



Organizational Impact Statement

1. **Name of Organization:** Waterford Foundation, Inc.
2. **Contact Person:** Stephanie Thompson, Executive Director
3. **Mission:** Our mission is to preserve the historic buildings and open spaces of the National Historic Landmark of Waterford, Virginia, and, through education, to increase the public's knowledge of life and work in an early American rural community.
4. **Constituency:** Waterford residents, Loudoun County residents, former Waterford and Loudoun residents, historians, Waterford Fair volunteers, educators, and others interested in National Historic Landmarks and history
5. **Summarize the key issues related to the Mid-Atlantic Resiliency Project as they affect your organization's mission and constituency:**

The proposed pathway of the transmission lines passes through the easement-protected open space owned by the Waterford Foundation called the Phillips Farm. The towers and lines, along with the cleared area required for their installation, would forever destroy the historic view shed that is an important element in Waterford's National Historic Landmark designation. The Phillips Farm property is a natural wetland with rolling hills and valleys that is a haven for wildlife, bats, birds, insects, and plant life. Its hedgerows and farmland invoke the village's agricultural past. The Catoctin Creek that passes through the property was home to indigenous peoples as early as 12,000 years ago and was the site of permanent settlements 9,000 years ago. Today, one can visit the village and walk in the open spaces and imagine the lives and histories of people who first settled the village in 1733 and who experienced some of the most critical events in the history of the British colony and United States for over close to 300 years. The destruction of the view shed and a large portion of the Phillips Farm property would forever alter that experience and diminish the educational value of a visit to Waterford. It would also uproot numerous species and plant life that define the natural habitat.

6. **Describe specific results/outcomes to your mission and constituency that will arise if the transmission lines are built in Loudoun County Greenspace. Be as specific as possible, including any statistics that are available to you:**

- a. **Financial Impact:** The Foundation currently hosts as many as 60,000 visitors to Waterford each year, including students who attend our programs on segregated education, reconstruction, and African American history. The Waterford Annual Crafts Fair draws as many as 15,000 individuals each year and is one of the primary means of financial support of the Waterford Foundation. Those visitors are less likely to choose to come to Waterford when the view shed does not reflect the 18th and 19th century periods reflected in the events and educational programs held here. If visitors choose not to come here, the Foundation would no longer be capable of financially supporting the necessary preservation and education efforts that cost the Foundation as much as \$500,000 each year. The Foundation receives no Federal or state monies and is completely dependent on funds from donors, events, the annual Fair, and educational programs. The Foundation would also likely lose its National Historic Landmark status and would eventually fail.
- b. **Blow to Preservation Efforts:** Should the Virginia Outdoors Foundation easement on the affected property through which the transmission line pathway traverses not remain in force, the future of preservation easements throughout Virginia will be at high risk. Current easements through the VOF and other entities would no longer offer concrete protections against utility and other infrastructure projects. Property owners would not be willing to invest the time and funds required to ease their lands, resulting in increased development, pollution, and the loss of historic sites that can never be replaced. The financial failure of the Waterford Foundation would leave a huge gap in Virginia's preservation and education efforts and would be a stain on the state's reputation for preserving the unique history of one of the original 13 colonies.
- c. **Diminution of the Foundation's Education Programs:** The Foundation hosts as many as 35 classes of fourth graders each year. They learn about African American students' experience in a segregated, one-room schoolhouse built in 1867 after the Civil War. Seventh grade students visit Waterford to learn about the lives and experiences of Waterford citizens during the period of Reconstruction through the Jim Crow era. This program is enhanced by the unique history of Waterford as a village that sided with the Union during the Civil War, was populated by abolitionist Quakers, and suffered severely at the hands of former Confederate supporters. High school students in Loudoun County Advanced Placement History and African American History classes tour Waterford to learn about the unique African American heritage of Waterford as a colonial and federal period village that welcomed free African Americans and formerly enslaved people who built prosperous lives here. All of these programs are enhanced by the experience of being able to imagine life as it was in the 1700's, 1800's, and 1900's. Students will no longer be able to walk around the village and its open spaces and imagine its agricultural history with 300 foot tall power lines looming over the village.

7. List any research sources that support your projections of the impact on your mission and constituency:

There are currently 4,246 preservation easements in Loudoun County today according to VOF.

Waterford Foundation records can document the number of visitors to the village each year, the number of Fair visitors, and the number of students who visit.

8. Share individual case studies of people, places, or things that will be affected by this project (no more than three):

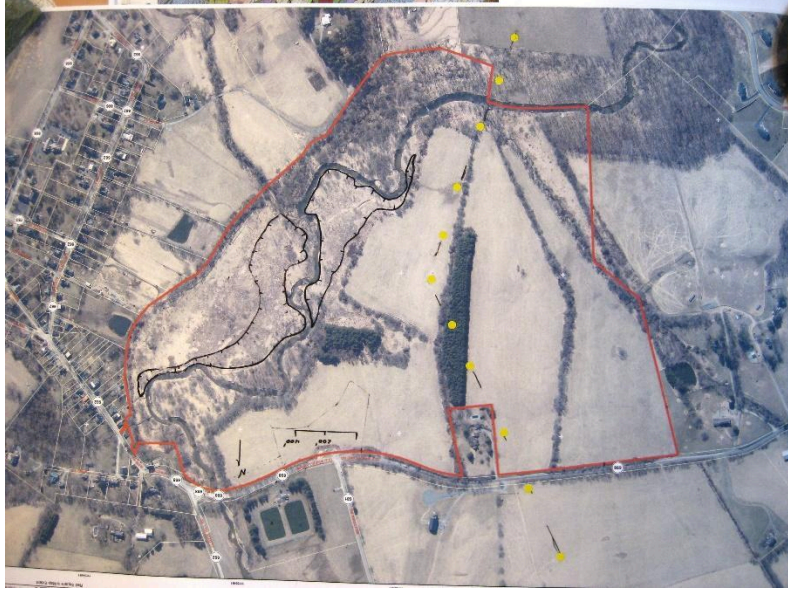
There are 32 historic homes and other properties that border the Phillips Farm property owned by the Foundation and on which the transmission lines would be built. The property value of those homes would be diminished significantly. A 2018 study from the Journal of Real Estate Research found that vacant lots near high-voltage power lines sell for 44.9% less than equivalent lots that aren't located near power lines. If you take a step back, a lot that is located within 1,000 feet of transmission lines tends to sell for 17.9% less. There would also be no home or property within the 1420 acre protected National Historic Landmark where the lines would not be visible. The value of all of these properties would also be diminished. The Waterford Foundation owns 13 historic properties and would experience heavy financial loss of the value of its assets.

The Phillips Farm property currently produces income for the Foundation from the rental of the property to a farmer who grows hay there. The transmission line path would significantly reduce the amount of acreage available for farming, reducing the hay output for the farmer's cattle and the amount of rent the Foundation could collect from him. That same farmer's land would also be significantly affected by the transmission line pathway, as it would bisect his farm, making a huge portion of his land unusable. His farm would no longer be a viable farmstead.

One of the Foundation's walking trails is located within the portion of the Phillips Farm through which the lines would be built. People would have no interest in hiking that trail in the future. In addition, the International Agency for Research on Cancer regards the link between childhood leukemia and the presence of power lines as sufficiently well established to rate extremely low frequency magnetic fields as a "possible" human carcinogen. People would not choose to hike or want to live in an area that is possibly dangerous to their health.

9. Upload any visuals available that illustrate or support your impact statement.

Projected Path Through the Phillips Farm (yellow dotted line)



Farmer who leases the Phillips Farm Standing in the Transmission Line Path (Jim MacIntosh)



Phillips Farm Trail Map

PHILLIPS FARM PILOT TRAIL
West Side Interpretive Hiking Trail
November 2022 -- Version 3.0



- 1. Path Entry – Overview of Farm and American Chestnut Trees
- 2. View Towards Mill – Intro to Flora of Phillips Farm
- 3. Osage Orange Trees – Living Example of 19th Century “Fencing”
- 4. Bluff Overlooking Catoctin Creek
- 5. Invasive Species Overview
- 6. Lower PF Overlook
- 7. Waterford Scenic Overlook
- 8. Lower Farm and Flood Plain
- 9. Border of Riparian Buffer
- 10. White Pine Forest Glade
- 11. Overview of Western Field in Current Use

Imagery Source:
<https://maps.boudun.gov/archive/>