

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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West Virginians Against Transmission Injustice (WATI)

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NextEra’s Proposed MARL Selects Preferred Route

Mineral County, W.Va — West Virginians Against Transmission Injustice (WATI) responds to NextEra Energy’s release of its proposed route for the Mid-Atlantic Resiliency Link (MARL) transmission line Friday, September 26, 2025. The 500 kV electric transmission line(s) ordered by regional grid operator PJM Interconnection in 2023, would stretch from Greene County, Pennsylvania, to a substation in Gore, Virginia, cutting across multiple West Virginia counties. While NextEra is framing the release as a “preferred route,” WATI emphasizes that the route is not final.

“The route is not a certainty—it’s simply what NextEra wants,” said Anthony “Tony” Campbell, President of WATI. “The actual application to the West Virginia Public Service Commission (PSC) is not expected until later this year, and West Virginians need to make their voices heard now.”

Impact on West Virginia Ratepayers

WATI warns that MARL provides no substantive benefits to West Virginians. Instead, the project is designed to serve the massive energy demand of Northern Virginia’s data centers.

NextEra recently filed a proposal with PJM to build a second 500 kV circuit on its towers, which would drive costs even higher. Energy experts estimate that the second additional line could increase the cost of MARL by at least 60%. MARL will pass this cost on to ratepayers across the PJM region, including West Virginia. Despite the fact that West Virginia residents receive none of the benefits, we will see MARL in our rates for decades if the project is approved.

Landowner Rights and Compensation

NextEra’s expected announcement will likely be followed by outreach from company land agents seeking easement agreements. WATI strongly cautions landowners against signing such early offers. To help inform those impacted, WATI has a “Landowner’s” fact sheet on its website (www.wvatli.org).

“Do not sign anything,” Campbell urged. “If the PSC approves the project, compensation will ultimately be decided by county jurors—your own neighbors—

who will determine what is fair. History shows landowners secure better compensation by refusing early offers and standing together.”

Support from County and State leaders

During the last week, NextEra met with county commissioners to inform them of the upcoming release of their desired route. These meetings were often one-on-one and not in public settings. NextEra claims that MARL line will provide economic benefit to West Virginia but fell short in providing details to our commissioners.

Delegate Rick Hillenbrand (R-88) says, “I remain convinced that NextEra’s preferred route for above-ground MARL transmission lines through West Virginia is unacceptable. While the electricity generated will primarily flow to Virginia, West Virginians would be left with the bill, the scars on our landscape, and diminished property values. That is not a fair trade.”

“The reality is simple — this project does not benefit our county. It is nothing more than a massive transmission corridor designed to push electricity through our land and across our state to Virginia. Mineral County is being asked to shoulder the burden while reaping little to no reward, and I will not support it,” states Mineral County Commissioner Charles “Dutch” Staggs.

Hampshire County Commissioner Logan Mantz shared, “It’s not just the fact that the tax revenue doesn’t offset the reduction in property values that our citizens will face or the economic harm to our burgeoning tourism sector; some things are just not for sale. Our land and heritage are precious beyond measure to our citizens, and we stand with them in opposing this project.” He continues referencing NextEra’s recent contributions to local projects, “It’s my read that this outreach effort will be highly referenced to the PSC and other state officials as a counterpoint to local governments and citizens that stand in opposition to the project.”

Fellow Hampshire County Commissioner Brian Brill adds, “NextEra still has not shown in any definitive way that this project is going to have any positive impacts not only in our county but anywhere within the state. They continue to defer that responsibility to PJM [regional grid manager] with little effort to facilitate a compromise.”

A Call to Action

WATI urges West Virginians to act now:

- Submit comments to the WV PSC (see WATI’s online tutorial at www.wvatli.org).
- Contact county commissioners and state representatives to thank them for their

support and to urge them to stay strong in their opposition to MARL.

- Stay informed and united via www.wvatli.org and the WATI Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1006627084973178>.

“This is a fight for West Virginia’s land, rates, and future,” Campbell said. “We will not stand by while out-of-state corporations scar our landscape and raise our bills. Our land is entrusted to us by our ancestors, and we must protect it for our children and grandchildren.”

About WATI

West Virginians Against Transmission Injustice (WATI) is a grassroots, nonpartisan coalition of citizens dedicated to protecting West Virginia’s landowners, ratepayers, and communities from unfair, unnecessary, and exploitative transmission projects.