



FIELDREPORT

Mid-Atlantic Region | Spring-Summer 2015

In Harm's Way Proposed Pipelines Threaten Our National Parks

By Pam Goddard

Increased hydraulic fracturing, a.k.a. “fracking,” throughout the country has brought a new challenge to national parks and forests—new proposals to build hundreds of miles of pipelines to carry natural gas across multiple states and through our national parks. In Virginia alone, three pipeline proposals could cross the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and Blue Ridge Parkway, as well as the George Washington, Jefferson, and Monongahela National Forests.

The Atlantic Coast Pipeline, the Mountain Valley Pipeline, and the Appalachian Connector would each span up to 500 miles from West Virginia to North Carolina. Each would require a 100-foot right-of-way during construction with a permanent 75-foot right-of-way, further fragmenting forests and disrupting plant and wildlife habitat. Additional fragmentation would result from multiple compressor stations required along a pipeline’s route, each typically occupying 20 acres and requiring access roads. Smaller lateral pipelines are often added to the major pipeline to deliver natural gas to consumers along the route.

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Down to the Wire Protecting Jamestown’s Historic Character

By Pam Goddard

The historic setting of Jamestown Island, site of America’s first permanent English settlement, is one of the last places in America where a new super-sized electric transmission line should be built. Incredibly, one of the nation’s most influential energy companies seeks to construct such a project this year—unless we can persuade decision makers to require Dominion Virginia Power to pursue alternatives.

Visitors discover an abundance of rich history and outstanding beauty at Colonial National Historical Park in Virginia, which includes Jamestown Island, the Cape Henry Memorial, Yorktown Battlefield, and the scenic 23-mile-long Colonial Parkway. In 2006, the U.S. Congress established the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, along the James River and other Chesapeake tributaries, making it the nation’s first Congressionally designated water trail.

Here, park visitors experience a landscape evocative of the time of Pocahontas and her father, Chief Powhatan, ruler of some 30 tribes. Smith sailed up the James River in 1607 with a small band of English men and

women, forever disrupting these First American cultures—and laying the foundation for today’s United States.

In 2012, Dominion Virginia Power announced plans to build a new electric transmission line amidst these national treasures. Dominion’s proposal would place 17 lighted towers up to 295 feet tall—nearly the height of the Statue of Liberty—across the James River. Not only would this line degrade the region’s historic character, it would threaten key natural resources.

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Above: Spring clouds reflected in James River, Colonial National Historical Park, site of first English settlement, Jamestown Island, Virginia. ©Tom Till **Right:** Seventeen electric transmission towers even taller than these in Newport News, Virginia would forever mar the John Smith Trail and the historic character of Colonial National Historical Park if Dominion moves forward with its ill-conceived proposal. © Margaret Fowler/Save the James Alliance

FIELD REPORT

SPRING-SUMMER 2015

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Finding Your Voice for America's National Parks



By Joy M. Oakes,
Senior Director, Mid-Atlantic Region

If you are reading this, you already are among those park lovers who have found and used their voices in support of America's national park system. Thank you!

You have helped stop proposed casinos at Gettysburg. You've helped clean the air and water in and around national parks by advocating for policies and much-needed funding. You've helped protect remarkable places in American history like Fort Monroe in Hampton, Virginia, and newly designated Pullman District in Chicago. You've contacted decision makers and the people who influence them, you've rolled up your sleeves for "hands on" projects like wetlands restoration at Fort McHenry, and you've invested your financial resources in NPCA's advocacy for our national parks.

Some might think that one million members is plenty of park advocates to connect, protect and restore our more than 400 national parks across the country.

You know better. America's parks face challenges from indifference to ignorance:

- One of the country's largest utilities proposes to build a new super-sized electric transmission line at Jamestown, where John Smith and a small group of English men and women sailed up the James River and forever disrupted First American cultures. (See page 1.)

- Lands significant to understanding how the siege of Petersburg engaged U.S. Colored Troops and led to the end of the U.S. Civil War are at risk from commercial and residential development. (See page 5.)

The challenges can seem stark—and, they can be overcome, especially when our one million members and supporters join with new park supporters to find—and use—our voices.

As both the national park system approaches its second century beginning in 2016, and NPCA approaches our second century beginning in 2019, NPCA is launching a new initiative to engage new and diverse audiences in finding their voices for our national parks. We are partnering with urban youth groups, veterans, and outdoor enthusiasts to connect them with our national parks, and equip them to advocate for the parks' bright future.

Thank you for finding your voice for our national parks—and thank you for being part of this initiative to build and engage our national parks community.

Above: Joy hiking at New River Gorge, one of three national parks in southern West Virginia, which offer a range of outdoor activities in a remarkably beautiful setting. © Heather Lukacs/NPCA

HAVE A PHOTO OR COMMENT TO SHARE? We welcome photos from members enjoying national parks, particularly those in the Mid-Atlantic region. We also appreciate feedback on our *Field Report*. Share your digital photos, comments, and ideas with us via email: midatlantic@npca.org



Down to the Wire

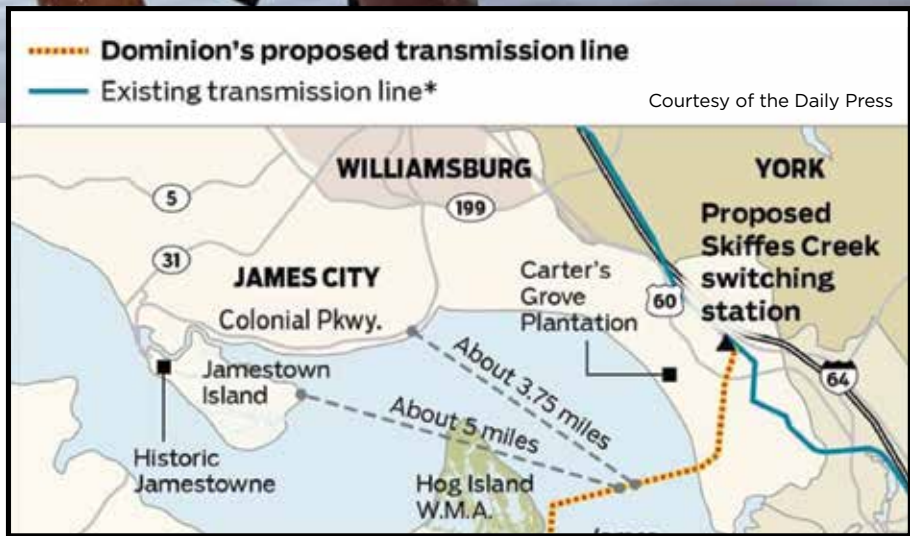
continued from page 1

The towers would require more than 550 pilings in the James River. Species at risk from this disturbance include the federally-endangered Atlantic sturgeon, the fish that fed Jamestown settlers. Sturgeon can grow up to 14 feet long and live for 40 years. The James River provides critical habitat for their twice-yearly spawn. Other species at risk include the bald eagle and oysters, and federally threatened plants including the small whorled pogonia and the sensitive joint vetch.

The national parks in the Historic Triangle (Jamestown, Yorktown, and Williamsburg) are critical to Virginia's \$22 billion tourism industry. More than 6 million visitors to these historic sites spend \$1 billion in the region each year, supporting local jobs and contributing to state and local tax revenue.

Dominion Virginia Power and its parent company, Dominion Resources, are at the bottom of the list of utilities implementing energy efficiency and other more sustainable strategies to provide energy services. Meanwhile, military installations in the region are working to reduce energy demand. An Obama administration executive order requires that by FY2015, military installations reduce energy usage by 30 percent compared to FY2003 levels.

NPCA and our coalition partners urge Dominion to pursue alternatives to building a new power line in this iconic setting, including adding to an existing crossing downriver, moving the line to a less sensitive location, aggressively pursuing strategies to increase energy efficiency, and implementing



renewable energy strategies, such as installing solar panels on industrial and institutional roof tops and other appropriate locations in the region.

We are contesting state and federal permits this project needs in order to advance. We joined an amicus brief before the Virginia Supreme Court to require the Commonwealth to examine the impacts of this proposal on the region's natural and historic resources. We are participating in the U.S. Army Corps

of Engineers' review under the National Historic Preservation Act that requires federal agencies to consider the effects of federal actions—like issuing a permit—on historic resources such as a national park.

NPCA reasonably and rationally requests that the Army Corps complete an Environmental Impact Statement to analyze potential impacts of and alternatives to this flawed proposal. So far, more than 10,000 park advocates have weighed in with this message.

TAKE ACTION

Learn more about the James River, Colonial National Historical Park, and how you can help protect these historic places by visiting parkb.it/stoptowers.

Above: Endangered Atlantic sturgeon have spawned in the James River for over 120 million years, and are threatened by Dominion's proposed super-sized electric transmission line at Jamestown. © Matt Balazik/Virginia Commonwealth University, Rice Center

Anne Donahue ~ Volunteer, Supporter and Advocate

By Joy Oakes

In September 2014, Baltimore commemorated the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Baltimore and Francis Scott Key's authoring of the "Star-Spangled Banner." We spoke with Baltimorean Anne Donahue, a member of NPCA's Mid-Atlantic Leadership Council, who volunteered to help nearly 7,000 students from across Maryland don red, white, and blue to create the largest ever "Star-Spangled Banner Living Flag" at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine.

Q: How did you first become involved in conservation and preservation advocacy?

A: Anyone who is exposed to nature and the outdoors has an inherent interest in conservation and preservation—although that interest may be untapped. I was lucky to spend summers with my grandmother at a Colonial-era farmhouse, with Colonial-era plumbing, in the New Hampshire woods. Without any overt messages, we learned the value of vast spaces, pristine woods and lakes, and an antique well-used household and its items. I appreciate the natural world in its own right, but also in a historic context. I was one of those kids who loved history, and lived in New England where we were surrounded by sites of historical and political interest. So, my interest was strong from an early age.

The transition from interest to advocacy took time and education. I wasn't exposed to any of the big iconic national parks until I was in my 40s, on an NPCA Parkscape trip to Montana and Wyoming. I saw firsthand what form advocacy can take and how important it is to our parks. Previously, I never thought of them as needing stewardship—they were just there for our enjoyment, being managed by invisible staff with invisible budgets. NPCA has educated me and many others on the vulnerabilities of our parks, be they Yellowstone or Ford's Theater.

My training as a lawyer has given me an understanding of the process of advocacy and my involvement with NPCA has given me an understanding of the reason for advocacy.

Q: How else have your life experiences informed your advocacy for our national parks?

A: I love to hike and paddle. When I visit a park or wilderness areas threatened by utilities, smog, excessive traffic, or dense development, I become infuriated. It helps to motivate me to write a letter, speak to an official, or just talk it over with my friends. And it's not just the natural world that is at risk. I've seen many historic sites which are poorly funded, under-maintained, and lacking in the spirited energy necessary to attract visitors. I am a firm believer that we learn valuable lessons from our history: how to be better citizens, why we are who we are, what values we want to perpetuate as a nation. We need advocates to convince others that the parks—in all their forms—are precious resources for these lessons and many other life-changing experiences.

Q: What are some of your favorite national park memories? **A:** How to choose? Seeing a grizzly bear at Yellowstone. Almost getting lost at dusk at Lassen Volcanoes. The first sight of Mount Rushmore, and of the Grand Canyon. Celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Star-Spangled Banner at Fort McHenry. Hiking in Zion... How many do you want? I could keep going!

Q: Why do you love Fort McHenry?

A: I'm proud to be a transplanted Baltimorean and to be associated with its important place in our history. The fort is so evocative of the battle in Baltimore's harbor in 1814 which led Key to write the Star-Spangled Banner. Fort McHenry also is beautiful. We use it as a local park—a place to sit on a blanket and read by the water, to stroll, to play Frisbee someday with our new grandchildren. It's a terrific oasis in the middle of a cityscape.

Below: Anne recently completed a cross-country tour of national parks, including Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming. © Donahue family photo



As Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area in New Jersey and Pennsylvania begins its sixth decade as part of America's National Park System, NPCA is releasing a new report: **Making Connections: Investing in a Vibrant Economic Future in the Region at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.** Based on research and consultation with local business, government, conservation, and other community leaders, the report assesses the national park's economic benefits and its quality-of-life values to the broader region. It also identifies challenges and opportunities to sustain and enhance its significance for future generations.

To read more, visit www.npca.org/watergapreport

Park Victories

Clean Air and New National Parks

In December 2014, Frederick County, Maryland, officials scrapped plans to build a large trash-burning incinerator next to **Monocacy National Battlefield**. For more than eight years, NPCA and our allies drew attention to the many ways that this industrial project would be a deeply inappropriate neighbor for hallowed ground with such significance in American history.

Called “The Battle That Saved Washington, D.C.,” the July 1864 engagement along the Monocacy River was lost by Union troops led by General Lew Wallace. However, the battle sufficiently delayed Confederate forces under General Jubal Early that Union reinforcements from Petersburg arrived in time to defend the capital successfully a few days later. Today’s visitors learn about this turning point in the U.S. Civil War, enjoy walks throughout the park’s more than 1,600 acres, and learn about native plants and wildlife.

Also in December, the U.S. Congress authorized the largest expansion of the National Park System since 1978—a remarkable bipartisan achievement, with more than a dozen park designations and expansions. This remarkable compromise struck in the waning minutes of one of the least productive sessions of Congress in its history demonstrates how national parks can unify our divided society.

New parks authorized in the Mid-Atlantic include **Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park** in Cambridge, Maryland (which connects to the national monument established in March 2013), and the **National World War I Memorial** in Washington, D.C.,



to be developed at Pershing Park. This bill also established **First State National Historical Park** in Delaware, incorporating and expanding the boundary of the national monument established in March 2013. Finally, the bill changed the boundary of **Gettysburg National Military Park** in Pennsylvania to include the historic Lincoln Train Station and 45 acres at the base of Big Round Top.

Disappointingly, the parks package did not include legislation to protect 7,200 acres of key lands at **Petersburg National Battlefield** in Virginia, a proposal approved by former president George W. Bush’s administration and strongly supported by

local community leaders. U.S. Senators Mark Warner (D-VA) and Tim Kaine (D-VA) have re-introduced legislation in the 114th Congress, S. 718, and U.S. Reps. Randy Forbes (R-VA04) and Bobby Scott (D-VA03) have re-introduced their bill, H.R. 1621. Protecting these places from commercial and residential development pressures would increase the National Park Service’s ability to convey the significance and meaning of this remarkable place, and help protect the park’s plants and animals including a nesting bald eagle.

Above: Thanks to YOU, NPCA’s dedicated members, the 113th Congress approved more national park-related legislation than any since 1978. © NPCA



Living Flag

Among a suite of activities to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, in September 2014 more than 6,600 Maryland students, teachers, and chaperones created the largest replica Star-Spangled Banner Living Flag ever assembled at Fort McHenry National Monument and Shrine in Baltimore, Maryland.

NPS photo

PIPELINES BY THE NUMBERS

Proposed natural gas pipelines across the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and Blue Ridge Parkway would fragment and destroy forests and other habitat for park wildlife and native plants, and interfere with wildlife migration corridors.

3

Major Pipelines Proposed

554+

Miles in Length
from West Virginia
to North Carolina

100-ft

Right-of-Way
During Construction

75-ft

Permanent
Right-of-Way

2

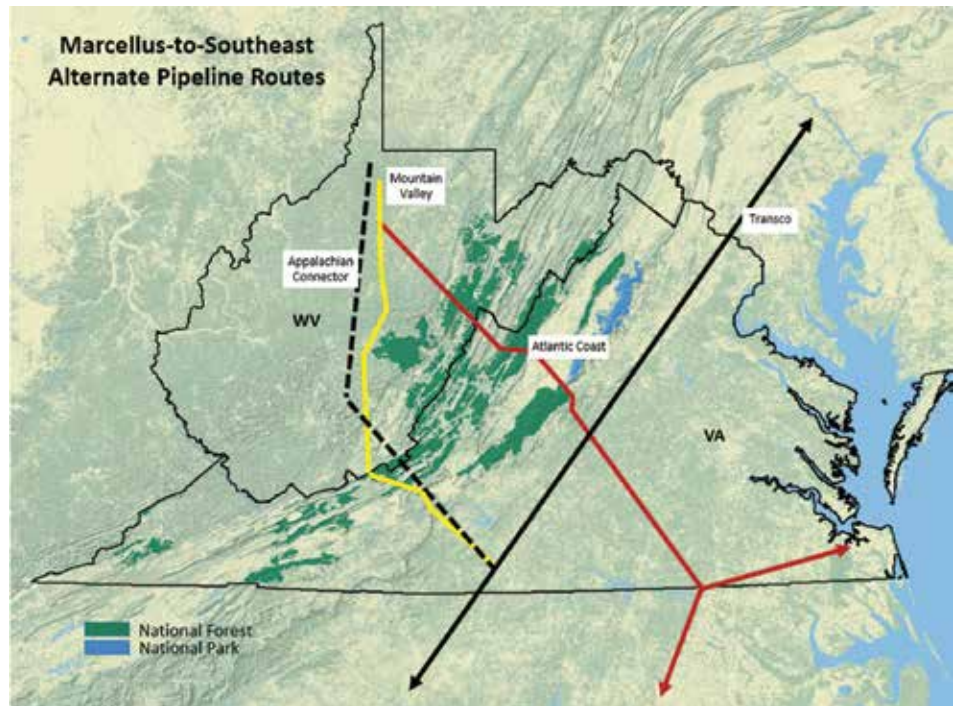
National Parks in
Virginia at Risk

10

Compressor Stations

3

National Forests in Virginia
and West Virginia at Risk



*Map courtesy of Dominion Pipeline Monitoring Coalition

In Harm's Way

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Besides fragmenting forests, pipelines would generate water pollution from storm-water runoff and from leaking pipes, generate noise and light pollution, degrade scenic views, and harm wildlife like Virginia's Cow Knob salamander. Pipelines bring increased risk of fire, explosions, and releases of toxic chemicals. Finally, individual permitting processes seldom assess the cumulative harm caused by multiple pipelines and related energy infrastructure.

NPCA urges decision-makers to put in place common-sense safeguards as such projects are planned. Such safeguards include:

- implementing energy efficient measures and broader use of renewables; modifying the proposed pipeline route to reduce its impacts on a park or other protected area, and;
- requiring co-location of pipelines with new or existing infrastructure including highways.

As the nation invests in new infrastructure projects, NPCA is working to ensure that our energy needs are met without sacrificing our special places.

LEARN MORE! Discover the impacts these infrastructure projects have on our national parks at www.npca.org/frackingmap.



Above: Proposed pipelines to carry fracked Marcellus Shale gas would require a 75-foot permanent right-of-way that would fragment valuable forest habitats along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and elsewhere. © FracTracker

Upcoming NPCA Events in the Mid-Atlantic

Contact Ed Stierli for more information on any of these events (estierli@npca.org).

APRIL 25

Fort McHenry Field Day: Join NPCA and the National Aquarium as we plant wetland grasses and restore trails in this urban wildlife sanctuary. **Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, Baltimore, Maryland.**

MAY 2

Shenandoah Trail Restoration: Join NPCA and the National Park Service as we kick off a series of trail-restoration service projects. **Shenandoah National Park, Virginia.**

MAY 9

Armed Forces Family Day: Join NPCA and Friends of Fort Hunt Park for a day of honoring and celebrating the men and women of America's armed forces. **Fort Hunt Park, Alexandria, Virginia.**

SAVE
THE
DATE

MAY 19-20

Choose Clean Water 6th Annual Conference: Learn about clean-water solutions at the local, state, and federal levels while participating in workshops and field trips including to Gettysburg,

Hilton Harrisburg, **Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.** <http://choosecleanwater.org/our-conference/may-19-20-2015/> Contact Joy Oakes, 202.454.3386, joakes@npca.org.

JUNE 6

"Find Your Voice" Kickoff Event: Join NPCA's "Find Your Voice" campaign as we enjoy a day of service and outdoor fun restoring and exploring C&O Canal National Historical Park. **Potomac, Maryland.**

JUNE 27

Reclaim the Nanticoke: NPCA partners with Nanticoke Watershed Alliance to complete a cleanup and paddle event along

the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. **Phillips Landing, Delaware.**

AUGUST 1

"Find Your Voice" Event: Join NPCA's "Find Your Voice" campaign for a day of service as we restore passage for native Appalachian Brook Trout. **Shenandoah National Park, Virginia.**

For more information about events in your area sponsored by the National Park Service, go to www.nps.gov, click on "Find a Park," and search for the park by name or state. For an updated list of NPCA-sponsored events in the region, go to www.npca.org/midatlantic, click on "Events".

For updated information about NPCA's advocacy campaigns, contact any of our offices (see p.2).

Below: Join NPCA this spring and summer as we protect, connect, and restore our national parks - and enjoy them at events like the second annual "Paddle the Potomac" at C&O Canal National Historical Park in Washington, D.C. © Annie Riker/NPCA

THANK YOU!

Our thanks to YOU, NPCA's members and supporters, who write letters, talk with decision makers, raise the profile of our parks in the media, and invest financially in our work to connect, protect, and restore America's national parks.

Special thanks to the members of our **Mid-Atlantic Leadership Council**, who advance NPCA's mission and philanthropic efforts in multiple ways:

Bob Rosenbaum, Chair (Bethesda, MD)
Calvert and Ted Armbrecht (Charleston, WV)
Don Ayer (McLean, VA)
Amy Boebel (Baltimore, MD)
Lloyd Brown (Devon, PA)
Dorothy Canter, Ph.D. (Bethesda, MD)
Anne Donahue (Baltimore, MD)

Edwin Fountain (Arlington, VA)
Fernando Gracia (Roanoke, VA)
Darryl Haley and Judy Xanthopoulos (Luray, VA)
Robert Lane (McLean, VA)
John Maounis (Baltimore, MD)
Mark Perreault (Norfolk, VA)



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Creature Feature

Among the Treetops

By Jasmine Lee, Mid-Atlantic Intern

The Northern flying squirrel ranks as one of the most acrobatic of the animals threatened by proposed gas pipelines across the region.

In truth, the Northern flying squirrel (*Glaucomys sabrinus fuscus*) doesn't exactly fly like a bird: rather, it glides through the air using its "patagia," skin stretched between its fore- and hind legs, to catch air and make their common grey squirrel relatives jealous. As the oldest living line of squirrels on Earth today, they are a delightful discovery for many national park visitors.

Unlike their grounded relatives, flying squirrels are active only at night, and feed on fungi and lichen, not nuts. This diet makes means they help disperse fungi spores and nitrogen-fixing bacteria, both essential to the health of trees and plants. The squirrel's presence fosters the health of red spruce trees in national parks such as Shenandoah National Park, Blue Ridge Parkway, Harpers

Ferry National Historical Park, and throughout the Appalachian landscape.

Habitat loss remains the most urgent threat to the flying squirrel's survival. Industrial logging around the turn of the 18th century decimated squirrel habitat, and their numbers declined rapidly. In the late 1990s, the squirrel was placed on the federal Endangered Species list, and after the population rebounded, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service removed them from the list in 2008. Three years later, a lawsuit brought by West Virginia-based Friends of Blackwater challenged that decision, arguing that the species' population had not recovered as defined by the Endangered Species Act. The flying squirrel was then placed back on the list, but was eventually removed in 2013 because of its stabilized, though still small, population.

Today, proposed shale gas pipelines across West Virginia and Virginia are the newest threat to the furry critters along the East Coast. Proposed paths would cut through



vital flying squirrel habitat in the high mountainous areas of the region. NPCA is working to ensure that proposed pipeline crossings avoid sensitive wildlife areas and are co-located with existing infrastructure to avoid damage to vital habitat.

Above: First appearing 30 million years ago, flying squirrels are the oldest living line of modern squirrels. Proposals for new shale gas pipelines threaten vital forest habitat, including national parks like the Appalachian National Scenic Trail.
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