

RAMP has \$2.5 million to reclaim mines

HARRISBURG - Soil Conservation Service (SCS) officials will have nearly \$2.5 million in Pennsylvania to administer the new Rural Abandoned Mine Program (RAMP). The cost-share assistance

funds will be used to reclaim several thousand acres of orphaned mine lands that present an extreme danger to public health and safety," says Graham Munkittrick, SCS State conservationist.

The voluntary program was established under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. It was designed to protect people and the environment from the adverse affects of past coal mining.

According to Munkittrick, "People who own or control

nonfederal land that has been mined for coal, may be eligible for cost sharing. Local SCS district conservationists and conservation district officials are reviewing mined acres at this time to determine which ones may have the greatest need for reclamation work.

"Under the program, County reclamation committees with the guidance of local conservation districts will screen applications to

identify the highest priority areas.

"A state reclamation committee comprised of private, local, state, and federal representatives will make the final determination on the sequence of work to be done. The appointments of this committee will be announced

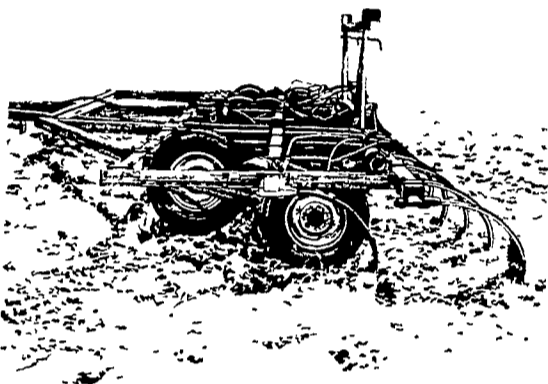
before February 1, 1979," according to Munkittrick.

"In the first year or so of the new program, only higher priority projects will be treated," Munkittrick pointed out, "where we can protect public health, safety, general welfare, and property from extreme danger caused by past mining practices."



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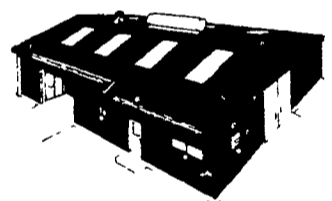
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