

## Memorandum

To: VOF Board of Trustees  
From: Martha Little, Deputy Director  
CC: Brett Glymph, Executive Director  
Date: October 12, 2023  
Re: Summary brief of Columbia Gas Transmission's Virginia Reliability Project and Gas line Rupture on Fisher's Hill Battlefield Easement

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### Virginia Reliability Project

Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC's ("TCO") filed an application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for authorization to upgrade and replace their natural gas facilities throughout southeastern Virginia. Known as the Virginia Reliability Project (VRP), it will provide an extra 100,000 dekatherms per day (Dth/d) of incremental mainline capacity and involves the replacement of roughly 50 miles of existing 12-inch diameter natural gas pipeline with 24-inch diameter pipeline in its place. TCO would install most of the replacement pipeline in the same trench as the existing one but is currently proposing a construction right-of-way through forestland and wetlands. In addition, TCO will need to maintain a cleared 50-foot permanent right of way for the pipeline. The existing pipeline and these proposed improvements directly cross two VOF open-space easements in Surry County, Virginia, known as Projects 4058 and 4115.

VOF has worked with TCO representatives over the past several months to discuss their existing rights and VOF's concerns with anticipated impacts to the conservation values of our two easement properties. Both VOF properties provide special protections, including restrictions on timber harvest, along the waterways and wetlands on each property. However, based on the original pipeline easements which were recorded decades before VOF's easements were executed, it appears that TCO may possess the rights to complete the VRP through the two subject VOF easement projects. Regardless of this fact, VOF has successfully advocated to reduce the total overall impact on these two easement properties by nearly a quarter (0.25) acres to date. In addition, on the Drewry owned easement (Project 4058), TCO representatives have worked closely with the landowner to ensure an additional number of large mature trees will be left undisturbed instead of harvested.

Notwithstanding TCO's rights to lay additional parallel pipelines and to perform this work specified in several right-of-way agreements recorded prior to the conservation easements TCO has agreed to pay VOF a one-time payment of Sixty-One Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty-Four Dollars to mitigate for the impacts to the conservation easement's protected resources.

### Gas line rupture on Fisher's Hill Battlefield Easement

On July 25, 2023, at approximately 8:40 AM, a gas line rupture occurred on the southern section of VOF Project 1251, Fisher's Hill Battlefield, in Shenandoah County along Interstate 81. Local and regional media documented this incident, and a select article and photo are included with this memo.

On July 28, 2023, the U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration released a letter (CPF No. 1-2023-051-CAO), which included a Corrective Action Order.

On August 23, 2023, after the site was stabilized, VOF staff inspected the incident area with Aaron Rohlfing (TCO) and Aaron Sievers (Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation). VOF created the attached report, including two documents received from TCO: 1) Preliminary VB Incident Response Workspace and 2) Tree Count of damaged trees.

VOF is in communication with TCO and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation regarding the next steps and intends to follow the same methodology to request funds for damages to the protected conservation resources.

#### BOT Request

VOF staff would like to request that both of these funds be placed into the VOF TERRA program which was established by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation to administer funds resulting from legal and regulatory actions involving Virginia's natural resources.

LOCAL

# Gas pipeline explodes near interstate in rural Virginia; no injuries reported

By Associated Press

July 25, 2023 at 3:19 p.m. EDT

STRASBURG, Va. — A gas line exploded Tuesday near a highway in rural western Virginia, but no injuries were reported, according to local officials.

TC Energy said it was notified of a fire after there was a pressure drop in its Columbia Gas Transmission Pipeline along Interstate 81 around 8:40 a.m., the company said in a statement. That section of the pipeline near Strasburg was shut down as a precaution, TC Energy said.

Witnesses saw the explosion in a field off Interstate 81 after 8 a.m. and called authorities, Shenandoah County Sheriff's Office spokesperson Denise Vollmer said by telephone. The explosion happened near Battlefield Road and Copp Road, she said.

The interstate was closed briefly, but the fire has been contained, Vollmer said. No structures were threatened, she said.

Jordan Morgan of Broadway in Rockingham County was driving to work Tuesday morning and could see the flames as he got on the interstate several miles to the south at Woodstock. As Morgan traveled north, he said he realized that the towering blaze shooting up high above the trees along southbound lanes was not a controlled burn as he first assumed. Had he been traveling on the other side of the highway, Morgan said he might not have felt comfortable driving past.

"I could feel the heat and pressure from it," Morgan said. "I've never experienced anything like that."

TC Energy said it in a statement Tuesday afternoon that the fire had been extinguished and it was working with local authorities to investigate the explosion. The company said it has established an approximately 1,650-foot response radius to ensure the safety of the community and asked the public to avoid the area.

Strasburg is about 80 miles (129 kilometers) west of Washington, D.C.





# EASEMENT INSPECTION REPORT

**Property #: 1452**

**Property Name: Fishers Hill**

**194.39 acres**

## Contacts

Name: Mr. Aaron Rohlfing  
Role(s): Utility Developer  
Address: TC Energy, 455 Racetrack Road  
Phone Number: (724) 223-2590, (412) 997-7973  
Email: aaron\_rohlfing@tcenergy.com

Name: Mr. Aaron Sievers  
Role(s): Party to Agreement  
Address: 9386 S. Congress St  
Phone Number: (540) 560-2472  
Email: asiever@svbf.net

Name: Mr. Dan Reinhart  
Role(s): Party to Agreement  
Address: PO Box 897  
Phone Number: (540) 740-4545  
Email: dreinhart@svbf.net

## Inspection Details

Inspection Component(s): Site Visit

Inspection Date: 08/23/2023

Inspector Name: Patrick Sweatt

Site Inspection Notification: 08/18/2023

Service Note: SFR was initiated due to a Columbia Gas pipeline rupture on 7/25/2023. Visit took place with Virginia Outdoors Foundation staff, Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation (SVBF) staff and TC Energy Land Representative Aaron Rohlfing.

Please see attached if indicated by VOF  Memo Attached  Map Attached  Photos Attached

**Landowner(s) plans for the Property**

Landowner intends to pursue restoration of the battlefield to its condition prior to the Columbia Gas pipeline rupture.

**Questions or follow-up needed**

None.

Observations	Observed?	Notes
Changes in Ownership or Owner Contact Information	No	
Discovery of Recorded Instruments Associated with the Property	No	
New or Modified Buildings and/or Structures (Including Removal)	Yes	A staging area with temporary trailers and timber matting for heavy equipment has been installed at the entrance to the property (Photopoints 2, 18). A new cattle working area has been installed south of Battlefield Road (Photopoint 3).
New or Modified Roads, Driveways, and/or Trails	Yes	The roads to the ruptured area have been re-gravelled in order to accommodate the heavier traffic accessing the blast site.
New or Modified Utilities and/or Alternative Energy	Yes	The ruptured section of gas line ("VB") has been replaced. The other two parallel lines are still intact and all three are fully operational.
Industrial and/or Commercial Activities (Other than Agriculture)	No	
Timber Harvest or Other Forest Management Activity	Yes	Trees immediately surrounding the blast site have been burned, and several were cut by the fire department in order to contain the initial fire.
Disturbance or Activity within Water Quality Protection Areas	No	
Disturbance or Activity within Restricted Building/Activity Area(s)	No	
Topographical Changes to the Property	No	The topography of the property is largely unchanged.

New Trash, Refuse, Junk, and/or Toxic Material	No	
Signs	Yes	Temporary signs noting restricted entrance to the property are in place.

78°25'30"W

78°25'0"W

78°24'30"W

**Legend**

-  Photopoints
-  Property 1452 Easement Boundary
-  Interstate
-  Roads

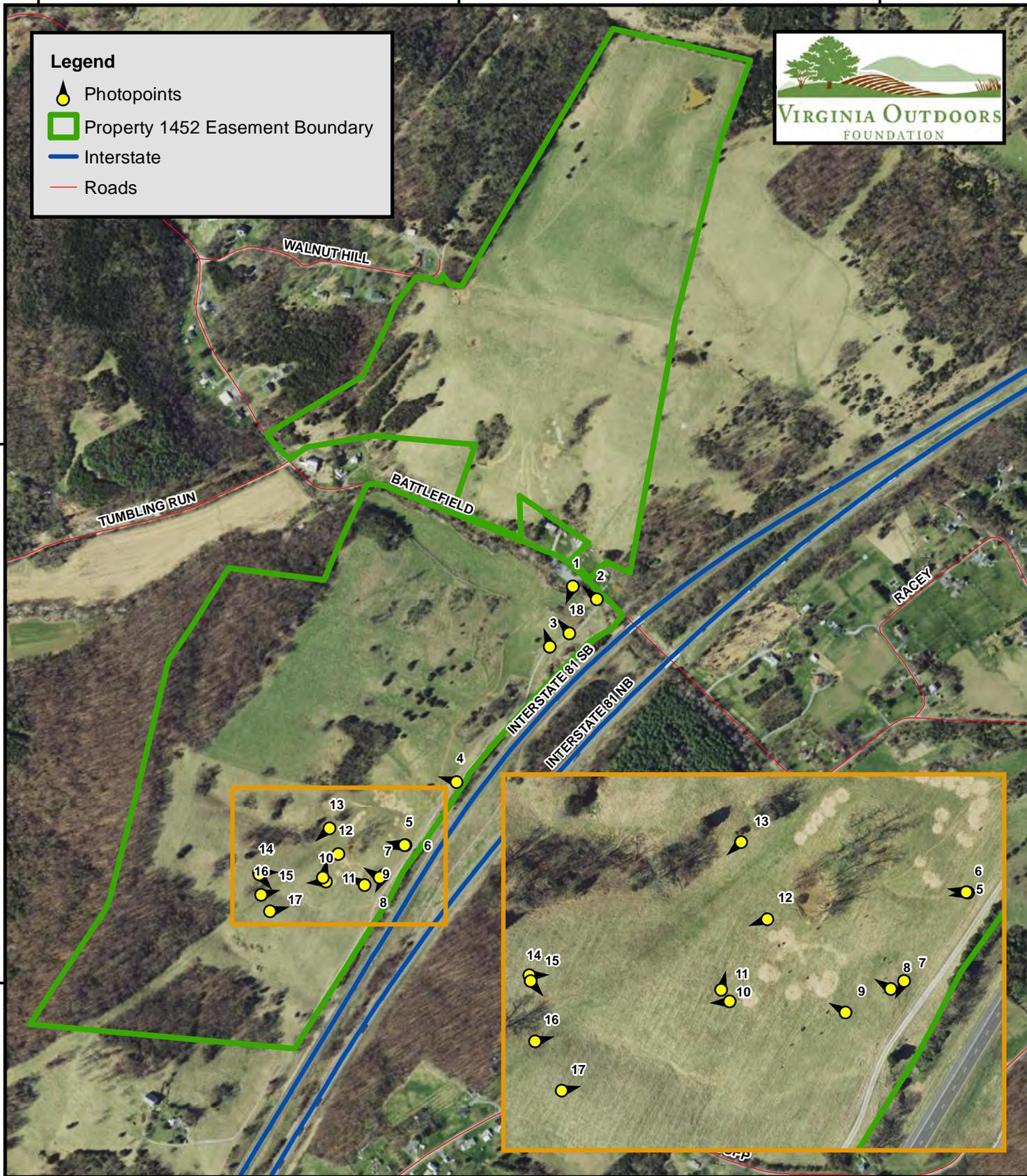


38°59'30"N

38°59'30"N

38°59'0"N

38°59'0"N



78°25'30"W

78°25'0"W

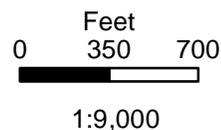
78°24'30"W

Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic  
 GCS North America 1983  
 Datum: D North America 1983

Map created 8/23/2023 by Patrick Sweatt.  
 Source data provided by VOF.  
 Photopoint data acquired by iPhone 14 internal GPS.  
 Aerial imagery acquired 04/13/2018.  
 Aerial imagery © Commonwealth of Virginia.  
 This map is for general reference and display purposes only.

VOF BOT 10/12/2023 Gas Line Rupture

**Photopoint Map**  
 Shenandoah Valley  
 Battlefield Foundation  
 SHN 1251  
 194.4 Acres  
 Site Visit Date: 8/24/2023



# SHN 1251

## Shenandoah County

### Stewardship Field Report Photographs

Unless otherwise noted, all pictures taken by Patrick Sweatt on August 23, 2023 using an iPhone 14.

\* Number of photographs is as taken in the field and may represent merged panoramic images; some photographs may have been omitted because of poor quality or duplicate images.



1. Closed entrance to property  
Facing South (202°)  
Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS  
20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_001.jpg



2. Entrance to property and into staging area-  
flags are marking low hanging wires  
Facing Northwest (313°)  
Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS  
20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_002.jpg



3. Entrance to battlefield and new cattle working  
structure  
Facing North (340°)  
Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS  
20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_003.jpg



4. View of fields and burned area from pipeline rupture

Facing West (287°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_004.jpg



5. View of burned and filled area from entrance road

Facing West (262°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_005.jpg



6. View of scorched trees and burned hillside

Facing West (280°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_006.jpg



7. View of access roads and trails serving the working area

Facing Southwest (208°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_007.jpg



8. View of burned (red) and filled (lighter-colored) areas

Facing Northwest (303°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_008.jpg



9. View of burned pipeline corridor

Facing Northwest (300°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_009.jpg



10. View of burned area (red) and filled area (lighter-colored)

Facing West (267°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_010.jpg



11. View of burned area (red) and filled area (lighter-colored)

Facing North (13°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_011.jpg



12. View of burned area (red) and filled area (lighter-colored)

Facing West (250°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_012.jpg



13. View of burned area (red), filled area (lighter-colored) and burned trees

Facing Southwest (228°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_013.jpg



14. View of charred hillside

Facing East (88°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_014.jpg



15. View of charred hillside

Facing Southeast (140°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_015.jpg



16. View of corner of the working area (marked by pink flagging)

Facing East (75°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_016.jpg



17. View of filled area and silt fencing

Facing East (76°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_017.jpg



18. View of staging area

Facing Northwest (320°)

Location from iPhone 14 internal GPS

20230823\_Proj1251\_SVBF\_018.jpg



Tree Species	Tree Count	
	Scientific	Total
Red Oak	Quercus rubra	11
Black Locust	Robinia pseudocacia	7
Eastern Black Walnut	Juglans nigra	90
Wax Myrtle	Myrica cerifera	2
Eastern Red Cedar	Juniperus virginiana	43
Charred (unidentifiable)		38
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>191</b>

\* The above count is for trees damaged, impacted or potentially killed in the incident