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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT VEER TO HELP SOUTHWESTERN VIRGINIA MANUFACTURERS EXPAND INTO WIND ENERGY SUPPLY CHAIN

Public-Private Initiative Seizes Significant Opportunity to Fill Supply Gap

BRISTOL, VA. — Project Veer is an economic development initiative designed for manufacturers in Virginia’s Southwest to give them entry points into the supply chain for wind energy equipment components. The project was announced today by InvestSWVA, which designed and coalesced the project with funding from GO Virginia Region One Council, the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission and Coalfield Strategies.

The project team, which includes global energy consulting firm Xodus, will bring together Southwest Virginia’s manufacturers with industry experts, public-sector partners, the Hampton Roads Alliance, Dominion Energy, Appalachian Power, and GO Virginia Region One’s economic and workforce development organizations to advance the region’s entry into this new market. Region One is the only GO Virginia region with energy and minerals as a target industry in its Growth and Diversification Plan. Project Veer acts on this priority by connecting the new energy economy to Southwest Virginia’s manufacturers in search of ways to expand their production models. The project picks up from an opportunity illustrated by the Hampton Roads Alliance, whose study exposed gaps in the supply chain and defined how manufacturers could fill them.

In the first quarter of 2021, the Hampton Roads Alliance began working with Xodus Group and BW Research to conduct a major offshore wind supply chain study for Virginia’s Hampton Roads area. The study provided an in-depth offshore wind supply chain assessment and gap analysis for the Hampton Roads metropolitan area and wider Southern Virginia. It scored the supply chain requirements, identified key sectors, and analyzed the strengths and limitations of Hampton Roads. Its set of recommendations for a measurable, strategically focused offshore wind development plan was based on available strengths and market forces, including paths for manufacturing partners and potential investors.

Project Veer to help Southwestern Virginia manufacturers expand into the wind industry supply chain

Renewable energy developers and original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) require a wide range of products and services, from highly technical components to services such as transportation in support of project delivery. There is a willingness by global and national developers and OEMs to help new players enter the industry and work with geographic regions to implement workforce development programs. The support of regional agencies and industry partners also lowers risk. Finally, the opportunity to build credentials in the wind energy space opens local manufacturers to markets not just in the Commonwealth of Virginia but beyond.

“Renewable energy developers and OEMs need partners who produce quality components and deliver them on time,” said **Will Payne, Managing Partner of Coalfield Strategies and project lead for InvestSWVA**. “We have partners who fit this bill in Virginia’s Southwest. Now we have some infrastructure to help them explore their entry into the burgeoning wind energy market, while leveraging the energy industry experience many of them already possess.”

“As a team that works on the front end of the wind energy sector, globally, Xodus is excited to see Virginia’s Southwest manufacturers enter the supply chain,” said **Jeff Tingley, Xodus senior consultant**. “Our role in the project is threefold. First, to help Southwest’s economic developers determine the available market and pathways for companies to participate in the regional renewable energy industry. Second, to create employment opportunities for the regional workforce, at all levels. And third, to recommend actions that promote Southwest manufacturers as key members of the wind energy supply chain.”

“The Hampton Roads Alliance congratulates InvestSWVA on initiating Project Veer,” said **Doug Smith, Alliance president and CEO**. “Offshore wind and the clean energy economy represent a generational opportunity for economic growth in Virginia. Project Veer’s mission to connect Southwest Virginia’s advanced manufacturing base to this opportunity will benefit the region and will also be of vital importance in establishing the Commonwealth as a hub of the U.S. offshore wind industry.”

“Dominion Energy Virginia is actively engaging business communities to bring offshore wind supply chain economic opportunities to all regions of the Commonwealth,” said **John Larson, Dominion Energy director of public policy and economic development**. “We look forward to working with Project Veer to tap into the strong manufacturing legacy of Southwest Virginia to help the region capitalize on the growing wind energy industry.”

“There’s no doubt renewable energy is on a growth trajectory, and there’s no doubt Southwest Virginia can benefit economically by adapting the skills of its workforce to support that growth,” said **Chris Beam, Appalachian Power president and COO**. “We appreciate InvestSWVA’s forward-looking efforts to help workers and businesses in this part of our service area prepare for, and ultimately prosper from, these coming opportunities.”

“Southwest Virginia manufacturers speak 'energy' fluently,” said **Mike Quillen, chair of the Southwest Virginia Energy Research and Development Authority**. “Of course, giving our region's manufacturers more options for their companies is a key activity of economic

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development. Just as interesting, Project Veer is also nice alignment with the energy legacy and future of this region. This is of great benefit to renewable energy developers and their OEMs.”

“Project Veer is another strong example of delivering to our charge to broaden the Southwest Region's economy,” said **Terry Kilgore, the District One delegate to the Virginia House of Delegates, Majority Leader, and chairman of the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission**. “The great thing about this project is, it taps what our manufacturers do best – stay in step with market opportunity and provide high quality products.”

For more information, visit [Project Veer](#).

About InvestSWVA

InvestSWVA is a public-private business research, attraction and marketing campaign for Southwest Virginia launched under the umbrella of the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission and backed by private industry. Visit [InvestSWVA](#) to learn more.

About Hampton Roads Alliance

The Hampton Roads Alliance is the leading regional economic development organization for Hampton Roads, VA. It is a nonprofit, public-private partnership representing 11 localities and over 70 private sector investors. With the support of its community and business partners, the Alliance serves as the region's single point of contact for regional economic development to assist domestic and international companies who are considering expansion or relocating to the Hampton Roads region. Its mission is to work collaboratively to attract, grow and retain higher-wage industries and talent to create a more resilient, inclusive and diverse region of choice. Visit [The Hampton Roads Alliance](#) to learn more.

About Appalachian Power

Appalachian Power has 1 million customers in Virginia, West Virginia and Tennessee (as AEP Appalachian Power). It is part of American Electric Power, which is focused on building a smarter energy infrastructure and delivering new technologies and custom energy solutions. AEP's approximately 17,400 employees operate and maintain the nation's largest electricity transmission system and more than 221,000 miles of distribution lines to efficiently deliver safe, reliable power to nearly 5.4 million customers in 11 states. AEP is also one of the nation's largest electricity producers with approximately 31,000 megawatts of diverse generating capacity, including 5,200 megawatts of renewable energy. Visit [Appalachian Power](#) to learn more.

About Dominion Energy

More than 7 million customers in 20 states energize their homes and businesses with electricity or natural gas from Dominion Energy (NYSE: D), headquartered in Richmond, Va. The company is committed to sustainable, reliable, affordable and safe energy and to achieving net zero carbon dioxide and methane emissions from its power generation and gas infrastructure operations by 2050. Visit [Dominion Energy](#) to learn more.

About the Southwest Virginia Energy Research and Development Authority

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The Authority is established for the purposes of promoting opportunities for energy development in Southwest Virginia, to create jobs and economic activity in Southwest Virginia consistent with the Virginia Energy Plan (67-200 et seq.), and to position Southwest Virginia and the Commonwealth as a leader in energy workforce and energy technology research and development. Visit [SWVAenergy](#) to learn more.

About GO Virginia Region One

The Virginia Initiative for Growth and Opportunity (GO Virginia) is a bipartisan, business-led economic development initiative that is changing the way Virginia's diverse regions collaborate on economic and workforce development activities. The GO Virginia initiative is to promote the creation of high wage careers, private-sector job growth, and diversification across the Commonwealth through incentivized regional collaboration. GO Virginia Region One represents thirteen counties and three cities in Southwest Virginia; including the counties of Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, and Wythe, and the Cities of Bristol, Galax, and Norton. Visit [GOSWVA.org](#) to learn more.

About the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission

The Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission is a 28-member body created by the 1999 General Assembly. Its mission is the promotion of economic growth and development in tobacco-dependent communities, using proceeds of the national tobacco settlement. To date, the Commission has awarded over 2000 grants totaling more than \$1.1 billion across the tobacco region of the Commonwealth, and has provided \$309 million in indemnification payments to tobacco growers and quota holders. Visit [RevitalizeVA.org](#) to learn more.

About Xodus Group

Xodus advises clients on a broad range of energy topics from sustainability, energy mix diversification and environmental impact to new and emerging technologies. The company provides holistic support and insight through the integration of engineering, corporate management consultancy and environmental science. Visit [Xodus](#) to learn more.

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