EXPANDING PARTNERSHIP
TO POST RECLAMATION MANAGEMENT

Bobby Kuennen, Environmental Specialist
Division of Soil Conservation
Mines & Minerals Bureau

Detra Dettmann, Executive Director
PATHFINDERS
resource conservation & development, inc.
History of Iowa Coal Mining

- Early settlers mined coal for heating homes/cooking were timber was sparse
- Coal production for industry began in 1870’s
- Peak coal production – 1917
- Reasons for reduction
  - Cheaper from other states
  - Natural Gas, Electricity, Fuel Oil
Minimum Program State

- 2008 bump to $1.7 million
- 2010 bump to $2.5 million
- 2012 bump to $3.0 million (sequestration)

- Numbers represent total grant $$$ not construction $$$
Iowa AML Landowners

• 500+ landowners
• Approximately 99% of sites privately owned
• Iowa ranks 49th in the nation in State/Federally owned property
Project Management

• Getting landowners thinking from the beginning
• Landowners aren’t interested until sites start to green
• Landowners change hands
• No Contracts!
Gullying
“Hot Spots”
Terrace Blowouts
Pipe Collapse
Cattle Trails
Over Grazing
Mowing Short
Crop Land
Driving Paths
Tree Planting
Success!
Reclaimed Ground vs Time

- Inputs needed!
Landowner Outreach Project

Fostering Stewardship on Iowa’s Reclaimed Abandoned Mine Lands

...educate landowners about technical and financial resources available to help them develop and implement best practices for managing their AML property.

Informational Handouts + Regional Meetings + Field Tour
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Managing Reclaimed Coal Mine Land: IMPROVING SOIL HEALTH

Looks can be deceiving

It is common for reclaimed coal mine land to have a variety of soil types and structures, which can make it appear similar to other systems. However, these soils may lack nutrients and organic matter, making them less suitable for plant growth. Thus, it is important to assess the soil conditions before initiating any land management practices.

Resources
- Soil Testing
- Land Stabilization Techniques

Fragile soils

The soil may be fragile and susceptible to erosion, which can lead to reduced plant growth and soil degradation. To prevent soil loss and protect the environment, it is important to implement proper land management practices, such as strip-mining systems, which can help to maintain the integrity of the soil.

Where to get help
- Local Extension Office
- University of Kentucky

Managing Reclaimed Coal Mine Land: HAY PRODUCTION

Looks can be deceiving

Hay production is a common practice for reclaiming coal mine land, but it requires proper planning and management to ensure successful production. The soil conditions, nutrient levels, and moisture availability can all affect the growth and yield of the hay, so it is important to assess these factors before initiating any hay production activities.

Resources
- Hay Production Guides
- Soil Test Results

Managing Reclaimed Coal Mine Land: GRAZING

Looks can be deceiving

Grazing is another common practice for reclaiming coal mine land, but it requires careful management to ensure the health and productivity of the grazing animals. Grazing can help to improve soil structure and fertility, but it can also lead to soil compaction and nutrient depletion if not managed properly.

Resources
- Grazing Management Guides
- Soil Test Results

Managing Reclaimed Coal Mine Land: WILDLIFE HABITAT

Looks can be deceiving

Creating wildlife habitat on reclaimed coal mine land can help to improve the ecological balance and support the recovery of local ecosystems. However, it is important to consider the needs of different species and to implement proper management practices, such as vegetation management, to ensure successful habitat creation.

Resources
- Wildlife Management Guides
- Soil Test Results

Managing Reclaimed Coal Mine Land: TREE PLANTING

Looks can be deceiving

Planting trees is a common practice for reclaiming coal mine land, but it requires careful planning and management to ensure successful growth and establishment. The soil conditions, moisture availability, and nutrient levels can all affect the success of tree planting, so it is important to assess these factors before initiating any tree planting activities.

Resources
- Tree Planting Guides
- Soil Test Results

Fragile soils

The soil may be fragile and susceptible to erosion, which can lead to reduced plant growth and soil degradation. To prevent soil loss and protect the environment, it is important to implement proper land management practices, such as strip-mining systems, which can help to maintain the integrity of the soil.

Where to get help
- Local Extension Office
- University of Kentucky
Managing Reclaimed Coal Mine Land: HAY PRODUCTION

Looks can be deceiving

A reclaimed strip mine will blend into the landscape and look virtually the same as undisturbed Iowa land. Don’t be fooled. Just underneath the surface the soil remains extremely fragile and susceptible to erosion. If the land is not properly managed, acid-forming materials may resurface and soils may begin to erode.

Hay production as a compatible land use

With proper care and management, reclaimed land can be used for hay production. However, it is important to remember that reclaimed land cannot be hayed in the same manner as undisturbed ground.

On reclaimed land it is recommended to wait until vegetation is well established before cutting, which could take several years. When hay is taken, it should be cut high. Reclaimed ground will not tolerate as many cuttings in a year as unreclaimed ground, so it must be monitored closely.

As with any hay ground management system, it is important to maintain soil fertility to generate the most productive crop possible. Each time hay is harvested, soil fertility is removed. Soil testing and proper nutrient management will help keep nutrients (nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and/or potassium (K)) in balance. Replenishing nutrients as necessary will help maintain the best stand possible.

Where to get help

For assistance with developing a management plan for your reclaimed area, contact your local USDA Service Center.

Resources

Each county in Iowa has a USDA Service Center where the local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) offices are housed.

These offices have technical and financial assistance available for land management and conservation practices.

Davis SWCD
402 Karr Ave
Bloomfield
(641) 694-2616

Mahaska SWCD
2503 Todd Street
Oskaloosa
(641) 673-3478

Marion SWCD
1445 Lake Drive
Knoxville
(641) 842-3186

Monroe SWCD
1701 S B-Street
Albia
(641) 832-7134

Van Buren SWCD
1016 Franklin Street
Keosauqua
(319) 293-3371

Wapello SWCD
2908 Oak Meadow Dr
Otterwa
(641) 684-6515

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For more information, contact Pathfinders R&O (841) 472 - 6177 • info@PathfindersRCD.org
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REAP
25th Resource Enhancement and Protection

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Informational Handouts + Regional Meetings + Field Tour
Regional Meetings, April 2014
Landowner Outreach Project

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What we’re thinking ≠ What landowner is thinking
Conversation

This is the good stuff.

Understanding
Success!