

Interior Provides Conservation Funding for the Hopi Tribe to Reclaim and Repurpose Abandoned Coal Mines

U.S. Acting Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt recently announced that the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) will provide in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Reclamation grants, to clean up and repurpose abandoned coal mines. Reclamation grants have been awarded to:

- Hopi Tribe – \$588,522
- Crow Tribe – \$1,211,505
- Navajo Nation – \$2,817,230

More than \$291 million in AML Reclamation funding will be available to states and tribes in FY 2019.

“These grants are a great example of Interior partnering with states, tribes, and local governments to provide resources for conservation efforts and infrastructure and public safety improvements, like fixing embankments, stabilizing land above underground mines, and restoring streams,” said Acting Secretary Bernhardt. “The investment we’re making back into

coal country helps protect people, land, water and property, and enhances the lives of local citizens.”

AML grants, funded in part by a fee based on coal produced in the United States, help to eliminate dangerous conditions and pollution caused by past coal mining. AML-funded projects have closed dangerous mine shafts, eliminated high-walls, reclaimed unstable slopes, treated acid mine drainage, and restored water supplies damaged by mining.

OSMRE provides AML grants to the 25 coal-producing states and three tribes according to a congressionally mandated formula based on their past and current coal production. Each year, after the distribution is announced, eligible states and tribes apply for annual reclamation grants to access money in their allocations. OSMRE evaluates and verifies the requests, and makes the award amounts available.

The authority to collect AML reclamation fees is slated to expire in September 2021, unless Congress reauthorizes the fee, as it did in 2006.



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