The Office of Surface Mining’s “Reclaim the Future!” initiative

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U.S. Office of Surface Mining,
USA
Surface Coal Mining Regulation in the U.S.

- Based on the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977
- Implemented by the States under the oversight of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement
Evolution of Environmental Approaches in the U.S.

- Originally “command and control”
  - Do things a particular way
  - Limited discharge of “pollution”
  - Put things back the way they were
Evolution Continued

- Slow movement towards sustainability
  - Technical conferences
  - Industry commitment
  - Government actions
    - Study
    - Talk
    - Do
Reclaim the Future!

- We know we can do some things better
  - Reforestation
  - Wildlife protection
  - Prime farmland reclamation
  - Determining post-mining land uses

- We need a systematic approach to get better on-the-ground results
Reclaim the Future!

- Recognize landowner rights
- Involve all stakeholders
- Identify desired outcomes up front
- Identify barriers
- Work collaboratively on new solutions
- Continued communication
- Shared risk
Some current needs

- Building trust among all parties
- Addressing incompatible goals
- Modifying regulatory and statutory framework
- Develop common goals for sustainability