

Implementation of the 2018 AML Pilot Program in Pennsylvania – AML Reclamation as an Economic Catalyst¹

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Abstract: The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, (Public Law 115-141), authorized the federal Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) to provide funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 for the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Reclamation Economic Development Pilot Program (AML Pilot Program). For FY2018, the AML Pilot Program is providing grants to the six Appalachian states with the highest amount of unfunded high-priority coal AML problems based on OSMRE's AML inventory data as of September 30, 2017 and grants to the three Tribes with an approved AML Reclamation Program. Kentucky, Pennsylvania (PA), and West Virginia are each receiving \$25 million; Alabama, Ohio, and Virginia are each receiving \$10 million; and, the Hopi Tribe, Crow Tribe, and Navajo Nation are each receiving \$3.33 million. The purpose of the funding is to accelerate the remediation of AML sites with economic and community development end uses, with the intent of exploring and implementing strategies to return legacy coal sites to productive uses. This is the third year that AML Pilot Program funding has been authorized by Congress; PA received \$30 million in FY 2016 and \$25 million in FY 2017. Like the first 2 years, the AML Pilot Program requires the AML program to consult with state and local economic and community development authorities to identify AML projects with an economic and community development nexus. PA is targeting 15 AML Pilot sites, from over two dozen proposals received and evaluated, that encompass a wide variety of projects types and a broad range of economic or community development benefits and partners. PA is allocating the majority of the AML Pilot Program funds for the construction of SMCRA Title IV eligible AML and AMD problems. The project partners will then work to fund and complete non-AML economic development aspects of the projects. PA's 2018 AML Pilot Grant was approved on December 1, 2018 and has a three-year period of performance. This presentation will discuss the planned reclamation and anticipated benefits for each of the 15 AML Pilot Projects as well as the status of each including any issues, which could impact their successful implementation.

Additional Key Words: Abandoned Mine Lands (AML), Economic Development.

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