

Peabody Energy's North Antelope Rochelle And Cottage Grove Mines Honored With Excellence In Reclamation Awards From U.S. Interior

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ST. LOUIS, Aug. 7, 2012 [/PRNewswire/](#) -- Peabody Energy has been honored with two U.S. Department of the Interior 2012 Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards for protection of raptor populations in Wyoming and restoration of prime farmland in Illinois.

To view the multimedia assets associated with this release, please click:<http://www.multivu.com/mnr/49637-peabody-energy-mines-excellence-in-reclamation-awards-from-u-s-interior>

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Peabody's flagship North Antelope Rochelle Mine in Campbell County, Wyo. – the world's largest and most productive coal mine – was recognized for a multi-faceted approach to sustain populations of eagles, hawks, owls and other birds of prey through creation of high-quality habitat and protection of nesting areas. Nearly three decades of monitoring data confirm that young have fledged each year, and raptor populations successfully have been sustained as mining activities significantly increased.

Peabody's Cottage Grove Mine in Saline County, Ill., was honored for soil handling and crop management methods to restore prime farmland, achieving high yields of corn, soy beans, wheat and hay crops that are as good or better than county averages. These results are important given Cottage Grove is located in one of the most productive agriculture regions in the state. Restoration of prime farmland is considered among the highest land uses, yet it is among the most difficult to achieve.

"Peabody has a world-class environmental, engineering and operations team that continues to demonstrate leadership in sustainable mining and restoration practices," said Charles Meintjes, Acting President of Peabody – Americas. "I congratulate our team for setting a standard of environmental excellence that consistently delivers the highest and most enduring benefits for communities and stakeholders long term."

Peabody's mission statement says that when mining is complete, lands will be returned to a condition that is equal to or better than before mining occurred. In practice, lands are often returned to a condition that is more productive than native range.

At the North Antelope Rochelle Mine, wildlife habitat restoration includes creating nesting and roosting areas and planting more than 1,900 cottonwood and willow trees in seasonal creeks and ephemeral pools.

The highly productive reclaimed rangeland provides habitat for rabbits, mice and other small mammals that are important prey for raptors. Nesting platforms also are constructed within restored lands to provide sites to attract new breeding pairs and allow existing pairs to maintain their territory. Monitoring and surveying are extensive and ongoing.

North Antelope Rochelle has a history of excellence in stewardship, which includes recent honors for protection of raptors from the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality and recognition for a quarter-century of successful land restoration and wildlife protection from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

At the Cottage Grove Mine, superior productivity of reclaimed farmland has been achieved through proper handling of soils and use of cover crops. The process includes storing topsoil prior to mining, replacing more than twice as much subsoil for the rooting zone using higher quality material than what is required, and employing the latest technology to prepare and aerate the soils.

Cover crops are used to further enhance the replaced soils and are hardy enough to withstand weather extremes and create rapid ground cover. The species have root types that act as nutrient pumps, concentrating nutrients near the surface while others hold nourishment in their tissues. Cover crops also encourage beneficial insects, mammals, birds, and microflora and microfauna to further strengthen the restored ecosystem.

Cottage Grove is routinely recognized for environmental excellence and has earned recent honors from the Illinois Office of Mines and Minerals and the National Association of State Land Reclamationists, both for outstanding restoration results.

This past year, Peabody restored more than 5,100 acres of mined lands globally, creating rangeland, wildlife habitat, hardwood forests, wetlands and prime farmland areas. The company earned nearly a dozen environmental and community awards worldwide and spent more than \$290 million on these activities.

Peabody Energy is the world's largest private-sector coal company and a global leader in sustainable mining and clean coal solutions. The company serves metallurgical and thermal coal customers in more than 25 countries on six continents. For further information, go to PeabodyEnergy.com and CoalCanDoThat.com.

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