

Video Transcript: April 2023 W&OD Trail Detour Between Rolling Water Terrace and Tuscarora Creek Park

Peggy: Hey there, I'm Peggy Fox with Dominion Energy, and we want to tell you about a closure on the W&OD Trail. That is the most popular park in all of Northern Virginia. There is a closure coming up in Loudoun County, and I have Carrie Rose Pace with us. She is the communications expert for this project. Carrie, thanks so much for joining us.

Carrie: Thanks for having me, Peggy. We are having to close a section of the W&OD Trail. This will happen during the first week of April, which, incidentally, is also Spring Break, if you have kids in Loudoun County Public Schools. And it's because we're going to be doing some reconductor work – that means we're swapping out wire that is along the transmission lines that are right along the W&OD Trail in Loudoun County. And so for everybody's safety, we want to let you keep moving east and west in the trail corridor, but we have to detour you away from the sections where we are pulling that wire – that conductor – overhead.

Carrie: You can go to [dominionenergy.com/Belmont](https://dominionenergy.com/Belmont), which is the name of the project. Or if you received any of our letters, you'll see a QR Code, and that will let you get to this page. It's interactive, you just hit the blue to get started, Peggy, (Peggy: There you go.) and that will let you in the blue boxes walk you through some of the different features. But the detour that we're talking about is the orange one, which you can see between Ashburn into Belmont heading up toward the Leesburg. And you can just click and move around the map as you like, as if it were a Google map – it's the same technology, you can see Google in the bottom left, "Google." So it behaves just as it would in any of your mapping features.

Peggy: And you can switch this around, too. That's a map you might be more familiar with, right?

Carrie: That's right, you can customize the view to what works best for you.

Peggy: Got it. There's styled.

Carrie: The way we have shown this is the orange dashed line. That's the detour route. And that's good for both cyclists and pedestrians. Now, of course, if you're an experienced cyclist and you're familiar with this area and you want to do your own detour routing that you are more comfortable with, you can certainly do that. But we have a VDOT – Virginia Department of Transportation – approved detour that is accessible for everybody, whether you are walking or using your bicycle. And it's that orange hashed line.

Peggy: Yes.

Carrie: And I do want to warn, Peggy, it's a little longer than what the normal trail distance would be. You can see the mile markers there show about a four-mile distance that you would be taking on the trail itself. This one is about 8.5 miles long with the detour. So we recognize it's an inconvenience but it's for everybody's safety.

Peggy: This is coming up April 3<sup>rd</sup>, right?

Carrie: That's right. Some of the Loudoun County Public Schools are right along the W&OD Trail, and there are students who use the trail as their way to get to and from school. So we want to get as much work done as we can during Spring Break, and minimize the potential of having to impact the schools in the morning and afternoon timeframe.

Peggy: So, if someone is bicycling along, say they're doing the whole route from Alexandria to Purcellville. And they're coming along here, and they come here, what are they going to see?

Carrie: They're going to see a trail closure signage, and then signage directing them at every turn along the way. It'll tell you whether you're going East or West. There will be a QR code that you can scan in case you want to look at this map along the way. We'll also have flyers that will show you a very simple version of the map with left-right turns available for you as if you were following those directions along the way.

Peggy: Route 7, obviously a very busy highway, a road.

Carrie: So we were really strategic, Peggy, with picking these crossing points. This is a bridge.

Peggy: A bridge, perfect!

Carrie: So you won't have to be crossing at the same level as all that traffic on Route 7.

Peggy: Very good.

Carrie: So that is in part why this is a longer detour because we really wanted to find those safer, more comfortable solutions for you to get across and around the area. We know it is a longer distance, and that is why we do have so much signage. We will have the deputy support from the Loudoun County Sheriff's Department to help make sure that everybody is safe at all of these points. And like I mentioned, Peggy, if you live in this area and you are a more experienced cyclist and more comfortable with alternate routes you can certainly take other paths that you feel more comfortable with. But we wanted everybody to know we do have a pre-approved, signed detour route that will be safe for pedestrians as well as bicyclists. This will be April 3-7, which is during Spring Break for Loudoun County Public Schools. We want to get as much work done as possible during that week. But, as we know, schedules are subject to change, especially if the weather doesn't hold nice for us, so it is possible that we may need to go into that second week of April. But we are going to do everything that we can to finish the work between April 3 and 7.

Peggy: Tell us again why this is important and why it is important for people to stay off the trail - the safety aspect of it.

Carrie: That's right, so the conductor – the wire - that's overhead along the trail is heavy. And even though we are going to de-energize it - meaning that, turn the power off to it – it is still dangerous work. And that's why we have our professionals doing it. And we want to make sure that they can work safely along the trail, and that you as a user of the trail, can safely get to where you need to go around our work. So that's why we need to close it – so that we can get in, do what we need to do quickly and safely, and then get out of the way so that you can get back to enjoying the W&OD Trail.

Peggy: Thank you so much for your work, and your explanations – it's very clear. And thanks for coming on and explaining it to me and to the folks here who are watching.

Carrie: Thanks, Peggy, and thanks to everybody for their patience while we complete this important project.

Peggy: Absolutely. Have a great day!