



Reply to
Attention of

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
NORFOLK DISTRICT
FORT NORFOLK
803 FRONT STREET
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

May 29, 2015

Southern Virginia Regulatory Section
NAO-2012-00080, 13-V0408 (James River)

National Park Service
Mr. Mike Caldwell, Regional Director
U.S. Customs House
200 Chestnut Street, 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Dear Mr. Caldwell:

This is in reference to a request by Dominion Virginia Power for Department of the Army authorization to construct a new 7.4-mile 500kV aerial transmission line from Surry County to a proposed Skiffes Creek 500kV-230kV-115kV switching station in James City County, followed by upgrades to 20.2 miles of existing 230kV overhead transmission line that connects with an existing Whealton substation in Hampton, VA. Additional Information specific to the proposed project can be found at <http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/SkiffesCreekPowerLine.aspx>. Our website also contains links to the applicant's and consulting party websites, which contain additional project information and perspectives on the project.

Based on National Park Service (NPS) data, Virginia has approximately 49,350 miles of river, but presently no designated National Wild and Scenic Rivers. The Commonwealth has a number of river segments listed on the Nationwide River Inventory (NRI) which are considered potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Specifically, a 62 mile segment of the James River (*between Mogarts Beach to Hopewell*) is listed on the NRI. Dominion's proposed project falls within this segment and could have an adverse effect on a portion which possesses "Outstanding Remarkable Values" (ORV) based on history. The planned construction of 17 high voltage transmission towers and 4 fender protection systems within the James River will result in direct impacts to 2,712 square feet of river bottom; however the proposed project involves the introduction of visual intrusions (*i.e. aerial transmission line*) which could affect the ORV for this segment.

We are currently evaluating the potential effects of the proposed project pursuant to the Corps NEPA Implementing Procedures (33CFR Part 230 & 33CFR Part 325 Appendix B), and we have identified adverse effects to historic properties as part of our Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act consultation process. We plan to prepare an Environmental Assessment to analyze the significance of impacts on our

natural and cultural resources. With this letter we are requesting the NPS's assistance in determining the significance or severity of this project's effects on the river's outstanding remarkable values. We respectfully request comments on the proposed project and its effects on the NRI within 30 days of receipt of this letter.

If you have any questions, please contact Randy Steffey at (757) 201-7579 or by e-mail at randy.l.steffey@usace.army.mil .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Prisco-Baggett', written in a cursive style.

Kimberly A. Prisco-Baggett
Acting Chief, Regulatory Branch

cc:

Mr. Frank Hays, Acting Associate Northeast Regional Director; NPS