

# News Release



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Indiana AML Program Receives Top Honors in 2017 Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Awards

*Bureau to Honor Five States at 25th AML Reclamation Awards Presentation*

**Washington, DC** – The Federal bureau that regulates coal mining and aids in restoring abandoned mine lands is honoring an Indiana environmental agency with its highest national award for abandoned mine reclamation.

The [Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement](#) (OSMRE) will honor the [Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Reclamation](#) (INDNR) AML Program during a national gathering of mine land reclamation professionals. INDNR won the Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Mid-Continent Regional Award for reclaiming a critical fish and wildlife area.

OSMRE, through its Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Reclamation Program, addresses the hazards and environmental degradation created by the two centuries of U.S. coal mining that occurred before the signing of the [Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977](#). This will be OSMRE's 25<sup>th</sup> year of honoring exemplary state and tribal reclamation projects.

The *Sugar Ridge Fish and Wildlife Area 2 Project* reclaimed an area that involved fixing several dangerous highwalls and an eroding gob pile near a fish and wildlife area. The reclamation was complicated by a nearby flooded underground mine, and the amount of water in all of the reclamation areas.



In FY 2017, Indiana received \$5.8 million in AML funding from OSMRE.

Indiana is among five winners of the [2017 Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Awards](#) for their reclamation excellence. A panel of judges composed of directors of state and tribal reclamation programs and OSMRE managers voted to determine this year's awardees.

## OSMRE News Release continued

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The other 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary award winners are:

### National Award

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Division of Abandoned Mine Lands

*Huling Branch AML Reclamation/ATV Recreation and Watershed Improvement Project*

### **Regional Awards – Honor the best projects in OSMRE’s three regions**

#### Appalachian Regional Award

Kentucky Department for Natural Resources

Division of Abandoned Mine Lands

*Bell Central School HP AML Reclamation Project*

#### Western Region Award

New Mexico Mining and Minerals Division

*Low Impact Stormwater Project, Madrid*

#### Small Project Award

(The Small Project Award recognizes a project that cost less than \$1 million and is in a state that receives less than \$6 million in AML funds.)

Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy

Division of Mined Land Reclamation

*Hurricane Fork Gob Pile Project*

Previous award winning projects have featured innovative reforestation techniques; geomorphic land restoration; and the creation of recreation space and wetlands to mitigate acid mine drainage.

OSMRE will present its Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Awards during the 39<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the [National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs](#) in Lexington, Kentucky on September 25, 2017.

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.

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