

The Recorder

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Outdoors foundation starts planning for Hayfields farm

Dominion to contribute \$4 million for support

McDOWELL — The Virginia Outdoors Foundation has initiated planning for the 1,034-acre Hayfields Farm in Highland County, which is being acquired by VOF following a three-year process in which Atlantic Coast Pipeline LLC sought conversion of open space on 10 VOF easements for a proposed 42-inch natural gas pipeline.

Dominion Energy, the lead developer of the pipeline, was required to provide substitute land for the incursions under Virginia's Open-space Land Act.

VOF's board of trustees finalized the conversion applications on Oct. 16 and gave Dominion until Dec. 4 to transfer ownership of Hayfields to VOF on behalf of the commonwealth.

Dominion is also providing \$4 million in long-term stewardship funding to help with the maintenance and operations of the property.

Hayfields will not be opened to the public until VOF has finished going through a management plan process that will involve stakeholders such as state and local government partners and community representatives.

VOF expects to conduct planning sessions in 2018, which will inform the management plan process. Details about the sessions will be made available through VOF's website, as well as through media and direct contact with state and local partners.

"Our overall goal is to make certain that this incredible property remains protected as open space, and that it serves the greatest good for the commonwealth," said VOF executive director Brett Glymph.