

Our mission is to serve Texas by our stewardship of natural resources and the environment, our concern for personal and community safety, and our support of enhanced development and economic vitality for the benefit of Texans.

RRC Becomes First State to Use Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grants to Complete Abandoned Mine Project



The Railroad Commission's Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program helps property owners around the state to reclaim and restore valuable land and water resources after mining. The program began in 1977 and more than 100 projects have been completed. AML's work in various projects consists of earthwork, burial or treatment of unsuitable spoil, and installation of erosion, water control structures, and revegetation. Abandoned, underground mine openings are usually closed by either backfilling, capping, or metal gating.

The RRC's expertise working with abandoned mines helped Texas become the first state in the country to use federal grants from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to complete an abandoned mine reclamation. AML staff worked quickly on a property in Bastrop to prevent an encroaching danger to a home. Every time a bad storm hit the area, an abandoned mine pit kept eroding and eventually would have led to the home caving in.

The reclamation work included creating a channel to drain storm water off the property and planting native species to benefit wildlife. The Commission worked with a company that employs current and former coal miners on the reclamation. The agency also took all steps necessary before the project began to ensure no environmental damage would occur. "With the goal of leaving the subsidence feature and toad habitat, we worked with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers on our wetland's determination and exclusion zone which ultimately deemed our project to have no impact," said Joe Parks, RRC Surface Mining and Reclamation Director. "AML also worked with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to review our programs best management practices."

[Watch a video of the AML project and an interview with the property owner here.](#)



www.rrc.texas.gov

Contact: Krista.Duke@rrc.texas.gov (512)463-6831
Director, Government Relations



@TxRRC



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