



A FORCE FOR CHANGE

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

“Now more than ever, our nation and our region need Appalachian Voices. As the United States moves beyond coal, Appalachian Voices is a critical leader in ensuring a transition to clean energy that does not leave people and places behind. Appalachia’s future matters tremendously to our climate and our democracy, and the essential work of Appalachian Voices gives us a chance of building a 21st-century economy in the region that can sustain the generations.”

— Mary Anne Hitt, Director, Sierra Club Beyond Coal Campaign



A Force for Change

In 2018, Appalachian Voices took the fight against destructive industries as well as our collaboration with allies to accelerate the region's transition to a healthy and equitable clean energy economy to a new level. The challenges facing our region and our country, combined with opportunities to make unprecedented progress, require no less of us.

We advanced a just economic transition in the wake of coal's decline, paving the way for solar energy and the transformation of old mine sites for ecologically and economically sound new uses. We fought mountaintop removal coal mining and fracked-gas pipelines in communities, our state capitals, and the courts. And we countered monopoly electric utilities' attempts to maintain their dominance of both the market and the political process at the expense of distributed renewable energy, small businesses, and consumers.

Our 2018 Annual Report illustrates how we are partnering with communities on the front lines of America's energy transition in four distinct but deeply interconnected program areas. This framework is the result of Appalachian Voices' new three-year Strategic Plan that will guide our work through 2021.

As Appalachian Voices takes on new challenges, we do so recognizing the inequities that an over-reliance on fossil fuels and a stark imbalance of power in our democracy have created in Central Appalachia and beyond.

Solving these systemic problems requires working toward environmental protection, economic opportunity, and social justice simultaneously. More than ever, we operate at the intersection of these three spheres, each essential to creating meaningful and lasting change.

Appalachian Voices is a force for such change. Our collaborative leadership and innovative approach place us at the cutting edge of our field, defending the region's common wealth, scaling up inclusive clean energy solutions, and pursuing a vision of an Appalachia with a healthy environment and generative local economies that allow our communities to thrive.

We will continue to honor the people and places we represent, and the trust you place in us, with integrity and bold action.

Thank you for contributing to our shared progress.



Tom Cormons
Executive Director



Kate Boyle
Deputy Executive Director

Building a New Appalachian Economy from the Ground Up



The Challenge ► For far too long, many decision makers in Appalachia have prioritized the coal industry above community needs, and a lack of investment in economic alternatives has left the region ill-prepared for the need to diversify that it faces today. But even as coal declines, the industry’s political power endures, creating consequences ranging from human health impacts and local ecological harm to the global climate crisis.

Our Progress

Developing a local clean energy economy: We’re building on a bright idea in far Southwest Virginia. Since co-founding the Solar Workgroup of Southwest Virginia in 2016, the momentum behind our work to spur clean energy development in the state’s coal-bearing counties continues to grow.

- We rolled out an innovative model for commercial solar development by grouping potential projects to demonstrate strong local demand. We released the first round of projects in July 2018, which included public schools, affordable housing developments, an industrial park, and other solar-ready sites, and generated interest in developing these projects among regional clean energy companies. Using this model, we are on the way to generating and sustaining enough investment to create jobs and foster local solar enterprises.

► To reduce barriers to solar development in Southwest Virginia, we encouraged local governments to seek the U.S. Department of Energy’s SolSmart designation. Appalachian Voices presented on the program to local boards of supervisors, leading six counties and two municipalities to hire an advisor to create solar-friendly policies and put Southwest Virginia on the map as a region making it faster, easier, and more affordable to go solar.

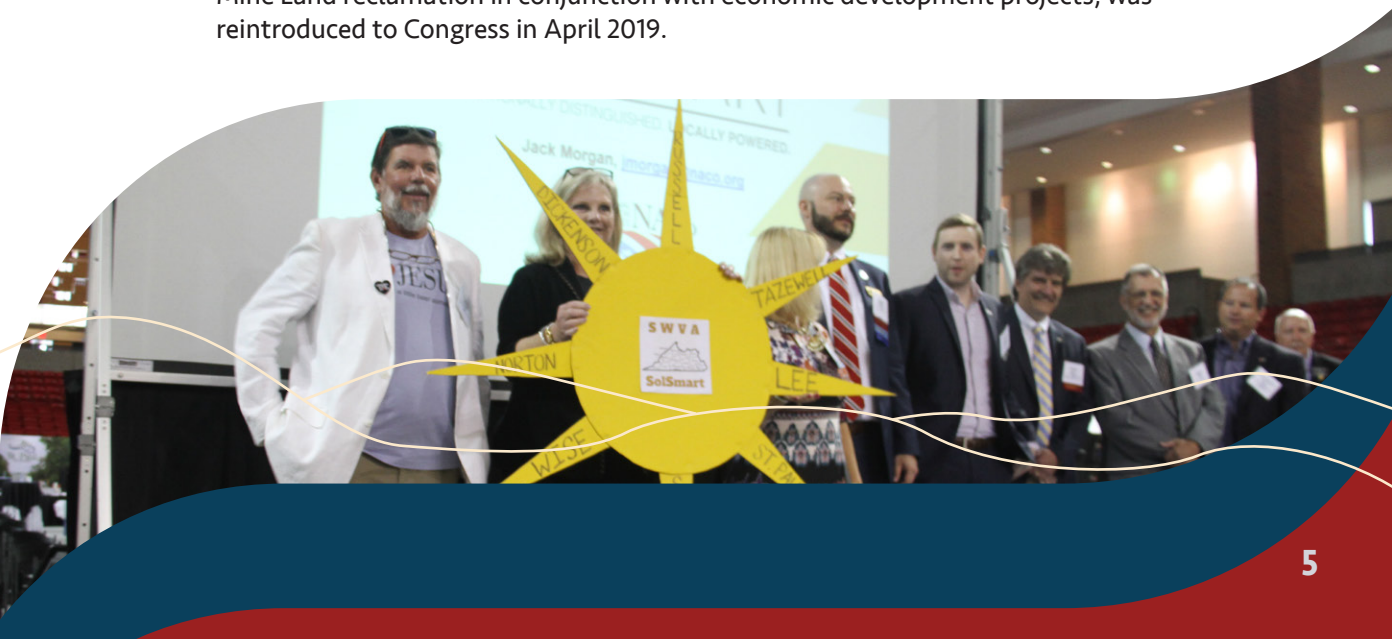
“At Appalachian Voices, you can hear the sound of people fighting for a better world. It is the sound of resistance and renewal, of people working together not just for a cleaner and more just energy future, but also for a sustainable economy and for jobs that will allow Appalachia to thrive in the 21st century. This is an urgent, important fight and, given the risks we all face from a rapidly warming climate, one that every American should care about.”

— Jeff Goodell, Contributing Editor at Rolling Stone and author of Big Coal and The Water Will Come

Repurposing coal-impacted lands: Appalachian Voices is a leader in the regional movement to heal the land and support local economies through innovative mine reclamation. We collaborate with local, state, and regional partners to secure and effectively deploy funding for projects in sustainable industries.

► Over the past three years, we’ve helped bring \$30 million to Southwest Virginia to restore and repurpose coal-impacted lands. We’ve put forward a series of successful project ideas that will attract tourism to historic towns and improve access to natural wonders. We also facilitated a joint proposal by Virginia-based Sun Tribe Solar and the Mineral Gap Data Center that resulted in \$500,000 to develop a solar farm on an old mine site that will power the Wise County data center.

► We have ensured the RECLAIM Act remains a critical policy tool to support coal community transition. Last fall, we brought residents from seven states to lobby congressional leaders in Washington, D.C., following actions at lawmakers’ district offices and the passage of more than 30 resolutions by local governments across Appalachia. The bipartisan bill, which would spend \$1 billion on Abandoned Mine Land reclamation in conjunction with economic development projects, was reintroduced to Congress in April 2019.



Transforming Our Energy System to Serve the Public Interest



The Challenge ► The falling cost of clean energy means that a more democratic energy system, which gives families a greater say over how we generate electricity, is not only possible but the only equitable model. But rather than expanding energy choice, monopoly electric utilities want to rewrite the rules to favor a business model that is increasingly obsolete.

Our Progress

Building coalitions to create systemic change: Overcoming utilities' entrenched power requires an inclusive approach. We're joining together with old and new allies in a movement for energy democracy to advance solar choice, energy efficiency, and ratepayer protections.

- In early 2018, we ignited opposition to Dominion Energy's agenda in Richmond. Legislation introduced on the monopoly utility's behalf weakened regulatory oversight and would have allowed Dominion to charge customers twice for the same project. While the bill ultimately became law, legislators removed the egregious "double dip" under pressure from Appalachian Voices and our allies.

► We opposed Duke Energy’s attempts to dramatically increase energy costs for millions of North Carolinians and force them to foot the bill for cleaning up the utility’s coal ash. Hearing the voices of residents impacted by coal ash pollution, state regulators have imposed \$100 million in penalties on Duke, slashed its proposed rate increases, and rejected a multi-billion dollar scheme that would reduce oversight of investments in the grid.

“Appalachian Voices is a highly strategic, deeply principled, and remarkably effective organization advancing an energy system grounded in economic, environmental, and racial justice. Its impressive range of core competencies includes research, policy, organizing, communications, and combining its technical expertise with the ability to work collaboratively with people and organizations across sectors and cultures.”

— Rachael Young, Program Officer, Mertz Gilmore Foundation

Securing policies that drive utility accountability and clean energy growth:

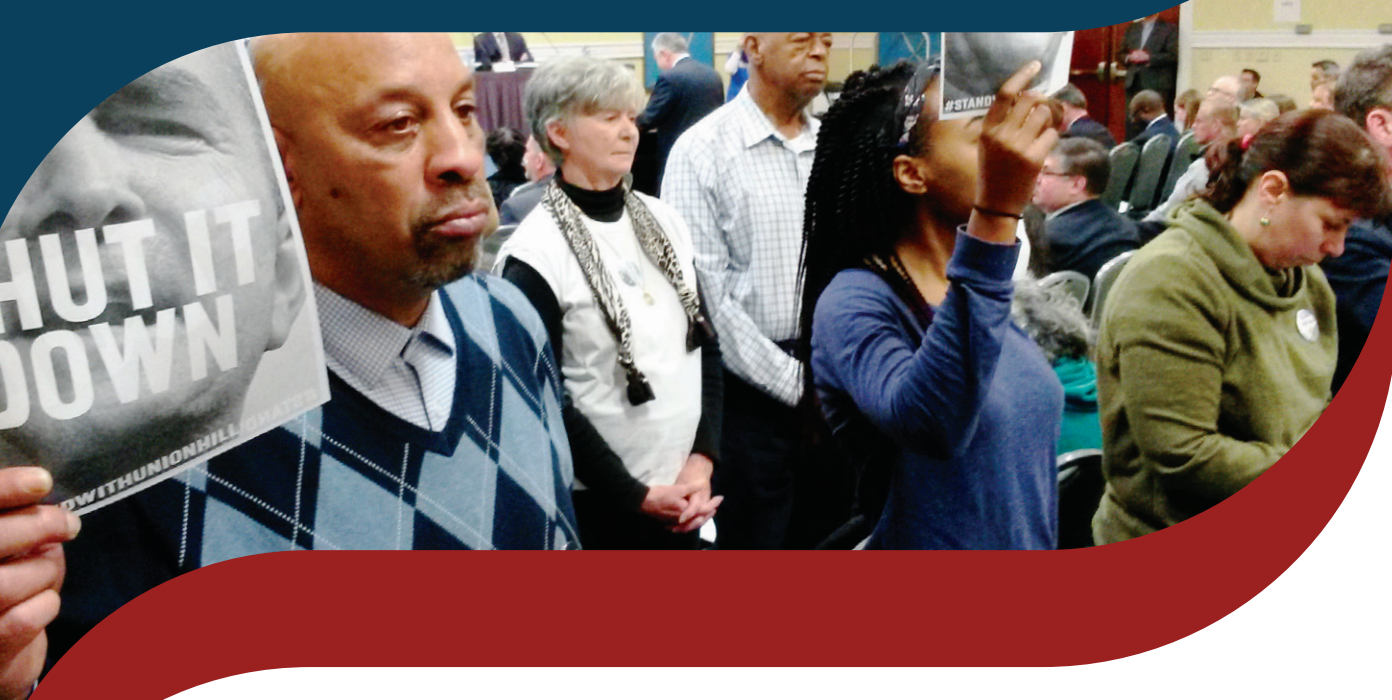
Better policies are needed to expand clean energy and counteract corporate greed. Appalachian Voices is promoting reforms to expand renewable energy and energy efficiency while increasing strain on utilities’ antiquated business models.

► During the 2018 legislative session in Virginia, we promoted a bill to help tax-exempt entities like schools and nonprofits go solar by allowing them to buy power from third-parties. The bill passed the House of Delegates before being tabled by a Senate committee. We also generated support for a bill that would force utilities to prove that contracts for natural gas offer the lowest-cost fuel option before being able to charge customers for those costs. The bill easily passed the House before it, too, was blocked by Dominion Energy allies in the Senate.

► After building a trusted relationship with Appalachian Electric Cooperative, we celebrated last year when the East Tennessee co-op voted to offer an inclusive energy efficiency financing option for its members. The program is using a \$5 million loan guarantee from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to retrofit as many as 700 homes over the next two years. Appalachian Voices helped ensure that investment will have the greatest possible impact by working with the co-op to identify the homes it should target to maximize energy savings.



Preventing New Investments in Fossil Fuels



The Challenge ► The oil, gas and electric utility industries want to bet our future on fracked gas. But investing billions of dollars in new fossil fuel projects now would only harm communities, prolong our reliance on dirty energy, and lead to massive greenhouse gas emissions.

Our Progress

Challenging fossil fuel proposals at every opportunity: The current approach to energy development discounts local voices and imperils current and future generations. Combining our grassroots and policy expertise, we are forcefully challenging the push to build new fossil fuel projects.

- The proposed Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley pipelines have been plagued by billions of dollars in cost increases and construction delays as Appalachian Voices and our allies challenge the projects in court. Last June, in response to a motion filed by Appalachian Mountain Advocates on behalf of a coalition including Appalachian Voices, a federal appeals court prohibited the Mountain Valley Pipeline from crossing streams in West Virginia. In the span of two weeks over the summer, court rulings brought construction of both projects to a halt and, at the end of the year, judges threw out a permit that would have allowed the Atlantic Coast Pipeline to carve through national forests and the Appalachian Trail.

► In Virginia we've continuously pressured Governor Ralph Northam's administration, state regulators, and the citizen boards tasked with approving pipeline permits. In spring 2018, our coalition delivered a petition to the governor signed by more than 10,000 Virginians demanding increased scrutiny of pipeline permits. In December, Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring responded to public pressure and sued Mountain Valley Pipeline developers over repeated violations of water quality protections, prompting the State Water Control Board to reconsider an essential permit for the project. Our sustained opposition contributed to significant delays in the pipelines' permit schedules.

"Watching Appalachian Voices evolve from an organization largely focused on the problem of coal to one that is also driving clean energy and climate solutions has been truly remarkable. Appalachian Voices is leading the region's transition to a clean energy future."
— Heidi Binko, Executive Director & Co-founder, Just Transition Fund — A Philanthropic Initiative Housed at the Rockefeller Family Fund

Elevating community voices and driving grassroots opposition: Appalachian Voices is active in frontline communities threatened by pipeline construction, partnering with local allies and providing resources to bolster opposition and amplify personal stories in the media.

► We have stood with local groups like Friends of Buckingham to fight the Atlantic Coast Pipeline compressor station planned in the historic black community of Union Hill. We supported residents before a vote by the Virginia Air Pollution Control Board by gaining signatures on an open letter demanding board members prioritize environmental justice concerns. Following the board's misguided approval of the compressor station permit in January 2019, we helped organize a "Moral Call for Ecological Justice," featuring Rev. William Barber II and Al Gore.

► Appalachian Voices offers support and training opportunities to frontline communities to ensure residents along the pipeline routes are equipped with the tools and knowledge they need to identify and report permit violations. These have included volunteer trainings in spring 2018 in Buckingham County (Atlantic Coast Pipeline) and Roanoke County (Mountain Valley Pipeline). We also organized a "Water Justice Summit" to unite residents fighting the pipelines, mountaintop removal coal mining, and other industrial threats to clean water.



Addressing Coal's Legacy and the Ongoing Impacts of Mining



The Challenge ► Despite the national shift to cleaner energy, mountaintop removal coal mining and pollution from coal-burning power plants continue to threaten communities and clean water. Meanwhile, the Trump administration has neglected solutions in favor of a dirty energy agenda.

Our Progress

Building local power to prevent new mining and hold polluters accountable:

Appalachian Voices puts boots on the ground and engages in frontline communities to expose regulatory failures and address the causes of pollution related to coal mining and waste storage.

- In April 2019 the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality ordered Duke Energy to excavate coal ash stored at six sites—an outcome Appalachian Voices has demanded since before the Dan River spill and enactment of the Coal Ash Management Act in 2014. The order marks a huge milestone in our years-long fight to protect North Carolina communities from coal ash pollution. Our efforts at the community level, paired with legal representation by the Southern Environmental Law Center, cemented the focus on community interests, elevated science, and exposed Duke's crimes and decades of mismanagement.

► We've exposed the coal industry's habit of cutting corners in the courts and in the media. Last year, Appalachian Voices sued mining companies in Virginia and West Virginia for flagrant violations of the Clean Water Act and surface mining laws. We also worked with investigative reporters to publish data-driven journalism on the consequences of laws that benefit the coal industry but put taxpayers and the environment at risk. As black lung disease makes a tragic comeback, we've lobbied Congress to extend the tax on coal that supports the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund.

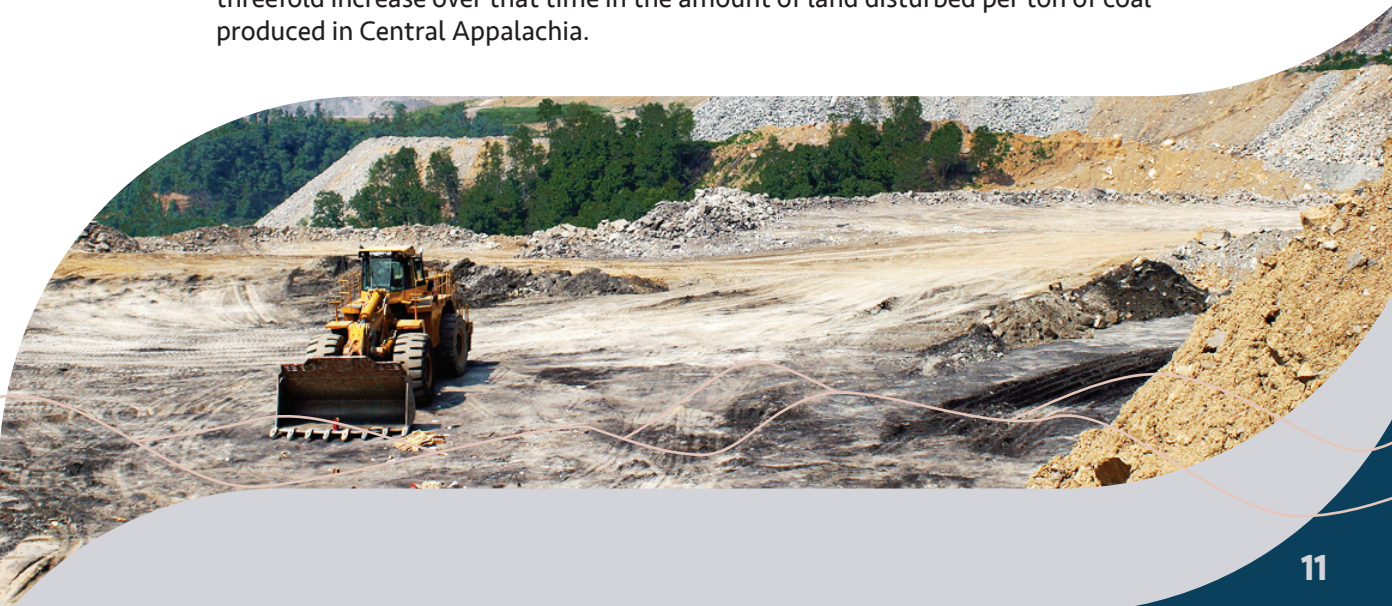
"For more than 20 years, Appalachian Voices has developed deep local roots and the capacity to connect and elevate local voices. They have the know-how needed to get things done. Our organizations share a place-based approach paired with strategic, big-picture perspectives, and we look forward to our work together over the next 20 years and beyond."

— Sarah Francisco, Director, Virginia Office, Southern Environmental Law Center

Fighting the Trump agenda: Appalachian Voices acts as a credible voice on the national stage when the White House moves to prop up coal. We will continue to educate decision-makers and the public about the need to safeguard the environment and human health by banning mountaintop removal coal mining.

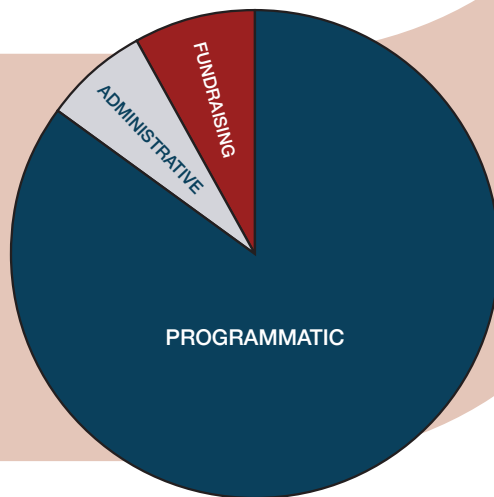
► We prominently opposed Trump's controversial nominee to lead the federal Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, highlighting why Steven Gardner, a coal mining engineer who has called mountaintop removal "accelerated erosion," is utterly unfit to represent the interests of Appalachian communities. Last September, nearly a year after his nomination, Gardner withdrew his name from consideration.

► While the Trump administration has defunded research to better understand the human health impacts of mountaintop removal, Appalachian Voices continues to expose the true cost of coal for our region's landscapes and communities. We collaborated with Duke University researchers on a study released last July that maps the expansive footprint of mountaintop removal since 1985, which found a threefold increase over that time in the amount of land disturbed per ton of coal produced in Central Appalachia.



Financials

Programmatic:	\$2,006,910	85%
Fundraising:	\$179,173	8%
Administrative:	\$159,537	7%
Total:	\$2,345,620	



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Changing the Conversation



Appalachian Voices is changing the conversation. Here's some of what we told local, state, and national media outlets last year about our work to:

Build a new Appalachian economy from the ground up ...

"Appalachia's citizens continue to re-imagine and work toward a future of sustainable and healthy local economies, where young people can find meaningful work and stay to raise their own families."

Transform our energy system to serve the public interest ...

"[Electric utilities] are in the business of selling energy. They make their money when they can justify or build out generation or transmission or infrastructure ... they make less money providing energy efficiency. It's a perverse incentive."

Prevent new investments in fossil fuels ...

"When we think about resistance, what people are really resisting is the power of these huge energy companies over our policymakers and regulatory authorities in Washington, D.C."

Address coal's legacy and the ongoing impacts of mining ...

"Companies are attempting to wait for the coal market to improve, even though all signs indicate that isn't going to happen. The biggest problem with this situation is that it delays mine reclamation and increases the chance the companies may go bankrupt and dump reclamation liabilities on states and taxpayers."

We also share compelling stories from across the region in our own publication, *The Appalachian Voice*. Read and subscribe to The Voice at apvoices.org/thevoice



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