

Issue 3 ■ 2017

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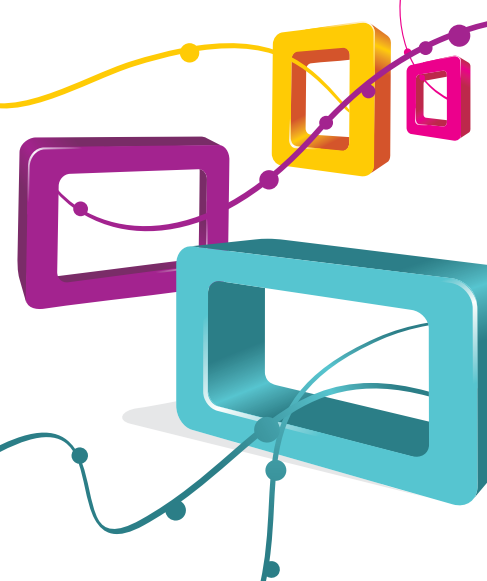


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PO Box 244322
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Toll Free Phone: (866) 387-0967
Toll Free Fax: (866) 458-6557

info@martonickpublications.com
www.martonickpublications.com
www.coalenergyonline.com

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President:

Maria Martonick

Vice President:

Steve Martonick

Managing Editor:

A.J. Raleigh

Research Coordinator:

Vivian Mofeed

Contributing Writers:

Maria Martonick, Vivian Mofeed,
Steve Horn, Zachs Equity Research,
Matthew Bristow, Marie Monteleone,
Hal Quinn, Logan Bonacorsi

Graphic Designer:

Natalia Filatkina

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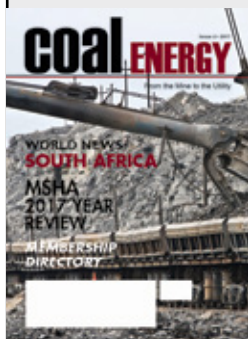


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letter from THE PUBLISHER



OCTOBER 2017

Dear readers,

Welcome to the **25th** edition of **Coal Energy**! The staff of **Coal Energy** sincerely thanks all of our readers, contributors and advertisers for this milestone in our ninth year of publishing.

In this extended anniversary issue, we meet David Zatezalo, Trump's choice for MSHA. We also take a look at Trump's deal with Ukraine. Information about the DOE's award to research REE's is also featured in this edition.

For reclamation news, we present to you the award winners for the 2017 OSMRE Awards. In Market News, Zacks Equity Research takes an in depth look at the good and bad news for coal stocks. In World News we visit a small coal mining town in Colombia.

Coal Energy is proud to be able to provide quick news updates gathered from various sources to create a wealth of industry information at the click of a button. From newly released equipment, to quarterly finance news, you can easily review important industry happenings in our press release department.

Coal Energy is the source journal for information about coal related associations in the industry. We provide information on different groups to benefit your companies' needs and targets. By providing information at a glance on each group, and including current member lists and events, your company can analyze the forums available to market, promote, and lobby for America's future regarding coal energy.

Please visit our website, www.coalenergyonline.com, for current and prior editions of Coal Energy.

You can also like and share our facebook page (www.facebook.com/coalenergyonline) created to network with the nations promoters of coal, suppliers of coal, and to serve as a public interface for the image of coal energy.

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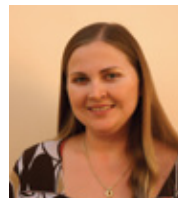
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And again, thank you for picking up, or clicking on, another edition of Coal Energy.

If you have any questions, editorial submissions, advertising interest or just comments about Coal Energy please feel free to email me directly at maria@martonickpublications.com.

Warmest regards,

Maria Martonick
President
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ASSOCIATION COMPARISONS



AMERICAN COAL ASH ASSOCIATION

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The ACAA advances the management and use of coal combustion products in ways that are environmentally responsible, technically sound, commercially competitive and more supportive of a sustainable global community.

www.acaa-usa.org

THE NATIONAL MINING ASSOCIATION

MISSION:

NMA's mission is to build support for public policies that will help Americans fully and responsibly benefit from our abundant domestic coal and mineral resources. Our objective is to engage in and influence the public process on the most significant and timely issues that impact mining's ability to safely and sustainably locate, permit, mine, transport and utilize the nation's vast resources.

NMA serves its membership by:

- Promoting the safe production and use of coal and mineral resources
- Establishing a strong political presence in the Nation's Capital
- Serving as the information center for and a single voice of U.S. mining
- Addressing the current and future policy needs of U.S. mining, mining equipment manufacturers and support services members of NMA

www.nma.org

NATIONAL COAL TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION

MISSION:

The Mission of the NCTA is to provide education and facilitation for the resolution of coal transportation issues in order to serve the needs of the general public, industry, and all modes of transportation.

This is accomplished through the sponsoring of educational forums and providing opportunities for the lawful exchange of ideas and knowledge with all elements of the coal transportation infrastructure.

www.nationalcoaltransportation.org

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MINING AND RECLAMATION

MISSION:

ASMR's mission is to represent and serve a diverse national and international community of scientists, practitioners, private industry, technicians, educators, planners, and government regulators involved in mineral extraction and the reclamation of disturbed lands. ASMR promotes the advancement of basic and applied reclamation science through research and technology transfer in the Society's annual meetings, workshops, published proceedings, newsletters, Reclamation Matters magazine, and the ASMR web site.

<http://fp1.ca.uky.edu/asmr>

AMERICAN COAL COUNCIL

MISSION:

American Coal Council (ACC) provides relevant educational programs, market intelligence, advocacy support and peer-to-peer networking forums to advance members' commercial and professional development interests.

ACC represents the collective interests of the American coal industry ~ from the hole-in-the-ground to the plug-in-the-wall ~ in advocating for coal as an economic, abundant and environmentally sound fuel source. ACC serves as an essential resource for industry, policy makers and public interest groups. The Association supports activities and objectives that advance coal supply, consumption, transportation and trading.

www.americancoalcouncil.org

WORLD COAL ASSOCIATION

MISSION:

The World Coal Association is a global industry association comprising the major international coal producers and stakeholders. WCA works to demonstrate and gain acceptance for the fundamental role coal plays in achieving a sustainable and lower carbon energy future. Membership is open to companies and not-for-profit organizations with a stake in the future of coal from anywhere in the world, with member companies represented at Chief Executive level. WCA is the global network for the coal industry.

www.worldcoal.org/about-wca/

RMEL

MISSION: RMEL, through its diverse membership, educational events, and programs, facilitates the discovery of solutions and strategies for vital issues facing the electric utility industry.

www.rmел.org

COAL TRADING ASSOCIATION

MISSION:

The Coal Trading Association (CTA) is the only trade association dedicated exclusively to the needs of traders, trading managers, brokers, risk managers, sales managers, and purchasing managers in the coal trading industry.

CTA was established in 1999 to promote coal trading capability and liquidity in the US. CTA develops and maintains industry standards for coal trading activity with the goal of achieving a disciplined, liquid and efficient coal trading industry. To achieve this goal, CTA develops policies, exchanges information among members and other interested professional and technical groups, and offers training programs to improve the knowledge, skills, and practice tools of its members.

www.coaltrade.org

AS US COAL EXPORTS SWELL, TRUMP ADMIN FACILITATES MAJOR DEAL WITH UKRAINE

By Steve Horn • August 21, 2017



Export levels of coal produced in the U.S. shot up earlier this year, as President Donald Trump assumed the White House, in what his administration has dubbed the age of “energy dominance.”

For the first quarter of 2017, export levels grew 58 percent compared to the same quarter last year, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. The news comes as the Trump administration recently helped broker a major coal export deal between Pennsylvania-based coal production company Xcoal Energy and Ukrainian company Centrenergy PJSC.

That deal, which will see 700,000 tons of thermal coal shipped from XCoal's mines to Centrenergy power plants in Ukraine, was applauded by both U.S. Secretary of Energy Rick Perry and U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross.

Although Trump's presidential campaign is under scrutiny for its potential connections to Russian operatives, Ross praised the coal deal in the name of fending off Kremlin influence.

“Today's announcement will allow Ukraine to diversify its energy sources ahead of the coming winter, helping bolster a key

strategic partner against regional pressures that seek to undermine U.S. interests,” Ross stated in a press release. “In the past, Russia has tried to choke off opposition to its ambitions by restricting the flow of natural gas to its western neighbors.”

Perry also lauded the deal as a way of beating back Russian energy dominance in that region. Russian-backed separatist rebels currently occupy Ukraine's coal-rich region and have commandeered the mines, making coal extraction in the area currently untenable.

“In recent years Kiev and much of Eastern Europe have been reliant on and beholden to Russia to keep the heat on. That changes now,” stated Perry. “The United States can offer Ukraine an alternative, and today we are pleased to announce that we will. U.S. coal will be a secure and reliable energy source for Centrenergy and its electricity customers.”

According to the joint Commerce Department/Energy Department press release, shipments of coal to Ukraine will begin in late August and early September in time to stockpile for the winter season. Those shipments, according to Kyiv Post, will come mostly via

the Port of Baltimore.

In June, President Trump met with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, which, according to the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine, prompted the deal.

“U.S. coal will bolster critical stockpiles for the winter heating season,” George Kent, Deputy Chief of Mission in Ukraine, said in prepared remarks at a ceremony marking the deal between XCoal Energy and Centrenergy. “We applaud the Government of Ukraine's dedication to diversifying supplies, and we hope that this deal augurs even deeper cooperation between our two countries in this critical sector.”

Much of the coal will come from mines in eastern Pennsylvania and will be transported via rail by Reading and Northern Railroad and Norfolk Southern.

“Reading & Northern is delighted to be partnering with Xcoal and Norfolk Southern on this wonderful opportunity,” Reading and Northern Railroad CEO Andrew Muller, Jr. said in a press release. “Our years of investment in coal cars and our branch line rail system pays off with our ability to turn on a dime and handle the movement of 30+ unit trains in 5

months." (A unit train carries only a single commodity.)

Some industry analysts believe that, though U.S. coal exports are riding high at the moment, that could easily change as global coal demand ebbs and flows.

"In the long-term, U.S. exports face multiple challenges," wrote CNBC. "China is scaling back plans for new coal-fired power plants. India aims to produce more of the coal it consumes. South Korea's new president has plans to wean the country off coal."

PREVIOUS BENEFICIARY

XCoal and Centrenergy have both previously benefited from U.S. government intervention. Under the Obama administration, XCoal landed a \$90 million loan guarantee in May 2012 from the U.S. Export-Import Bank to facilitate shipping coal to Asian countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea. That loan was subject of a lawsuit from environmental groups, though it was eventu-

ally dismissed in federal court, and came amidst the 2012 presidential campaign as Obama sought votes in battleground coal states such as Ohio and Pennsylvania.

"The Ex-Im Bank has once again demonstrated its commitment to the world's most heavily polluting fuel: coal. Their fondness for the financing of coal comes at the expense of U.S. taxpayers and local communities by sacrificing competitiveness, jobs, and local environments to prop up a dirty and outdated industry," Justin Guay of Sierra Club's International Climate Program said at the time the deal was signed.

And during Bill Clinton's administration, Centrenergy executives and officials received U.S. coal industry training in procurement and financing from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of its Energy Industry Partnership Program (EIPP). Russian utility companies were also trained under the same program.

"The objective of the EIPP is to establish long-term cooperative relationships between U.S. and [New Independent States] energy enterprises that provide a mechanism for the U.S. energy industry to transfer its experience in market-based energy production, transmission, and distribution to its counterparts," explained a US-AID document from October 2000.

LNG EXPORTS

In addition to exporting coal, XCoal also has entered the export game for natural gas. Its subsidiary XLNG Energy plans to facilitate exporting gas obtained via hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") in Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale basin.

"The creation of XLNG demonstrates our commitment to supplying our long term business partners with products necessary to meet their resource needs in a changing energy landscape," Ernie Thrasher, CEO of Xcoal, said in 2015 of the new subsidiary.

Main image credit: U.S. Embassy in Ukraine



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DOE AWARDS UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA CONTRACT TO SAMPLE AND CHARACTERIZE COAL-BASED RESOURCES CONTAINING RARE EARTH ELEMENTS / October 26, 2017

The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Fossil Energy (FE) and the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) have announced that the University of North Dakota has been awarded a 2-year, \$1.5 million contract to sample and characterize U.S. coal-based resources containing high concentrations of rare earth elements (REEs). The university will also perform a round-robin inter-laboratory study on the analytical methods used to measure the concentration of REEs in U.S. coal-based resources.

REEs comprise a series of 17 chemical elements found in the Earth's crust. They are essential components of many technologies spanning a range of applications, including electronics, computer and communication systems, transportation, health care, and national defense. The demand for these elements has grown significantly over recent years, stimulating an emphasis on developing economically feasible approaches for domestic REE recovery.

The newly announced contract will support FE's

REE Program, which has characterized many REE-bearing samples of coal and coal by-products. The University of North Dakota will supplement this work by sampling and characterizing U.S. domestic pre-combustion coal and coal-related materials with a minimum REE concentration of 300 parts per million, as the material is removed from the ground, with no processing other than drying. The University will also perform a round-robin inter-laboratory study to determine the lab-to-lab and method-to-method variability in analyzing the REE content of domestic U.S. based coal resources.

The Office of Fossil Energy funds research and development projects to reduce the risk and cost of advanced fossil energy technologies and further the sustainable use of the Nation's fossil resources. To learn more about the programs within the Office of Fossil Energy, visit the Office of Fossil Energy website. More information about the National Energy Technology Laboratory is available on the NETL website.

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DAVID ZATEZALO,

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S NOMINEE FOR MSHA CHIEF /

September, 2017



In September 2017, Zatezalo was nominated by President Donald Trump to become the next head of the Mine Safety and Health Administration.

Zatezalo's nomination was received in the Senate and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions on September 5, 2017. Ahead of his confirmation hearings, Democrats asked for details of the warnings at the Eagle #1 mine. Zatezalo's confirmation hearing was October 4, 2017. The committee voted 12-11 in favor of advancing his nomination. Zatezalo's nomination now goes to the full Senate.

In 1974, Zatezalo began his mining career with Consolidation Coal Company, where he worked as a United Mine Workers laborer. He became a foreman and was later named general superintendent for Southern Ohio Coal Company and general manager of the Windsor Coal Company. Zatezalo has served as vice president of operations of American Electric Power's Appalachian mining operations, as general mine manager for Broken Hill Proprietary, and as president of Hopedale Mining.

From 2007 to 2014, Zatezalo was chairman of the coal company Rhino Resources.

Zatezalo received his mining engineering degree from West Virginia University and his MBA from Ohio University. Senate confirmation hearings are expected to take place within the next couple of weeks.

If he were to lead MSHA, Zatezalo said his work in Washington would be a natural extension of his former work in running a coal company. When he ran Rhino Resources, he said, he started each day reviewing the previous day's safety reports, and noted just about every coal executive he's ever met puts the health and safety of miners first.

In a statement issued in response to Zatezalo's nomination, United Mine Workers of America President Cecil Roberts said miners' safety and health is "MSHA's first and only priority," adding, "It is my hope that Mr. Zatezalo will take the tough stance on enforcement that is needed to rein in the rising level of serious injuries and fatalities."

PRESS RELEASES

Study Documents Coal's Value for Baseload Power / August 31, 2017,

Washington, D.C

The National Mining Association (NMA) today hailed a new report documenting the value of coal for ensuring the reliability and resiliency of the national power grid.

The report, "The Contribution of the Coal Fleet to America's Electricity Grid," was prepared by PA Consulting Group for the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity (ACCCE), and documents the attributes of coal that are essential for baseload power reliability. Qualities including dispatchability, on-site

fuel, voltage control and contingency reserves, concludes the report, serve the grid as a valuable hedge against weather events, price surges from energy sources and other disruptions that reduce associated risks.

The report, released yesterday, also found that over the past five years, coal-fueled power plants stockpiled an average of 82 days of bituminous coal and 73 days of subbituminous coal on site, eliminating the need for pipelines and transmission grids to deliver

fuel when needed. As a result of the added security coal offers, the study advised that "retaining existing coal-fueled power plants can help insulate ratepayers against rising and possibly volatile natural gas prices."

The report holds value for policymakers, as it underscores the Department of Energy's concerns about grid reliability following the substantial retirements of coal based power plants and the reduced fuel diversity now available for electricity generation.

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Peabody Calls U.S. Secretary of Energy's Proposed Grid Resiliency Pricing Rules a Key Step to Protect Energy Security for Families and Businesses / September 29, 2017

Peabody today said the U.S. Secretary of Energy's proposed rules on grid resiliency pricing mark a crucial step to protect America's energy security for families and businesses by recognizing the importance of baseload power supplied by coal for a reliable, resilient, cost-effective electricity grid.

Peabody applauds Secretary Perry's urgent call to action, which seeks to ensure that the reliability and resiliency attributes of generation with on-site fuel supplies are accurately priced to recognize the full benefits they provide to America.

"The secretary clearly recog-

nizes our electricity system is a complex organism that must offer a continual supply of affordable electricity that is available any time we need it," said Peabody President and Chief Executive Officer Glenn Kellow. "America can learn the lessons of other countries, which demonstrate that overreliance on intermittent or expensive fuel sources can jeopardize what is a great national resource."

Coal provides reliable baseload power, with the security of a large domestic supply. It has the capacity for high demand periods, significant on-site fuel storage and the ability to withstand major supply dis-

ruptions caused by unforeseen events.

"Maintaining coal for baseload power protects the balance of our energy supply and is part of an all-in energy strategy that Peabody has long advanced," said Kellow. "We encourage all federal and state regulators and market participants to embrace the fundamental importance of these actions."

A diversified energy portfolio including coal has the benefit of lowering the cost of U.S. electricity by as much as \$114 billion annually and lowers the average retail price of electricity by 27 percent, according to a recent IHS Markit study.

National Mining Welcomes Repeal of the Costly Power Plan /

October 6, 2017

National Mining Association (NMA) President and CEO Hal Quinn today issued this statement following reports of the administration's plans to repeal the Clean Power Plan:

"As reported, Administrator Pruitt will signal a decisive break with past policies that have used regulation of doubtful legality to circumvent the will of Congress, usurp States' authority and raise costs on American consumers.

"Repealing this Obama-era rule would close a chapter of regulatory overreach that set standards without regard to

the steep costs or availability of technology necessary to meet them. The Clean Power Plan represented an unlawful attempt to transform the nation's power grid. It would have destroyed additional baseload power assets, leaving our economy more vulnerable to reliability concerns and higher costs with trivial environmental benefits.

"Unplugging the plan would spare further loss of high-wage employment. By saving an estimated 240 million tons of annual coal production, the administrator's action helps to safeguard more

than 27,000 mining jobs and almost 100,000 additional jobs throughout the supply chain.

"A far better approach to achieving environmental improvement will rely on sound legal rules and proven technologies that can sustain the impressive reductions in emissions achieved over the past decades. Such an approach consistent with EPA's basic mission will restore the important balance between costs and benefits that have been missing from federal regulatory policies."

Westmoreland Successfully Exits ROVA Power Supply Agreements; Will Collect \$12 Million in Net Cash Collateral /

Englewood, CO – October 2, 2017

Westmoreland Coal Company (Nasdaq:WLB) today announced that it terminated its power purchase contracts with BP Energy Company and assigned its substitute energy agreement with Virginia Electric and Power Company, a subsidiary of Dominion Energy, effective October 1, 2017. As a result, Westmoreland will no longer have any obligation to provide power and capacity to Dominion, or to purchase power from BP which, in turn, secured the release of the related cash collateral. Westmoreland will receive \$12 million, comprised of \$22 million of cash collateral less a final \$10 million make-whole payment to BP. Previously, Westmoreland expected to receive a similar amount in net cash collateral releases as the con-

tracts ran off through early 2019.

“I want to congratulate the team on their hard work unwinding the overhang from this non-core power asset. We recently announced the sale of the physical ROVA facility, which is expected to close later this month and will generate \$5 million of cash receipts. This \$5 million, plus the accelerated receipt of \$12 million from exiting the power agreements, will result in significant cash inflows this year as well as the elimination of the otherwise ongoing annual cash flow drag of approximately \$5 million from the ROVA operation,” said Kevin Paprzycki, Westmoreland’s Chief Executive Officer.

About Westmoreland Coal Company

Westmoreland Coal Company is the oldest independent coal company in the United States. Westmoreland’s coal operations include surface coal mines in the United States and Canada, underground coal mines in Ohio and New Mexico, a char production facility, and a 50% interest in an activated carbon plant. Westmoreland also owns the general partner of and a majority interest in Westmoreland Resource Partners, LP, a publicly-traded coal master limited partnership (NYSE:WMLP). For more information, visit www.westmoreland.com.

DOI Cancellation of Sage Grouse Land Withdrawal Highlights Unreasonable Nature of Proposal it Recognizes was a “Complete Overreach” / October 5, 2017.

National Mining Association (NMA) President and CEO Hal Quinn issued the following statement in response to the U.S. Department of Interior announcement that it will not proceed with a proposed mining ban covering 10 million acres in Western states:

“Today’s action shows the importance of fact-based policymaking. This damaging and unnecessary ban would have barred mining on 10 million acres of mineral-rich lands, further increasing our import dependence.

“In cancelling the withdrawal, BLM itself called the proposal both ‘unreasonable’ and ‘complete overreach.’ The alleged rationale behind the proposed ban was to protect the sage

grouse habitat – a bird that is not endangered, whose habitat has been improved by mining conservation agreements and habitat restoration. Research has shown the true threats to the sage grouse are wildfires and invasive species, not mining.

“This proposal in search of a problem would have deepened our dependence on foreign countries for the minerals and metals that will help build our infrastructure, and serve as the tip of America’s supply chain. To be truly ‘Made in America,’ American manufacturing and American goods should start with American minerals that are mined here in the U.S.”

Arch Coal, Inc. Announces Stock Repurchase Agreement with Monarch Alternative Capital / ST. LOUIS, Sept. 13, 2017

Arch Coal, Inc. (NYSE: ARCH) ("Arch") today announced that it has entered into a stock repurchase agreement with certain investment funds managed by Monarch Alternative Capital LP (collectively, "Monarch").

Under the terms of the stock repurchase agreement, Arch has agreed to repurchase from Monarch 750,000 shares of Arch's common stock at a purchase price of \$74.33 per share, representing aggregate consideration of approximately \$55.7 million. Arch intends to fund the repurchase with cash on hand. The share repurchase would be made pursuant to, and would count toward, Arch's existing share repurchase program of up to \$300 million.

The transaction is expected to close on or about September 19, 2017, and is subject to customary closing conditions. Following the closing of the transaction, Monarch will own approximately 2.6 million shares of Arch's common stock.

U.S.-based Arch Coal, Inc. is a top coal producer for the global steel and power generation industries. Arch operates a streamlined portfolio of large-scale, low-cost mining complexes that produce high-quality metallurgical coals in Appalachia and low-emitting thermal coals in the Powder River Basin and other strategic supply regions. For more information, visit www.arch-coal.com.

Forward-Looking Statements: This press release contains "forward-looking statements" – that is, statements related to future, not past, events. In this context, forward-looking statements often address our expected future business and financial performance, and often contain words such as "expects," "anticipates," "intends," "plans," "believes," "seeks," or "will." Forward-looking statements by their nature address matters that are, to different degrees, uncertain. For us, particular uncertainties arise from changes in the demand for our coal by the domestic electric generation industry; from legislation and regulations relating to the Clean Air Act and other environmental initiatives; from operational, geological, permit, labor and weather-related factors; from fluctuations in the amount of cash we generate from operations; from future integration of acquired businesses; and from numerous

other matters of national, regional and global scale, including those of a political, economic, business, competitive or regulatory nature. These uncertainties may cause our actual future results to be materially different than those expressed in our forward-looking statements. We do not undertake to update our forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as may be required by law. For a description of some of the risks and uncertainties that may affect our future results, you should see the risk factors described from time to time in the reports we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

View original content: <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/arch-coal-inc-announces-stock-repurchase-agreement-with-monarch-alternative-capital-300519375.html>

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Secretary of Energy Rick Perry Announces \$36 Million for Projects to Advance Carbon Capture Technologies / September 22, 2017,

Washington, D.C.

U.S. Secretary of Energy Rick Perry has announced approximately \$36 million in federally-funded financial assistance to advance carbon capture technologies. Under the Department of Energy's (DOE's) Office Of Fossil Energy (FE), the *Design and Testing of Advanced Carbon Capture Technologies* funding opportunity announcement (FOA) will support cost-shared research and development projects that will continue the development of carbon capture technologies to either the engineering scale or to a commercial design.

"Carbon capture technologies are one of the most effective ways we can continue to leverage the sustainability of our Nation's fossil fuel resources while advancing environmental stewardship," said **Secretary Perry**. "This funding opportunity will provide for further innovation on methods for capturing carbon emissions for storage and other utilization efforts, as well as underscore this Administration's commitment to both environmental and economic security."

Selected projects for this FOA will fall under two areas of interest:

- Scaling of Carbon Capture Technologies to Engineering Scales Using Existing Host Site Infrastructure—Up to four awards, with combined DOE funding up to \$30 million.

- Initial Engineering, Testing, and Design for a Commercial-Scale, Post-Combustion CO₂ Capture System—Up to two awards, with combined DOE funding up to \$6 million.

These projects will undertake engineering-scale testing of transformational solvent - or membrane-based CO₂ - capture technologies, and will conduct design work for a commercial-scale, post-combustion CO₂-capture system at an existing coal-fueled generating unit.

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Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement 2017 Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Award Winners

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OSMRE Acting Director Glenda Owens presented the awards at the 39th annual National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs (NAAMLPP) conference in Lexington, Kentucky, September 24-27, 2017, during the AML Awards Banquet.

- **NATIONAL AWARD WINNER:**
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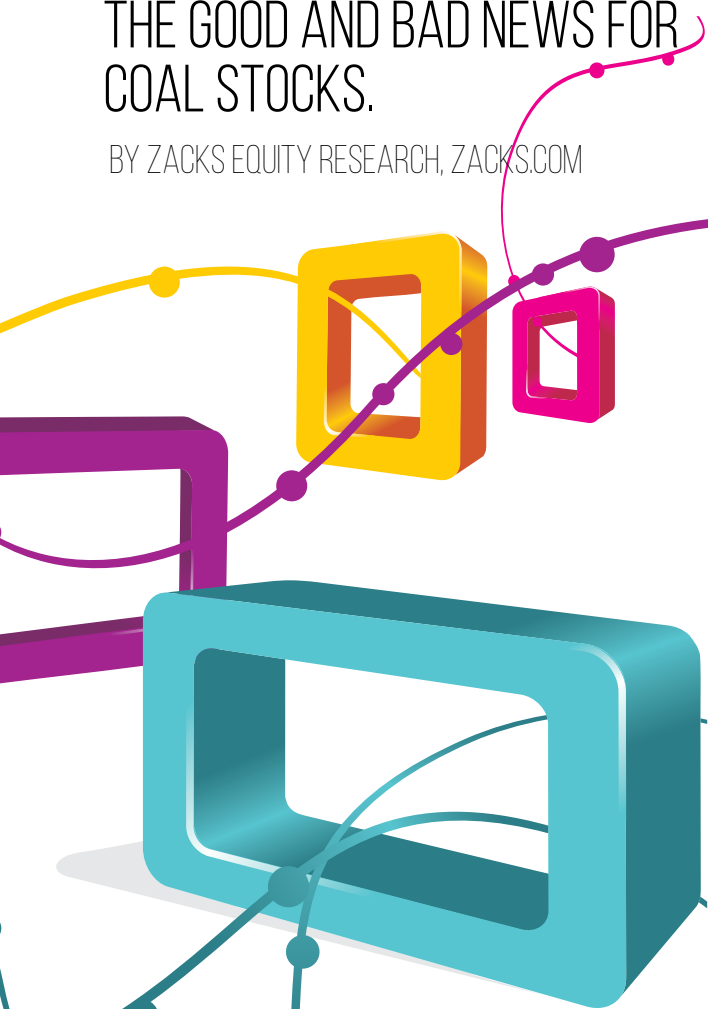
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COAL INDUSTRY OUTLOOK 2017

THE GOOD AND BAD NEWS FOR
COAL STOCKS.

BY ZACKS EQUITY RESEARCH, ZACKS.COM



It is a well-documented fact that the U.S. Coal industry has been challenged by stringent environmental regulations for the last few years. Former President Obama's introduction of Clean Power Plan made things worse for the coal industry. With the policy's initiation, coal as a fuel source was pushed back further by increasing usage of natural gas and renewable energy sources to produce electricity.

However, the condition of the coal industry has started to change for the better after the election of the new President. Donald Trump wants to revive the coal industry and relax regulations that are hurting its prospects. He has started to act on his pre-election promises and taken measures to repeal the Climate Power Plan. Moreover, Trump has also walked out of the Paris Climate Agreement.

The Climate Power Plan and Paris agreement have the same objective of lowering emission levels. Coal usage to generate electricity and in other heavy manufacturing industries are the primary sources of greenhouse gas emissions. No doubt we will see extended use of coal in different industries, which will help coal companies to sail through the difficult times.

Coal is currently mined in more than 50% of U.S. states. The top five coal-producing states - Wyoming (40% of the total), West Virginia (11%), Kentucky (8%), Illinois (6%) and Pennsylvania (6%) - contribute the major share of the total coal production of the country, per reports from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA).

Unfortunately, all major U.S. coal producers have been affected by the drastic fall in demand and consequently prices have dipped. However, demand for coal is rising again due to helpful legislation and hike in [natural gas prices](#). Revival of demand from China is also going to have a positive impact on overall demand for coal as source of energy.

In the fourth quarter of 2016, we saw **Arch Coal Inc. (ARCH)** successfully completing its financial restructuring and resuming trade on the exchange. Following the same path, we saw **Peabody Energy(BTU)** successfully completing its financial restructuring and trading again from Apr 2017.

As per a recent release from EIA, U.S. coal production touched its lowest point since 1978 in 2016. However, EIA expects that given the gradual revival in demand and export of coal, U.S. coal production to improve by 4.7% and 1.5% year over year in 2017 and 2018, respectively. EIA expects an increase in U.S. coal exports to contribute to a 5% rise in coal production in 2017. The likely growth in coal-fired electricity generation should lead to an additional 1% increase in coal production in 2018.

Coal and its various byproducts also find use in the industrial sector, underscoring its manifold advantages. However, unchecked usage of this fossil fuel has raised concerns in all quarters. The primary cause of concern related to coal is global warming caused by the emission of greenhouse gases.

Zacks Industry Rank: Negative Outlook

The Zacks Industry Rank, which relies on the same estimate revision methodology that drives the Zacks Rank for stocks, currently puts the coal industry at 193 out of 258 industries in our expanded industry classification. This places the industry in the bottom-third among all industries, corresponding to a negative outlook. However, we expect this industry outlook to change as President Trump's

decision to walk out of the Paris Climate agreement will have a positive impact on the coal industry.

The way to look at the complete list of 258 industries is that the outlook for the top one-third of the list (Zacks Industry Rank of #85 and lower) is positive, the middle one-third of the list (Zacks Industry Rank of #86 to #169) is neutral while the outlook for the bottom one-third (Zacks Industry Rank #170 and higher) is negative. For more details kindly read our Zacks Industry Rank classification.

Please note that the Zacks Rank for stocks, which is at the core of our Industry Outlook, has an impressive track record going back years, verified by outside auditors, to forecast stock prices, particularly over the short term (1 to 3 months).

Of the 20 coal companies presently in our coverage, two stocks sport a Zacks Rank #1 (Strong Buy) and one stock carry a Zacks Rank #2 (Buy).

Apart from President Trump's decision to move out from Paris Climate agreement, more good news for the coal industry loyalist, similar to Arch Coal, Peabody Energy also came out of bankruptcy and delivered a positive earnings surprise of 245.18% in the first quarter.



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Among the remaining coal companies in the space, 10 carry a Zacks Rank #3 (Hold), five carry a Zacks Rank #4 (Sell) and two have a Zacks Rank #5 (Strong Sell).

Coal Industry Offers Some Upside

The valuation of the industry at present looks attractive. The industry is currently trading at 12.12x P/E multiple. This is quite cheap when compared to its own traded multiple (trading much lower than its high end of 61.00x and median of 31.88x) in the last 12 months as well as the S&P 500 (19.29x).

In addition, the coal industry has returned much higher than the S&P 500 Index in the 12-month period. Shares of the industry have witnessed an increase of 39.2% compared with the S&P 500 Index's gain of 15.2% in the same period.

Earnings Review & Outlook

Out of the 20 coal companies in our coverage, 16 have come up with first-quarter earnings results. Out of the 16 releases, 11 companies, or 68.8%, delivered a positive earnings surprise while the other five missed earnings expectations.

Alliance Holdings GP, L.P. (AHGP) currently having a Zacks Rank #2 surpassed first-quarter estimates by 13.58%. Its 2017

estimate has moved up by 13.7% to \$3.16, while its 2018 estimate has moved up by 7.8% to \$2.91 in the last 90 days. Its unit price has also gained 1.85% over the same time period.

Alliance Resource Partners, L.P. (ARLP), currently carrying a Zacks Rank #3 (Hold), surpassed first-quarter estimates by 42.86%. Its 2017 estimate has moved up by 20.4% to \$3.25 in the last 90 days. Its unit price has also gained 1.42% over the same time period.

Miners have taken initiatives to cut costs while engaging in tactful expenditures to ensure coal-mining safety. Further, high-cost coal mines are being shuttered while operations are moved to low-cost regions. Longwall coal mining techniques are also having a positive impact on production. The marketing teams of coal companies have also been working hard to secure new contracts and renew existing long-term contracts.

The positive developments, thanks to supportive legislations and revival of global prices will boost the performance of the coal stock at least in near future if not over a longer period of time.

Bottom Line

Coal stocks are suffering and some presume they won't survive in the long run. Loads of

negative factors are weighing down coal stocks, but do these companies have the resources to fight back successfully? We know for a fact that coal reserves at the current pace of production and consumption will last longer than all other fossil fuel resources. Further, coal is still far cheaper than other fuel sources.

The new President no doubt has brought in some hope for this sinking industry. Plus, big names coming out of bankruptcy are indicating a gradual turnaround of the coal group. Even though the damage done to this industry has yet to be compensated fully, the positive changes are already noticeable.

Even with drawbacks, coal will still account for nearly 30% of the electricity produced in the U.S. in 2016 - not a bad achievement for an industry that has been under tremendous pressure from natural gas and booming alternative energy sources.

Further, the EIA has forecast that U.S. coal production will increase year over year in 2017 and 2018. This is an encouraging sign for coal investors. We still believe that coal's cost advantage and worldwide availability make it more commonly accepted source of power generation.

The views and opinions expressed herein are the views and opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of Nasdaq, Inc.



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World News: COLOMBIA



WHERE COAL IS STILL ALIVE AND WELL

By Matthew Bristow & Marie Monteleone

COLOMBIA IS SET TO PRODUCE A RECORD OF MORE THAN 90 MILLION TONS OF THE FOSSIL FUEL THIS YEAR, ITS BIGGEST EXPORT AFTER OIL

Colombia continues to bet on coal. Nearly all Colombia's exports are produced by three multinationals near the Caribbean coast—Drummond Co. Inc., Glencore Plc and Cerrejon. In the interior, however, smaller operations such as these these produce fuel mainly for domestic consumption. Photographer Nicolo' Filippo Rosso traveled to Cundinamarca Department to document a coal mining town for Bloomberg News.

Coal is piled at a distribution center at a mine in Cundinamarca Department in central Colombia, from where it will be trucked to clients in the steel industry.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
Bloomberg*



Velasquez, 70, who is also a musician, says he has worked in the mine most of his life.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
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Velasquez shows pieces of coal he'll take down the mountain to sell to people who cook and sell food in the streets.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
Bloomberg*



Miners push a wagon loaded with coal by hand. They can earn from \$300 to \$850 per month.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
Bloomberg*



Soot covers wild limes that grow inside the mine's perimeter.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
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Three miners pray before the morning shift starts, then cross themselves for protection before entering the pit.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
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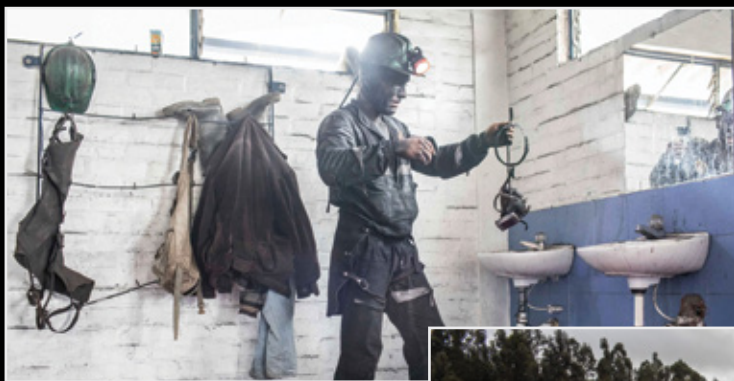
A furnace in which coal is used to produce coke.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
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Ingenieria Minera SAS workers descend into the mine in a wagon.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
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A coal miner washes and changes at the end of his shift.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
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A truck loaded with fuel leaves the distribution center.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
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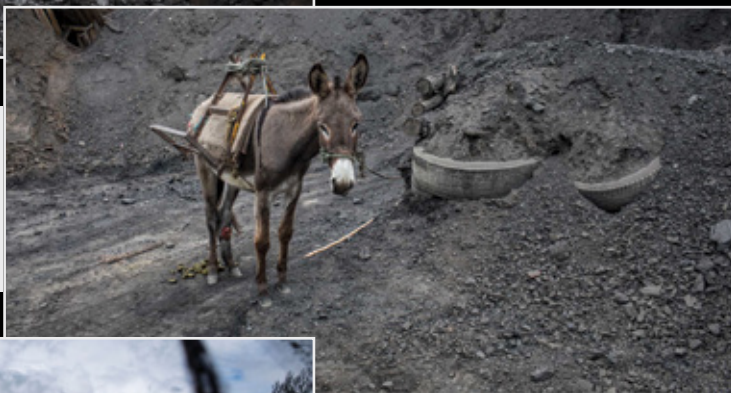


A woman manually culls rocks and stones from the coal.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
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A donkey awaits sacks of coal for people that live near the mine and use it for heating and cooking.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
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A truck loaded with coal, seen from another carrier.

*Photographer: Nicolo' Filippo Rosso/
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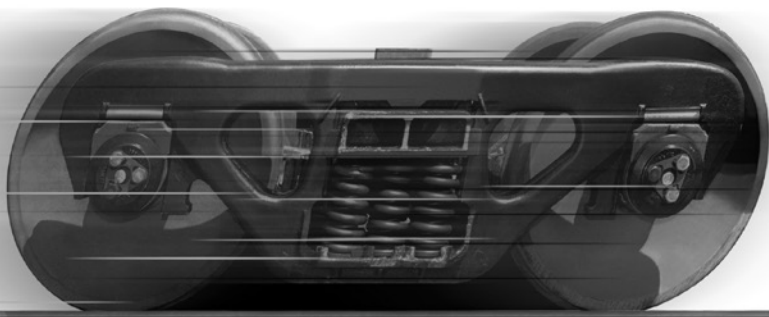
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Bowman Consulting Group	Estes Park Light & Power Dept.	La Junta Municipal Utilities
Brand Energy & Infrastructure Services	Exponential Engineering Company	La Plata Electric Association, Inc.
Brooks Manufacturing Company		Lake Region Electric Coop Inc.
Burns & McDonnell		Lamar Utilities Board
Butler Public Power District	Foothills Energy Services Inc.	Laminated Wood Systems, Inc.
	Fort Collins Utilities	Las Animas Municipal Light & Power
C.I.Agent Solutions	Foster Wheeler	Lauren Engineers & Constructors
Carbon Power & Light, Inc.	Fuel Tech, Inc.	LEADERSHIP A Business
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CB&I	Gallup Joint Utilities	Lewis Associates, Inc.
CBS Arc Safe	GE Power & Water	Lincoln Electric System
Center Electric Light & Power System	Golder Associates, Inc.	Llewellyn Consulting
CH2M HILL	Grand Island Utilities	Longmont Power and Communications
Chimney Rock Public Power District	Grand Valley Rural Power Lines, Inc.	Loup River Public Power District
City of Alliance Electric Department	Great Southwestern Construction, Inc.	Loveland Water & Power
City of Aztec Electric Department		Luminate, LLC
City of Cody	Gunnison County Electric Association, Inc.	
City of Farmington		Magna IV Engineering Inc.
City of Fountain		Marsulex Environmental Technologies
City of Gillette	Hamilton Associates, Inc.	Missouri River Energy Services
City of Glenwood Springs	Hamon Research - Cottrell	Mitsubishi Power Systems
City of Imperial	Harris Group, Inc.	Americas, Inc.
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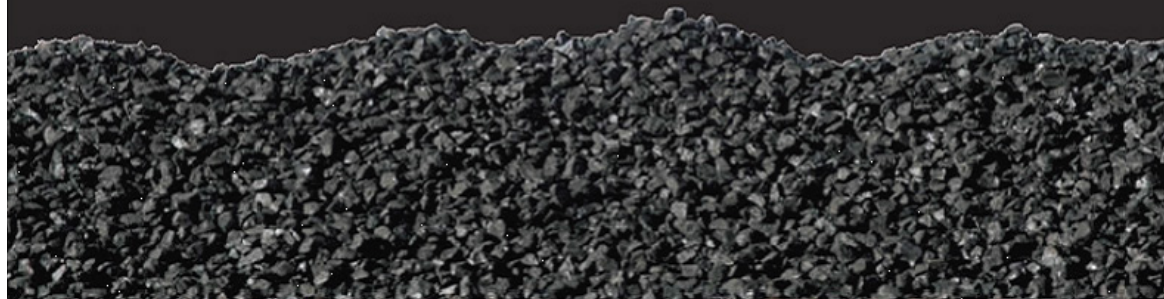


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Contact: James Marcum
10175 Six Mile Cypress Pkwy Unit 1
Phone: 239-939-1696
Fax: 239-939-2173
Website: www.akjindustries.com
Email: jimm@akjindustries.com
Categories: Chemicals, Dust Control, Liquid Solid Separation, Freeze Protection



PHOENIX PROCESS EQUIPMENT CO.

Contact: John Waugh
2402 Watterson Trail
Phone: 502-499-6198
Fax: 502-499-1079
Website: www.dewater.com
Email: phoenix@dewater.com
Categories: Filters, Dewatering Equipment



STRATO, INC.

100 New England Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854
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Email: customerservice@stratoinc.com



HOWDEN NORTH AMERICA

7909 Parklane Rd., Columbia, SC 29209
Phone: 800.327.8885
Website: howden.com
Email: sales@howdenbuffalo.com



FORD STEEL COMPANY

Contact: Phil Cady
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St. Louis, MO 63043 USA
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Email: pcady@fordsteel.com
Category: Abrasion Resistant Materials



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Email: info@asgco.com
Categories: Coal Support Services



PENN LINE SERVICE, INC.

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Phone: 724-887-9110
Fax: 724-887-2151
Website: www.pennline.com
Email: don@pennline.com



Contact: Matt Reed
PO Box 308 Ceredo WV 25507
Phone: 304-781-6618
Fax: 304-453-6917
Website: www.traxys.com
Email: matt_reed@traxys.com



HARDSTEEL, INC.

Address: 702 Bear Creek Cutoff Road
Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
Phone: 205.343.9100
Fax: 205.343.0073
Website: www.hardsteel.com
Email: info@HardSteel.net
Categories: Abrasion Resistant Materials/Services



SUPERIOR INDUSTRIES

Contact: Corey Poppe
315 East State Hwy 28 PO Box 684
Morris, MN 56258-2406
Phone: 320-589-2406
Fax: 320-585-5644
Website: www.superior-ind.com
Email: corey.poppe@superior-ind.com
Categories: Fans, Material Handling, Ash Handling Systems



Contact: Mark Fraley
341 White Pond Dr, Akron, OH 44320
Phone: 330-315-6767
Fax: 330-436-1916
Website: www.firstenergycorp.com
Email: fraley@firstenergycorp.com
Categories: Coal Consumers

INDUSTRY EVENTS

NATIONAL COAL TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 22, 2017
Receipt at NCTA office of all
re-certification forms for the
UMLER Fee Waiver for
Calendar Year 2018

APRIL 23-25, 2018
Spring Conference
Palm Coast, Florida

JUNE 11-13, 2018
Operations and
Maintenance Conference
Nashville, Tennessee

AMERICAN COAL COUNCIL

DECEMBER 4 - 5, 2017
16th Annual Coal Trading
Conference New York,
New York

RMEL

NOVEMBER 2, 2017
2018 Fall Convention
Planning Session
Denver, Colorado

NOVEMBER 3, 2017
Safety Roundtable-
November 2017
Fort Collins, Colorado

JANUARY 18, 2018
Introduction to the Electric
Utility Workshop
Lone Tree, Colorado

JANUARY 31, 2018
Physical and Cyber Security
Conference
Tempe, Arizona

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