



U.S. Office of Surface Mining

News Release



February 3, 2004

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MEDIA ADVISORY

Interior Secretary Norton to Join Pennsylvania Gov. Rendell Tomorrow to Announce President's Plan to Clean Up Dangerous Abandoned Coal Mines

Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton will join Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell in Harrisburg on Wednesday, February 4, to unveil a plan to accelerate abandoned mine reclamation efforts in Pennsylvania and across the nation. Jeff Jarrett, Director of the Office of Surface Mining (OSM), U.S. Reps. John Peterson and Don Sherwood and representatives of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council will be joining in the announcement. OSM estimates that more than 3.5 million Americans—including 1.5 million Pennsylvania residents--still live less than a mile from a dangerous high-priority abandoned coal site.

WHAT: News conference to announce President Bush's proposal to accelerate the clean-up of dangerous abandoned coal mines and direct funds to the highest priority areas. The reauthorization proposal would provide sufficient funding to eliminate all significant health and safety problems within 25 years, removing 142,000 people from risk annually.

Under the proposed legislation, Pennsylvania would see an increase in its federal reclamation grant of nearly 50 percent, from \$24.1 million to \$35.5 million, with 20,612 more individuals removed from harm annually compared to current law.

WHO: U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Gale Norton

Pennsylvania Governor Edward Rendell

U.S. Rep. John Peterson

U.S. Rep. Don Sherwood

Jeff Jarrett, Director of the Office of Surface Mining

Pennsylvania Environmental Council

WHEN: TOMORROW -- Wednesday, February 4 at 11:00 a.m.

WHERE: Capitol building, main rotunda
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

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For more information visit OSM's website at <http://www.osm.gov>.