

Delegate Will Morefield Announces Salmon Aquaculture Facility Coming to Southwest VA - \$228 Million Private Investment

Delegate Will Morefield (HD 3) announced one of the largest private capital investments implemented in the history of Southwest VA - to create over 200 jobs.

NORTH TAZEWELL, VA, USA, November 17, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, Delegate Will Morefield is pleased to announce one of the largest private capital investment projects implemented in the history of Southwest Virginia that will create over 200 high-paying jobs in the region.

Recognizing the need to diversify the economy in Southwest Virginia, Delegate Will Morefield (HD-3) traveled to Israel seven years ago in search of new economic opportunities for the region. During his travels, he observed several large-scale aquaculture pilot projects which became the inspiration for a similar project coming to the Cumberland Region in 2023: Project Jonah. Delegate Morefield's research and advocacy for this project will now bring to the coalfield region the largest vertically integrated indoor aquaculture facility in the world.



Project Jonah would never be possible without the collaboration between Buchanan, Russell, and Tazewell Counties, all of which had been considered as potential project sites. Realizing the project was too large for one county to land on its own, the three counties established a regional industrial facilities authority in 2017 to provide for sharing of future tax revenue and joint contributions to local incentives for the project. Just last month, the counties entered into a historic revenue sharing agreement, concluding negotiations after almost six years working to make the project a reality.

Construction of Project Jonah will be led by Pure Salmon, one of the fastest-growing Atlantic salmon companies in the world. The company will invest approximately \$228 million in the creation of the facility, which will be located between Tazewell and Russell Counties and

promises to raise and produce around 20,000 tons of salmon each year. As an environmentally friendly industry and an opportunity to supplement the area's coal-driven economy, the project will constitute one of the Cumberland Region's most important economic development efforts, as well as one of the largest private capital investment projects implemented in the history of Southwest Virginia.



In addition to its historic significance, Project Jonah will have an overwhelmingly positive impact on Southwest Virginia's coalfield counties. The countless new job opportunities produced by the

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Project Jonah is a leading example of how we can start attracting investment on an international level and rebuilding our economy from the ground up.”

Delegate Will Morefield

new facility will not only enable the region to make the most of its workforce's talents and skills, but also enable residents to stay in the area rather than moving away from home to find work and provide opportunities for future generations. This collaborative effort promises to strengthen communities and improve quality of life for all residents in the region.

Apart from the assistance given by all three participating counties, the project has also received support from the

Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority, Southwest Virginia Community College, and the College Foundation.

Project Jonah will officially begin site preparation this winter near Southwest Virginia Community College, where it has purchased 203 acres of land. It is expected to be completed by the end of 2023.

Delegate Morefield stated, “I am honored to have been able to advocate for this project and help it become a reality for the hardworking families in our region. Southwest Virginia has been hit hard in recent years as the coal industry has declined. This will be a great opportunity to employ deserving workers while providing a world-class facility that will positively impact Appalachia. I am so proud of the local leaders for their effort in working together. A tremendous amount of work has gone into this project since I was first invited to Israel by my friend Aaron Roberts to seek out economic opportunities for Southwest Virginia. I thank God, my family for supporting me throughout this endeavor, and the people of Southwest Virginia for making this a reality. We are confident this will be the beginning of many great projects to come. Combined with local, state, and federal incentives, Southwest Virginia can offer companies an even better reason to locate here. Project Jonah is a leading example of how we can start attracting investment on an

international level and rebuilding our economy from the ground up. We can and must work together to ensure that our region has a bright future.”

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