



NEWS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release, Contact:
Randy Christmann, (701) 328-4091
Julie Fedorchak, (701) 391-1140
Brian Kalk, (701) 261-0373

**PSC Presents Dakota Westmoreland Corporation with Award
for Excellence in Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation**

BISMARCK, ND – The North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) presented the Award for Excellence in Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation to Dakota Westmoreland Corporation (DWC) today at the Lignite Energy Council’s annual meeting being held in Bismarck. The PSC’s Reclamation Division recommended that DWC be recognized for implementing a plan to avoid or minimize disturbance to wooded draws at the Beulah Mine.

“North Dakota’s mining companies do an exemplary job of minimizing their environmental impact, but in this case Dakota Westmoreland’s effort was particularly remarkable,” said Commissioner Randy Christmann who holds the coal mining and reclamation portfolio. “This is a great example of how we can make use of our valuable resources in an environmentally friendly way.”

Wooded draws are naturally occurring steep, narrow valleys that are primarily vegetated by trees and shrubs. They provide valuable wildlife habitat, as well as landscape diversity and livestock shelter. If disturbed by mining, wooded draws are difficult to reclaim.

DWC has a number of wooded draws in its active mine area. Although the lower reaches of most of these wooded draws do not have coal underneath the surface, the upper reaches can contain coal. Oftentimes the upper reaches of the wooded draws on mine sites are disturbed by associated disturbances, such as sedimentation ponds and diversions and/or by coal removal. DWC modified its mine plan to avoid disturbance of several wooded draws, including the upper reaches. This involved moving the location of several ponds and associated diversions out of wooded draw locations. DWC used creative mining and water management methods to avoid disturbance to the upper reaches of the wooded draws, thus preserving these unique features.

The North Dakota Public Service Commission is a constitutionally created state agency with authority to permit, site and regulate business activities in the state including electric and gas utilities, telecommunications companies, power plants, electric transmission lines, pipelines, railroads, grain elevators, auctioneers, commercial weighing devices, pipeline safety and coal mine reclamation. For more information, contact the Public Service Commission at (701) 328-2400 or www.psc.nd.gov.

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