

MEDIA ADVISORY

January 7, 2010

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement Director to Meet with Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribal Officials

(Washington, D.C.) Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) Director [Joe Pizarchik](#) will attend upcoming high-level meetings with officials of the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe to discuss issues related to coal mining and the reclamation of abandoned mines.

While in Arizona, Pizarchik will attend a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting that each tribe holds with OSM and other Federal agencies. Pizarchik will also meet publicly with Tribal members to hear their concerns directly and visit an active coal mine and lands restored under the Tribal government's Abandoned Mine Land program funded by OSM.

"These meetings are a chance for me to meet face to face with citizens so I might better understand their concerns about the work OSM does," said Pizarchik. "I look forward to spending an extended time with the Navajo and Hopi and their leaders," he added.

The visits come after [last month's announcement](#) from Interior Secretary Ken Salazar that the two tribes are eligible to receive millions of dollars in grants from OSM's Abandoned Mine Land program. In the current fiscal year, OSM is making up to \$6.5 million available to the Navajo Nation, and another \$1.1 million is available for the Hopi Tribe. To receive these funds, the tribes apply to OSM for specific reclamation projects throughout the fiscal year, which ends September 30, 2010. [The money is eligible for use in a wide variety of projects](#) that provide stable, well-paying jobs to people throughout both reservations.

Pizarchik's public meeting is scheduled for 1:00 PM, January 11, 2010, at the Hopi Wellness Center in Kykotsmovi.

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement carries out the requirements of the [Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977](#) in cooperation with states and tribes. OSM's objectives are to ensure that coal mining activities are conducted in a manner that protects citizens and the environment during mining, to ensure that the land is restored to beneficial use after mining, and to mitigate the effects of past mining by aggressively pursuing reclamation of abandoned coal mines.

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