

Kill The MARL and Valley Link Transmission Lines!

Fact Sheet

West Virginia is being asked to bear the burden of at least two huge cross-state transmission lines that will move West Virginia's coal energy to power Virginia's data centers

What? Our regional electric power grid operator (PJM) has called for two massive new transmission lines to move coal powered electricity from western West Virginia through our beautiful state to deliver power to northern Virginia's rapidly expanding data center hub. The 500kV Mid-Atlantic Reliability Link (MARL) will run a total of 105 miles: mostly through West Virginia, including Hampshire, Mineral and Jefferson Counties. The 765kV Valley Link transmission line will run 261 miles through 14 West Virginia Counties including Hampshire and Hardy Counties. Each will have a 200-foot wide right of way path bulldozed through our forests, farms and home sites. The towers will be anywhere from 150 to almost 200 feet high and spaced about ¼ mile apart.

Why? Northern Virginia is the world's largest concentration of power-hungry data centers – well over 300 in place now and plans to as much as double that amount in the coming years. Meanwhile, Virginia has built no new baseload electric power generating facilities in many years. Further, in 2020, Virginia passed its "Clean Economy Act" which precludes the construction of new fossil fuel plants, leaving Virginia in a deepening electric power "hole". Data center growth plus no new baseload power has resulted in Virginia being the nations' #1 electricity importer!

Where? The MARL line will pick up energy from 5 West Virginia coal plants at a junction just inside the Pennsylvania border and travel across WV (Monongalia, Preston, Mineral, Hampshire and Jefferson Counties) and after traveling 155 miles, ultimate deliver power to northern Virginia's data centers. The Valley Link line will travel from the John Amos coal-fired power station across 14 West Virginia counties with a short section in Virginia before ending at an enormous new substation at Point of Rocks, Maryland

Who? If approved by the West Virginia Public Service Commission (PSC) the MARL line will be constructed by NextEra and FirstEnergy, two huge energy companies. The Valley Link line if approved will be constructed by a joint venture of American Electric Power, Dominion Energy and FirstEnergy.

When? NextEra suggests that they will send their permit application for the MARL transmission line to the PSC during the fall of 2025 and hopes to have that permit granted during 2027 with construction beginning in 2029 and completed by 2031. FirstEnergy has not released any detail, but has signaled that they hope to complete construction of the Valley Link by 2029.

Why Should I Care?

1. Both the MARL and Valley Link lines will be landscape wrecking, environmentally destructive ugly scars across our beautiful State. For example, together they will eliminate approximately 10,000 acres of forest;
2. If these transmission lines go through your property, your property will lose considerable value and you will possibly spend months or years attempting to be justly compensated by the energy companies who build them;

3. If your property is near or in sight of these transmission lines, your property will likely lose some of its value but you will not be compensated for that loss;
4. Landowners near these lines will endure months or years of heavy construction equipment on their roads;
5. Approval of these lines will only make it more likely that additional transmission lines to power Virginia's data centers will be proposed and built.
6. Your electric power rates will go up as a result of these transmission lines. A recent study by the Institute For Energy Economics and Financial Analysis shows that even you will receive no benefit from these transmission lines, West Virginians will pay an additional amount of approximately \$440 million over 40 years on their power bills if these lines are built.
https://ieefa.org/sites/default/files/2025-05/UPDATED_West%20Virginia%20Ratepayers%20Footings%20the%20Bill%20for%20Infrastructure_May%202025.pdf

I Have Heard That There's No Stopping These Lines. Is that true? NO! Transmission lines have been stopped before. In fact, the proposed PATH transmission line through West Virginia was killed in 2012.

How Do We Stop Them? Write and/or call the WV PSC to state your opposition to MARL and the Valley Link transmission lines. Become an intervenor in the process – to learn how to do that, follow our website. In addition, contact Governor Patrick Morrisey and your local elected officials including your West Virginia Delegates and Senators and let them know of your opposition. Join a citizens group such as ours and volunteer to help. For more information on all of the above, go to our website: **xyz.org** (QR code here)