

# The Land Reclamation Report

The Land Reclamation Report will be a monthly feature of Weeds Trees & Turf Magazine. We stand by in support of those contractors and mine operators who must contend with rules that change monthly. We hope to alert our readers to these changes and to the eventual demand for revegetation services when laws are coordinated with national energy policies and the real value of coal is finally recognized.

## OSM alters bonding regulation proposal

The large, long-term bond which represented a major roadblock to small- to medium-sized surface mine operators has been softened with alternatives in the latest proposal from the Office of Surface Mining.

Alternatives include:

- pledging real or personal property in lieu of a bond.
- incremental deposits over a period of time.
- liability limited to the post-mining plans for the land.

Still, operators wince at the five to ten-year length of liability. And there are still problems with the basic law which bothers the surety industry.

## MARC asks pledge in draft to President

The Board of Directors of the Mining and Reclamation Council of America has drafted a resolution requesting a national commitment to coal by the President and the entire Administration.

The two-page statement summarizes the reasons for a national commitment to coal and asks that:

- a program for conversion of oil and gas burning utility and industrial boilers to coal;
  - removal of inhibitory regulations by EPA, DOI, and the ICC;
  - modification of Clean Air Act;
  - increased export of coal;
- and an overall public commitment to coal and its increased use and production.

## ALCA committee plans to beef up program

The Erosion Control Committee of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America has decided to step up its programming, beginning with a summer program to be held at a mine site. Equipment demonstrations under field conditions, observation of a job in progress, and a round table discussion of production problems and techniques are planned. One hope is to provide comparative equipment trials in a field location.

ALCA plans to change the name of the committee to the Land Reclamation Committee and increase its importance in the overall structure of association meetings.

## Fifth of surface mines closed in 1979

During one of the most critical energy shortages felt in this nation, the number of surface coal mines dropped by 20 percent because of overly stringent air pollution regulations. Furthermore, it is estimated another 15 percent of those remaining will fail in 1980, according to Ben E. Lusk, president of MARC.

Overkill by the Office of Surface Mining and the Environmental Protection Agency is the main cause of the business failure, despite critical energy needs. A number of candidates for the Presidency have taken positions on coal, but nothing has come from the current administration which offers any relief.

## Missouri mine program first approved

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources will receive \$198,193 of fees collected under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to compile data on abandoned mine land problems within the state. Missouri is the first state to receive funds for an inventory.

The information developed will be used to determine plans, priorities, budgets, schedules and appropriate techniques for reclaiming the abandoned mines in the state.

## Four watershed projects to get planning aid

Projects in New York, Minnesota, and North Carolina will receive assistance from the Soil Conservation Service to develop watershed plans.

They include Brandywine Creek Watershed, Broome County, NY; Dyke Creek Watershed, Allegheny County, NY; Snake River Watershed, MN; and Moss Neck Watershed, Robeson County, NC. The four projects will protect the watersheds they serve from erosion and siltation and help prevent flooding and poor drainage.

## Coal conversion bill may be passed in 1980

Kentucky Senator Wendell Ford said in March that Congress should finish action on a new coal conversion bill outlined by the Carter Administration this year and send it to the President for approval.

The bill, which establishes a two-phased program aimed at displacing one million barrels per day equivalent of oil and natural gas in the electric utility sector by 1990, was presented by Administration energy officials to coal state members of Congress at a briefing in the Capitol. Senate majority Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.) said work would begin immediately on developing the proposal into legislative form with a companion bill expected in the House at the same time.

The other senator from Kentucky, Walter Huddleston has added that a policy of stopping the use of oil and gas for utility power generation should be inherent in any national energy policy. Ford said the Administration wants the bill before Congress adjourns.

## Pickseed establishes new sales facility

Pickseed has opened a distribution center in Calgary, Alberta, from which it intends to serve the entire province of Alberta, western Saskatchewan, and eastern British Columbia.