

News Release

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation & Enforcement
A Bureau of the U. S. Department of the Interior



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: October 17, 2019

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OSMRE to Recognize Peabody, Navajo Transitional Energy Corporation and ICG Tygart Valley at the 2019 Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards

Washington, DC – The [Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement](#) (OSMRE) today recognized the winners of its 2019 Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards. The [Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards](#) are presented to coal mining companies that achieve the most exemplary coal mine reclamation in the nation. Past winners have demonstrated a commitment to sound mining practices and effective reclamation plans that enhanced the post-mining use of the land.

OSMRE has recognized high-quality coal mine land reclamation since 1986. The awards program was designed to encourage citizen and private sector involvement in the care of America's resources, recognize the outstanding reclamation that is being achieved by companies under the [Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act](#) (SMCRA), capture and infuse in others a spirit of commitment to restoring the land after it is mined for coal and provide a catalyst for the transfer of new or innovative technology for wider use.

All of the winning projects went beyond the reclamation requirements of SMCRA to achieve superior results in returning a site to productive use after completion of mining. A team of judges reviewed the nominations and voted on projects based on the following criteria:

- Difficulty of achieving reclamation under existing conditions
- Effectiveness of the on-site work
- Extent to which project exceeds the spirit and intent of SMCRA
- Increase public awareness of SMCRA
- Long-term benefit to the community
- Transferability of the on-site practice to other reclamation projects

OSMRE is recognizing mine operators in two categories for 2019:

National Awards

This award is presented to coal mining companies for achieving the most exemplary mining and reclamation in the country. A coal mining operation may be nominated for achievement in a specific aspect of the reclamation, such as the design and implementation of sedimentation control practices, or for its overall performance in meeting the goals of SMCRA.

Good Neighbor Awards

Mine operators are selected to receive Good Neighbor Awards for successfully working with the surrounding landowners and the community while completing mining and reclamation.

This year's awardees are:

National Award

Peabody Western Coal Company

Kayenta Mine

Black Mesa, Arizona

The judges cited Peabody's Kayenta mine for its utilization of geomorphic reclamation, sinuous drains, and multiple sub-watersheds to achieve post-mining land uses of rangeland grazing, wildlife habitat, and cultural plant habitat. As part of the cultural planting, the reclamation team included a cultural seed mix for Navajo and Hopi medicine men.

National Award

Peabody Midwest Mining, LLC

Vermilion Grove Mine

Ridge Farm, Illinois

The mine's use of a filter press to de-water slurry generated from a coal preparation plant allowed for increased compaction levels, a smaller footprint of refuse area reclamation, and allowed for recovery of water in the plant. Additionally, the company employed techniques such as layering clay, subsoil, and topsoil to total four feet of cover material. This method allowed for the successful implementation of post-mining land uses of herbaceous wildlife cover and high-capability cropland adjacent to the slurry impoundment. These techniques can be transferred to other sites where water resources are limited and land is costly.

Good Neighbor Award

ICG Tygart Valley

Leer Mine Complex

Grafton, West Virginia

ICG nominated the Leer Mine Complex as a Good Neighbor for its efforts to reduce noise and visibility of the mining operations. Newly installed centrifugal fans inside sound-insulated buildings reduced noise levels to the extent that previously concerned patrons at an adjacent golf course did not know the new fans were in operation. Surrounding trees were left in place and a winding access road reduced visibility of the site. The company also practices good neighbor policies, providing sports scholarships, hosting *Relay For Life* events, giving away Christmas presents to school children, donating to food drives, and numerous other community outreach events. ICG Tygart Valley is owned by Arch Coal.

Good Neighbor Award

Navajo Transitional Energy Company, North American Coal Company – Bisti Fuels

Navajo Mine

Fruitland, New Mexico

This Navajo Nation owned mine was nominated for its commendable work within the Navajo community. Citing high unemployment and poverty, the company invested in the community in several ways, including:

- Supporting a post-secondary education program at the Bond Wilson Technical Center
- Developing a STEM career event at local schools
- Creating a teacher workshop
- Funding internship and scholarship programs
- Creating a seminar series at a local college
- Coordinating with academia to create a new species of plant that is adapted to harsh New Mexican deserts
- Hosting tours and other educational outreach events

The *Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards* is presented in partnership with the National Mining Association. This year's awards will be presented at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. on October 21, 2019.

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) carries out the requirements of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 in cooperation with states and tribes. OSMRE'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.