Engaging the Public in Mine Land Reforestation:
Volunteer Tree Planting Projects and Events in Appalachia

Hannah Angel, Stephen F. Austin State University
Chris Barton, University of Kentucky
Michael French, Green Forests Works/The American Chestnut Foundation
Patrick Angel, Office of Surface Mining, USD
The Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative

Restoring healthy productive forests on mined land
ARRI is a joint effort between... OSM and the Appalachian coal states
ARRI’s goals:

- Plant more high-value hardwood trees

- Increase the survival rates and growth rates of planted trees

- Expedite the establishment of forest habitat through natural succession
Working to “restore the American chestnut tree to its native range within the woodlands of the eastern United States”
The Forestry Reclamation Approach

- Provide at least 4 feet of suitable material
- Minimize compaction
- Limit ground cover
- Plant a variety of hardwood tree species
- Use proper tree planting techniques

http://arri.osmre.gov
Spreading the FRA through...

- Arbor Day Events
- SMI Signing Ceremonies
- Reforestation Awards
- Videos
- TV and Radio
- Newspaper
- ARRI Newsletter
- ARRI Website
- ARRI Advisories
- FRA Training
- ARRI Conferences
- Partnerships
Since 2005...

about 95 million trees have been planted on about 140,000 acres
A New Direction
(Backward Looking)

≈1 million acres of reclaimed grass/shrub lands in Appalachia

• CCC modeled program to stimulate economy and improve the environment

• Plant millions of trees on thousands of acres of degraded mine land

• Create much needed “green” jobs in Appalachia

Photo by Chris Barton
Green Forests Work
(Investing in America)

....to mitigate climate change,

....to improve water quality,

....to restore habitat,

....to create economic opportunities,

....to empower Appalachian citizens

....to turn negative energy into positive energy
Haiku

folks argue in road
while old man steps around them
on way to plant trees
7 yrs of GFW's work on legacy mines...

217 projects in 8 states
1.59 million trees
2,600 acres
11,701 volunteers
Feature Projects

- Virginia: American Chestnut Orchard
- Pennsylvania: Flight 93 Memorial
- West Virginia: Boy Scout Jamboree Project
- Ohio: Hellbender Bluff Carbon Offset Project
- Maryland: ADF Air Quality Mitigation
- Kentucky: Fishtrap Lake Stream Mitigation
- West Virginia: Red Spruce Restoration
- Tennessee: Golden-Winged Warbler Recovery
- Kentucky: Burning Man Wood Offset
Flight 93 Memorial Tree Plantings

Photo by Michael French