



PROGRAMS

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## COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

### *Virginia Department of Energy*

Washington Building / 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
1100 Bank Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219-3638  
(804) 692-3200 FAX (804) 692-3237  
[www.energy.virginia.gov](http://www.energy.virginia.gov)

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Tarah Kesterson

(276) 356-3405

[tarah.kesterson@energy.virginia.gov](mailto:tarah.kesterson@energy.virginia.gov)

### **Virginia Energy Receives \$22.7 Million to Reclaim Abandoned Mine Lands**

#### *Department of the Interior Announced Second Round of Funding for the Commonwealth*

**Richmond, Va.** – The Virginia Department of Energy (Virginia Energy) is getting a second round of significant funding to reclaim abandoned mine land features across the Commonwealth. The agency will receive \$22,790,000 through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation (BIL) leading to more community development projects and job opportunities through the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program. The Department of the Interior made the announcement in Richmond today that Virginia would receive the second round of funding. The AML program reclaims features left behind by coal mining that occurred before 1977.

“Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda, we have a historic opportunity to address nearly all currently inventoried abandoned mine lands across the country and create good-paying, family sustaining jobs in coal communities in the process,” said **Acting Deputy Secretary Laura Daniel-Davis**. “With these new resources, the Biden-Harris administration is creating jobs, revitalizing local economies and improving the health, safety and quality of life of so many Americans.”

“This funding is a game changer for Virginia and the work that this agency can accomplish through new abandoned mine land projects,” said **Virginia Energy Director Glenn Davis**. “Creating jobs in coal-impacted communities is a priority. Through reclamation and repurposing of these historically mined lands we can contribute to workforce growth and find economic development opportunities through projects.”

Virginia has thousands of abandoned mine land features awaiting reclamation. Previous funding limited the number of projects that could be completed within a grant year. The additional BIL funding received this year, and last year, has set the stage to begin planning for reclamation on a very long list of slated projects. Virginia Energy is seeking additional contractors and called for [coal companies to apply to bid](#) on AML work to cover the increase in projects.

“Virginia has a ready workforce to complete the to-do list created by the infrastructure legislation,” said **Virginia Energy Director of Coal Programs Randy Moore**. “Our agency prides itself on economic development and we are grateful to be able to create more job opportunities over the next 15 years with this specific funding.”

Since 2017, Virginia Energy’s traditional AML program continues to establish and support job growth by creating approximately 1000 jobs within our communities and expects to create an average of 100 jobs every five years. The AML program typically receives around \$3 million annually. Based on that funding, these additional dollars are projected to create more than one thousand jobs.

“There are thousands of features posing safety and environmental harm due to historic mining in southwest Virginia, the Richmond coalfields and other areas of the Commonwealth where coal was once extracted,” said **Virginia Energy Abandoned Mine Land Director Lesa Baker**. “These funds will allow us to reclaim just over 70% of the current inventory Virginia Energy has gathered since our AML program began in 1981.”

Ground has been broken on many BIL projects already and Virginia Energy has several more in the planning phases. Increased funding allows the agency to plan for more comprehensive projects with a greater community and environmental impact. Entire neighborhoods and watersheds will benefit from reclamation work planned with BIL dollars.

Contractors and coal companies interested in bidding on AML projects can find out more details via the Virginia Energy [website](#). All must be registered in Virginia’s procurement system, [eVA](#).

Virginia Energy’s Abandoned Mine Land program was established after the passing of the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act in 1977. The agency manages a federal grant to reclaim issues caused by coal mining that occurred before that date. The federal funds come from the Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement (OSMRE).