



DIVISIONS

ENERGY
GAS AND OIL
GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES
MINED LAND RECLAMATION
MINERAL MINING
MINES
ADMINISTRATION

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

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Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy's Daniel Kestner Wins National Reclamation Award

Big Stone Gap, VA- The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy's (DMME) Daniel Kestner, has been awarded the Dean Spindler Reclamationist of the Year Award for 2016 from the National Association of State Land Reclamationists. (NASLR)

Kestner, a Saltville native, joined DMME in 2001 and today serves the agency as the Geographic Information Supervisor. Over the past year, he has led agency efforts in drone technology, attending a pilot school and FAA training to obtain proper certifications for flying the unmanned aerial vehicle. He helped DMME inspectors easily map abandoned mine land hazards by developing an application for their smart phones. He works with federal and state agencies to promote innovations and other technology in reclamation and is often requested to give presentations so others across the country can learn about his contributions to reclamation. This is the second national honor received by one of DMME's employees. Ken Comer, a reclamation inspector supervisor, received the honor in 2014.

Director of DMME's Mined Land Reclamation program, Randy Casey, says he was not surprised by the announcement. "Daniel is always searching for a way to do the job better," said Casey. "He instituted drone technology for our entire agency and continues to bring cutting edge ideas to the forefront in our efforts to protect the environment. He is one of the best on my team and clearly has accomplished environmental goals that has inspired other reclamationists in the U.S."

The award was announced at the NASLR conference in Bozeman, Montana in September.

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“Our agency’s environmental efforts in promoting and ensuring effective reclamation practices are phenomenal,” said Kestner. “Reclamationists across this country have the same passion and drive to do the same and I am truly honored to be recognized on that level.”

As a nationally recognized authority on the reclamation of mined lands, the National Association of State Land Reclamationists (NASLR) advocates the use of research, innovative technology and professional discourse to foster the restoration of land and water affected by coal and mineral mining activities.

The Dean Spindler Award was established to recognize exemplary work in the field of coal and mineral mined land reclamation across the United States. For more information on NASLR visit: <http://naslr.org/>

DMME’s Division of Mined Land Reclamation (DMLR) promotes environmentally sound coal mining through regulating surface effects of coal mining, reclaiming abandoned mine lands, issuing permits, performing inspections, assisting small operators and responding to citizen concerns. For more information on DMLR visit: <http://www.dmme.virginia.gov/DMLR/DmlrLandingPage.shtml>

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