



Brent T. Wahlquist
Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement



Brent Wahlquist was the ninth Director of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement. Created in 1977 under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA), OSM works in partnership with state and tribal Governments to regulate active coal mining and reclamation and to reclaim abandoned mines. Wahlquist was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate on August 3, 2007, the 30th anniversary of SMCRA.

Before then, Wahlquist served as OSM's Acting Director for almost two years. Wahlquist also has held various positions in state and Federal government, consulting, land holding, and mining over the past 35 years. Raised in Idaho, he holds a PhD in biology from New Mexico State University, as well as master's and bachelor's degrees in botany from Brigham Young University in Utah.

Wahlquist began his career in 1971 as principal investigator and project manager for environmental studies of electric generating stations, transmission lines and coal mines at Westinghouse Electric in Pennsylvania. In 1977, he joined Rocky Mountain Energy Corporation in Colorado where he continued working on environmental issues related to coal mining. The following year, he went to work for Carbon Fuel Company in West Virginia developing the company's capability to meet the requirements of the newly enacted SMCRA at the company's coal mines in West Virginia and Kentucky.