

reclamation techniques to correct or abate these problems, including highwall reduction by bench reconstruction, re-establishment of wildlife routes by pulling down highwall sections, or screening or covering the highwall with appropriate species to enhance wildlife values and reduce aesthetic degradation.

On page 16–9, in the paragraph entitled “Limitation of loss of habitat,” the sentence has been changed by adding at the end the phrase “and runoff from burned areas may impede or prevent utilization of water resources by aquatic life.” Also, a second sentence is added, which states that “[s]uch [forest] fires can have adverse impacts on endangered or threatened species.”

On page 16–12, at the end of the paragraph entitled “Limitation or loss of fish and wildlife habitat,” the following sentence was added: “This [limitation or loss of fish and wildlife habitat] problem is especially serious for those endangered or threatened species, such as Federally listed bats, which inhabit caves or mine shafts subject to subsidence.”

All of these changes to section 16 were previously contained in the Errata Sheet for the 1981 Plan, both of which we approved in 1982, and are merely being transferred to the text of the Plan. Therefore, we are approving the transfers without further discussion.

Relationship to Existing and Planned Land Use (pp. 17 B1, 17–6, and 17–7)

Kentucky has revised this section to recognize the presence of endangered or threatened species during reclamation and land use planning. A sentence has been added on page 17–6, stating that the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area has been adversely affected by erosion, sedimentation and acid mine drainage from AML sites. On pages 17–6 and 17–7, it is noted that commercial forest land in the Eastern Kentucky Coalfield includes 670,000 acres of the Daniel Boone National Forest. These revisions to section 17 were previously contained in the Errata Sheet for the 1981 Plan, both of which we approved in 1982, and are merely being transferred to the text of the Plan. Therefore, we are approving the transfers without further discussion.

Quantities of Land and Water Affected by A.M.L. (p. 18–1)

Kentucky has added the following two sentences on page 18–1, at the end of the first paragraph: “Not all of the acres listed are priority I or II sites. The acreages represent an approximation of the total mined acres in each coalfield, some of which may be determined to be

acceptable in their current state or may require limited efforts to correct remaining problems.” This revision to section 18 was previously contained in the Errata Sheet for the 1981 Plan, both of which we approved in 1982, and is merely being transferred to the text of the Plan. Therefore, we are approving the transfer without further discussion.

Socio-Economic and Cultural Profile of the Coalfields (p. 19–23)

Kentucky has changed the first sentence of “The Redbird Purchase Unit” paragraph to make it clear that the unit is not purely a recreational area. This revision to section 19 was previously contained in the Errata Sheet for the 1981 Plan, both of which we approved in 1982, and is merely being transferred to the text of the Plan. Therefore, we are approving the transfer without further discussion.

Flora and Fauna of the Coalfields (Chapter 21)

Kentucky has revised its program to include references to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C., 4321 *et seq.*), and Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 on page 21–77. This change is approved as a non-substantive change because it merely notes that NEPA and the aforementioned Executive Orders, along with other statutes already listed, require that fish and wildlife be considered in the initial reclamation planning for a project.

Kentucky has added a requirement for DSMRE to consult with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources regarding the existence of Federally endangered or threatened species during the NEPA review process on page 21–79. We are approving this change because the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources is the appropriate state agency for purposes of consultation with respect to endangered or threatened species.

Kentucky has added the current title of the “Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet” to its AML plan. As this change does not substantively affect the Kentucky AML program, it is approved.

Kentucky has also revised its program to incorporate NEPA compliance measures into the AML plan rather than the previous requirement to do an “environmental assessment.” We are approving this change because it more accurately accounts for the varying levels of review that may be required pursuant to NEPA.

Kentucky has added numerous changes to the text of its AML Plan that

are composed mostly of additional references to various species of flora and fauna. These changes were previously contained in the Errata Sheet for the 1981 Plan, both of which we approved in 1982, and are merely being transferred to the text of the Plan. Therefore, we are approving the transfers without further discussion.

Commercially Minable Coal Seams and Projects, Methods of Extraction (pp. 22–5, 22–14, 22–24, and 22–26)

The Figure 22–2, “Preliminary Correlation Chart of Coal Beds and Key Beds of the Pennsylvanian Rocks of Eastern Kentucky,” has been added and the section has been revised to present options in determining remining feasibility, and to eliminate references to Site Score Sheets and matrices to rank AML sites. The references to be deleted are found on page 22–22 of the currently approved AML plan, and are discussed further below.

The State has eliminated the use of Site Score Sheets and matrices to rank AML sites, and approved a new system that is found in Chapter 4 of the current plan, “Project Ranking and Selection Procedures” which was approved on July 14, 1987 (52 FR 26299). Based on that change, we recommended that the references in Chapter 22 to these previously removed features be removed from Chapter 22 of the current plan amendment as well. Kentucky has complied with this suggestion and we thus find that these deletions render the State AML program internally consistent with respect to AML site ranking and hereby approve them.

The sentences inserted to provide options in determining remining feasibility are found on page 22–14 of this amendment, and state that “Kentucky may use different systems to analyze the consideration for probability for remining. In 1980, the Kentucky Geological Survey developed a system of moderate complexity for ranking probability of remining.” We are approving this change because it accords with the elimination of the references to Site Score Sheets.

On page 22–26, pertaining to non-coal minerals, Kentucky has deleted the reference to the Site Score Sheet, but the potential for non-coal mineral recovery remains a factor to be considered when ranking AML sites. This deletion is approved for the reasons stated above in this same finding. In that same paragraph, the following four sentences are being added: “Extraction of these non-coal minerals in the Commonwealth may take place by any of several methods. Petroleum and natural gas are extracted through the