

13-Million-Pound Dragline to Cross Central Indiana in Trek to Largest New Coal Mine in Eastern United States

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Peabody Energy's 13-million-pound dragline has begun an 18-mile "walk" from the Farmersburg Mine in Sullivan County, Ind., to its new home at the Bear Run Mine south of Dugger, Ind.

Bear Run will be the largest coal mine in the eastern United States, initially operating two draglines to move rock and reveal coal seams. Mined areas are ultimately restored to productive farmland and pasture.

One of the most massive machines in the world, the Bucyrus-Erie 2570-W dragline will cross the countryside and two Indiana state highways during its month-long journey to Bear Run.

Transporting a machine of the 2570's size requires great precision and extensive planning, said Kent Holcomb, Bear Run's Operating Manager. "It takes a lot of hard work from many people to move anything of this scale," he said. "We thank the many state and local agencies, neighbors and utility personnel who have helped us successfully engineer this rare and important journey."

The walk will continue 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at a pace of less than one-tenth of a mile an hour. A crew of up to 20 staff will support the machine's operators, including maintenance personnel and electricians responsible for the 22,900-volt cabling that powers the dragline's progress.

At 13-million pounds, the 2570 weighs more than 150 Boeing 737-700 jetliners. It towers 220-feet high and swings a 335-foot boom with a maximum operating radius of 300 feet, the length of a football field. This boom carries a 115-cubic-yard bucket capable of moving a 335,000 pound payload. The machine sits on a tub spanning 80 feet in diameter and walks with two "shoes" measuring 72 feet in length by 14 feet in width. This size is necessary to lift and advance the dragline's massive frame.

The Indiana Department of Transportation also will close highways 48 and 54 temporarily to accommodate the dragline's journey. At each highway crossing, teams will layer plastic, straw, clay and shale above the road to protect the asphalt and will remove these items after the dragline's passage. Because the process may take several hours, the department has planned detours and ongoing alerts for motorists.

At the end of its travels, the dragline will immediately begin operating at the Bear Run Mine. With an 8 million ton-per-year capacity, Bear Run will bring significant economic benefits to the community, Peabody Energy Chief Operating Officer Eric Ford said of the company's newest mine.

"Bear Run employs more than 350 skilled workers and annually contributes approximately \$140 million in direct economic benefits into the regional economy. Annual payroll at the site alone is expected to exceed \$50 million," said Ford. "We're enormously proud to bring on line another new source of affordable, made-in-America energy in the Illinois Basin."

Peabody has a more than 125-year history in the Midwest and is globally recognized for safety, environmental excellence and good neighbor practices. The company earned more than 30 major honors in 2009 for safety, sustainability and financial achievements.

Peabody Energy is the world's largest private-sector coal company and a global leader in clean coal solutions. With 2009 sales of 244 million tons and \$6 billion in revenues, Peabody fuels 10 percent of U.S. power and 2 percent of worldwide electricity.

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