



## STATEMENT OF MUTUAL INTENT

*for the*

### ***APPALACHIAN REGIONAL REFORESTATION INITIATIVE***

The States of Appalachia including the Regulatory Authorities in Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia; the Office of Surface Mining, including the Tennessee Federal Program; and all other parties of this Statement of Mutual Intent desire to work together to promote and encourage planting more trees on active and abandoned coal mined lands. We will increase efforts, cooperate and partner among ourselves to plant economically viable trees, while using current Forestry Reclamation Approach (FRA) technology. This technology will increase survival rates and growth rates of crop trees, increase overall productivity, and promote natural invasion and succession of plant and animal communities.

FRA technology is a five-step reclamation process that has been proven by forestry research to increase tree survival and tree productivity. The five steps in the FRA are:

1. Create a suitable rooting medium for good tree growth that is no less than four feet deep and comprised of topsoil, weathered sandstone and/or the best available material.
2. Loosely grade the topsoil or topsoil substitutes established in step one to create a non-compacted growth medium.
3. Use ground covers that are compatible with growing trees.
4. Plant two types of trees; early succession species for wildlife and soil stability, and commercially valuable crop trees.
5. Use proper tree planting techniques.

Reforestation of coal mined land using the FRA will provide multiple environmental and economic benefits:

#### Environmental Benefits of Reforestation

- Increased diversity of plant succession
- Natural succession of native forest plants
- Reduced potential for establishment of invasive species

- Enhanced wildlife habitat
- Soil and water conservation
- Recovery of the hydrologic balance
- Improvement of overall water quality
- Carbon sequestration

#### Economic Benefits of Reforestation

- Increased timber value
- Landowner tax reduction
- Recreational areas
- Jobs for the local economy
- Local tax revenue
- Reforestation provides an economically viable post mining land use option for both the landowner and the mining company

### I. OBJECTIVES

- A. Establish and implement a reforestation program within each of the seven Appalachian Region States that promotes the FRA during reclamation of active coal mining operations and abandoned mined lands projects.
- B. Raise the awareness level of government agencies, private organizations, and general public on economic and environmental benefits associated with planting quality trees using FRA technology.
- C. Work with Federal, State, and local government agencies, mining companies, environmental groups, industry groups, academia and other public and private organizations to identify landowners and mining companies that will utilize the current FRA technology in reclamation.
- D. Provide a forum to transfer technology and other information concerning the creation of highly productive forestland and related environmental assets and cooperate as a clearinghouse to share data and information as it relates to current FRA technology.
- E. Apply FRA technology for growing quality trees while supporting the development of new technologies.
- F. Prepare periodic reports to describe the current status, success and increased productive tree planting efforts of projects using the FRA technology by all parties to the Statement of Mutual Intent.
- G. Promote the establishment of native forest species.

## II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS (or SUCCESSES)

- Provide FRA training to State and Federal regulatory personnel for active and abandoned coal mined lands.
- Achieve public outreach and FRA training to the coal industry located in the States represented by this Statement of Mutual Intent.
- Achieve public outreach and FRA training to all other interested parties located in the States represented by this Statement of Mutual Intent.
- Increase the number of trees planted using FRA technology in the States represented by this Statement of Mutual Intent.
- Identify incentives to promote reforestation on coal mined lands.

## III. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. We will carry out all activities in this Statement of Mutual Intent in full compliance with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations.
- B. Any party may withdraw from this Statement of Mutual Intent by notifying the other parties in writing.

## IV. SIGNATURES (Attached)