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June 25, 2019

Mr. Robert Rice
Director
Division of Land Restoration
WV Dept. of Environmental Protection
601 57th Street SE
Charleston, West Virginia 25304-0001

Dear Mr. Rice,

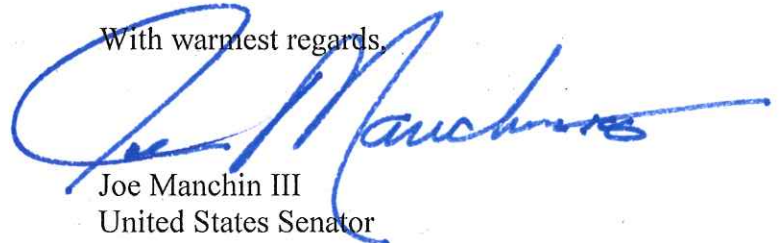
I have been alerted that Friends of Blackwater is submitting a grant application to the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection under the 2019 Abandoned Mine Lands Economic and Community Development Pilot Program.

I am writing to express my support for Friends of Blackwater, their partners, and this application. I understand that, if approved, funding provided by this opportunity will be utilized for remediation and economic development efforts in Tucker County, West Virginia.

Specifically, these efforts would allow for the remediation of acid mine drainage in the North Fork of the Blackwater River, expand a recreational trail system to connect local communities with Monongahela National Forest and Blackwater Falls State Park, restoration of the historical Davis Coal and Coke Company Engineering Building in Thomas, creation of a sub-grant program, and covers the costs of one staff member that would manage grant implementation, facilitate collaboration with communities and work on promotion of the area.

I greatly appreciate your noting my interest in this application and providing it a full and fair review. I am proud to lend my support for this project and others like it that seek to spur economic growth, create jobs, promote tourism and recreation, and improve the lives of West Virginians. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

With warmest regards,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

cc: Travis Parsons, WV DEP

JM/rt