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Comment submitted by Catherine Carter

Posted by the **Environmental Protection Agency** on Feb 25, 2025

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As a concerned citizen, I'm writing to express unreserved support for the EPA's draft Interim Framework for Advancing Consideration of Cumulative Impacts. However, I especially ask you to commit to making enforcement and accountability central to this policy. You and I both know that in conservation (as in so many other areas), enforcement is too often the weakest link; we know that the current administration has little regard for regulation, claiming to view it as government overreach (though, given their business ties, the representatives of this administration are pretty clearly thinking more of their own short-term profits than of any real principle; and we know that without strict oversight, polluters will continue and intensity the harm they are doing to our most vulnerable communities while facing no real consequences.

I live in southern Appalachia; I've seen what unregulated extractive industry can do. I've seen the topped mountains, the gouged quarries, the fouled streams and rivers and ground water, the coal ash spills, and the constant haze of smog which now hangs over these mountains. I've seen the damage to which deforested slopes contributed so heavily in Hurricane Helene. I've seen my students (I'm a teacher) lose their homes, and get almost nothing in return from FEMA. Without meaningful enforcement of thoughtful public policy, we're looking at nothing but more and worse of the same..

To create a truly effective Framework, I ask that the EPA
--prioritize enforcement and ensure that regulatory agencies have the authority and resources to hold polluters fully (and expensively) accountable;
--be sure that every decision the EPA makes has an ample period for public comment, and consider the comments it receives;
--close regulatory loopholes and strengthen permitting processes to fully consider cumulative impacts, particularly in overburdened communities;
--call out corporate greenwashing and require transparency and strict guidelines to stop companies from using the Framework as a shield for continued pollution.

I askthe EPA to strengthen enforcement measures within the Framework, and fight strongly to see them

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implemented. Thank you for considering my comments and for your commitment to protecting public health and the environment.

Sincerely,
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