



## **Commonwealth of Virginia**

### Office of Governor Glenn Youngkin

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### **Governor Glenn Youngkin Announces Virginia Receives \$22.7 Million to Reclaim Abandoned Mine Lands**

*~Increased funding is projected to create significant job increases for displaced coal workers~*

**RICHMOND, VA** – Today, Governor Glenn Youngkin announced the Virginia Department of Energy (Virginia Energy) is getting a significant increase in funding to reclaim abandoned mine land features across the Commonwealth. The agency was awarded \$22,790,000 in federal funding which will significantly increase the projects and job opportunities made possible through the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program.

“We are excited to get to work and assist in getting others back to work with this announcement of federal funds,” said Governor Youngkin. “Creating jobs in coal-impacted communities is a priority and through the reclamation and repurposing of these mined lands, we hope to see an additional economic activity for properties that can become suitable for development.”

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. This grant of \$22.7 million will open up work 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.

“Southwest Virginia has a ready workforce to complete the numerous infrastructure projects in Virginia,” **said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Caren Merrick**. “Our agency prides itself on economic development in this region and we will aid in continued job increases over the next 15 years with this specific funding.”

Since 2017, Virginia Energy’s traditional AML program has created 792 jobs, adding an average of 100 jobs every five years. The AML program typically receives around \$4 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 and other areas of the state where coal was once extracted,” **said Virginia Energy Director John Warren**. “These funds will allow us to reclaim and repurpose just over 80% of the current inventory Virginia Energy has gathered since our AML program began in 1981.”

The AML team will also review and complete a more intensive inventory to ensure its accuracy and that any features previously identified are added.

“Our AML team finally gets to complete projects and tasks that have been on our wish list for years,” **said Virginia Energy Deputy Director Will Clear**. “The impact this work will have on our region will be so significant for a growing economy and for community enhancement.”

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 U.S. Department of Interior’s Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement (OSMRE).