

# NAAMLP

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ABANDONED MINE LAND PROGRAMS

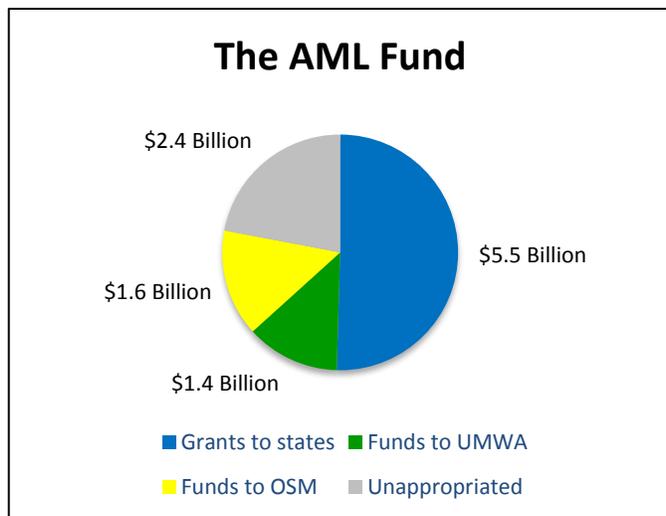
## 2017 REPORT

NAAMLP represents 31 State and Tribal Abandoned Mine Land Programs that reclaim abandoned mine sites to protect the public’s health and safety.

Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) are plagued by health and safety hazards as well as diminished economic opportunities. The AML Programs reclaim hazards such as subsidence, mine fires, hazardous mine openings, acid mine drainage and dangerous highwalls that are remnants of mining prior to regulation. AML Programs are funded by a per ton fee on coal production as authorized by the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA). The States and Tribes work closely with the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) to meet the intent of SMCRA to “*promote the reclamation of mined areas left without adequate reclamation prior to August 3, 1977, and which continue, in their unreclaimed condition, to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, prevent or damage the beneficial use of land or water resources, or endanger the health or safety of the public.*”

### KEY ISSUES

- ✓ The current AML fee is set to expire in 2021 leaving billions of dollars in unreclaimed abandoned mine hazards across the nation with no resources. NAAMLP strongly supports the reauthorization of the AML fee collection through 2036.
- ✓ NAAMLP strongly supports the increase of mandatory minimum program funding to \$5 million annually.
- ✓ NAAMLP strongly supports that the AML emergency program is a mandatory expenditure from the OSMRE’s discretionary share.
- ✓ NAAMLP strongly supports ending sequestration of AML grants (\$84 million to date).



### BUDGET HISTORY

Since SMCRA’s enactment OSMRE has collected over \$10.9 billion (including interest) through a AML fee assessed on each ton of coal that is produced. OSMRE has distributed more than \$5.5 billion in AML grants to states and tribes. More than \$1.4 billion was transferred to the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Health and Retirement Funds. Over \$1.6 billion has been used for OSMRE operating expenses. Over \$2.4 billion of the fund remains unappropriated.<sup>i</sup>

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS<sup>ii</sup>

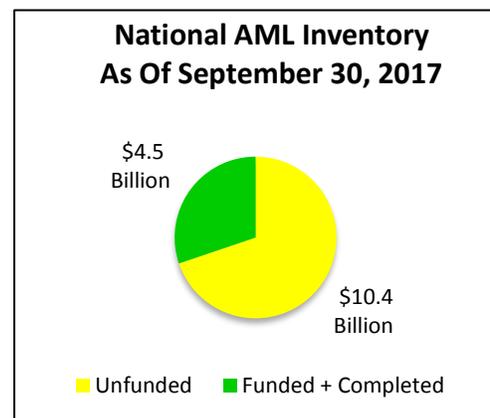
With the \$5.5 billion in grant funds, AML Programs have reclaimed thousands of dangerous sites left by abandoned coal mines, resulting in increased safety for millions of Americans:

- More than 875,000 acres of high priority abandoned coal mine sites have been reclaimed.
- Hazards associated with more than 46,000 open mine shafts and portals have been eliminated.
- Over 1,000 miles of dangerous highwalls are no longer a threat to people.
- Over 29,000 acres of dangerous piles and embankments have been eliminated and the land reclaimed.
- Nationwide, \$616 million has been spent on water hazards including polluted drinking water and acid mine drainage have been reduced or eliminated.
- For every federal dollar spent for construction, \$1.59 was returned to the local economy. For every mile of stream improved, there is a net gain of \$80,000 per year to the local economy.
- More than 7.2 million people nationwide have been protected from abandoned mine hazards.

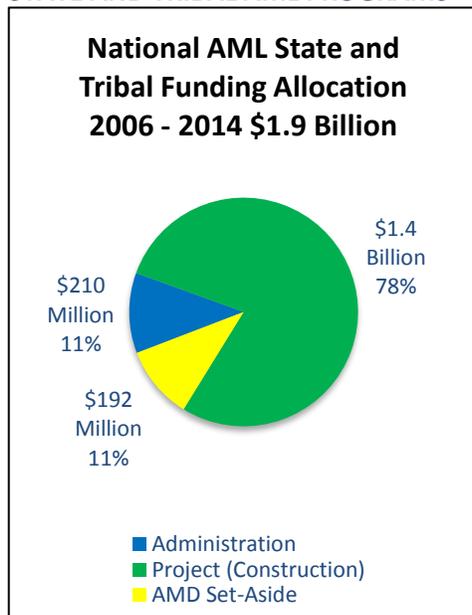
*Despite these impressive accomplishments, \$10.4 billion of high priority problems still threaten the public health and safety and remain unreclaimed. These hazardous sites require safeguarding or reclamation by the State and Tribal AML Programs.*

## AML INVENTORY

AML Programs continually revisit and inventory land and water impacted by past mining (primarily coal mining). OSMRE maintains this national inventory which provides the information needed to implement SMCRA (eAMLIS).



## STATE AND TRIBAL AML PROGRAMS



State and Tribal AML Programs are very efficient at providing timely responses to

new abandoned mine hazards that arise including emergencies. All reclamation projects comply with NEPA and other state and local regulations. Nationwide, the AML Programs are spending 83% on planning, engineering, construction and maintenance of AML Projects. This correlates to good paying jobs and reclaimed lands. The AML Programs on average, nationwide have committed 9% of their annual grants to set aside programs for acid mine drainage mitigation. Finally, the AML Programs are spending an approximate 8% on administration, which pays for staff time and the resources programs need to support AML work.<sup>iii</sup>

The AML Programs are excellent at public outreach and engage community partners in reclaiming the lands to meet the needs of the landowners and the communities. The AML Programs have

been around since the early 1980's following the passage of SMCRA in 1977 and have demonstrated success to "promote the reclamation of mined areas left without adequate reclamation prior August 3, 1977, and which continue, in their unreclaimed condition, to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, prevent or damage the beneficial use of land or water resources, or endanger the health or safety of the public."

<sup>i</sup> Values provided by Glenda Owens, Acting Director OSMRE, before the Committee on Natural Resources Oversight Hearing of OSMRE's Abandoned Mine Land Program, June 7, 2017. These values represent the totals from 1977 – November 30, 2016.

<sup>ii</sup> Values provided by OSMRE's eAMLIS data as of 9/30/17.

<sup>iii</sup> Values provided by OSMRE's AML Closed Grants 2006 – 2012 (FBMS)