

These six States, all of which have reclamation laws, contain 81 percent of the surface coal mines—strip and auger—in the Nation, and were responsible for 83 percent of the coal produced from surface mines in 1966.

Thirteen of the 23 States in which coal is now being surface mined have reclamation legislation on the books and an additional State has a voluntary reclamation agreement between State conservation authorities and strip mine operators. A total of 90 percent of the auger and strip mine coal produced in 1966 came from these 14 States; and 94 percent of the auger and strip mines in this country are located therein.

In addition, three States, Alabama, North Dakota, and Missouri, are now considering reclamation laws. When these three States enact such laws, it will mean that 99 percent of the country's surface coal mines and over 96 percent of surface coal mine production are covered and regulated under State law. The bulk of the remaining production is on public and Indian lands in the West where the Secretary of the Interior had responsibility.

If there is one thing that my experience with Mined-Land Conservation Conference has shown, it is that there can be no single comprehensive national blueprint of reclaimed land use. Topography, soil climate, and the surrounding environment must all be taken into consideration in developing productive and useful land reclamation programs.

Thus, what is feasible and appropriate in reclaiming strip mined land in one area may be impracticable, inappropriate, or even impossible in another.

For example, a reclamation plan for a strip mine in the arid areas of the West would hardly resemble a reclamation plan for a strip mine east of the Mississippi River where 40 inches of rainfall make revegetation easier.

We are pleased to see that this fact is recognized in paragraph (d), section 3, of S. 3132.

We concur wholeheartedly with that portion of paragraph (e) of the same section which states, "* * * responsibility for developing, authorizing, issuing, and enforcing regulations for surface mining operations and for the reclamation of surface mined areas should rest with the State."

As we have pointed out, States which produce 90 percent of the coal mined by surface methods now have reclamation laws, and other States are acting. We believe that the States are doing an effective job and, insofar as coal is concerned, that there is no need for Federal surface mining legislation at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to tell you a little bit about what the coal industry is doing to reclaim the land it disturbs in the surface mining of coal.

Senator METCALF. Thank you very much for a very persuasive and illuminating statement, Mr. Sall. Your prepared statement will be included at this point.

(The statement referred to follows:)