

NEWS

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VIRGINIANS FOR SENSIBLE ENERGY POLICIES ANNOUNCES COMMITMENT TO CONTINUING FIGHT OF POWER LINES *Dominion Refuses to Provide Proof of Need*

DELAPLANE, Va., March 5, 2007 --- Dominion recently announced an additional alternative route to their proposed 40-mile, 500-kv transmission line. Virginians for Sensible Energy Policies (VSEP) was quick to note that, while the additional proposed line follows existing right of way, the other proposed lines are not off the table and Dominion has still not proven that the lines are necessary. “We have been asking for Dominion’s studies for several months,” explains Matt Sheedy, president of VSEP, “Dominion has blatantly refused to share any data with us.” In a recent meeting with a local newspaper, a Dominion representative, when asked where the studies are, simply shrugged his shoulders and stated that it’s a “complex engineering issue” involving several regions and nobody had it and that, even if they did have it they would not make it available until the final plan was filed with the State Corporation Commission. “It is unconscionable that a company that is funded by the public refuses to present their data,” Sheedy adds.

“How can a major corporation threaten to permanently scar land and take personal property and not have to account to anyone in the impacted areas?,” Sheedy questions. Dominion executive John Smatlak recently dismissed the new alignment by stating, “The areas are already damaged somewhat.”

The proposed 40-mile, 500-kv transmission line with its 15-story tall towers is overkill, according to energy experts and advisors to VSEP. VSEP is a coalition of energy experts, local groups, electric customers, families, farmers, workers and citizens of all ages. VSEP is organized to study energy policy, educate the public, and litigate to protect the environment and property rights.

At an initial Dominion public meeting held in Middleburg, Va., an engineer with Burns & McDonnell (the engineering firm hired by Dominion to site the line), explained to attendees that the line was initially sited south of Interstate 66 because “there’s nothing there but cattle and horse farms and most of the homes are weekend homes.” Several attendees were furious because their (full-time) family homes were right in the path. “I don’t know of any ‘weekend’ homes,” stated local resident and VSEP board member Carter Wiley.

No one is arguing that Northern Virginia is growing. Interestingly, it is the only area of Virginia that is growing per a recent report by the University of Virginia which shows overall state growth to have dropped. However, these growth predictions are not new. The Metropolitan Washington Council on Governments (COG) has reliable growth projections through 2030. These projections were available in 2005 when Dominion and PJM were initially plotting to financially capitalize on the proposed transmission line. At that time, PJM stated in a (JLARC) report that the benefits of the line to Northern Virginia would be “0%”. Since that time, they have changed their story.

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VSEP energy expert and retired vice president of Booz Allen's world-wide energy practice, Mitch Diamond states that Dominion's advertising campaigns are misleading the public. Dominion already has plans for increasing capacity through existing infrastructure that will provide more than enough electricity for the entire region for many years to come.

Also, if the region exercised demand management, power savings and conservation would be significant. Some areas of the country have seen as much as a 25% savings with demand management practices and generation buy-back.

The PJM Regional Transmission Expansion Plan (PJM-RTEP) 2006 states that, in the region, the total peak day demand for electricity now is about 17000MW. For the sake of absolute safety from unexpected events, it is normal to add 15% to that peak number. The absolute total demand that must be met for this year in this region is 19500MW peak demand. For 2011, the same demand plus 'reserve' is projected to be about 23000MW. Dominion has included this information in their presentation.

The total capacity of power plants in this defined area is 13000MW. However, the area is also served by five giant 500-kv transmission lines, and each of these can carry an additional 2900MW of power to this region. The total available supply is, therefore, 27500MW - certainly more than adequate now and into the future to meet peak day demands. This is confirmed by independent studies of this area by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC).

"The truth is that any local overloads that Dominion sees are caused by projected PJM transfers of western coal-fired electricity to east coast markets, and have little or nothing to do with our demand here," explains Diamond, "And those overloads are readily and better addressed with other solutions."

"We believe that Virginia can meet all of its future energy needs through a comprehensive state energy plan that promotes the use of modern technology and energy efficiency that will move Virginia from being one of the worst states in the nation for its energy practices to one of the best," states Sheedy.

Virginians for Sensible Energy Policies (VSEP) is a coalition of local groups, electric customers, families, farmers, workers and citizens of all ages. VSEP is organized to study energy policy, educate the public, and litigate to protect the environment and property rights. For more information, visit the Web at www.EnergyPolicies.org or call 540-364-3527.

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