



U.S. Department of the Interior

NEWS RELEASE

Date: February 6, 2020
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Interior Announces More Than \$170 Million in Conservation Funding for States and Tribes to Reclaim and Repurpose Abandoned Coal Mines

AML funds improve coal communities and the lives of their residents

WASHINGTON – U.S. Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt today announced the availability of Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 [Abandoned Mine Land \(AML\) Reclamation grants](#) through the [Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement \(OSMRE\)](#). A total of \$170.9 million in grants will be provided this year for states and tribes to reclaim and repurpose abandoned coal lands.

“AML grants provide states, tribes and local partners with important resources to reclaim lands and waters impacted by abandoned mines, restoring the promise of the outdoors for hardworking Americans in coal country,” **said Secretary Bernhardt.**

“OSMRE is proud to announce today the 2020 AML grants availability,” **said Principal Deputy Director exercising the authority of the OSMRE Director Lanny E. Erdos.** “These grants will continue to ensure our state and tribal partners have the resources needed to continue their decades of successful work on our nation's AML sites.”

OSMRE provides AML grants to the 25 coal-producing states and three tribes based on a congressionally mandated formula that evaluates past and current coal production by these entities. Each year, after the distribution is announced, eligible states and tribes apply for annual reclamation grants to access money in their allocations. OSMRE evaluates and verifies the requests and makes the award amounts available.

The AML Grants are funded in part by a fee collected on all coal produced in the United States. Under the AML Reclamation Program, OSMRE has distributed billions in grants to states and tribes. The funds have directly contributed to AML Reclamation Program achievements including the closure of over 45,000 abandoned underground mine shafts and openings, the elimination of over 960 miles of dangerous highwalls and the restoration of over 850,000 acres of clogged streams and land.

OSMRE and its state and tribal partners have worked for more than 42 years to address the physical hazards posed by lands and waters mined and abandoned or left inadequately restored before 1977 when the [Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act \(SMCRA\)](#) was enacted.

The FY 2020 AML Reclamation funding available to states and tribes is as follows:

State/Tribe	Amount Allocated
Alabama	\$3,356,714
Alaska	\$2,823,000
Arkansas	\$2,823,000
Colorado	\$2,823,000
Illinois	\$11,681,218
Indiana	\$5,731,158
Iowa	\$2,823,000
Kansas	\$2,823,000
Kentucky	\$11,314,447
Louisiana	\$54,775
Maryland	\$2,823,000
Mississippi	\$113,406
Missouri	\$2,823,000
Montana	\$3,326,000
New Mexico	\$2,823,000
North Dakota	\$2,823,000
Ohio	\$6,048,847
Oklahoma	\$2,823,000
Pennsylvania	\$32,171,975
Tennessee	\$2,823,000
Texas	\$1,048,744
Utah	\$813,312
Virginia	\$3,563,263
West Virginia	\$22,865,581
Wyoming	\$35,801,324
Crow Tribe	\$457,853
Hopi Tribe	\$361,073
Navajo Nation	\$1,096,930
National Total	\$170,859,620

To watch videos featuring award-winning AML reclamation projects, please visit [OSMRE's YouTube Channel](#).

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

“Kentucky holds great potential for the future, and I’m grateful Secretary Bernhardt and the Interior Department continue investing in our Commonwealth,” **said Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (KY)**. “As a strong supporter of the AML grants program, I look forward to its many benefits for Kentucky’s environment and the new opportunities it can present for families in the Bluegrass State. I’ll continue partnering with the Trump administration as Senate Majority Leader to deliver critical federal resources for Kentucky communities.”

“I’m pleased we’ve caught up on abandoned mine land (AML) payments to Wyoming. Washington is finally living up to its obligation to the people of our state,” **said U.S. Sen. John Barrasso (WY)**. “Even while facing challenging conditions, Wyoming coal is still dominating national production. Our state continues to reclaim all abandoned mine sites, and employs innovative techniques to maximize the ecological health of these sites.”

“AML reclamation grants help diversify West Virginia’s economy by cleaning up old mine lands for new development,” **said U.S. Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (WV)**. “They help keep lands and waters clean and enable the ability to reuse land for community benefit. I’m grateful this funding is coming to our state, and I’m excited to see continued economic growth in coal country.”

“Wyoming has always been a proud leader in coal production and it’s great to see our state getting money it deserves,” **said U.S. Sen. Mike Enzi (WY)**. “The Abandoned Mine Land money is a dedicated fund set aside for states with coal production. While the federal government has tried to use these funds for other projects in the past, in the previous two years Wyoming has received back payments that the delegation fought hard to ensure were returned.”

“I am pleased West Virginia will receive \$22 million dollars to reclaim abandoned mine lands (AML). These grants, which are financed by fees paid by coal companies, go directly towards addressing the environmental legacy of the coal mining industry,” **said U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin (WV)**. These funds make West Virginia safer and healthier. I thank Secretary Bernhardt and Lanny Erdos for recognizing the necessity of this program. Additionally, the AML fee collection authority is set to expire in 2021, and its extension remains one of my top priorities.”

“The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement has worked diligently for more than four decades to address the hazards of abandoned mine land across the country,” **said U.S. Rep. Andy Barr (KY)**. “I voted in favor of this funding in Congress as it will aid in giving communities damaged by the loss of coal production a fresh start. The \$11 million allocated to Kentucky today will be used for reclaiming and repurposing land in the Sixth District and across the Commonwealth.”

“Pennsylvania has more unreclaimed mine sites than any other state, and there are more than 300 in my district alone,” **said U.S. Rep. Matt Cartwright (PA)**. “Cleaning up these dangerous sites is a top priority for us in Northeastern Pennsylvania, but we need federal help to get it done. That’s why I’ve been a strong advocate for this program, and why I’m fighting to ensure the AML Trust Fund remains active for years to come. These grants will help our local governments clean up toxic mine drainage, restore blighted areas, and create jobs and economic opportunities on these previously unusable lands.”

“As the nation’s leading coal producer and largest contributor to the AML fund, Wyoming’s coal communities rightly deserve these critical resources,” **said U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney (WY)**. “These grants, which we have fought hard to protect, help fulfill the promise made to the people of Wyoming to support investment in reclamation projects and leading-edge technologies like carbon capture. These hard-earned funds will create new economic opportunities while enhancing Wyoming’s land and water resources.”

“This announcement is good news for rural Kentucky, and I am hopeful that this funding from the Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Fund will contribute to mine cleanup and future economic development in our Western Kentucky coal communities,” **said U.S. Rep. James Comer (KY)**. “As a region that has produced much of the coal that has powered our economy and kept our lights on, it is critical that Western Kentucky sees these coal dollars reinvested back into our local economy. Citizens from our coal communities expect and deserve nothing less, and I am thankful and excited to see Kentucky receive a share of these funds.”

“I am proud to support Kentucky’s coal mines. These grants will help ensure that the coal mines no longer in use can be safely cleaned up and transformed into outdoor spaces,” **said U.S. Rep. Brett Guthrie (KY)**. “I want to thank Secretary Bernhardt and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement for awarding this competitive grant to Kentucky.”

“It’s important for historically strong coal producing states like Ohio to restore - and in many cases, improve - the land used to mine for energy resources prior to SMCRA being implemented. These grants will help,” **said U.S. Rep. Bill Johnson (OH)**. “Thank you to Secretary Bernhardt and his team for continuing to look out for Coal Country.”

“West Virginia’s coal industry is a cornerstone of our history, our heritage, and our economy. It is important that we prioritize innovation in our mines, even at the end of their intended use,” **said U.S. Rep. Carol Miller (WV)**. “This funding ensures abandoned mine land is refurbished to better our coal communities by bringing new business opportunities to our state, creating good-paying jobs, and encouraging conservation in the region.”

“I am pleased to hear that West Virginia will receive more funding to do important reclamation work on AML sites across our state,” **said U.S. Rep. Alex Mooney (WV)**. “The reclamation funds will keep West Virginia ‘Wild and Wonderful’ by ensuring our streams and rivers are clean and any abandoned mine shafts are safely and properly closed.”

“These grants help bring our coalfields full circle by providing funds to rehabilitate the same land that generated affordable power and infused our economy through coal mining for generations,” **said U.S. Rep. Hall Rogers (KY)**. “Coupled with the AML Pilot Grants since 2016, we are covering more ground faster in Kentucky than ever before. It is vital that we revive our environment and our economy in coal country for future generations.”

“Pennsylvania’s Fifteenth Congressional District has more abandoned mine lands than any other nationwide and this funding will directly assist with our longtime AML reclamation goals,” **said U.S. Rep. Glenn ‘GT’ Thompson (PA)**. “I appreciate OSM’s support for this important work that benefits our historic coal communities, both environmentally and economically.”