

Legal action filed against proposed interstate

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Virginians for Appropriate Roads and Virginia Forest Watch have filed legal action against the Federal Highway Administration and Virginia Department of Transportation seeking an injunction prohibiting FHWA from providing financial assistance for I-73 and prohibiting VDOT and its contractors from commencing construction of the project, according to a press release.

VAR, Virginia Forest Watch, and two individually-named co-plaintiffs claim that FHWA's refusal to study a comprehensive upgrade of U.S. 220 as an alternative to building I-73 through Roanoke, Franklin and Henry counties is a violation of the National Environmental Policy Act.

The lawsuit cites I-73's "significant, irreversible adverse effects on natural, scenic, and ecological resources, including impacting 3,370 acres of forest habitat and . . . exposing over 2,000 households to noise and air pollution, (and) adversely impacting thousands of acres of natural habitat and farmland," among other charges.

I-73 is the proposed Michigan-to-Georgia interstate that would utilize the U.S. 220 corridor.