

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

State of North Dakota

Memorandum

To: Commissioners Kroshus, Fedorchak and Christmann
Executive Secretary Steve Kahl
General Counsel John Schuh
DM

From: Dean Moos and Joan Breiner - AML Division

Date: February 18, 2020

Subject: AML's 2020 Grant Application and Major AML Reclamation Projects
Case No. AM-20-79

On February 7, we received notice that OSM allocated North Dakota \$2,823,000 for the next AML grant period that begins March 1, 2020. We should have been allocated \$3,000,000 this year as a minimum program funded state, but this amount was reduced 5.9% due to sequestration. Attached is the 2020-2023 AML Simplified Grant Application. Commission approval is requested to submit this grant application to OSM. The major AML reclamation projects are also described in the grant application.

The AML Division plans the following AML projects in 2020:

2020 Hettinger/Stark County AML Project: This 37-acre project will reclaim four surface mines and eliminate about 2250 feet of dangerous highwalls in Hettinger and Stark counties. These AML sites are characterized by steep final pit highwalls that are about 15-30 feet high. The proposed reclamation work involves a combination of backsloping and backfilling the highwalls with earthen material from adjacent spoil piles. About 151,060 cubic yards of spoil material will need to be moved in the reclamation process. Two of the AML sites will contain tree plantings to serve as wildlife habitats. The estimated project cost is \$400,000.

2020 Williams County Road 9 Phase 8 AML Project: This remote backfilling project will stabilize underground coal mine workings at an industrial development near Williston along Williams County Road 9. This project will use holes drilled and cased in 2019. Additional drilling will be completed as needed. The 2020 project will continue the pumping of cementitious grout and grout testing. It is estimated that an additional 3,500 cubic yards of grout will be pumped into mine voids. The estimated project cost is \$750,000.

2020 Noonan Foamed Sand AML Project: This remote backfilling project will stabilize collapsing underground mines near public use areas and roads south of Noonan. Holes were drilled and cased in 2019. Additional drilling will be completed as needed. This project will include pumping sand water and surfactant foam into the mine voids. It is estimated that 1,000 tons of foamed sand will be pumped in these areas. The estimated project cost is \$290,000.

2019-2020 Sinkhole Filling AML Project: This is the second year of a two-year project conducted to fill dangerous sinkholes caused by underground mine collapse. Some funds may be used to conduct maintenance work on reclaimed sites. If necessary, some of these funds may also be used for emergency projects. The estimated 2020 project cost is \$125,000.

The total estimated project contract costs for 2020 are \$1,565,000. It appears about \$1,800,000 will remain in North Dakota's 2019-2022 AML grant. The remaining funds in the 2019-2022 grant will be used to pay the contract/construction costs incurred during the 2020 construction season before the 2020-2023 grant monies are spent for contract/construction cost. Any funds from the 2020-2023 construction grant that are not used in 2020 will be used similarly during the 2021 construction season.

Attached is a motion for the February 19, 2020, Commission meeting to approve the major AML construction projects for 2020 and to submit the next AML grant application to OSM.

Attachment

Minedata/AML/AMLGrants/2020/2020_Grant_memo_2-18-2020