

Mined Land Reforestation Conference

Theme: “Mined Land Reforestation: Science and Practice”

Location: Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, Abingdon, VA

Sponsor: Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative / US Office of Surface Mining (OSM)

Hosts: Virginia Tech, Powell River Project; Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy

Co-Hosts: The American Chestnut Foundation, Eastern Coal Council, National Council of Coal Lessors, National Mining Association (invited), The Nature Conservancy, Virginia Mining Association

Summary: The Mined Land Reforestation Conference will be held in Abingdon, Virginia, on August 7 – 8, 2007, hosted by Virginia Tech’s Powell River Project and by Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy. The conference will call attention to advanced mine reforestation practices that are being developed through scientific research and adopted by the coal industry, and will present scientific research findings with the potential to further improve mine reforestation success. The conference is intended for personnel representing coal mining firms, mineral-bearing land owners, mining consultants, natural resource agencies, scientists with mined land reforestation expertise, students, and interested members of the public. The first day’s activities will include presentations by scientific, industry, and agency personnel who are involved with the development and application of coal mine reforestation practices, and active discussion. The second day of the conference will be a field tour of operating mines and research sites where advanced mine reforestation practices are being developed and utilized.

Tuesday, August 7: Conference Presentations and Discussions

7:30 am – Vendors and agencies set up booths and displays. Students, scientists, and other contributors set up posters featuring reforestation science and practical applications.

First Morning Session: Moderated by Carl Zipper, Virginia Tech

8:30 am – Opening session: “Why better mine reforestation”?

Welcome, Presentation of Conference Goals

8:40 am – “OSM’s Commitment to Better Mine Reforestation,” Brent Wahlquist

8:50 am – “A Coal Miner’s Perspective on Mine Reforestation,” Bob Zik, TECO Coal

9:10 am – “The Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative (ARRI) and the Forestry Reclamation Approach: A State-Federal Reforestation Initiative,” Butch Lambert Director, Virginia Division of Mined Land Reclamation

9:30 am – “Advances in Scientific Knowledge and the Forestry Reclamation Approach,” Dr. James Burger, Department of Forestry, Virginia Tech

9:50 am – Break (vender / poster area)

Morning Presentations: Moderated by Mary Beth Adams, US Forest Service

10:20 am – “Federal and State Regulations, Bond Release, and the Forestry Reclamation Approach,” Becky Hatmaker, US Office of Surface Mining, Knoxville Field Office

10:45 am – “Overburden, topsoil substitutes, topsoil handling: Influence on Tree Growth” Patrick Angel, University of Kentucky and US Office of Surface Mining

11:10 am – “Influence of Herbaceous Groundcover Vegetation on Reforestation Success,”
Jeff Skousen, Plant and Soil Sciences, West Virginia University

11:35 am – “Carbon Sequestration by Forests on Reclaimed Mines,” Chris Barton,
Department of Forestry, University of Kentucky

12:00 pm – Lunch at Conference Center

1:30 pm – Panel Discussion: “Coordination to Achieve Reforestation Success,” Panel to address strategies for coordination among parties who are involved in the mining-reclamation process that is essential to reforestation success. To be followed by interactive discussion with the audience. Moderated by John Jones, Alpha Natural Resources.

Landowner – Keith Horton, Penn Virginia Resource Partners

Regulator – Jeff Emmons, Ohio Department of Natural Resources - Representatives from other state agencies will also be present to participate in discussion, should audience questions address State regulatory practices.

Consultant/Permit Writer – Steve Gardner, Lexington, Kentucky

Tree Planter – Rick Williams, Williams Forestry & Associates

Operator – Marcie Moore, former Director of Permitting for Cravat Coal Company, Cadiz, Ohio, and current employee of Oxford Mining

2:50 pm – Break (vender / poster area)

Afternoon Presentations: Moderated by Bill Kittrell, The Nature Conservancy.

3:20 pm – “Mining and Mine Reforestation: Influences on Watershed Hydrology,” Richard Warner, University of Kentucky

3:45 pm – “The Joys and Challenges of Producing Forest Products on Mined and Reforested Lands,” Tim Probert, Gaddy Engineering

4:10 pm – “Economics of Mine Reforestation: Mine Operator and Landowner Perspectives,” Jay Sullivan, Department of Forestry, Virginia Tech

4:35 pm – “The Forestry Reclamation Approach at Fola Coal,” Mike Isabelle, Fola Coal, WV

5:00 pm – Day 1: Closing Remarks and Summary

5:15 pm – Break for Discussion at Posters, Exhibits, and Cash Bar

6:15 pm – Snacks and Light Dinner Items, Buffet

Wednesday, August 8: Mined Land Reforestation Field Tour

7:45 am – Prepare to board vans in the parking lot of the and Southwest Higher Education Center. Vans will leave at 8am.

6:00 pm – Vans return to Abingdon

This field tour will visit Virginia coal mining operations that are using the Forestry Reclamation Approach during reclamation. The field tour will also visit long-term reforestation plantings on mines sites at the Powell River Project Research and Demonstration Center, where planted softwoods and native hardwoods have been monitored for survival, growth, forest products production potential, and other indicators of reforestation success. Tour Leaders will be Chris

Stanley and Richard Davis, Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy; Jim Burger and Carl Zipper, Virginia Tech; Jon Rockett, Powell River Project; and mining company personnel.