



PROPOSED 2026 TRANSMISSION LINES IN VIRGINIA

YOUR PROPERTY RIGHTS, YOUR LAND, YOUR OPTIONS

Why Farmers are Being Contacted

Currently, multiple high-voltage electric transmission projects are proposed or are under review in Virginia driven primarily by data center growth. To keep up, utilities like Dominion Energy, Appalachian Power, and conglomerates like Valley Link LLC (Dominion, FirstEnergy, & Transource) are driving major infrastructure expansions in central Virginia. **Most of these projects are currently in pre-filing and route-selection phases** and you may be impacted by lines crossing or running parallel to active farmland, timberland, or family-owned rural property.

Does a Transmission Line Automatically Have the Right to Take Your Land? NO

Utilities do not own your property simply because a project is approved. In Virginia, a utility cannot take private property without notice, which is required at multiple stages - before a project is approved, before any easement is condemned, and before a court can authorize a taking.

- Transmission lines over 138kV must receive approval from the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC), but SCC approval does not grant free access to private land.
- Utilities (Dominion, Appalachian Power, Valley Link LLC), must obtain a voluntary easement from you or pursue eminent domain through a separate legal process.

Eminent Domain in Virginia is Constitutionally Limited

- Property may only be taken for legitimate public use, not for private gain or economic development alone.
- Utilities must prove that the taking is reasonably necessary and pay just compensation - the full monetary equivalent of what is taken or damaged.

The Bottom Line: The courts – not utilities – ultimately decide whether a taking is lawful if it is challenged.

When Will I be Contacted About a Potential Taking?

Before a utility can condemn land for a high-voltage transmission line (138kV and above) it must seek approval from the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC). Once the utility has filed their application with the SCC, then they are required to notify affected landowners.

The First Notice

- When the project is under review by the SCC the notification sent to impacted landowners is not a taking, but the first formal notice. The utility is required to send direct written notice by mail to affected property owners, publish public notices in local newspapers, provide project maps, route descriptions, and contact information, and offer community meetings or open houses.





⚠ Important: For the Joshua Falls to Yeat project, as of June 2026, they have not yet filed with the SCC. Typically, decisions are rendered 8-12 months after initial filing, which would mean that the initial notice for eminent domain proceedings would not likely occur until at least 2027.

What this Initial Notice Means:

- Your land has not been taken.
- No easements exist yet.
- You now have the right to:
 - Submit public comments or participate formally as a respondent before the SCC.
 - Challenge the need and routing impacts to farmland and your operation.

⚠ Important: Many landowners mistakenly believe this notice means condemnation is inevitable. It does not.

Pre-Condemnation Notice & Offer

- This is the first notice that a taking is possible.
- Before filing an eminent-domain case, a utility must attempt to acquire your property voluntarily.
- The utility or condemning authority must provide you with:
 - A written notice that the property (or an easement) is needed.
 - Make a written offer to purchase property rights based on an appraisal or valuation.
 - Give the owner time to consider the offer and respond.

⚠ Important: A utility cannot go straight to court without doing this first.

Formal Notice of Condemnation (Court Filing)

- This is when eminent domain begins.
- If negotiations fail, the utility may file an eminent domain petition in circuit court.
- The property owner must:
 - Be formally served with court papers;
 - Receive the condemnation petition, legal description of the property, statement of public use, and amount of compensation offered.

Property Owner Rights After Condemnation Notice

- Once served, you as the landowner have the right to:
 - Challenge whether the taking is:
 - For a legitimate public use;
 - Necessary and reasonably located.
 - Challenge the amount of compensation.
 - Present evidence of:
 - Farm operation impacts;
 - Severance damages (loss of value to remaining land);
 - Drainage, access, equipment, and long-term productivity losses.



- Under Virginia’s Constitution, property cannot be taken for private gain or economic development alone, and courts—not utilities—decide disputes

Key Takeaways for Property Owners

In Virginia, eminent domain is a process, not an ambush. A utility must:

1. Notify you early
2. Make a real offer
3. Go through court
4. Prove public use and necessity
5. Pay full, just compensation

Failure at any step can delay—or defeat—the taking.

What is the Current Status of the Joshua Falls to Yeat Transmission Line? DRAFT STAGE

1. **Valley Link Joshua Falls to Yeat**
 - a. Company: Valley Link LLC (Dominion, FirstEnergy, Transource)
 - b. Impacted Counties: Campbell, Appomattox, Buckingham, Fluvanna, Louisa, Orange, Culpeper, (potentially: Goochland, Spotsylvania)
 - c. Have they Filed with the SCC: **NO**. Formal SCC application expected late 2026 (August-October).
 - d. Valley Link Joshua Falls to Yeat Official Website: <https://vltransmission.com/joshua-falls-to-yeat/>
 - e. Issue Comments and View Proposed Lines: <https://vltransmission.com/joshua-falls-to-yeat/#about-project>

As of June 2026, the Joshua Falls to Yeat Transmission line has been deemed essential by PJM (a Regional Transmission Organization that coordinates the movement of electricity across 13 states and DC) to meeting Virginia’s climbing energy needs. Valley Link will be hosting a [second round of community meetings](#) from June 15-June 25, 2026, and will continue to take public comment directly on the proposed routes that will ultimately be submitted later this year to the State Corporation Commission (SCC) for final consideration.

Valley Link is anticipated to formally file their application with the SCC in late Summer early Fall 2026. This will then begin a roughly 8-12-month review process where 3 SCC Commissioners will evaluate whether the line will maintain or improve grid reliability, address projected load growth, and avoid violations of reliability standards.





You have the Right to Participate in the SCC Process

Farmers are not spectators.

- You may submit written public comments, even if the line does not directly cross your parcel.
- Affected landowners can file as formal participants (respondents), allowing submission of testimony and evidence.
- SCC review explicitly requires consideration of environmental, historic, scenic, and land use impacts—including agricultural land

Virginia Farm Bureau is Here to Support You

Virginia Farm Bureau is engaged in discussions with the Waldo & Lyle law firm for potential assistance in crafting public comments to the SCC as an organization for one or multiple of these projects. Virginia Farm Bureau cannot file as a formal respondent before the SCC on these cases due to the fact that we are not affected landowners. There is, however, potential for us as an organization to issue written public comments. While many of these projects are still in early stages of route development at time of publication, if you have legal questions about your standing as a landowner, we recommend reaching out to Waldo & Lyle. The law firm has offered multiple property rights centric community meetings, and should they schedule more, we will continue to share those with impacted counties.

Waldo & Lyle Contact Information

757.622.5812 | admin@waldoandlyle.com

