Commonwealth of Virginia

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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Andrew R. Wheeler
Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources

Michael S. Rolband, PE, PWD, PWS Emeritus
Director
(804) 698-4000

January 24,2022

Joby P. Timm, Forest Supervisor
5162 Valleypointe Parkway
Roanoke, VA 24019

RE: Scoping Response - George Washington and Jefferson National Forests Fiberoptic
        Telecommunication Lines - Alleghany, Amherst, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt,
        Carroll, Craig, Dickensen, Frederick, Giles, Grayson, Highland, Lee, Montgomery, Nelson, Page,
        Pulaski, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Scott, Shenandoah, Smyth, Tazewell, Warren,
        Washington, Wise, and Wythe Counties, Virginia

Dear Mr. Tim:

        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.

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:
>> o   DEQ Regional Office
>> o   Air Division
>> o   Office of Wetlands and Stream Protection
>> o   Office of Local Government Programs
>> o   Division of Land Protection and Revitalization
>> o   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
> Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (soon to be 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:
  - http://128.172.160.131/gems2/

- 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

- 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

- 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

- EPA Envirofacts Database

  EPA Environmental Information, including EPA-Regulated Facilities and Toxics Release Inventory Reports:
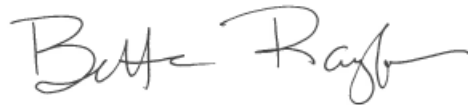 - www.epa.gov/enviro/index.html

- EPA NEPAssist 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 (telephone (804) 659-1915 or e-mail bettina.rayfield@deq.virginia.gov).

I hope this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Bettina Rayfield, Program Manager
Environmental Impact Review and
Long-Range Priorities