



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

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Virginia Department of Energy Celebrates 17th Annual Virginia Arbor Day in Wise County

Coeburn, Va.- Nearly 100 Wise County ninth graders planted over 1,000 trees at the 17th annual Virginia Arbor Day celebration. The Eastside Earth Science students planted trees on a site that was mined for coal in the mid 1970's and is now managed by The Nature Conservancy.

The event teaches students about the importance of environmental protection during and after coal mining. It also emphasizes the important role trees play in our daily lives. Students and volunteers planted red and white oak, maple, locust, dogwood, persimmon, apple and pine trees on three acres.

Since Virginia's Arbor Day celebration began in 2005 over 11,000 trees have been planted on nearly 45 acres of mined land. The event also meets goals of the Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative which is dedicated to restoring forests on coal mined lands in the Eastern United States.

In addition to tree planting, students had the opportunity for some hands-on learning at various educational booths. Solar and wind energy demonstrations were available. They could learn more about the coal mining process by viewing a model surface mine. Virginia Energy's mine rescue team demonstrated technology used in their roles as emergency responders and the Virginia Department of Transportation had equipment used in their everyday work available for students to test out.

Virginia Energy is grateful for community and agency partners that joined us to celebrate the 151st Anniversary of Arbor Day that first began in Nebraska. They include: The Nature Conservancy, the Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement (OSMRE),

Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF), Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
and the Metallurgical Coal Producers Association (MCPA).

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