



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Ralph S. Northam

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Office of the Governor

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**Governor Northam Announces \$10 Million
Economic Development Grant Program for
Southwest Virginia**

*~ The project application period is now open for grants that expand
economic opportunities and reclaim abandoned coal mine sites ~*

RICHMOND—Governor Ralph Northam today announced a \$10 million economic development grant program for Southwest Virginia. The grants are part of the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program and will be used for projects that are designed to both reclaim abandoned mine lands and boost the Southwest Virginia economy.

“This program provides the Commonwealth a tremendous win-win to improve our natural environment and to generate exciting economic development opportunities in Southwest Virginia,” **said Governor Northam**. “The possibilities are endless when it comes to reclaiming the thousands of historic mining features across the region, and I look forward to seeing the innovative plans that Virginia’s selection to participate in this pilot program will yield.”

The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) will administer the program. Project applications should include both the reclamation of historic mining features and economic development strategies. Areas of focus include infrastructure improvement for new industrial sites, broadband access, clean energy development, tourism, and agriculture.

“The economic development opportunities associated with this program are significant,” **stated Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball**. “The program has already successfully funded new industry and tourism assets in Southwest Virginia, and we look forward to more project applications to build upon this impact.”

Virginia is one of six states selected to administer this pilot program for economic development projects. The projects selected in 2017 included funding for outdoor recreation, tourism assets, and the development of industrial sites. The grant comes from the Power Plus Pilot Program, which was part of the federal Omnibus Funding Bill passed in May 2018.

“The Commonwealth has reclaimed abandoned mine lands for decades,” **said DMME Director John Warren**. “Traditionally, we have only had funding to reclaim features that addressed safety or environmental concerns. These federal dollars give us the opportunity to expand the program to provide additional economic benefits to the coalfield region.”

An inventory of eligible abandoned mine land sites may be found on the DMME [AML website](#). Proposals must also meet the Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement (OSMRE) Guidance for Power Plus Pilot Program projects. Project applications are due by October 31, 2018, and the project application may be found [here](#).

[Full Release](#)

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