



The South Carolina Native Plant Society

To: South Carolina Public Service Commission
c/o: contact@psc.sc.gov

Subject: Increased Transparency for All New Pipeline Regulations

Reference: SC-PSC Docket No. 2022-360-A

Date: 20 December 2021

Comments On Behalf of the SCNPS Membership:

Growth is vital to the economic health our state, and the preservation of biodiversity is essential to all life here in South Carolina. We rely on our state government to '*protect, preserve and restore*' the balance between these too often competing objectives. The SCNPS enthusiastically endorses the new regulations proposed by the SC Public Service Commission (PSC) for the assurance of a robust and transparent approval process of the construction and operation of natural gas pipelines and use of eminent domain by pipeline companies.

It is the mission of the SCNPS to '*protect, preserve and restore*' native plant populations in our state and to educate our population and support both government and non-government agencies on these goals. We believe the intended proposed regulatory amendments align with these proposed amendments. More specifically, we believe the approval process for any such future natural gas pipelines include a study of the direct and indirect environmental impacts from construction (*and operation*) of the pipeline, including at a minimum:

- induced urban sprawl
- impacts on properties protected for conservation value
- impacts to the bio-diversity of habitat
- impacts to state and federal listed endangered species
- Assessment of alternative energy solutions for the utilities that heat and supply electricity to our homes that prevent or reduce additional habitat disruption

We also believe it to be essential that transparency of the approval process and compliance to approval conditions are assured, including:

- Timely opportunity for community input
- Clear maps of proposed pipeline routes that enable the public to assess the environmental impacts
- A mechanism for accountability during construction and continuous operation phases for compliance

We strongly endorse improvements to the current approval process for natural gas pipelines to ensure that the considerations and transparency enable us all to make the most informed decisions possible for the greater good of all. From our perspective, these should be included at a minimum.

The South Carolina Native Plant Society
A 501©(3) Nonprofit Organization
c/o: 306 West Faris Road, Greenville, SC 20605