Manufacturing Valuable Coal-Derived Products in Southern Appalachia

PI: Charles Sims, University of Tennessee November 1, 2021





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Project mission and objectives



<u>Mission</u>

- 1. Revitalizing distressed Southern Appalachian coal communities
- 2. Reducing reliance on foreign imports of REE and CM

<u>Objective</u>: Develop and deploy new technologies for manufacturing rare earth elements (REE), critical minerals (CM), and valuable non-fuel, carbon-based products (CBP) from coal and/or coal waste in the Southern App Basin

Key locations reflecting our unique resource base



AL-GA-TN contains almost 250M tons of stored coal ash (roughly 10% of US inventory), mainly at SO and TVA sites, with typical REE concentrations > 400 ppm[~5X SoApp coal average]

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REE data will be obtained for 420 ash/CCP samples (30 distributed samples per pond) collected from 14 different ash ponds Coal surface and underground mines, coal preparation plants

Other potential sources

- Coal mine refuse piles (low-quality coals and shale interbeds) will be assessed for REE-CM and CBP potential
- Acid mine drainage (AMD) wastes
- Co-produced water from coal-bed methane wells
- Coal de-watering projects
- Coal prep plant waste
- Coal mine tailings (typically shales and clays)



3 key features of our CORE-CM program

- **Incomparable REE innovation ecosystem** with massive coal ash inventory (~ 10% of US coal ash is in AL-GA-TN typically containing > 400 ppm REE);
- Unique manufacturing R&D capabilities in carbon fibers, 3D printing, batteries, and graphite

Novel separations expertise

- HPC modeling of REE separations
- **Biological processing (ORNL, UT)**
- Electromagnetic processing (ORNL)
- Thermochemical (Nth Cycle, American Renewable Metals)

Text on HPC modeling of REE separations, edited by a team member

Bicycle parts made with hi-modulus pitch carbon fiber



Technology Innovation Center







- Follows and leverages IACMI's distributed innovation network "affiliate" model
- Composites: > 200k sq ft of uniquely equipped facilities in 6 states valued > \$300M
- CORE-CM: Facilities identified at ORNL, Southern Company, UAB, UTK; more potential



A diverse and experienced team

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IACMI (Applicant – Managed by Collaborative Composites Solutions Corporation) Geological Survey of Alabama (GSA) Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) Roane State Community College (RSCC) Southern Company (SO) Tennessee Geological Survey (TGS) University of Alabama-Birmingham (UAB) University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa (UA) University of Tennessee-Knoxville (UTK)

Prime Recipient: Principal Investigator: John Hopkins, CEO Charles Sims HE HOWARD H BAKER IACMI **Baker Center for Public Policy** CENTER University of Tennessee INIVERSITY & TENNESSEE Task 1: Project Management Erin Brophy, IACMI Heather Castleberry, IACMI Catherine Ross. IACMI Task 7: Stakeholder Outreach Task 6: Technology Innovation Task 4: Strategies for Infrastructure. **Task 5: Technology Assessment** and Education Center **Industries and Business** Joannie Harmon, IACMI Edgar Lara-Curzio, ORNL John Hopkins, IACMI Charles Sims, UTK Mark Morrison, IACMI Art Ragauskas, ORNL Cliff Eberle, IACMI Matthew Murray, UTK Kim Harris, RSCC Cliff Eberle, IACMI **Riley Flowers, SO** Randall Jackson, EconAlvze Teresa Duncan, RSCC Deborah Penchoff, UTK Charles Sims, UTK Deborah Penchoff, UTK Nikki Luke, UTK M. Parans Paranthaman, ORNL Rona J. Donahoe, UA Jill Welch, UTK Manoj K. Mahapatra, UAB Edgar Lara-Curzio, ORNL John Hopkins, IACMI Brian Pillay, UAB Uday Vaidya, UTK

Uday Vaidya, UTK

Brian Pillay, UAB

Task 2: Resource Assessment Rona J. Donahoe, UA Marcella McIntyre-Redden, GSA Barry W. Miller, TGS Riley Flowers, SO

Task 3: Waste Stream Reuse Riley Flowers, SO Eric Pierce, ORNL Manoj Mahapatra, UAB

Why is this important to the region?



Coal production in the Southern Appalachian Basin has fallen nearly 70% over the last decade leading to job losses



Note: * = 2020 production is estimated based on the annualized growth rate of the total production in the first 3 quarters of 2020. Appalachian coal-producing regions include only Appalachian coal-mining counties, defined as those that, based on MSHA data, have non-zero coal production or more than 10 coal-mining jobs in any year between 2005 and 2020.

Source: Bowen et al. 2020



Decline in coal production driven by shift away from coal-fired electricity generation that is not expected to reverse



Source: Davis, Holladay, and Sims. 2020

Automotive manufacturing: a regional economic powerhouse



8 major assembly plants with 4 producing electric vehicles

2021: Ford announces new \$5.7B investment in electric vehicle and battery manufacturing plant in West TN

> 2021: Mazda Toyota joint venture in Huntsville, AL begins production



SE US auto assembly plants

2019: Volkswagen breaks ground on plant expansion to produce and test electric vehicles

Stakeholder Outreach and Education



IACMI will lead stakeholder outreach efforts with planned conversations and meeting, public events and workshops and various forms of media (website updates, press releases, social media posts, etc.) in the basinal areas with:





Local communities

State & local governments



Business & industry partners

Econ. Dev. groups & Non-profits

Outreach

Challenges and Opportunities

Fostering a supply chain that doesn't currently exist

- Data exists to characterize upstream (coal, ash) and downstream (REE, CM) supply chain linkages
- Traditional approaches can't characterize critical midstream CORE-CM supply chain linkages as these industries do not yet exist.

Assessing impacts of coal mining and coal waste streams in underserved communities

<u>Step 1</u>: Potentially impacted communities will be identified and impacts on legacy environmental impacts of CORE-CM activities in the SoApp will be assessed

<u>Step 2</u>: Surveys and interviews with member of underserved communities impacts by coal mining and coal waste streams in Alabama and Tennessee.

Utilize existing contacts within social justice organizations in TN and AL to identify members of underserved communities in and around current and legacy coal mining communities and communities impacted by coal waste streams

Thank you for attending!! Questions?

cbsims@utk.edu

www.iacmi.org

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