



## OSM/VISTA Big Coal River, WV

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As an OSM/VISTA, I support the mission of improving the overall picture of the communities served by Big Coal River Watershed Association (BCRWA). The goals, both long and short term, include identifying negative stressors in the communities served, assessing community resources, educating the citizens about these stressors/resources and utilize the knowledge gained from the citizens to work with appropriate groups to alleviate, repair, or eliminate stressors and enhance resources. Stressors identified include acid mine drainage affecting water quality, lack of new economic development, open dumps, litter, flooding issues, lack of recycling, mountain top removal mining, logging, lack of education, under utilization of community resources, no recreational facilities/activities, transportation and access to other communities.



My work plan includes utilizing equipment to plot and test possible AMD sites and record the data collected. Also, I must work with other agencies to gather any other pertinent data on these sites. This is an ongoing process. Once these sites are identified then the steps to remediation can begin. BCRWA is in the schools with an environmental education program for youth ages 6-16. They are being instructed about positive stewardship of their natural resources,

the watershed concept, and ways they can make a difference in their own tomorrow. Volunteers are also working to obtain a donation of a piece of land that would be prime for developing a stocked lake, camping facilities, nature trails, and other outdoor recreational facilities (this was prior mined land). Other projects include open dump site remediation, in-stream cleanups, stream bank stabilization, and the beginning of a community policing program. BCRWA is encouraging beautification of the communities served to help create pride.

The OSM/VISTA can concentrate on these goals and work toward making the organization and the communities served sustainable, independent, and successful. They can accomplish this by educating all involved how to use the resources available. By using their time to recruit volunteers to participate in various projects, educating them how to be a more vital part of the community, and giving them ownership of the

accomplishments, they are instilling positive thinking, pride, and a need for continued growth in the citizens of communities that for so long have been deprived economically, socially, educationally and environmentally

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