

# PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Abandoned Mine Lands Division

## Memorandum

TO: Commissioners Kalk, Christmann and Fedorchak  
Darrell Nitschke  
Illona Jeffcoat-Sacco

From: Jim Deutsch, Director - AML Division

Date: February 7, 2013

Subject: Closeout of Contract No. AM-642-12 for AML's 2012 Coal Outcrop Fire  
Suppression Project, Case No. AM-12-510

**Summary** – On September 28, 2012, the Commission awarded Contract AM-642-12 to Baranko Bros. Inc. of Dickinson, ND, to excavate and extinguish dangerous coal seam fires. This work was conducted at sites in Slope and McKenzie Counties. The contractor has completed work and has now been paid. The AML Division recommends the contract be closed out.

**Discussion** – In July of last year the AML Division received a special grant from OSM for \$35,000 for extinguishing coal outcrop fires at three or more sites on U.S. Forest Service lands in McKenzie and Slope Counties. These coal fires were likely started by grass fires and they pose a serious risk for starting other grass fires in the future. The coal fire suppression project involves the excavation of earthen materials to expose the burning coal seams, digging trenches to place the burning materials, covering the trenches, and placing earthen materials against the coal face and reshaping the site.

After the contract was awarded the work was delayed until the fire danger in western North Dakota was low. Baranko began work on December 5<sup>th</sup> and it was completed on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Four coal outcrop fires were extinguished, one in Slope County and three in McKenzie County. Two change orders were issued for the excavation of the burning coal seams and related work. The original contract price was \$27,000, but the actual invoiced price was increased to \$35,000, the full amount of the special grant. Work was completed satisfactory and the final invoice has been paid.

Please note that this was the sixth coal outcrop fire suppression project the AML Division has completed since 2003. A total of 58 coal fires have been extinguished or suppressed in McKenzie, Billings and Slope Counties, at a total cost of \$169,975.

Attached is a motion for the February 13, 2013, Commission meeting to close Contract AM-642-12.

Attachment

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