Biden Administration Outlines Key Resources to Invest in Coal and Power Plant Community Economic Revitalization

APRIL 23, 2021 • [STATEMENTS AND RELEASES](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/)

White House Releases Initial Report Detailing Existing Resources for Energy Communities

Department of Energy Announces $109.5 Million to Support Energy Jobs, Executive Director to Spearhead Interagency Efforts

Today, the [White House Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/02/26/readout-of-the-white-houses-first-interagency-working-group-on-coal-and-power-plant-communities-and-economic-revitalization/) released a [report](https://netl.doe.gov/IWGInitialReport) that was delivered to President Biden and included the initial recommendations from the Interagency Working Group  to catalyze economic revitalization, create good-paying, union jobs, and support workers in energy communities – hard-hit coal, oil and gas, and power plant communities – across the country.

The Interagency Working Group identified nearly $38 billion in existing federal funding that could be accessed by energy communities for infrastructure, environmental remediation, union job creation, and community revitalization efforts. This funding includes the [over $260 million in existing resources already mobilized by the Department of the Interior](https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/interior-investing-over-260-million-help-create-jobs-and-revitalize-land-coal) to support abandoned mine land reclamation, predominantly in Appalachia. This funding will be bolstered by the historic investment in energy communities proposed by President Biden’s [American Jobs Plan](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/31/fact-sheet-the-american-jobs-plan/#:~:text=The%20American%20Jobs%20Plan%20is%20an%20investment%20in,by%20more%20than%2040%20percent%20since%20the%201960s.).

The report is a first step, delivered to the President 60 days following Executive Order 14008, which established the Interagency Working Group. In addition to identifying resources available for immediate deployment, the report identifies urgent geographic areas, hard-hit by past coal mine and plant closures and vulnerable to more closures, that are priorities for investment and engagement and next steps for the Working Group to deliver on the President’s long-term commitment to support energy workers and communities.

In connection with the report release, the Department of Energy (DOE) announced $109.5 million in funding for innovative projects that will catalyze next generation industries to retain and create jobs directly in energy communities, including

* $75 million in funding to engineer carbon capture projects – This funding will support customized engineering designs to install carbon capture and storage technology for power and industrial plants. Retrofitting with carbon capture technology could employ a similar workforce that exists today in energy communities and position American industry to compete in a global economy that is rapidly turning toward decarbonization.
* $19.5 million in funding awards for critical mineral extraction from coal and associated waste streams – Critical minerals are vital to the manufacture of batteries, magnets, and other important components for making electric vehicles (EV) and other clean energy technology. Coal communities and workers could be well-positioned to see new industrial jobs extracting critical materials from the waste left behind by coal mining and coal power plants in many areas.
* $15 million for geothermal energy research projects at West Virginia University and Sandia National Laboratories – DOE will provide up to $15 million for two projects to help drive down costs and risks associated with the discovery of new geothermal resources for power production and heating-cooling. West Virginia University (WVU) will use the funding to explore year-round deep-direct use heating and cooling on campus in preparation for the 2027 planned closure of the existing coal-fired cogeneration plant that supplies steam for the school. WVU will drill an exploratory well with a full logging and coring program critical to developing the resource under the campus and will evaluate shallow reservoirs for energy storage, away from fossil fuels and transitioning to a fully clean grid by 2035. Sandia National Laboratories will use innovative approaches to conduct electromagnetic surveys to refine geothermal exploration methods and aid drillers as they explore for geothermal energy in the Western United States, a potential opportunity to create jobs for laid-off oil and gas workers.

The Interagency Working Group also named Brian Anderson as its Executive Director. A longtime resident of West Virginia and a descendant of coal miners, Anderson serves as director of DOE’s National Energy Technology Laboratory with facilities in Morgantown, West Virginia, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Albany, Oregon, and is a renowned scientist with extensive expertise in technology development for carbon management in hard-to-decarbonize sectors. In addition, DOE identified senior staff from DOE’s Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, Office of Energy Jobs and Office of Indian Energy who will also support the work of the Interagency Working Group.

President Biden is committed to robust federal leadership in direct partnership with energy communities to foster investment and economic revitalization, ensure the creation of good-paying jobs that provide a choice to join a union, remediate mining and drilling lands and plant sites to address environmental degradation, and secure the benefits workers have earned.

During his first week in office, President Biden established the Interagency Working Group to coordinate an integrated, whole-of-government approach to supporting energy communities. As its first action, the Interagency Working Group convened stakeholder roundtable sessions to hear from community and worker representatives as well as sector experts on the needs and most promising strategies for economic development and transition. The Working Group also identified existing federal resources that can be immediately deployed to support hard-hit energy communities.

Today, the Interagency Working Group, issued an [initial report](https://netl.doe.gov/IWGInitialReport) identifying key federal programs that could spur economic revitalization in energy communities.

EXISTING FEDERAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE DEPLOYMENT TO ENERGY COMMUNITIES:
As a first task, the Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization identified existing federal resources that can be immediately deployed to support hard-hit energy communities. When deployed in key energy communities, these funds will:

Invest in Job Creating Infrastructure Projects

* Fund Critical Infrastructure Investments in Coal Country – On April 7, 2021, the [Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) announced a $2.5 million grant to the Pea Ridge Public Service District of Barboursville, West Virginia](https://www.eda.gov/news/press-releases/2021/04/07/barboursville-wv.htm), that according to grantee estimates is expected to retain 851 jobs and generate $14.6 million in private investment by extending public sanitary sewer services to support local businesses and encourage future economic growth. These funds were provided under EDA’s Assistance to Coal Communities (ACC) initiative which provides grants to coal communities for a range of activities including economic diversification, job creation, capital investment, workforce development, and re-employment opportunities. In FY21, EDA received $33.5 million under the ACC initiative which has ongoing availability, with applications reviewed on a rolling basis. The Department of Commerce is also revising EDA investment priorities to promote projects that meet the needs of coal and power plant communities. The updated guidance will apply to all EDA funding, including the $3 billion received through the American Rescue Plan.
* Provide Access to Rural Broadband – The Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has three broadband grant programs with funding totaling $1.5 billion. These programs collectively focus on bringing broadband access to tribal communities, minority communities, and those regions that have households without access to broadband at speeds of at least 25 megabytes per second (MBps) for download and 3 MBps for upload. Energy Communities with broadband needs will be eligible to apply for deployment grants from these programs. The NTIA is exploring how to facilitate increased participation from Energy communities through targeted outreach.
* Fund Transportation Infrastructure – The Department of Transportation releases the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program solicitation annually. RAISE is an approximately $1 billion competitive grant program that provides flexible capital funding that can support multi-modal and multi-jurisdictional projects. Applicants can include municipalities, counties, tribal governments, and states. For the upcoming RAISE Notice of Funding Opportunity for FY2021, DOT is determining how to integrate the transportation needs of applicants like Energy Communities that are focusing on job creation and climate change response.

Create Jobs through Pollution Mitigation and Environmental Remediation

* Provide access to $1.3 billion in grants, loans and technical assistance  to address Mine-Impacted Water – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Utilities Service Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) is a program that provides financing for rural communities to establish, expand, or modernize water treatment and waste disposal facilities. Energy Communities can utilize WEP to address issues related to mine runoff or mine-impacted water. Recently, a rural Michigan town received WEP funding to treat a water source that was contaminated with high levels of magnesium and iron due to mining. WEP currently has $967 million available for loans, $308 million in grant funds, and $36 million in technical assistance and training funds.
* Revitalize Brownfields –  The Environmental Protection Agency anticipates releasing the guidelines for its Brownfields Assessment, Cleanup, and Revolving Loan Fund Grant programs in Fall 2021. Brownfields grants are competitively awarded and provide funding to empower states, communities, tribes, and non-profit organizations to inventory, assess, and clean up brownfields. Brownfield grants facilitate environmental cleanup and economic redevelopment in communities across the country. Success stories include projects in communities adversely affected by closed or abandoned power stations and mining sites. The competition for FY2022 assessment, clean up, and revolving loan fund grants will open in fall 2021 .
* Create Good Jobs by Reclaiming Abandoned Mine Lands – Last month, the [Department of Interior’s Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation, and Enforcement (OSMRE) announced the availability of $152.2 million in annual reclamation grants](https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/interior-investing-over-260-million-help-create-jobs-and-revitalize-land-coal) and began disbursing $115 million to eligible states and tribes for coal mine reclamation projects that support economic revitalization efforts through the Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization grant program. These projects directly address the economic development needs of Energy Communities. OSMRE also has an additional $24.8 million available in FY2021 to provide administrative and technical support for coal reclamation projects in certain states and tribal areas. DOI also highlighted $4.2M of funding at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to remediate orphan wells on public lands. This funding is estimated to address 39 of the 102 orphan wells in BLM’s most recent orphan well inventory, with another $8.7 million to remediate wells in Alaska’s National Petroleum Reserve. Dislocated oil and gas workers living in energy communities would be ideal candidates for employment on these projects.

Catalyze Next Generation Industries

* Provide $8.5 billion in loans for breakthrough carbon capture technologies – DOE’s Loan Programs Office (LPO) has $8.5 billion in funding for carbon capture projects through LPO’s Title 17 Innovative Energy Loan Guarantee Program. LPO is open for business and ready to help deploy carbon capture technology to enable low-carbon manufacturing of cement, steel, and other industrial products in addition to power plants. Retrofitting with carbon capture technology would draw upon a similar workforce that exists today in energy communities and could create thousands of new jobs while positioning American industry to compete in a global economy that is rapidly turning toward decarbonization.

Fund Civic Infrastructure that Sparks New Economic Activity

* Fund Small Businesses – The American Rescue Plan provided $10 billion to the Department of Treasury’s State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), a program that supports state, territorial, and tribal programs that finance small businesses, including in economically disadvantaged and minority communities. The Department of Treasury is exploring ways to encourage the use of SSBCI funding in Energy Communities including by highlighting the objectives of Executive Order 14008 in related program guidance and outreach.
* Fund Non-Profit Job Creators – The Department of Health and Human Services announced its intent to prioritize energy communities in its upcoming solicitation for the Community Economic Development (CED) discretionary grants program. The CED is a $13.6 million grant program for non-profit community development corporations in disinvested communities for purposes of creating new jobs for low-income individuals, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families recipients. HHS will provide additional consideration under the solicitation to applications that demonstrate that the project will support energy communities.
* Invest in Economic Revitalization in Appalachia – The Appalachian Regional Commission announced the next round of funding availability for its Partnership for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative grants. The program supports Appalachian communities that have experienced job losses in coal mining, coal-fired power plant closures, and coal-related supply chain and logistics industries. Applicants to this competitive program should have a transformational vision for diversifying the regional economy, addressing both short-term response and long-term restructuring. Applications should also be regional, collaborative, large-scale, and outcome-driven. Priorities for funding include workforce development, entrepreneurship, industry clusters, substance use disorders, and broadband access. Current funding availability is $55 million.

Secure Benefits and Opportunity for Energy Workers

* Finance Economic Development Aligned Workforce Training –The Department of Labor [announced the next round of Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC) demonstration grants, which makes up to $29.2 million available to support rural communities in aligning workforce development efforts with economic development plans](https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/eta/eta20210422-0). Grant activities can include classroom training; work-based learning, including apprenticeships; skills and needs assessments; job matching assistance; online and technology-related learning strategies, including expanding broadband access; supportive services; employer services; and supporting individuals impacted by substance use disorder. The [funding notice](http://www.grants.gov/) includes an additional emphasis on Energy Communities and will be administered in partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Delta Regional Authority (DRA).

AMERICAN JOBS PLAN INVESTMENTS IN ENERGY COMMUNITIES

President Biden’s [American Jobs Plan](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/31/fact-sheet-the-american-jobs-plan/#:~:text=The%20American%20Jobs%20Plan%20is%20an%20investment%20in,by%20more%20than%2040%20percent%20since%20the%201960s.) will provide a historic investment in the economic revitalization of energy communities. Specifically, the plan will:

Invest in Job Creating Infrastructure Projects

Increase investment by $115 billion to modernize the bridges, highways, roads, and main streets that are in most critical need of repair. This includes funding to improve air quality, limit greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce congestion. The plan will modernize 20,000 miles of highways, roads, and main streets, not only “fixing them first” but “fixing them right,” with safety, resilience, and all users in mind. It will also repair the worst 10,000 smaller bridges, including bridges that provide critical connections to rural and tribal communities.

Upgrade and modernize America’s drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater systems, tackle new contaminants, and support clean water infrastructure across rural America – including by providing $56 billion in grants and low-cost flexible loans to states, Tribes, territories, and disadvantaged communities across the country. President Biden’s plan also provides $10 billion in funding to monitor and remediate PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in drinking water and to invest in rural small water systems and household well and wastewater systems, including drainage fields. Further, President Biden’s plan will invest $45 billion to replace 100 percent of the nation’s lead pipes and service lines, which will create jobs and reduce lead exposure in homes and 400,000 schools and childcare facilities.

Produce, preserve, and retrofit more than a million affordable, resilient, accessible, energy efficient, and electrified housing units. Through targeted tax credits, formula funding, grants, and project-based rental assistance, President Biden’s plan will extend affordable housing rental opportunities to underserved communities nationwide, including rural and tribal areas.

Put union building trade workers to work upgrading homes and businesses to save families money. President Biden’s plan will upgrade homes through block grant programs, the Weatherization Assistance Program, and by extending and expanding home and commercial efficiency tax credits. President Biden’s plan also will establish a $27 billion Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator to mobilize private investment into distributed energy resources; retrofits of residential, commercial and municipal buildings; and clean transportation. These investments have a particular focus on disadvantaged communities that have not yet benefited from clean energy investments.

Deliver affordable, reliable, high-speed broadband to every American through a historic investment of $100 billion to build high-speed broadband infrastructure to reach 100 percent coverage. The President’s plan prioritizes building “future proof” broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas so that we finally reach 100 percent high-speed broadband coverage. It also prioritizes support for broadband networks owned, operated by, or affiliated with local governments, non-profits, and co-operatives—providers with less pressure to turn profits and with a commitment to serving entire communities. Moreover, it ensures funds are set aside for infrastructure on tribal lands and that tribal nations are consulted in program administration. Along the way, it will create good-paying jobs with labor protections and the right to organize and bargain collectively. President Biden’s plan will promote price transparency and competition among internet providers and the President is committed to working with Congress to find a solution to reduce internet prices for all Americans, increase adoption in both rural and urban areas, hold providers accountable, and save taxpayer money.

Create Jobs through Pollution Mitigation and Environmental Remediation

Put the energy industry to work plugging orphan oil and gas wells and cleaning up abandoned mines. Hundreds of thousands of former orphan oil and gas wells and abandoned mines pose serious safety hazards, while also causing ongoing air, water, and other environmental damage. Many of these old wells and mines are located in rural communities that have suffered from years of disinvestment. President Biden’s plan includes an immediate up-front investment of $16 billion that will put hundreds of thousands to work in union jobs plugging oil and gas wells and restoring and reclaiming abandoned coal, hardrock, and uranium mines. In addition to creating good jobs in hard-hit communities, this investment will reduce the methane and brine that leaks from these wells, just as we invest in reducing leaks from other sources like aging pipes and distribution systems.

Invest $5 billion in the remediation and redevelopment of Brownfield and Superfund sites, as well as related economic and workforce development – turning this idle real property into new hubs of economic growth and job creation.

Mobilize the next generation of conservation and resilience workers. This $10 billion investment will put a new, diverse generation of Americans to work conserving our public lands and waters, bolstering community resilience, and advancing environmental justice through a new Civilian Climate Corps, all while placing good-paying union jobs within reach for more Americans.

Catalyze Next Generation Industries

Build next generation industries in distressed communities. President Biden believes that the market-based shift toward clean energy presents enormous opportunities for the development of new markets and new industries. For example, by pairing an investment in 15 decarbonized hydrogen demonstration projects in distressed communities with a new production tax credit, we can spur capital-project retrofits and installations that bolster and decarbonize our industry. The President’s plan also will establish ten pioneer facilities that demonstrate carbon capture retrofits for large steel, cement, and chemical production facilities, all while ensuring that overburdened communities are protected from increases in cumulative pollution. In addition, in line with the bipartisan SCALE Act, his plan will support large-scale sequestration efforts that leverage the best science and prioritize community engagement. And to accelerate responsible carbon capture deployment and ensure permanent storage, President Biden’s plan reforms and expands the bipartisan Section 45Q tax credit, making it direct pay and easier to use for hard-to-decarbonize industrial applications, direct air capture, and retrofits of existing power plants.

Jumpstart clean energy manufacturing through federal procurement. The federal government spends more than a half-a-trillion dollars buying goods and services each year. As a result, it has the ability to be a first-mover in markets. The President is calling on Congress to enable the manufacture of electric vehicles, charging ports, and electric heat pumps for residential heating and commercial buildings, as well as critical technologies like advanced nuclear reactors and fuel, here at home through a $46 billion investment in federal buying power, creating good-paying jobs and reinvigorating local economies, especially in rural areas.

Strengthen manufacturing supply chains for critical goods. President Biden believes we must produce, here at home, the technologies and goods that meet today’s challenges and seize tomorrow’s opportunities. President Biden is calling on Congress to invest $50 billion to create a new office at the Department of Commerce dedicated to monitoring domestic industrial capacity and funding investments to support production of critical goods.

Advance U.S. leadership in critical technologies and upgrade America’s research infrastructure. President Biden is calling on Congress to provide $30 billion in additional funding for R&D that spurs innovation and job creation, including in rural areas. His plan also will invest $40 billion in upgrading research infrastructure in laboratories across the country, including brick-and-mortar facilities and computing capabilities and networks. These funds would be allocated across the federal R&D agencies, including at the Department of Energy.

Support small, medium and rural manufacturers. President Biden is calling on Congress to quadruple support for the Manufacturing Extensions Partnership —increasing the involvement of minority-owned and rurally-located small- and-medium-sized enterprises in technological advancement. He is also calling to invest $14 billion in NIST to bring together industry, academia, and government to advance technologies and capabilities critical to future competitiveness.

Increase access to capital for domestic manufacturers. America’s manufacturing industry needs to innovate, adapt, and scale to win the industries of the future. President Biden is calling on Congress to invest more than $52 billion in domestic manufacturers. The President is calling on Congress to invest in existing capital access programs with a proven track record of success, with a focus on supporting rural manufacturing and clean energy. The President’s plan also includes specific supports for modernizing supply chains, including in the auto sector, like extending the 48C tax credit program. He also will call for the creation of a new financing program to support debt and equity investments for manufacturing to strengthen the resilience of America’s supply chains.

Fund Civic Infrastructure that Sparks New Economic Activity

Invest billions in critical physical, social and civic infrastructure including through the Economic Development Agency’s Public Works program, “Main Street” revitalization efforts through HUD and USDA, the Appalachian Regional Commission’s POWER grant program, the Department of Energy retooling grants for idled factories (through the Section 132 program), and dedicated funding to support community-driven environmental justice efforts – such as capacity and project grants to address legacy pollution and the cumulative impacts experienced by frontline and fence line communities.

Partner with rural and Tribal communities to create jobs and economic growth in rural America. Today, despite the fact that rural and Tribal communities across the country are asset-rich, more than 8 in 10 persistent poverty counties fall outside of a metropolitan area. President Biden is proposing to transform the way the federal government partners with rural and Tribal communities to create jobs and spur inclusive economic growth. As part of his plan to ensure that all communities recover – regardless of geography – President Biden is proposing a $5 billion for a new Rural Partnership Program to help rural regions, including Tribal Nations, build on their unique assets and realize their vision for inclusive community and economic development. This program will empower rural regions by supporting locally-led planning and capacity building efforts, and providing flexible funding to meet critical needs.

Make it in ALL of America. The President believes we must build social infrastructure to support innovation and productivity across the country. He is calling on Congress to invest $20 billion in regional innovation hubs and a Community Revitalization Fund. At least ten regional innovation hubs will leverage private investment to fuel technology development, link urban and rural economies, and create new businesses in regions beyond the current handful of high-growth centers. The Community Revitalization Fund will support innovative, community-led redevelopment projects that can spark new economic activity, provide services and amenities, build community wealth, and close the current gaps in access to the innovation economy for communities of color and rural communities that have suffered from years of disinvestment.

Invest in community college infrastructure. Investing in community college facilities and technology helps protect the health and safety of students and faculty, address education deserts (particularly for rural communities), grow local economies, improve energy efficiency and resilience, and narrow funding inequities in the short-term, as we rebuild our higher education finance system for the long-run. President Biden is calling on Congress to invest $12 billion to address these needs. States will be responsible for using the dollars to address both existing physical and technological infrastructure needs at community colleges and identifying strategies to address access to community college in education deserts.

Secure Benefits and Opportunity for Energy Workers

Empower Workers. President Biden is calling on Congress to update the social contract that provides workers with a fair shot to get ahead, overcome racial and other inequalities that have been barriers for too many Americans, expand the middle class, and strengthen communities. He is calling on Congress to ensure all workers have a free and fair choice to join a union by passing the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, and guarantee union and bargaining rights for public service workers. His plan also ensures domestic workers receive the legal benefits and protections they deserve and tackles pay inequities based on gender.

Create good jobs. The President’s plan demands that employers benefitting from these investments follow strong labor standards and remain neutral when their employees seek to organize a union and bargain collectively. He is asking Congress to tie federal investments in clean energy and infrastructure to prevailing wages and require transportation investments to meet existing transit labor protections. He also is calling for investments tied to Project Labor, Community Workforce, local hire, and registered apprenticeships and other labor or labor-management training programs so that federal investments support good jobs and pathways to the middle class. Finally, he is asking Congress to include a commitment to increasing American jobs through Buy America and Ship American provisions.

Call for a $40 billion investment in a new Dislocated Workers Program and sector-based training.  This funding will ensure comprehensive services for workers, who have lost jobs through no fault of their own, to gain new skills and to get career services they need with in-demand jobs. Sector-based training programs will be focused on growing, high demand sectors such as clean energy and manufacturing, helping workers of all kinds to find good-quality jobs in an ever-changing economy.