



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
Norfolk District

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THREATENED/ENDANGERED SPECIES / EFH COORDINATION FORM

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Project Number: NAO-2012-0080 / 13-V0408

Property Owner's Name and Address: Virginia Electric & Power Company Dominion Virginia Power Courtney Fisher 701 E. Cary Street; 12 th Floor Richmond, Virginia 23219	Authorized Agent's Name and Address: Stantec Consulting Service, Inc. Christine Conrad, Phd. 5209 Center Street Williamsburg, VA 23188
Address of Job Site/Directions: The proposed project will begin in Surry Co. Near the Surry Nuclear Power Plant, cross the James River near Skiffes Creek in James City Co. and continue down the Peninsula into Hampton, VA. (HUC 02080206 & 02080108)	Locality: Surry & James City Co. Waterway: James River Latitude: 37° 10' 28.06"N Longitude: 76° 38' 29.00" W

Probable Action Type: Individual Permit Regional Permit Nationwide Permit

Project Description: Dominion Virginia Power proposes to construct a new electrical transmission power line and associated infrastructure, known as Surry - Skiffes Creek - Whealton project, consistent with the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) standards. The proposed project involves construction of a new 7.4-mile 500kV overhead transmission power line from Surry nuclear power plant to the proposed Skiffes Creek 500kV-230kV-115kV switching station, on 51 acres of private and commercial property in James City County, followed by the construction of 20.2 miles of new 230kV overhead transmission power line from the switching station to Whealton substation in Hampton.

The proposed project consists of both a river crossing and land based segment. This coordination specifically focuses on the proposed Surry – Skiffes Creek 500kV powerline segment requiring the placement of transmission towers and fender protection systems within the James River. This segment of the project will result in 2712 square feet of subaqueous river bottom impacts caused by the installation of (416) 24-inch steel piles with 26-inch fiberglass sleeves for tower foundations and (240) 30-inch fiber piles for fender systems.

Additional information specific to the proposed project can be found at <http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/SkiffesCreekPowerLine.aspx> , as well as previous coordination packages we have provided to you since August 28, 2013.

Endangered/Threatened Species: Atlantic Sturgeon is known to be present within this section of the James River. Coordination is currently ongoing with NOAA PRD.

Submerged Aquatic Vegetation: No SAV is documented in the vicinity of the proposed project.

Essential Fish Habitat Assessment: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-267), requires all Federal agencies to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The James River contains Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for the egg, larvae, juvenile, and adult life stages of 13 species including windowpane flounder (*Scopthalmus aquosus*), bluefish (*Pomatomus saltatrix*), Atlantic butterfish (*Peprilus triacanthus*), summer flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*), black sea bass (*Centropristus striata*), king mackerel (*Scomberomorus cavalla*), Spanish mackerel (*Scomberomorus maculatus*), cobia (*Rachycentron canadum*), red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*), dusky shark (*Charcharinus obscurus*), sandbar shark (*Charcharinus plumbeus*), yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), and basking shark (*Cetorhinus maximus*). The habitat which this project may affect in the James River consists of both shallow & deep water subaqueous bottom. A total of 656 steel and fiber pilings ranging in diameter from 24 inches to 30 inches will be impact driven into the river bottom for tower foundations and fender protection systems resulting in a direct loss of subaqueous bottom. The proposed route crosses four private oyster lease areas, resulting in seven towers (i.e. 17-20, 23, 27, & 28) having direct impacts. Additional impacts as a result of this activity will be limited to the noise, vibrations, and increases in turbidity duration of construction. Dominion has incorporated several construction techniques to help further avoid and minimize these effects during construction. Bubble curtains will be used at each location during all pile driving activities. Ramp up methods will be used for all pile driving activities which will gradually increase impact hammer intensity over the course of single pile install. All pile driving associated with Towers 21 thru 26, located in deep water habitat, will be avoided during the traditional time of year restriction from February 15 through June 15 of any given year.

Anadromous Fish: This segment of the James River is a confirmed anadromous fish use waterway. Dominion has proposed certain construction techniques such as a traditional TOYR prohibiting any piling installation in deep water areas, use of bubble curtains, and ramp-up techniques to avoid impacts.

Project Manager's Comments: On August 28, 2013 a Public Notice was issued for Dominion proposal concluding a preliminary determination that the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on EFH or anadromous fish. In addition to this PN, coordination documents have been provided for your consideration throughout the course of our review. We have continued to copy you on correspondence between Chris Vaccaro with NOAA PRD; most recent of which was June 10, 2015. Impacts from the proposed project have changed as a result of "final design" which is why we would like to extend the opportunity for your review and comment once again.

Our assessment of the modified project continues to find that the project will not have a substantial adverse effect on EFH and/or anadromous fish. Our rationale for this preliminary determination is based on the minimal direct impacts to subaqueous bottom, minimal increases in turbidity caused by the proposed work, the absence of direct impacts to vegetated wetlands and/or submerged aquatic vegetation.

We are requesting your comments or concurrence of our effect determination within the prescribed suspense date. If we do not receive comments we will assume you concur with a determination of “not likely to adverse effect”.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Steffey either via telephone at (757) 201-7579 or via email at randy.l.steffey@usace.army.mil . Thank you.

Attachments: Project Plans