

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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Virginia Program Wins Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Award for Second Year in a Row

*OSMRE to Honor Top Abandoned Mine Land
Reclamation Projects at Awards Presentation*

Washington, DC – The Federal Bureau that oversees the regulation of coal mining and restoration of abandoned mine lands is honoring a Virginia environmental agency award for abandoned mine reclamation.

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) will honor the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy, Division of Mined Land Reclamation (DMLR) during a national gathering of mine land reclamation professionals. DMLR won the Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Small Project Award for reclamation work at the Mid-Lothian Mines Park in Chesterfield County, Virginia.



Last year DMLR won the Small Project Award for reclamation work on the [Hurricane Fork Gob Pile](#) reclamation project.

The historic Mid-Lothian Mines abandoned mine land features the remains of the first documented mining in Virginia's Richmond Coalfields. Unfortunately, the features were in great disrepair and were disintegrating. Open shafts, subsidence areas and falling structures were huge safety hazards to the surrounding residential areas. Initially DMLR reclaimed two features within the park: the entrance and the air shaft to the Murphy slope.

The owner of the property donated the land to Chesterfield County to create the park, and the reclamation project activities included the following:

- Closure of two Priority 1 vertical openings
- Stabilization and enclosure of two Priority 1 and one Priority 2 Hazardous Equipment and Facilities structures
- Closure of one Priority 1 subsidence area
- Stabilization of two Priority 3 pits and three Priority 3 slumps

Today the Mid-Lothian Historical Mines Park comprises the 42-acre reclamation site and is the most visited park in the County.



OSMRE News Release continued

In FY 2018, Virginia received \$5.8 million in [AML funding](#) from OSMRE.

Virginia is among five recipients of the 2018 Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Awards given for reclamation excellence. Awards are presented for the best reclamation project nationally, as well as the best project in each of OSMRE's three regions and for the project that costs less than \$1 million and is in a state that receives less than \$6 million in AML funds. A panel of judges composed of directors of state and tribal reclamation programs and OSMRE managers voted to determine this year's awardees.

The other award winners are:

National Award

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Mines and Minerals Bureau, Division of Soil Conservation
Logan Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Project

Appalachian Region Award

Kentucky Department of Natural Resources
Division of Abandoned Mine Lands
Joan Bernat Slide Reclamation Project

Mid-Continent Region Award

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
Division of Reclamation
Abandoned Mine Land Site 882 - Snow Hill

Western Region Award

Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Abandoned Mine Land Program, Division of Mining, Land and Water
Hydraulic Pit Reclamation Project

OSMRE will present its Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Awards during the annual conference of the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs in Williamsburg, VA on September 10, 2018.

The AML Reclamation Awards, established in 1992, recognize exemplary state and tribal reclamation projects that reclaim coal mine sites that were abandoned prior to the signing of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA). Eligible projects are funded wholly or in part by OSMRE's [AML Reclamation Fund](#). OSMRE's [AML Reclamation Program](#) addresses the hazards and environmental degradation posed by two centuries of US coal mining that occurred before SMCRA.

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.

