

Farmville Herald

Questioning The Pipeline Placement

Buckingham, Prince Edward Supervisors Pledge Support

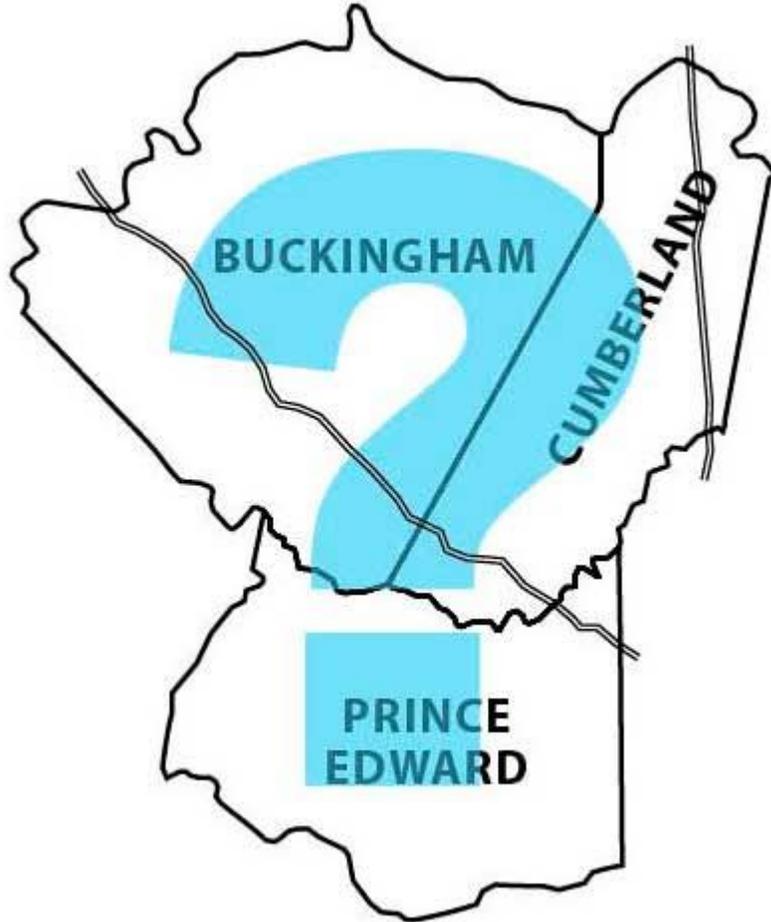
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Will the proposed natural gas pipelines go through your farmland, backyard or family property?

A released general location map of the proposed Dominion Energy natural gas pipeline, which displayed the route running through western and southern Buckingham, southern Cumberland, and a far eastern portion of Prince Edward, is outdated and no longer accurate, say officials.

"The proposed route continues to change. The...map was very preliminary at the time (and) is now outdated and no longer is an accurate representation of the proposed route," cited Frank Mack, a spokesperson for Dominion. When *The Herald* requested a copy of the revised map, Dominion said an updated map was unavailable.



Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of stories on the proposed natural gas pipelines that are being considered for our area. The Herald will explore, in depth, the impact, process and concerns surrounding the projects. Why these proposals now? Who can tap into them? Do landowners have a say? These are the questions we'll be answering.

Even while Buckingham and Prince Edward County supervisors voted to approve resolutions in support of natural gas pipelines, the Cumberland board put their motion on hold until they learned more about the projects.

A map of a pipeline proposed by Spectra Energy, which *The Herald* published in May, is still the most recent illustration of that company's preliminary route. The map shows a pipeline

running north to south through Cumberland County, entering near Columbia and continuing due south toward the Sunnyside area of the county. However, the process is still in its very early stages, wrote Arthur Diestel, manager of stakeholder outreach for Spectra, in an email to *The Herald* last week.

The route is merely “a study corridor based on a desktop evaluation of publically available information,” explained Diestel. Spectra plans to survey land in the corridor this summer to define the route further before the projects move forward. “The survey will help us identify all cultural and environmental resources along the route so we can determine the best route possible if we move forward.”

Diestel also stated that a final decision has not been made to pursue the project.

The absence of the Dominion route map and Spectra’s tentative stance is a reflection of the flux that the two proposed projects are in.

Although they would not share the preliminary route with *The Herald*, Dominion confirmed they had begun surveying. “Landowners were, and continue to be, very helpful about areas on their property to avoid, such as springs, family cemeteries, gardens, planned home sites, etc. Along with their feedback, we will be able to find the best possible route with the least overall impact to the environment, historic and cultural resources,” the Dominion spokesperson explained.

Mack’s statement concerning the proposed Dominion route comes as citizens in *The Herald’s* coverage area express concerns over property rights, and County boards of supervisors consider resolutions in support of the Dominion and Spectra projects.

“I think it’s a little immature at this time to devote a resolution of support...The original map that they gave us of a possible proposed (route) is no longer valid,” noted Buckingham’s District Four Supervisor John Staton during the board’s July 14 meeting.

His fellow board members voted to approve the resolution, supporting the proposed Dominion and Spectra pipelines, while Staton was the sole opponent.

The Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors, during their July meeting, voted unanimously to support the construction of “any and all” natural gas pipelines in the County, “in order that residents and businesses in the County of Prince Edward may access natural gas transmission lines...” The Virginia Growth Alliance (VGA) requested the action from the County.

County board members in Cumberland tabled the resolution, also presented by VGA, citing the strong language of the document and concerns over a lack of information. As of their July 8 meeting, the County had received no formal contact from either pipeline company.

“I don’t have any problem saying that we support it...generally speaking. But, the language in here,” protested Supervisor Bill Osl, District One, pointing out that the pledge of the support and cooperation was very strong. He went on to say that he needed more details.

Supervisor Lloyd Banks, District Two, was concerned with issues raised by landowners regarding surveying of their land and trespassing.

See also the first story in the series published in the Wednesday, July 23 edition of *The Herald*. We explore landowner concerns regarding property rights and surveying for the pipeline projects.