

purposes of making loans to owners of orphaned land.]

7-505.

(e) In addition to any fee required in this subtitle, each applicant for a permit to mine coal by open-pit or strip method shall pay to the Department, before the permit is issued, a special reclamation fee of [~~\$40~~] ~~\$50~~ \$75 for each acre of land affected. THE FEE SHALL BE PAID ONLY WHEN AN ACRE IS INITIALLY PERMITTED. [The State shall contribute an equal amount.] This fee shall be deposited in the bituminous coal open-pit mining reclamation fund. The payment shall be based on the same number of acres as that for which a bond is required. [Each year, the Governor shall place an item in the State budget to provide for the matching money required by this subsection. The matching funds may be provided by the State in the current budget at the time the permit is issued or in the next succeeding State budget.] NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROVISIONS OF § 7-514 OF THIS SUBTITLE, THE SECRETARY SHALL USE THE FUNDS PRODUCED BY THE FEE UNDER THIS SUBSECTION TO BACKFILL, GRADE, AND PLANT AREAS AFFECTED BY OPEN-PIT MINING WHERE THE FUNDS RECEIVED FROM FORFEITURE ON BONDS, CASH, SECURITIES, AND OTHER COLLATERAL ARE NOT SUFFICIENT TO DO THE NECESSARY BACKFILLING, GRADING, AND PLANTING. HOWEVER, IF AT ANY TIME THE MONEY PRODUCED BY THIS FEE AND AT THAT TIME IN THE BITUMINOUS COAL OPEN-PIT MINING RECLAMATION FUND EXCEED THE SUM OF ~~\$500,000~~ \$750,000, THEN THE SECRETARY MAY USE THIS EXCESS MONEY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF § 7-514 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

[7-514.1.

(a) The Secretary shall establish within the Bituminous Coal Open-Pit Mining Reclamation Fund, from that portion of the fund which represents State contributions, a revolving account to provide assistance to landowners for the reclamation of orphaned lands.

(b) The Department shall administer the revolving account solely to provide interest-free loans to persons for the construction of orphaned land reclamation projects. The account shall be maintained by:

(1) Repayments of principal on loans made from the account; and

(2) Annual transfer of funds from the Bituminous Coal Open-Pit Mining Reclamation Fund to restore the account to a level sufficient to carry out an effective orphaned mine reclamation loan program during the succeeding year.

(c) During the first month of each fiscal year, the Department shall submit to the Department of Budget and Fiscal Planning an estimate of the amount of revenues that the account expects to receive from repayment of outstanding loans and the