

Draft

February 8, 2018

Dear County Manager X,

I write to inform you about an opportunity for your community to benefit from a new source of funding designed to support environmental protection, economic development and renewable energy.

The funding originates from the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and will be placed in trust to focus benefits on the eight counties the pipeline will cross: Northampton, Halifax, Nash, Wilson, Johnston, Sampson, Cumberland and Robeson.

The \$57.8 million fund will be overseen by a board of trustees that will authorize allocations. That board will solicit and review applications from qualifying governmental entities and nonprofits, and I invite you to work with interested parties in your communities to establish priority requests for consideration.

The purposes as established by the Governor's office Memorandum of Understanding are as follows:

- Protection of natural resources along the pipeline's path beyond that required by the pipeline's permit, including protection of sensitive forests, waterways and preserving natural habitats;
- Economic Development in qualifying areas, such as supplying natural gas access for industrial recruitment and job growth;
- Renewable energy projects to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and provide a carbon offset, such as weatherization for better energy efficiency and community solar for clean energy production.

While governmental entities and nonprofits may apply for funding individually, your county may decide that a collaborative approach would yield the best result with the least duplication.

The board of trustees that will oversee the fund will be made up of seven subject-matter experts, including the state secretaries of Environmental Quality, Commerce and Natural and Cultural Resources and the executive director of the Wildlife Resources Commission or their designees; and one expert each in environmental protection, economic development and renewable energy.

The process for application and performance measures will be decided by the board with recommendations from the trust administrator. Please be aware that the board's activities, including applicants' submissions, meetings where the applications are considered and post-award accountability measures, will be subject to the state's Open Meetings and Public Records laws.

The fund will be established after final Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approval, with half the total deposited on that date and the other upon the pipeline's completion. The trust will be established in conjunction with a North Carolina financial institution

While the needs of Eastern North Carolina are great, this fund provides an unprecedented opportunity to create opportunity for economic growth while protecting and preserving important environmental areas.

Thank you for your thoughts regarding needs in your communities, and please feel free to share this information with other organizations in your county such as municipalities, school districts, environmental nonprofits, economic development offices and other eligible entities.

When the fund and application process are established we will notify your offices. Thank you for the work you do on behalf of the people of your county and our state.

Sincerely,

Kristi Jones
Chief of Staff

CC: North Carolina School Boards Association
North Carolina League of Municipalities
North Carolina Association of County Commissioners