

SUMMER
2020

NATIONAL ECONOMIC TRANSITION

PLATF O R M

A VISIONARY PROPOSAL FOR AN EQUITABLE FUTURE
Launched and led by the Just Transition Fund and partners across the country.

NationalEconomicTransition.org



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE CHALLENGE

Workers and families affected by the changing coal economy are facing a profound crisis complicated by unique difficulties. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic decline, coal facility closures, layoffs, and cuts to vital services were devastating to people and places dependent on the coal economy—many of whom are still struggling following earlier economic declines, the loss of manufacturing jobs, or inequality and widespread poverty. For low-income communities and communities of color already disproportionately left behind by the status quo, the need for equitable and inclusive economic growth is vital. But, now, with COVID-19, these unique challenges are exacerbated. The closure of even more coal facilities is accelerated, giving communities little time to plan for the disappearance of their largest employer and the erosion of the tax base, which provides critical funding for public services, local education, and health care systems.

We envision a future where the communities hit hardest by the decline of the coal sector build locally driven, vibrant, inclusive, and resilient economies with thriving, locally owned businesses and quality, family-sustaining jobs.

OUR VISION

We envision a future where the communities hit hardest by the decline of the coal sector build locally driven, vibrant, inclusive, and resilient economies with thriving, locally owned businesses and quality, family-sustaining jobs. This is a future where communities of color, Indigenous and Native communities, low-income communities, and others that are too often shut out of equitable economic growth opportunities are prioritized. To realize this vision, we're asking America's leaders to make a big, bold investment in our future and create an ambitious national community transition program.

From Appalachia to the Navajo Nation, we have an opportunity to ensure the workers and communities on the frontlines of our nation's energy transition become more prosperous and resilient and that low-income communities and communities of color that have been left behind aren't just included, but help lead the way. Although each place is unique, transitioning communities all need a diversified 21st-century economy, good-paying job opportunities, sound infrastructure, and a clean, healthy environment. Based on decades of work in the field, we've learned that the most durable solutions are:

- Community-driven, built from the ground up by local leaders and local ideas.
- Place-based strategies, which leverage local assets and improve quality of life.
- Inclusive, relevant, and accessible to all, including those historically left behind.
- Community-supporting jobs with family-sustaining wages that build a more resilient future.



Photo courtesy Natural Capital Investment Fund/Sam Levitan

THE PLAN

Today, 80 organizations and individuals urged national leaders to support this National Economic Transition platform. Our platform empowers workers and communities—in rural, urban, and tribal settings—as positive agents for change as our country adapts to the realities of climate change. This National Economic Transition Platform creates a framework from which national leaders can develop a comprehensive community and worker transition program our communities need and deserve.

Drawing from the decades of economic and workforce development experience of community and labor leaders living and working in America’s coal communities and the experience and unique know-how of tribal leaders, the ideas presented here represent the wisdom and best thinking of those directly affected. The platform is built on the foundation of two immediate, first steps: the creation of an inclusive national transition task force charged with creating a national action plan, and the development of a new federal Office of Economic Transition, guided by an advisory board reflective of affected stakeholder groups and communities.

These entities will help launch and synchronize the efforts of a range of interdependent and synergistic economic development strategies to create vibrant, livable, inclusive places and communities, represented by the seven pillars of this platform:

- 1. Invest in local leaders and long-term economic development planning.** Building the capacity of community-based leaders and organizations provides communities with the resources and incentives to plan early for and respond to coal facility closures. These investments ensure communities are prepared for a transition that protects workers and is responsive to local needs.
- 2. Expand investments in entrepreneurship and small businesses in new sectors to help communities diversify and strengthen their economies.** Investing in small businesses in diverse sectors of the economy—like health care, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and remote work opportunities—grows not just resilience, but stronger, healthier communities.
- 3. Provide bridge support and pathways to quality in-demand, family-sustaining jobs for workers.** By providing a bridge of support for workers affected by closures, comprehensive workforce development efforts, and skills training for in-demand jobs, leaders can create a pathway to effective and equitable access to high-quality jobs in the public and private sectors.
- 4. Reclaim and remediate coal sites to create jobs while cleaning up the environment.** Initiatives to reclaim, remediate, and reuse coal sites and clean up coal ash requires a sizable workforce and immediately creates jobs for workers while curbing public health and environmental risks.
- 5. Improve inadequate physical and social infrastructure. Investing in critical infrastructure, like improved connectivity, stimulates economic development and builds community resiliency.** Infrastructure projects create jobs, reduce inequities, and help boost investment in healthy, livable communities.
- 6. Address the impact of coal company bankruptcies on workers, communities, and the environment.** Holding companies accountable to financial regulations and bankruptcy laws when closing operations helps protect worker pay and benefits, while also ensuring polluted sites are reclaimed for new development.
- 7. Coordinate across programs to ensure communities have access to the resources they need.** Launching an interagency grants program helps ensure affected stakeholders have a voice and empowers local communities with federal resources.

By investing at scale in a new national community transition program that is aggressive and ambitious, coordinated and sustained, we can build inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and resilient communities for our children, working families, and future generations.

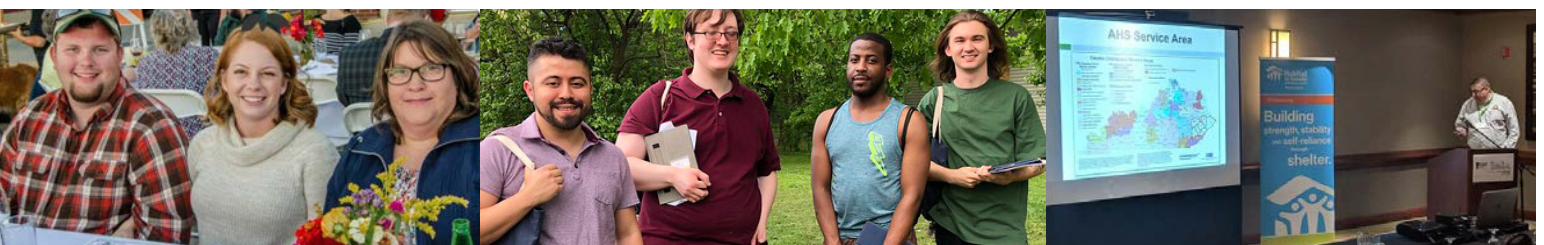


Photo courtesy Fahe

PLATFORM FOR NATIONAL ECONOMIC TRANSITION

INTRODUCTION

From Appalachia to the Navajo Nation, and the Illinois to the Powder River Basin, workers and families affected by the changing coal economy are facing a profound crisis. Coal facility closures, layoffs, and cuts to vital services are hitting the people and communities already facing a decades-long economic decline, a black lung epidemic, and environmental devastation. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic and economic decline, reliance on a troubled coal-based economy resulted in high poverty rates, deep job losses, and shrinking opportunity. Challenges—from decaying infrastructure to inadequate healthcare access to the opioid epidemic—only make the future of these communities more uncertain.

COVID-19 is making an already precarious economic situation in these communities more unstable. Many of these places haven't recovered from the Great Recession, were struggling from the loss of manufacturing jobs, or were never on equal or strong footing to begin with. These new economic and public health crises are layered on to the existing crises spurred by the transition from coal and threaten to inflict more turmoil on people and communities. The national economic decline is accelerating the decline of the coal sector, likely leading to the rapid closure of even more coal facilities. That will leave more communities with little time to plan for the disappearance of their largest employer and the tax base that supports public services, local education, and health care systems. Challenges for communities of color and low-income communities already disproportionately left behind by the status quo multiply as already scarce resources, opportunities, and services are disappearing and exhausted. The people and places that powered our country for generations deserve much better.

Yet people living and working in American communities dependent on coal are confronting these challenges, spurring economic development, and charting their own paths to a bright and sustainable future. Local leaders are embracing innovative ideas that foster locally driven, equitable economic opportunity and build resilience to help weather future crises. Workers in Wayne, West Virginia are learning to install solar panels; Navajo communities and entrepreneurs near the recently closed coal-fired Navajo Generating Station in Northern Arizona are launching clean energy and sustainable tourism enterprises and partnerships; and community members from Southwest Virginia to western Colorado are creating regional food markets. There are sustainable, equitable, and inclusive solutions for economic development for the people and places hit hardest by the transition away from coal, and they are driven by communities, built from the ground up.



Photo courtesy Natural Capital Investment Fund/Sam Levitan

People living and working in American communities dependent on coal are confronting these challenges, spurring economic development, and charting their own paths to a bright and sustainable future.

SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY

We envision a future where the communities hit hard by the decline of the coal industry have vibrant, resilient economies with thriving local businesses and quality, family-sustaining jobs. To realize this vision, America's leaders must make a big, bold investment to create an ambitious national community and worker transition program.

Our nation has the opportunity to ensure the communities on the frontlines of our energy transition become more prosperous and resilient and to develop a framework that can be applied to other communities facing similar changes and challenges now and in the future. We cannot afford to miss this chance. Our National Economic Transition platform draws from the decades of economic and workforce development experience of community, tribal, and labor leaders living and working in America's coal communities. We also drew insight from the public and private sectors and philanthropy. The platform creates a framework from which national leaders can develop the comprehensive community and worker transition program our communities need and deserve.

GETTING STARTED

To scale innovative solutions that prioritize the economic and climate challenges before us, we need a national commitment that is ambitious, coordinated, and sustained. We need a new federal transition program that will target and expand resources for affected communities and workers and coordinate across sectors and agencies.

National leaders should take two interim, concrete actions to help create the ambitious national transition program and synchronize these efforts:

- 1. Create a National Community Transition Action Plan, created within a one-year period, that would identify priorities and needs across affected communities.** To help create this plan, we recommend the immediate creation of an inclusive national just transition task force, which can assess the financial and social costs of the energy and economic transition, identify

solutions, and make recommendations about a path forward.

- 2. Create a new federal Office of Economic Transition to coordinate and oversee the new national community transition program.** Guided by an advisory board reflective of affected stakeholder groups and communities, the Office would be charged to help synchronize ongoing efforts and leverage new public and private sector investments. The new Office should work to implement the action plan created by the task force.

ABOUT OUR PLATFORM

Intended to help strengthen and diversify local economies undergoing transition, the National Economic Transition platform combines workforce and economic development strategies, provides both immediate and long-term support to affected workers and communities, encourages entrepreneurial development, and promotes a clean environment. Our platform empowers workers and communities—in rural, urban, and tribal settings—as positive agents for change as our country reduces the risks and adapts to the realities of climate change while confronting economic and public health crises. These are solutions built by and for communities to create thriving, resilient economies that can withstand shocks like COVID-19 and equip workers and families.

The framework for this platform is built on seven pillars of integrated federal policy solutions that will help create vibrant, livable communities. Fully addressing the challenges of the energy transition requires a substantial local, state, and federal-level investment, as well as investment from the private sector and philanthropy. Only by investing at scale can we build resilient communities for our children, working families, and future generations.

More than 80 organizations and individuals collaborated to develop this National Economic Transition platform because we know that the communities in which we live, work, and play deserve better. Together, we call upon national leaders to advance its framework to serve the people and places affected by past and future coal closures.

#1 LOCAL LEADERSHIP

Invest in local, community-based leaders to help communities plan and respond. Leadership comes in all forms. Local leaders may be individuals from government, labor, non-profit, faith-based, small business, tribal or community organizations, or individual community members. Furthermore, local leadership will include representation from every part of the community, especially low-income communities and communities of color that have been left behind by the status quo. To ensure a community can plan for and respond to past, current, and future impacts from the decline of coal, local leaders must have access to adequate resources—both funding and expertise—to gather information about the impact, bring their community together to create a collective vision for the future, and plan a long-term strategy that fits the context of their community. Federal leaders should:



A. Provide critical capacity-building support for local leaders and organizations.

Given the local nature of this work, federal support should be provided to help build the capacity of local community-based leaders and organizations and facilitate community-driven planning processes and on-going program development and implementation. This is achievable through training and mentorship programs, grant funding to directly support salaries and materials needed for planning and program implementation, support from resource experts, and other technical assistance.

B. Provide resources and incentives to help communities plan early.

The sooner a community begins to plan for the transition away from coal, the more opportunity there is to address job and economic loss and to capitalize on and reinvest in a community's assets. Eligible communities should receive technical assistance and federal funding to plan for their future prior to the announcement of coal mine or plant closures. Creating a transition plan that identifies impacts, assets, and desired outcomes is strongly recommended and should make communities more competitive for further federal funding. Transition should be seen as a multi-year, multi-stage effort to build just, equitable, and prosperous communities.

C. Invest in organizations led by those too often left out of economic development and transition planning.

Funding should be directed to support leadership and develop capacity in Black, brown, and Indigenous-led organizations, as well as others too frequently left behind by the status quo and/or investments and planning around transition priorities, including young people, workers, women, and LGBTQ people.

#2 RESTORATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Invest in entrepreneurs and locally owned small businesses to grow diverse economic sectors that contribute to stronger, more resilient communities, improved public health, restored ecosystems and equitable opportunities for all people.

Supporting local entrepreneurship and business development can create economic resilience that resists shocks like COVID-19, encourages younger generations to stay and build their communities, and protects the health of individuals, communities, and places. Growing businesses in diverse economic sectors doesn't just create jobs, it can support clean air and water and the healthy stewardship of farmland, forests, and watersheds that is necessary for this resilience. Investments can support local communities in identifying the economic opportunities unique to their local assets that can fulfill these goals and ensure growth is equitable and inclusive. Communities and groups most adversely affected by resource extraction economies, including Native/Indigenous People and communities of color, should receive particular attention. To this end, the federal government must institute policies, regulations, programs, and tax structures that help expand these key sectors. Furthermore, any federal programs created for this purpose should develop with input from affected workers and communities, and include strong labor and procurement standards and respect for workers' organizing rights. Federal leaders should:



A. Expand entrepreneurship and small business development support in coal communities. Prioritize investment in new and expanding small to mid-size, locally owned enterprises in sectors, such as those identified below, that support a restorative economy. This investment should include increased support for the entrepreneurial ecosystem, such as training, mentorship, and technical assistance for startups and business expansions, as well as physical infrastructure. Increased access to capital, including flexible financing, loan guarantees, rate buydowns, collateral supports and a range of investment types will also grow these types of businesses. Furthermore, leveraging resources from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Agriculture, the Economic Development Administration, the Community Development Financial Institution Fund, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Energy, the Department Of Interior, and other federal agencies will support this work. Private sector investments that bridge capital gaps are needed to scale promising transition work.

B. Expand the clean, renewable energy sector, including energy efficiency, clean technology innovation, and manufacturing. This sector has great potential for creating good-quality jobs while also addressing the climate crisis by reducing carbon emissions. Expand energy efficiency retrofits for residential, commercial, and public buildings, prioritizing housing, schools, and municipal structures using grants, low-cost loans, on-bill financing, and other mechanisms. Businesses can realize substantial savings from efficiency measures and can use clean, renewable energy to stabilize costs over time. Residential efficiency measures can make homes safer, healthier and more comfortable while also reducing household energy bills. The federal government can support this sector through grants, rebates, tax credits, and innovative financing and policy initiatives that will make these measures affordable even for low-income households and small businesses. Programs should incentivize regional clean-tech manufacturing, and grants or low-interest financing should be available to groups that include tribal organizations, non-profits, and low-income communities that can't take advantage of tax credits. Federal policy should facilitate community solar and third party purchase agreements with strong labor standards, which are key to expanding the clean, renewable energy sector.

#2 RESTORATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CONT'D)

C. Invest in health as an economic driver by expanding essential health care infrastructure.

Federal programs should increase the number and capacity of healthcare professionals and invest in prevention and wellness by expanding primary care, mobile, and black lung clinics, as well as dental care, mental health services, and substance abuse prevention and recovery facilities. Guided by the ideas of local leaders, programs should provide cutting-edge, trauma-informed support for communities after closures.

D. Expand the sustainable agriculture and forestry sectors.

Communities need funding and other financial assistance for land and water access, land restoration, and sustainable production systems, including soil carbon sequestration practices on farms, ranches, and forest land. Programs should expand local food system infrastructure—such as food hubs, farmers' markets, and processing—that can return more value to farmers and communities. Support for regenerative agricultural practices can support farmers directly, put more money into impacted communities, and also sequester carbon, mitigate against drought, and increase land health and productivity.

E. Expand availability of, and infrastructure for, remote work opportunities across sectors.

COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that there are numerous remote work opportunities available in communities that are equipped with affordable high-speed broadband. With expanded access to key infrastructure paired with strengthened rural-to-urban partnerships, transitioning communities can close the digital divide and leverage demand from outside markets to create quality remote career opportunities that offer workers flexibility as well as nationally competitive salaries and benefits. Programs should encourage companies, organizations, and government agencies to promote quality remote work opportunities, and to prioritize making such opportunities available for qualified applicants in transitioning and other rural communities.



#3 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & WORKER HEALTH

Provide a broad system of support for workers and viable pathways to quality, family-sustaining jobs. Communities and workers affected by coal closures need targeted workforce development and training programs, in addition to investment in broader economic development strategies that spur quality job creation. Because coal closures can significantly affect supply chains and deplete the local tax base, causing local businesses to close and interrupting public sector services, solutions must include a special focus on the long-term needs and the well being of all workers affected by these economic changes. In rural communities, in urban settings, and on tribal lands, displaced coal workers and affected community members need targeted support to help manage the transition. To ensure workers have effective and equitable access to high-quality jobs (especially good union jobs) in both the public and private sectors, federal leaders should:

- A. Provide a bridge of support for workers.** Worker packages should include paid training connected to high-quality employment, guaranteed pensions, relocation assistance, healthcare support, and a bridge of meaningful wage differential and replacement until an affected worker either retires or finds new employment. Coal companies must pay their fair share to ensure miners suffering from black lung disease receive the benefits to which they are entitled.
- B. Provide skills training and connect workers to in-demand jobs.** Workforce programs should position workers to access high-quality, in-demand jobs by identifying existing workforce skill gaps in partnership with employers and developing and delivering demand-driven training to fill those gaps. Program participants should connect with employment through on-the-job training models, including formalized apprenticeships (and pre-apprenticeships) with unionization, and/or comprehensive job placement support.



- C. Invest in wrap-around workforce development programs.** Workforce programs should provide healthcare, transportation, childcare and other critical services that often prevent workers from completing training programs and obtaining the credentials they need for in-demand jobs. This includes access for those workers from Native/Indigenous communities and communities of color. Federal leaders should increase investment in workforce development programs at tribal colleges and state community colleges. Social enterprises are particularly important vehicles for creating quality jobs that prioritize up-skilling and wrap-around supports.
- D. Require more from companies.** Ensure utilities and mining companies issue longer periods of advanced closure notices and help communities prepare for transition. Advance notice and specific, defined schedules of phased closure are needed, with planned attrition and early retirement buyouts included. Require companies to work directly with affected workers, stakeholders, and communities to create workforce transition plans that prioritize the existing workforce either for immediate reclamation/remediation opportunities locally or jobs elsewhere within the utility or company or tied to company reinvestment in the community.

#4 RECLAMATION

Reclaim, remediate, and reuse coal sites to create jobs while restoring land and clean water. As coal production declines and workers and communities face an uncertain future, reclamation and remediation of coal sites offer a bright spot. Clean-up and decommissioning activities require a sizable workforce and can *immediately* mitigate the impact of layoffs and put former coal employees to work. Federal leaders should prioritize miners and power plant workers for reclamation and remediation jobs when possible and:

A. Ensure coal companies reclaim both existing and legacy abandoned coal mine sites.

Federal policy should end self-bonding (which allows coal companies to promise to complete reclamation) and review all bonds to ensure they adequately cover reclamation costs. Fund reclamation of historic abandoned mine sites by reauthorizing the federal Abandoned Mine Land (AML) fee paid on each ton of coal mined. The RECLAIM Act would direct \$1 billion over five years to reclaim abandoned mine lands and repurpose them for community-supported economic development projects like solar farms, recreation areas, and sustainable farming and forestry.

B. Expand the EPA Brownfields program with designated funds to repurpose former coal sites for new development.

Redeveloping power plant and industrial sites—associated with coal extraction, processing, transportation, and combustion—offers near-term job creation and new economic development opportunities. Expand the Brownfields program to meet the number of former coal sites in need of repurposing. The Brownfields program should coordinate with the Department of Labor to ensure that clean-up programs hire retrained workers, when possible, in affected communities.



C. Require utilities to pay for the complete cleanup and remediation of coal ash waste and groundwater contamination.

Federal coal ash rules should be strengthened and federal policy should require coal-fired power plants to post bonds that cover the full cost of remediation. Require utilities to excavate coal ash from all unlined sites and dispose of it either in lined, dry landfills, away from waterways, or by recycling it for cement or other uses, in a manner that protects public health and the environment.

D. Plan for unanticipated closures and the possibility of inadequate reclamation funds.

Federal policy should require all coal mines and power plants to provide advance notice of closure, develop closure plans that include safety and worker transition plans, and detail company resources available for closure. The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement should require all state regulatory authorities to develop bond forfeiture contingency plans and response plans. A new federal program should provide funding for unanticipated closures, including when bonds are insufficient to cover the full costs of reclamation and remediation.

PLATFORM FOR NATIONAL ECONOMIC TRANSITION

#5 INFRASTRUCTURE

Invest in physical and social infrastructure to stimulate economic development and build a foundation for change.

When coal plants close, the lost tax revenue negatively impacts both physical infrastructure, like local schools, as well as societal services like fire departments. Investing in a community's physical infrastructure (such as roads, rails, airports, and drinking and wastewater), social infrastructure (such as education, health, housing) and tech infrastructure (like broadband) helps create jobs, stimulate the local economy, and encourage private investment. Communities should drive infrastructure investment decisions and planning.

A. Provide support to communities facing the loss of significant local tax revenue from coal closures. The federal government should establish or augment programs to provide temporary replacement of lost tax revenue previously provided through local property taxes or state severance taxes derived directly from coal, focusing on locations where local taxation authority has been maximized.

B. Prioritize connectivity through broadband access. Economic development and participation in new economic opportunities is driven by connectivity. Federal programs should ensure coal communities have reliable, affordable, broadband access that enables them to develop remote work opportunities, access training opportunities, and benefit from and advance next-generation clean energy technologies.

C. Invest in social infrastructure. A healthy and educated workforce in both the public and private sectors is essential for prosperity. Healthcare facilities, tribal and community colleges, and public schools should be accessible and modernized. Investment in supporting the local public sector workforce is essential. Federal programs should restore and maintain public community social spaces and provide funding for the public sector, public services, and community programs that support recreation, arts, and other creative programming.

D. Invest in physical infrastructure. Federal programs should prioritize investments in improving roads, rails, and airports in affected communities, creating jobs and providing important economic development opportunities. Federal programs should also support robust water infrastructure, especially in light of the impact of coal mining and processing on wells and waterways, to ensure that every community has access to affordable potable water, wastewater systems, and solid waste treatment or removal. These infrastructure projects will immediately create jobs and better conditions for long-term economic growth, as well as have a critical impact on public health.

E. Maximize benefits of infrastructure investments for workers and communities. Federal policy should ensure that projects built with public resources include labor standards, domestic content requirements, project labor agreements, community benefit agreements, local hiring, and other provisions that improve training, working conditions, and project benefits for communities.

F. Invest equitably in tribal and Indigenous communities. Seventy-five percent of the unelectrified homes in the U.S. are located on tribal lands, and tribal and indigenous communities in general need significant investment.



#6 BANKRUPTCY

Protect workers, taxpayers, communities, and the environment during bankruptcies.

Companies often enter bankruptcy proceedings owing workers and local and state governments unpaid wages, taxes, royalties, and paycheck contributions to retirement and health plans. Federal law prioritizes repayment of bank loans rather than repayment of debts to workers and their communities. As more companies go through bankruptcy, fewer companies will be available to purchase mines and take over reclamation obligations, increasing the likelihood of mine closures and bond forfeitures. Many states' bonding systems are not robust enough to withstand widespread bankruptcy, which will leave abandoned mines with inadequate reclamation funding. A series of protections, if established prior to future bankruptcies, can help buffer workers and taxpayers from some of the worst impacts of bankruptcies. Federal leaders should:

A. Require performance bonds to ensure workers are paid.

Federal policy should require coal companies to carry surety bonds to ensure that employee payroll and retiree pensions are covered in the event of bankruptcy, similar to requirements in Kentucky and Montana for certain mining companies and other companies.

B. Ensure financial compliance. It should be the responsibility of regulatory agencies to ensure that companies do not owe back taxes or federal royalties, unpaid employee wages or pensions, or paycheck contributions before approving transfer of leases and mining permits, which offloads these liabilities to new owners.



#7 COORDINATION AND ACCESS

Empower local communities by providing direct access to federal resources. We recommend a structure of supports to ensure federal programs are coordinated, grounded in communities, and responsive to local needs. In addition to creating the national task force, coordinating office, and advisory board mentioned above, federal leaders should:

A. Launch a comprehensive, interagency grants program.

Participating agencies should include (but not be limited to) the Appalachian Regional Commission, Economic Development Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, the Department of Agriculture, the Small Business Administration, and the Department of Labor. Tribal interests must be represented. Agency coordination, community engagement, and early planning are essential to build lasting economic resilience. Participation in a stakeholder process to facilitate community ownership and engagement should be a requirement to access funds.

B. Ensure affected communities have a voice. It is incumbent upon the federal government to help communities understand how to access and apply for transition funds. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has played an important role in helping Appalachian communities respond to the changing coal economy. Federal leaders should ensure communities in the West, Midwest, and affected sovereign tribal nations have similar representation modelled after the ARC's regionally-responsive structure.



Photo courtesy Natural Capital Investment Fund/Sam Levitan

PLATFORM CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

While many communities that once relied on coal are in crisis, leaders from these communities are developing and implementing solutions that create inclusive, equitable, and sustainable economic growth. This National Economic Transition platform represents the best thinking of those local leaders and the best of those solutions, offering federal and national leaders a path forward to ensure that no community in this country is left behind during the transition away from coal. The stakes are high.

Already, COVID-19 has layered challenges upon challenges for those already facing unprecedented struggles. The livelihoods of thousands of communities and tens of millions of people rely on us getting this transition right. Political leaders across the country must make the decision to engage and make significant investments now using the community-driven framework and scalable solutions provided by this platform.

For the health of our communities, the strength of our economy, the future of the country, and the well-being of the communities that powered this country for generations, this is an opportunity we cannot afford to miss.

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Launched and led
by the Just Transition Fund
and partners across the country:



Engagement
process
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