

News Release

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Oct. 14, 2021

Contact: news@osmre.gov (202) 208-2565

OSMRE Recognizes Two Coal Operators with 2021 *Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards*

WASHINGTON – The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) recognized Luminant Mining Company, LLC (Luminant) of Mount Pleasant, Texas, and North American Coal Corporation, Mississippi Lignite Company, of Ackerman, Mississippi, as the winners of its 2021 *Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards* during a [live virtual presentation](#) on October 13, 2021.

The [Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards](#) are presented to coal mining companies whose reclamation projects demonstrate exemplary results and go beyond the reclamation requirements of the [Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act](#) (SMCRA) of 1977 in returning a site to productive use after completion of mining. Past award recipients demonstrated a commitment to sound mining practices and effective reclamation plans that enhanced the post-mining use of the land.

OSMRE's *Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards* recognize mine operators in two award categories: the National Award and the Good Neighbor Award.

National Award

This award is presented to a coal mining company for achieving the most exemplary mine 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

Luminant Mining Company, LLC (Luminant)
Monticello-Winfield Mine
Mount Pleasant, Texas

Luminant was nominated for outstanding mining and reclamation practices that have produced diverse post-mining land uses exceeding pre-mining conditions. Mining activities near Mount Pleasant, Texas, began in 1974 at the Monticello–Winfield Mine and continued until 2015. Over that time, the operation mined more than 15,500 acres. The nomination focused on an area called H-area, where the last 418 acres were approved for Phase III Bond release on September 23, 2020. Luminant reclaimed 2,438 acres in the H-area; the reclaimed acreage includes post–mine land use for pastureland, forestry, fish and wildlife habitat, and developed water resources.

Good Neighbor Award

North American Coal Corporation, Mississippi Lignite Company

Red Hills Mine

Ackerman, Mississippi

North American Coal was nominated for its superior community outreach, education, and contribution. The Red Hills Mine (RHM) in Choctaw County, Mississippi, began development in 1998. Recognizing the forestry industry as important to the local economy, the company has permitted 68 percent of its 4,678 acres as forestry post-mining land use. To date, 867,056 trees have been planted on the mine. The company has hosted annual Arbor Day events since 2009 with fourth graders from Choctaw County and gifted a hardwood tree seedling to each child to take home and plant in their community. RHM also partners with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to sponsor an annual poster event that educates the students about environmental topics such as watersheds, soils, trees, and pollinators.

OSMRE has recognized high-quality coal mine land reclamation for 35 years. 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 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.

-- OSMRE --

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.