

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Board Adopts Resolution Opposing Western Loudoun Power Line Route**

During its April 16, 2024, business meeting, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution in opposition to a proposed new electrical transmission line route that would cut through western Loudoun.

NextEra Energy, Inc. (NextEra) proposes new 500kV transmission lines running from a new substation near the West Virginia border through western Loudoun County to the Aspen substation located near Cochran Mill Road east of the Town of Leesburg (Western Loudoun Route).

#### **Regional Electrical Planning**

On December 11, 2023, the Transmission Expansion Advisory Committee of Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Maryland Interconnection, LLC (PJM) approved NextEra's proposal, known as "Proposal 853," for consideration. PJM is a regional transmission organization operating under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that coordinates the movement of electricity in all or parts of thirteen states and the District of Columbia.

While NextEra's proposal is only a preliminary routing plan, the identified route through western Loudoun would run through mountainous, rural, historic, environmentally sensitive and productive agricultural areas. It would also pass near the villages of Waterford and Paeonian Springs, and the towns of Hamilton and Leesburg. The Board's adopted resolution states that the proposed western Loudoun route would "negatively impact natural, environmental and heritage resources, local businesses in the agricultural, equine, hospitality, and tourism sectors, National Historic Landmarks and National Register of Historic Places, agricultural and forestal districts, open space and conservation easements, and residents" living in the area.

#### **Potential Alternate Route**

Loudoun County has proposed an alternate western Loudoun route that relies on existing electrical transmission rights of way that connect the Woodside substation to the Doubs substation (south of Frederick, Maryland), and then south across the Potomac to the Aspen substation. The alternative route would use the existing Pepco right-of-way in Maryland and existing Dominion Energy right-of-way in Loudoun County.

#### **Approval Process**

Loudoun County is closely monitoring the process conducted by the Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) PJM Interconnection, which has included consideration of proposals to improve a portion of the nation's power grid to prepare for growing demand in Virginia and Maryland. PJM is the RTO charged by the FERC with coordinating the sale and movement of electricity in designated states, including Virginia.

In Virginia, the State Corporation Commission (SCC) must approve any proposed high-voltage transmission lines prior to construction. While the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors has no formal role in the approval process, the county will serve as a "referral agency" for any proposals within the county. In addition, the SCC will hold public hearings for those proposals, during which county officials, local organizations and members of the public will be able to offer comments.

In a separate action, on April 2, 2024, the Board [voted to file a "notice of participation"](#) in Dominion Energy Virginia's application to the SCC for new transmission lines along Route 7 in eastern Loudoun. The Board's action will allow Loudoun County to join the case that is before the SCC and to provide input on the proposed power project.

### **More Information**

Read the [April 16, 2024, staff report](#) to view maps of proposed routes and to read the Board's adopted Resolution Opposing NextEra Energy's Proposed New High Voltage Transmission Route Through Western Loudoun County and Encouraging the Use of Existing Electrical Transmission Right-of-Way.

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