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News Release

Salazar Announces \$395 Million Available to States and Tribes for Cleaning Up Abandoned Coal Mines

Grants create jobs, eliminate health and safety hazards in coalfield communities across the nation

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today announced the availability of more than \$395 million in grants to states and tribes to restore abandoned mine lands nationwide, generating jobs and eliminating health and safety hazards caused by past coal mining. The Fiscal Year 2011 funding for the grants administered by Interior's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) represents an increase of more than \$25 million over last year.

"These grants have significant economic and environmental impacts in coalfield communities across the country," said Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. "In the past three years alone, OSM has distributed more than a billion dollars in these funds to states and tribes, enabling them to undertake projects that benefit the environment while employing people living in affected areas."

The grants, which are funded in part by a per-ton reclamation fee levied on all coal produced in the United States, allow state and tribal Abandoned Mine Land (AML) programs to correct environmental damage from past mining, reclaim steep and unstable slopes, improve water quality by treating acid mine drainage, and restore water supplies damaged by mining, among other things.

"The AML Program represents real, on-the-ground service to communities," said OSM Director Joe Pizarchik. "The program's grants allow local people to benefit in three ways. First, their state or tribe can address their highest local priorities first. Second, our partners hire local workers to the benefit of local economies, which triggers an economic multiplier effect. Finally, the entire community benefits from a cleaner environment."

A 2009 Department of the Interior economic study showed that when state and tribal AML programs invested the \$298 million available during that fiscal year, the cumulative economic impact in the communities where projects were completed was estimated at \$733 million. The same study indicated AML funding was directly responsible for nearly 3,300 jobs.

OSM provides these grants to 28 coal-producing states and tribes according to a formula based on their past and present coal production. OSM will award grants to the states and tribes over the next nine months as they apply for specific reclamation projects.

Of the total \$395 million in FY 2011 grants, \$150 million comes from the reclamation fees collected, while \$245 million is derived from the U.S. Treasury. Since 1977, when Congress passed the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act to create OSM and the AML program, the bureau has provided states and tribes more than \$7 billion to reclaim more than 285,000 acres of hazardous high-priority abandoned mine sites.

The FY 2011 AML funding available to eligible coal-producing states and tribes is as follows:

Alabama \$ 7,353,617

New Mexico \$ 4,561,458

Alaska	\$ 2,398,714	North Dakota	\$ 3,425,951
Arkansas	\$ 2,313,073	Ohio	\$ 12,303,893
Colorado	\$ 7,322,466	Oklahoma	\$ 2,483,693
Illinois	\$ 17,211,418	Pennsylvania	\$ 47,627,365
Indiana	\$ 13,102,140	Tennessee	\$ 2,600,437
Iowa	\$ 2,464,845	Texas	\$ 4,672,759
Kansas	\$ 2,443,394	Utah	\$ 4,204,645
Kentucky	\$ 37,721,012	Virginia	\$ 9,065,985
Louisiana	\$ 370,701	West Virginia	\$ 51,339,855
Maryland	\$ 2,658,327	Wyoming	\$133,062,524
Mississippi	\$ 256,484	Crow Tribe	\$ 1,952,992
Missouri	\$ 2,512,881	Hopi Tribe	\$ 1,211,532
Montana	\$ 12,163,821	Navajo Nation	\$ 6,751,382

Fiscal Year 2011 Abandoned Mine Land Grant Distributions

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement carries out the requirements of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 in cooperation with states and tribes. OSM's objectives are to ensure that coal mining activities are conducted in a manner that protects citizens and the environment during mining, to ensure that the land is restored to beneficial use after mining, and to mitigate the effects of past mining by aggressively pursuing reclamation of abandoned coal mines.

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<< Previous

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Next >>

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