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# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Norton Industrial Development Authority Receives \$3.5 Million for Job Creation and Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation**

**Norton, Va.-** A site ranked as the top for economic development in three southwest Virginia counties will now be developed for future industry due to a grant of \$3.5 million from the Pilot Program. The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) received \$10 million from the U.S. Department of Treasury to help identify abandoned mine land sites that could be reclaimed to boost the economy of the southwest region of the Commonwealth.

The grant will be used to turn 200 acres of an historic mine into flat, developable land that could bring in new business and jobs. A very unstable high wall will be removed in the process.

“This project has great potential for quite the economic boost in the coalfields,” said DMME Deputy Director Butch Lambert. “Removing the highwall left behind from historic mining automatically increases the value on this land. Our agency is excited to see what the future may hold once this site is developed.”

The proposal submitted said, once developed, the site could host three industrial buildings. Future phased development includes road access, water and sewer lines, electric service, natural gas access and broadband.

“The member localities of the Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority (LPRIFA) have worked tirelessly to foster projects with regional participation and significance,” said LPRIFA Chairman John Kilgore. “Project Intersection is one of these projects that will be a partnership project providing regional benefit for all of Southwest Virginia”.

Project Intersection was one of 15 proposals submitted to the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME). The agency reviewed proposals for eligibility and then took them before an advisory council made up of people involved in local economic development. The council chose six projects to go to the Office of Surface Mining (OSM) for approval.

The Pilot Program originated in a federal omnibus bill in 2017. DMME will receive another \$10 million this year for more economic development projects on abandoned mine lands. The agency will receive proposals through October 31<sup>st</sup>.

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