

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**State of North Dakota**

Memorandum

To: Commissioners Fedorchak, Christmann and Haugen-Hoffart  
Executive Director Steve Kahl  
General Counsel John Schuh

From: <sup>ZAB</sup> Zanna Brinkman and Joan Breiner - AML Division  
Jill Kringstad - Accounting Division

Date: May 4, 2022

Subject: AML's 2022 Grant Application, Case No. AM-22-181

OSM allocated North Dakota \$2,829,000 for the next AML grant period that began March 1, 2022. Attached is the 2022-2025 AML Simplified Grant Application. Commission approval is requested to submit this grant application to OSM.

The 2022-2025 AML grant will be used to eliminate hazards associated with abandoned surface and underground coal mines located in western North Dakota. The AML Division estimates approximately \$2.16 million will be spent for projects at abandoned coal mines in 2022. Some grant funds will be used for the in-house design of reclamation projects and for administering the program. Contract funding will come from the 2022-2025 grant and funds remaining from the 2020-2023 grant, about \$330,000 and \$1,825,000 from the 2021-2024 grant. The Commission approved the 2022 AML projects in January 2022 and the contract for the 2021 Sinkhole Filling, Maintenance and Emergencies will be extended.

**Exploratory Drilling:** The 2022 Exploratory Drilling AML Project will locate and characterize underground mine workings beneath public roads and occupied residences. This investigatory project is expected to be conducted near the cities of Beulah, Dickinson, Garrison, Noonan and Velva, North Dakota. Surface disturbance will be minimal. This project is to be conducted between April and July 2022. The estimated cost for this project is \$910,000.

**Garrison Phase 5:** The 2022 Garrison Phase 5 AML Project: This remote backfilling project will stabilize abandoned underground coal mine workings along McLean County Highway 15 just south of its intersection with North Dakota State Highway 37 and near homes in the adjacent South Garrison Subdivision in McLean County. This project will use previously drilled and cased holes with additional drilling completed as needed. An estimated 2000 cubic yards of flowable fill will be pumped into mine workings. Work is expected to be conducted between July and September 2022. The total area affected will be less than 5 acres and surface disturbance will be minimal. The estimated cost for this project is \$769,550.

**Morton Co. Phase 3:** The 2022 Morton County Phase 3 AML Project: The Youngstown abandoned surface coal mine contains 3200 feet of steep highwalls that are 20 to 25 feet high. The proposed reclamation work involves backsloping and backfilling the highwalls with on-site mine spoil and reducing the steepness of the highwalls. The property owners support the proposed reclamation project. Affected areas will be reseeded with locally adapted grass species native to western North Dakota. No off-site pit dewatering is planned, and erosion and sedimentation will be controlled. The total area affected is about 12.5 acres. Work is expected

to be conducted between June and September 2022. The estimated cost for this project is \$406,168.

**2021 Sinkhole Filling, Maintenance and Emergencies:** This project fills dangerous sinkholes caused by underground mine collapse. Sinkhole filling projects like this have been conducted since the 1980s. 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 2022 project cost is \$75,000.

Attached is a motion for the May 4, 2022 Commission meeting to submit the next AML grant application to OSM.

Attachment

Mine Data\AML\AML Grants\2022\2022\_Grant\_memo\_5-4-22