



Commonwealth of Virginia

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

www.deq.virginia.gov

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October 28, 2024

Jay Garcia
USDA Forest Service Maintenance of Open and Semi-Open Lands
Roadside Corridors and Utility Rights-of-Way
5162 Valleypointe Parkway
Roanoke, VA 24019
Via email: jay.garcia@usda.gov

RE: NEPA Scoping response: George Washington and Jefferson National Forests are seeking public input on the 2024 Forest wide Maintenance of Open and Semi-Open Lands, Roadside Corridors, and Utility Rights-of-Way Project

Dear Mr. Garcia:

This letter is in response to the scoping request for the above-referenced project.

As you may know, the Department of Environmental Quality, through its Office of Environmental Impact Review (DEQ-OEIR), is responsible for coordinating Virginia's review of federal environmental documents prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and responding to appropriate federal officials on behalf of the Commonwealth. Please note that while DEQ will review and respond to the NEPA document for this project, we do not wish to become a consulting party to the development of the document.

DOCUMENT SUBMISSIONS

In order to ensure an effective coordinated review of the NEPA document, notification of the NEPA document documentation should be sent directly to OEIR. We request that you submit one electronic to eir@deq.virginia.gov (25 MB maximum) or make the documents available for download at a website, file transfer protocol (ftp) site or the VITA LFT file share system (Requires an "invitation" for access. An invitation request should be sent to eir@deq.virginia.gov).

The NEPA document should include U.S. Geological Survey topographic. We strongly encourage you to issue shape files with the NEPA document. In addition, project details should be adequately described for the benefit of the reviewers.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW UNDER THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT:
PROJECT SCOPING AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

As you may know, NEPA (PL 91-190, 1969) and its implementing regulations (Title 40, *Code of Federal Regulations*, Parts 1500-1508) requires a draft and final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for

federal activities or undertakings that are federally licensed or federally funded which will or may give rise to significant impacts upon the human environment. An EIS carries more stringent public participation requirements than an Environmental Assessment (EA) and provides more time and detail for comments and public decision-making. The possibility that an EIS may be required for the proposed project should not be overlooked in your planning for this project. Accordingly, we refer to “NEPA document” in the remainder of this letter.

While this Office does not participate in scoping efforts beyond the advice given herein, other agencies are free to provide scoping comments concerning the preparation of the NEPA document. Accordingly, we are providing notice of your scoping request to several state agencies and those localities and Planning District Commissions, including but not limited to:

Department of Environmental Quality:

- DEQ Regional Office
- Air Division
- Office of Wetlands and Stream Protection
- Office of Local Government Programs
- Division of Land Protection and Revitalization
- Office of Stormwater Management

Department of Conservation and Recreation

Department of Health

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Department of Wildlife Resources

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

Department of Historic Resources

Virginia Energy

Department of Forestry

Department of Transportation

DATA BASE ASSISTANCE

Below is a list of databases that may assist you in the preparation of a NEPA document:

- DEQ Online Database: Virginia Environmental Geographic Information Systems
Information on Permitted Solid Waste Management Facilities, Impaired Waters, Petroleum Releases, Registered Petroleum Facilities, Permitted Discharge (Virginia Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permits) Facilities, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Sites, Water Monitoring Stations, National Wetlands Inventory:
 - www.deq.virginia.gov/ConnectWithDEQ/VEGIS.aspx
- DEQ Virginia Coastal Geospatial and Educational Mapping System (GEMS)
Virginia’s coastal resource data and maps; coastal laws and policies; facts on coastal resource values; and direct links to collaborating agencies responsible for current data:
 - <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/?splash=https%3a%2f%2fgaia.vcu.edu%2fportal%2fapps%2fsites%2f%23%2fgemsmaps&isexternal=true>
- MARCO Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal
The Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal is a publicly available online toolkit and resource center that consolidates available data and enables users to visualize and analyze ocean resources and human

use information such as fishing grounds, recreational areas, shipping lanes, habitat areas, and energy sites, among others.

- <http://portal.midatlanticocean.org/visualize/#x=-73.24&y=38.93&z=7&logo=true&controls=true&basemap=Ocean&tab=data&legends=false&layers=true>
- DHR Data Sharing System.
Survey records in the DHR inventory:
 - www.dhr.virginia.gov/archives/data_sharing_sys.htm
- DCR Natural Heritage Search
Produces lists of resources that occur in specific counties, watersheds or physiographic regions:
 - www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/dbsearchtool.shtml
- Wetland Condition Assessment Tool (WetCAT)
 - <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/our-programs/water/wetlands-streams/wetcat>
- DWR Fish and Wildlife Information Service
Information about Virginia's Wildlife resources:
 - <http://vafwis.org/fwis/>
- Total Maximum Daily Loads Approved Reports
 - <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/programs/water/waterqualityinformationtmdls/tmdl/tmdldevelopment/approvedtmdlreports.aspx>
- Virginia Outdoors Foundation: Identify VOF-protected land
 - <http://vof.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) Database: Superfund Information Systems
Information on hazardous waste sites, potentially hazardous waste sites and remedial activities across the nation, including sites that are on the National Priorities List (NPL) or being considered for the NPL:
 - www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/cursites/index.htm
- EPA RCRAInfo Search
Information on hazardous waste facilities:
 - www.epa.gov/enviro/facts/rcrainfo/search.html
- Total Maximum Daily Loads Approved Reports
 - <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/our-programs/water/water-quality/tmdl-development/approved-tmdls>
- EPA Envirofacts Database
EPA Environmental Information, including EPA-Regulated Facilities and Toxics Release Inventory Reports:

- www.epa.gov/enviro/index.html
- EPA NEPAassist Database
Facilitates the environmental review process and project planning:
<http://nepaassisttool.epa.gov/nepaassist/entry.aspx>

If you have questions about the environmental review process, please feel free to contact me. I hope this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,



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