



# Scenic Virginia

To Preserve, Protect, and Enhance the Scenic Beauty of Virginia

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August 11, 2017

Rachel W. Snead  
Electric T & D Project Manager II  
Dominion Energy Transmission, Inc.  
701 East Cary Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Surry-Skiffes-Wheaton Transmission Project  
Comments on Proposed Recommendations Regarding Tower  
Coating Alternatives  
Stipulation Letter of July 12, 2017

Dear Ms. Snead:

I write on behalf of the Board and supporters of Scenic Virginia, the only statewide organization dedicated solely to the preservation, protection, and enhancement of the scenic beauty of our Commonwealth.

We oppose -- as vehemently as possible -- Dominion Energy's suggestion that it not have to coat or treat the metal used for the transmission towers across our beloved James River. We do this for the following reasons:

The construction of 44 hulking utility transmission towers near and across America's Founding River® will forever tarnish this iconic, currently pristine landscape of national and international importance. These steel behemoths will be visible from such significant areas as Historic Jamestown, the Colonial Parkway (designated a National Scenic Byway®/All-American Road® in 2005), the Captain John Smith Chesapeake Historical Trail (designated as such by Congress in 2006), and Carter's Grove, just to name a few.

During the Section 106 process conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, numerous citizens, organizations, and agencies provided documentation – in the form of letters, reports, testimony, and visual simulations – detailing the full extent of the project's damage to significant natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources.

All of it was to no avail. Dominion chose to continue pushing forward its original, extremely flawed plan.

To those who respect and treasure our nation's history and beauty, it is distressing enough that Dominion could not see fit to find a more appropriate location than the birthplace of America for this ill-conceived project. That Dominion Energy would now try to sidestep its duty to minimize the intrusions to this significant historic site is unconscionable.

The Memorandum of Agreement that Dominion signed in late 2016 mandates several ways to reduce the visual damage to this historic viewshed. Coating/treating the metal used for the transmission towers is one of those required steps.

We are incredulous that Dominion Energy now has the temerity to suggest that it should not have to comply with this stipulation because of the purported difficulty in retro-coating steel that it purchased several years ago, prior to securing the permit for the project.

This situation is one of Dominion's own making. Dominion alone is responsible for its hasty and premature purchase of untreated steel. Citizens should not have to bear the brunt for this lack of planning.

In summary, Dominion Energy must treat/coat the steel it uses for the utility transmission towers to reduce visibility. This is stipulated in the MOA, and Dominion Energy willingly signed the document. For the record, Scenic Virginia favors the chemical dulling process, and we insist that it be completed off site to prevent further environmental harm to the James.

Scenic Virginia appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on this proposal. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at (804) 643-VIEW (8439) or [email@scenicvirginia.org](mailto:email@scenicvirginia.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leighton Powell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leighton Powell  
Executive Director

cc: Randy Steffey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District