

# **Alabama Department of Labor Abandoned Mine Land Program seeks proposals for Pilot Program Projects to bring jobs to Coal Impacted Counties in Alabama**

Birmingham, AL. (July 1, 2017) – Up to \$10 million in federal grant money from the U.S. government’s General Fund is available to the Alabama Department of Labor Inspections Division Abandoned Mine Land Program (AML) for pilot projects in any of the counties situated in the coal fields in the approximate northern half of Alabama that have the potential to create long-term economic benefits.

In a joint collaboration with the current Administration and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, the Alabama Department of Labor’s Abandoned Mine Land Program is seeking economic and community development proposals that will attract new industry and jobs to the state’s counties historically impacted by the downturn in coal production.

This Pilot Program represents a tremendous opportunity for leaders in our Coal Impacted counties. Requirements concerning eligibility for the funding include identifying projects on abandoned mine sites historically mined for coal, with real potential for long-term success. The funds will be vital to attracting more jobs and creating more opportunities for the people of Coal Impacted counties, while also addressing the problem of abandoned mine lands.

The Pilot Program will allow our coal communities to reclaim abandoned mine sites while simultaneously pursuing proactive economic development opportunities to help put our people back to work and spur innovation in Northern Alabama.

## **Eligible counties**

Counties eligible for projects include Bibb, Blount, Cherokee, Cullman, DeKalb, Etowah, Fayette, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Lamar, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Shelby, St. Clair, Tuscaloosa, Walker, and Winston.

The Alabama Department of Labor’s Abandoned Mine Land Program is encouraging community leaders throughout the region to look at options that will have the best chances of bringing dramatic growth and jobs to their communities. Communities may choose to band together to upgrade industrial sites, including providing the necessary infrastructure and possibly spec buildings, so that companies looking to expand in these counties can be up and running quickly.

Proposals are now being solicited and should include information about the project’s purpose, link to AML, cost, partnerships and/or leveraged funds (if applicable), and any evidence of community improvement, support and economic development.

A committee made up of officials from the Alabama Department of Labor Inspections Division Abandoned Mine Lands Program will evaluate all proposals and recommend a list of projects to the federal Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, which will make the final decisions.

We are looking for projects that will bring long-term significant economic and community development benefits to the Appalachian coal region,” said Chuck Williams, State AML Mine Land Reclamation Supervisor. The key is that these projects will have to bring jobs and private investment opportunities while reclaiming abandoned mine lands for reuse.

The Pilot Program is part of \$105 million in funds that have been set aside for one-time grants to Appalachian States to return coal sites to productive uses that will bring new jobs to replace the thousands lost during the downturn of the industry.

Application forms and programmatic guidance/requirement documentation for project submittals will soon be available at <https://www.labor.alabama.gov/Inspections/Mining/reclamation.aspx> and selecting the **AMPLILOT** banner or by calling or emailing Brian Wittwer, Program Administrator, 11 West Oxmoor Road, Suite 100 Birmingham, AL 35209. Phone: 205-945-8671 FAX: 205-945-8685 Email: [brian.wittwer@labor.alabama.gov](mailto:brian.wittwer@labor.alabama.gov)