



January 12, 2017

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Dear Conservation Easement Landowner,

We are writing to you, owners of property protected by a conservation easement with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF), about an important matter that could have a profound and lasting effect on the integrity of conservation easement programs in Virginia.

VOF needs your support. VOF is being aggressively pressured by Dominion Resources, Inc. to allow the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) to cross a block of properties held in conservation easement. The ACP is a high-pressure gas pipeline that would extend across Virginia, from West Virginia to North Carolina. If allowed, this pipeline would be the largest intrusion onto protected properties in the 50-year history of Virginia's conservation easement program.

On February 9, 2017, VOF is scheduled to consider Dominion's application to permanently impair conservation values on 10 VOF easements in exchange for other conservation lands. Virginia state code (Va. Code Ann. §10.1-1704) provides very narrow provisions for such exchanges, requiring that the proposed project be "*in accordance with the official comprehensive plan for the locality*" and "*essential to the orderly development and growth of the locality.*" The proposed gas transmission pipeline meets neither requirement.

VOF has filed several excellent letters with Federal Regulatory Energy Commission (FERC), the agency charged with review and permitting, urging them not to permit the ACP to cross these protected properties.

It is our hope that the VOF will continue its firm stance by fully enforcing the criteria set forth in Virginia's statute and denying Dominion's irresponsible request, thereby helping to ensure the ongoing protection of the 10 properties conserved by the landowners and VOF.

But Dominion is aggressively pressuring the agency to back down and vote yes in February.

It is important for VOF to hear from its most valued constituents, its landowner partners, as it considers this unprecedented proposal.

Please join with conservation easement landowners in the Shenandoah Valley who have already submitted comment, urging VOF to:

- support the clean water, wildlife habitat, working farmland, rural character, and scenic views protected by the conservation easements,
- preserve the essential trust that exists between landowners and VOF, critical to the future of land conservation in Virginia, and
- deny Dominion's unprecedented and irresponsible request to permanently impair conservation values on 10 conserved properties.

Send your comment by mail, email or fax prior to the February 9, 2017 VOF board meeting. Include your mailing address and phone number, and address your comment to:

Ms. Stephanie Ridder, Chairman
Virginia Outdoors Foundation
39 Garrett Street, Suite 200
Warrenton, VA 20186
By email: bcabibbo@vofonline.org
By fax: (540) 347-7711

We also encourage you to attend the meeting and make your comment in person. The public comment opportunity begins at 11 AM, and the meeting will be held at the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, 7870 Villa Park Drive, Suite 400, Henrico, VA. See virginiaoutdoorsfoundation.org for details.

Find out more information and read letters submitted by other conservation easements donors by visiting svnva.org/vof or contact Kate Wofford at kwofford@svnva.org or 540.244.7809.

VOF stewards more than 750,000 acres of extraordinary lands across the Commonwealth, and it is a champion for conservation and for its thousands of landowner partners. We hope you will join us in encouraging the VOF to continue its legacy of stewardship.

We welcome you to contact us with your questions, concerns or ideas. Thank you for your commitment to Virginia's enduring tradition of land conservation.

Sincerely,



Brenda Mead
Executive Director
Valley Conservation Council



Kate G. Wofford
Executive Director
Shenandoah Valley Network



Christopher G. Miller
President
Piedmont Environmental Council