

PURSuing EXPEDITIOUS RELEASE OF RECLAMATION BONDS HELD ON POST-MAY 3, 1978, AFFECTED AREAS

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AMAX Coal Company recognizes the benefits of pursuing expeditious release of reclamation bonds. With over twenty-eight thousand acres of current or potential reclamation liability at six surface mines in the Midwest alone, the importance of timely reclamation, achievement of performance standards and submittal of release requests cannot be overemphasized. In addition to the expense of bond premiums and limitations on bonding capacity, reclaimed areas where release is not expeditiously sought can require expensive remedial reclamation to repair and revegetate erosion before once again being eligible for release.

AMAX is currently pursuing bond release at two exhausted mine sites. Thirty-five hundred acres were affected under the Indiana and Illinois Interim Regulatory Programs and Illinois Permanent Program prior to mine closures in 1983 and 1984. The success of AMAX's active release program is briefly outlined below.

In summary, AMAX has been successful in achieving expeditious release of bonded areas through cooperation among and the diligent efforts of reclamation, revegetation, permitting and bonding personnel.

MINE NAME/LOCATION: Wright Mine/southern Indiana

PRODUCTION YEARS: 1954 to 1983

TONS PRODUCED: 37 million (bituminous)

MINING TECHNIQUE: Area surface mining

OVERBURDEN REMOVAL: Marion 5761 (65-yard bucket), Marion 5561 (45-yard bucket) shovels; Marion 7400 (13-yard bucket) dragline

RECLAMATION EQUIPMENT: Caterpillar and Terex tractors, Terex and WABCO scrapers

ACRES AFFECTED: 6,000 total; 1,300 under Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA)

POSTMINING LAND USES: Cropland (43%), pasture & hay (48%), water (9%), wildlife (1%)

REVEGETATION: Aerial, ground and hand seed. Fescue, brome, alfalfa, alsike, wheat, autumn olive, bald cypress, dogwood, green ash, virginia pine, lespedeza, black locust

BOND RELEASE STANDARDS: NOTE: All standards IN Interim Reg. Program
Cropland: wheat, yield estimated
Pasture & Hay: species diversity and % ground cover
Wildlife: % survival

COMMENTS: Last coal was loaded from active pit January, 1983. 962 acres still bonded March, 1985. Only 5-acre equipment compound still bonded as of December, 1987. Several downdrains blew out over winter of 1984-1985. Were replaced and concreted in place to ensure long-term performance. Key factors in expeditious bond release: reclamation manager kept on-site for one year past end of soil replacement, personnel involved and good weather. All land has been sold and new owner is establishing residential subdivision oriented around mining-created final cut and incline water impoundments.

MINE NAME/LOCATION: Sun Spot Mine/western Illinois
PRODUCTION YEARS: 1962 to 1984
TONS PRODUCED: 17.6 million (bituminous)
MINING TECHNIQUE: Area surface mining
OVERBURDEN REMOVAL: Marion 5761 shovel (65-yard bucket); Marion 8750 (110-yard bucket) and Marion 7800 (31-yard bucket) dragline
RECLAMATION EQUIPMENT: Caterpillar and Fiat-Allis tractors, Caterpillar scrapers
ACRES AFFECTED: 6,000 total; 2,250 under Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA)
POSTMINING LAND USES: Cropland (39%), pasture & hay (29%), forestry(19%), wildlife habitat (6%), water (7%)
REVEGETATION: Depends on land use. Cropland is alfalfa, wheat and corn rotation. Pasture & Hay is alfalfa or clover. Forestry and wildlife habitat: various species.
BOND RELEASE STANDARDS: Cropland: productivity, 2 crops-one corn (both Interim & Permanent Program)
 Pasture & Hay: % ground cover (Interim Program)
 productivity, hay tons/acre (Permanent Program)
 Forestry: survival (450 live stems/acre)
 Wildlife: survival
COMMENTS: Last coal was loaded from active pit in 1984. 3,300 acres still bonded December, 1987. 1,300 acres were reclaimed to Illinois Rule 1104/High Capability Land Standards (48" topsoil and suitable rooting medium replaced) and 16.5 acres were reclaimed to Prime Farmland Standards (same soil replacement as above; 100% premining productivity required). While most cropland areas will remain bonded for several years while crops are grown in an attempt to achieve the productivity required for release, AMAX successfully proved cropland productivity on 11.3 acres of reclaimed Rule 1104 land mined in 1982. In 1984 AMAX achieved 64 bushel/acre wheat when the target yield was 44.4. In 1986 AMAX achieved a corn yield of 152 bushels/acre when the target yield was 129 bushels acre.
 Most Interim Program non-cropland is released. Fall, 1988, is first season Permanent Program areas are eligible for release. Significant forestry and wildlife habitat releases are anticipated.