



APPALACHIAN COAL COUNTRY TEAM

ANNUAL REPORT 2011

AN OSM/VISTA INITIATIVE

The mission of the **Appalachian Coal Country Team** is *to assist rural communities impoverished by environmental degradation and its consequences in making their home-place-watersheds healthier places to live and work.*



An OSM/VISTA Initiative



Spring 2011



An OSM/VISTA Initiative



Fall 2011



The ACCT is supported by an innovative partnership among the Office of Surface Mining, AmeriCorps VISTA and local community groups serving the 3 million people living within a mile of an Abandoned Mine Land.



Moving Forward...

A Message from Dr. T Allan Comp OSM/VISTA Teams Coordinator

This is our first attempt at an annual report for the Appalachian Coal Country Team—happily, it’s been a great year to report. The Department of the Interior awarded its Environmental Achievement Award in the Good Neighbor category to the two OSM/VISTA Teams. We had 31 sites located throughout seven Appalachian states with funding support from OSM, the Appalachian Regional Commission and several others as well—all much appreciated.

All this happens because we have great local sponsors for equally-great OSM/VISTAs—and a Beckley, WV Support Office to make sure our recruitment, training and support for each of those positions is the best.



We remain committed to building capacity in communities impoverished by environmental degradation—creating the opportunities for rural communities to educate, rebuild, and revitalize their rural places and their peoples. I hope you enjoy this quick summary and I’d like to hear back from you about what you think.

Yours in service,

T Allan Comp, Ph D
OSM/VISTA Teams Coordinator

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ACCT BY THE NUMBERS

\$8,984,777

GRANT FUNDING

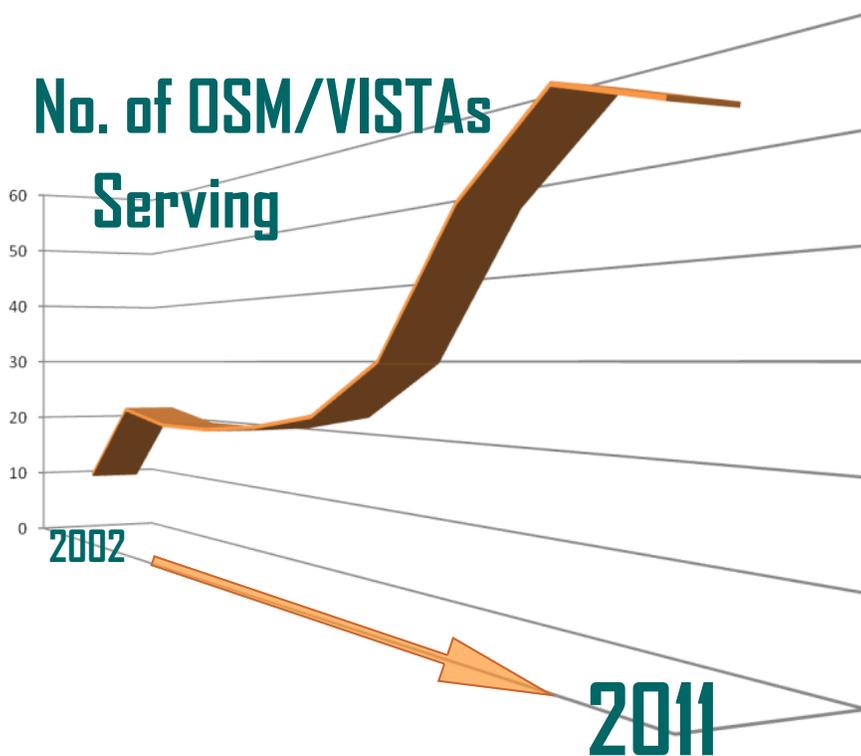
Generated by DSM/VISTA for Project

IN KIND RESOURCES

Donated to DSM/VISTA Project

\$4,658,577

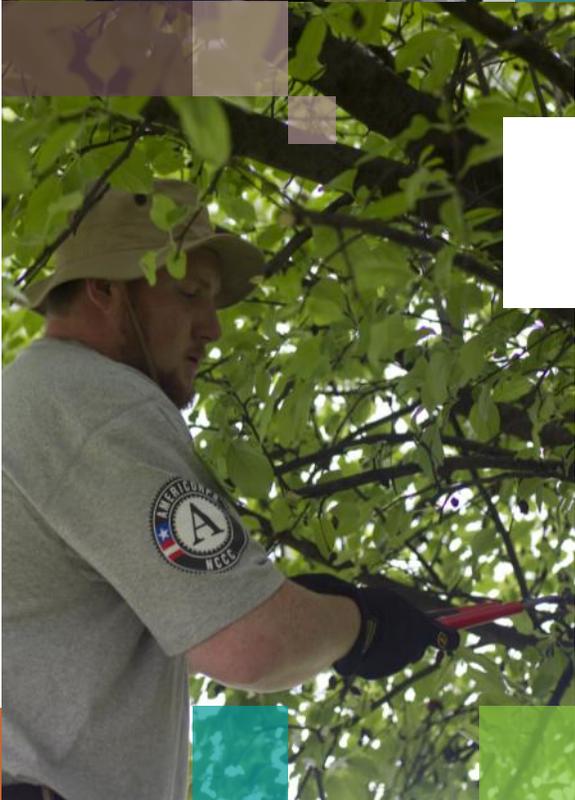
No. of DSM/VISTAs Serving

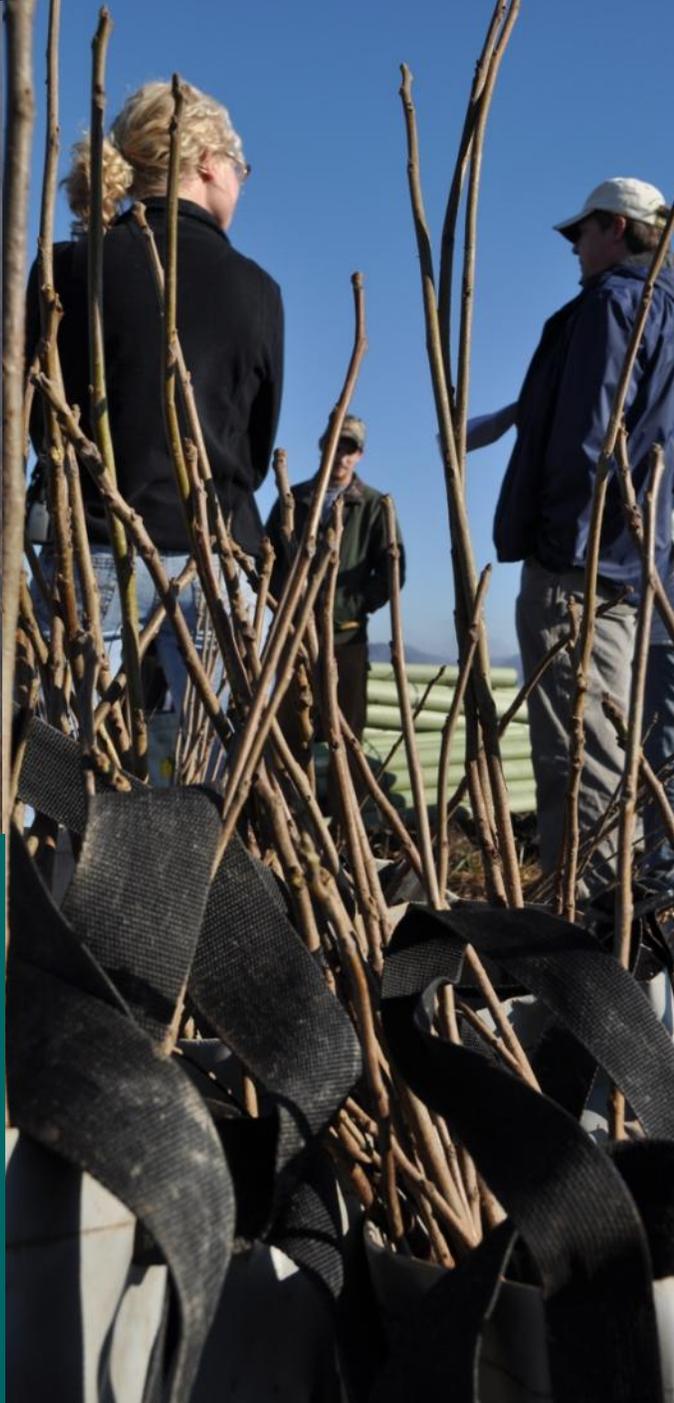




Serving Across Appalachia

From January to December of 2011, OSM/VISTAs served across Appalachia assisting rural community organizations. Each point on the map below depicts a site in which at least one OSM/VISTA served.





*“ARRI brought the science, and ACCT brought thousands of **inspired volunteers**, and together they planted hundreds of thousands of tree seedlings on previously mined land. By working together we are reestablishing the former eastern hardwood forests and creating future **economic opportunity** for Appalachian communities.”*

- Dr. Patrick Angel

Senior Forester / Soil Scientist for the Office of Surface Mining and
Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative Team Member

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES THROUGH *Reforestation*

2011 saw the Appalachian Coal Country Team continue a successful partnership with the Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative (ARRI) that began in 2009. The

*"[Reforestation projects] **build** human-resource **capacity** and infrastructure through private and nonprofit sectors that will generate jobs and **economic activity**—years after the trees are planted."*

goal of this partnership is to restore the former eastern hardwood forest cover to create future avenues for economic opportunity.

ACCT received a grant opportunity from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) that provided \$12,000 for reforestation projects, combining ACCT's focus of community engagement combined with ARRI's mission to plant more of the high-value hardwood trees throughout Appalachia.

*"These lands provide the opportunities for **jobs**—current and future—improvement of environmental conditions (air and water) and many other '**green**' endeavors."*

ACCT sent out a call for proposals from

our partners who were interested in conducting reforestation projects. Six projects each received \$2,000 to aid them in this goal as well as the

assistance of an OSM/VISTA Reforestation Coordinator. Each site had to be located on public land which would encourage community participation. The projects had to also include an educational component related to that organization's reforestation efforts in the area.

ACCT continues to discover new opportunities to further our reforestation initiatives.

2011 Reforestation Numbers

57,800

Hours Donated by
Community Volunteers

500,000

Tree Seedlings were
Planted by Volunteers

680

Acres of Land was
Reforested

STATE SNAPSHOT



Serving OH, PA, MD and WV

from January to December of 2011, OSM/VISTAs worked with their organizations to achieve:

\$1,314,260 GRANT FUNDING
Generated by OSM/VISTAs

IN KIND **\$321,340**
Resources Donated to Rural Groups

\$1,326,900 CASH RESOURCES
Generated by OSM/VISTAs For their Project

"Our excellent [OSM]VISTAs have written many grants and recruited volunteers to support ongoing projects and implement new initiatives."

-Amanda Pitzer, Supervisor
Friends of the Cheat, WV



NORTHERN COALFIELDS

OHIO
PENNSYLVANIA
MARYLAND
WEST VIRGINIA

"It's always nice to know that you are part of something greater, that the work you do can actually have an impact..."

- David Thompson
Former OSM/VISTA
New River Gorge Project, WV



40 OSM/VISTAs

Located in the Northern Coalfields, worked to achieve:

10,924

Hours Donated by
Community Volunteers

156

Acres of Parks Improved
and Beautified

96

Miles of Trails and Rivers
Cleaned and Restored

2011

ST

SOUTHERN COALFIELDS

VIRGINIA
KENTUCKY
TENNESSEE

"I appreciate the learning experience I'm having here and appreciate that I'm getting real world experience..."

-Samantha Lukasiewicz
Former OSM/VISTA
Upper Powell River Project, VA

13 OSM/VISTAs

Located in the Southern Coalfields, worked to achieve:

3,316

Hours Donated by
Community Volunteers

125

Acres of Parks Improved
and Beautified

37

Miles of Trails and Rivers
Cleaned and Restored



ATE SNAPSHOTS



"After completing their terms of service, OSM/VISTA[s] have continued serving the community by working with the environment and the public through their jobs."

-Carol Doss, Supervisor
Upper Tennessee River Roundtable



Serving VA, KY, and TN

from January to December of 2011, OSM/VISTAs worked with their organizations to achieve:

\$1,481,211 ▶ GRANT FUNDING
Generated by OSM/VISTAs

◀ **\$1,441,233**
IN KIND Resources Donated to Rural Groups

\$29,264 ▶ CASH RESOURCES
Generated by OSM/VISTAs For their Project

3 YEARS OF RESEARCH

WORKING WITH *Rural Volunteers*

In 2011, the OSM/VISTA Teams completed a pioneering three-year research project on rural volunteerism throughout Appalachia and the Rocky Mountain West with funding from the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds.

After engaging in place-based research in thirty-four rural communities, we created the *Toolkit for Working with Rural Volunteers* to share approaches to volunteer recruitment, management, and retention that have proved successful in rural settings.

The Volunteer Toolkit also contains tools for rural organizations to build sustainable volunteer management infrastructure.

"I think the biggest volunteering need in this community is leadership and organizers."

The Toolkit is composed of three sections, each of which can provide significant insight and ideas for rural volunteers:

SECTION 1 is Rural Volunteer Statistics, an extensive survey of the volunteers themselves, which explains just who the OSM/VISTA Teams rural volunteers are, and what they do; and introduces the organizations for which they work.

SECTION 2, Rural Volunteer Management Practices, summarizes twenty-five different volunteer practices that have been proved to work. This section of the Toolkit is a good idea catalogue, a collection of approaches to

volunteer management that have been tested and documented, whether successful or unsuccessful.

SECTION 3 contains tools: a dozen worksheets, templates and checklists

that any small community will find useful as they begin a project or as they carry that project to success.

The *Toolkit for Working with Rural Volunteers* was included in volunteer management consultations that helped to assist organizations preparing for a reforestation project. Each consultation would be tailored to the need of that organization so it could be expanded beyond the planning of the reforestation project.

"I'm so happy you didn't gloss over mistakes and missteps because I think our group can learn as much or more from what went wrong as what went right."

of consultations to aid community groups in finding solutions to persistent problems or exploring new opportunities for their groups.

"This was a great way for us to try out new volunteer recruiting and fundraising ideas"

This allowed groups to explore their other needs and discover the path to solutions through the use of the *Toolkit*.

Future plans for the *Toolkit* include the use







We're on the Web!



CoalCountryTeam.org

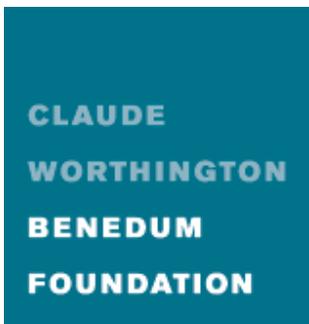
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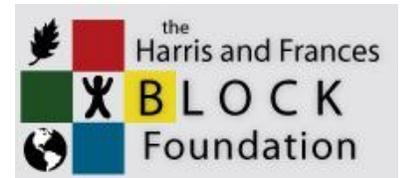
THANK YOU
to Our Partners & Sponsors



Citizens Conservation Corps
of WEST VIRGINIA
(Working Investing Improving)



We would also like to thank:
The Mental Insight Foundation



Without the generous support from our partners and funders, our work in coal country would not be possible. Thank you for believing in our work and sharing our mission.