



Appalachian Voices

2023 PRIORITIES

## DEFATING FOSSIL FUEL INTERESTS

In 2022, as a result of public engagement and legal action, the Mountain Valley Pipeline's federal permits were vacated. In the months that followed, powerful forces in Congress attempted to secure unprecedented congressional approval for the Mountain Valley Pipeline. Working around the clock with partners, we defeated these attempts. The Mountain Valley Pipeline and its Southgate extension must be defeated, and we will devote every resource to that goal!

In Tennessee, the Tennessee Valley Authority is trying to convert former coal power plants to methane gas plants, and construct pipelines to support that effort. Like the Mountain Valley Pipeline, these pipelines have the potential to devastate communities and habitats throughout Tennessee. We are committed to working with communities directly impacted by these dangerous proposals and fighting utilities' attempts to continue polluting our land and natural spaces with unnecessary fossil fuel projects.

### Top Priorities for 2023:

- Defeat attempts by Mountain Valley Pipeline to secure special favors from legislators or win new federal permits
- Understand the full destructive scope of the proposed TVA gas pipeline projects, and defeat them at every possible stage of their unnecessary development
- Join with partners and directly affected communities to ensure the voices of those most impacted by these projects are amplified and centered



## ENSURING AN EQUITABLE CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

Thanks to the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022, and due in part to Appalachian Voices' work on the bill, nearly \$370 billion dollars will be available to accelerate the transition to clean energy in the coming years and our Energy Democracy team is determined to ensure that Appalachian communities are not left behind. We are already providing technical assistance to community leaders, nonprofits, local governments, businesses and managers of electric cooperatives to help them navigate and access more than 70 federal programs designed to support a nationwide transition to clean energy.

At the same time, we are continuing to hold energy co-ops and utilities accountable to the public and ensure transparency in their governing practices. This will include intervening when utilities misuse resources, attempt unnecessary rate hikes or prioritize profit over our climate and wellbeing. We will also continue to distribute co-op scorecards, which evaluate electric cooperatives based on their energy efficiency, transparency, transition to renewables and programs to support low-income members.



### Top Priorities for 2023:

- Engage utility customers in rural communities to develop plans that can win federal support for local clean energy projects
- Support efforts to transition local co-ops and power providers to renewable energy
- Inspire people with the very best ideas and success stories from our region

# ADDRESSING COAL'S DEVASTATING IMPACTS

Working in close partnership with our allies last year, we saw significant wins holding coal companies accountable. Appalachian Voices continues to use pollution monitoring and legal strategies to hold companies accountable to their obligation to clean up mined lands and the creeks, rivers, and Appalachian communities that have been damaged by coal mining.

Our federal priorities focus on the deployment of billions of dollars won through federal legislation to clean up historic abandoned mine land in Appalachia and clean up poisoned streams. Additionally, we will continue to fight for the rights and benefits of miners suffering from black lung disease and ensure these benefits are protected and expanded.

## Top Priorities for 2023:

- Ensure that A&G Coal Company, owned by W.Va. Gov. Jim Justice's family, complies with their court-ordered mine cleanup deadlines in Southwest Virginia.
- Work with leaders in Congress to advance solutions that ensure current mines are cleaned up by the coal companies responsible for them and that any outstanding costs do not fall to local communities
- Work with communities to get stronger rules to lower levels of air pollution from mining operations that impact miners and surrounding communities



# BUILDING A NEW ECONOMY

Following an incredible year creating economic opportunity through the Appalachian Solar Finance Fund and federal legislative victories securing billions of dollars for Appalachia, it is imperative that we continue the positive momentum we have created bringing jobs and economic development through mine reclamation and renewable energy projects. Thanks to our efforts, and the work of our partners, we anticipate deploying millions

more dollars from federal grants for local economic development through the Appalachian Solar Finance Fund.

We will work with local, state, and federal agencies and legislators to continue driving investment in the coal-bearing region. This will build renewable energy infrastructure and jobs, while also finding innovative ways to reclaim former mine lands.



## Top Priorities for 2023:

- Work with federal partners to win further investment and support in Southwest Virginia and beyond for innovative mine reclamation, renewable energy deployment, and climate resilience
- Engage local communities and leaders about the opportunities and economic potential of investing in renewable energy
- Advocate for better policies and laws that unlock the full potential benefits of a just energy transition
- Work with grassroots leaders to address environmental justice concerns and envision a new, sustainable economy



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25



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