



*Indiana Property Clean Up & Environmental Solutions  
Post Ownership Control*

---

2020





**A PROPERTY LEFT IN DISARRAY**



# LANDREE MINE HISTORY

Platinum Partners LP, an investment group based in New York City, and the previous owner of the property had hired a group out of Arkansas to manage the complex for them as a contract miner. During that period, the prior operator, while under the oversight of Indiana DNR, were completely negligent in protecting the environment and following the requirements of the permit.

As a result, the property was overly littered with waste material, trash and used obsolete equipment penetrating and permeating the property with complete disregard for the community, the environment and the future.

In 2015 Platinum Partners, seeing the neglect and derelict state of the mine and property, approached our affiliate, American Resources Corporation, requesting our assistance in fixing the property and cleaning up the disastrous state of dozens of acres left with no regard. After months of discussions American Resources accepted the role of manager of the property conditionally that it contained a reclamation budget for equipment and regaining future compliance with the permit, which, given Platinum Partners' own internal issues, resulted in always receiving less capital resources than agreed to.



*Improperly stored waste material*

# THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN ENACTED

We immediately implemented a plan-of-action as the newly-appointed manager of the Landree Mine, within Platinum's business plan for the mine, to start cleaning up three mountains (larger than the prep plant itself) of improperly stored refuse material that the prior operator unnecessarily and irresponsibly created, over the course of two years, despite there being a course refuse impoundment that was present on site less than a mile away.

Furthermore, the we balanced the need for a reclamation plan alongside the need for efficiency and that of the environment. Therefore, choosing environmentally friendly and efficient equipment to execute its plan was essential, as nothing appropriate existed on-site when it took over as manager.

A "legacy" reclamation spread would consist of inefficient and wasteful equipment, such as an excavator, trucks, a bulldozer and a compactor. This equipment involves utilizing 300 to 400 gallons of diesel fuel a day while it is also very time and labor intense.

Instead, our solution was utilizing a highly-modern, fuel-efficient tractor and pan solution. Given Platinum was falling on tough times and wouldn't pay for it, we utilized our own funds to acquire a very modern, \$500,000 tractor and pan that did the job of five pieces of equipment with a 1/6th to 1/8th of the fuel consumption. Since the tractor and pan has been acquired it has run continuously with minimal break downs and has literally moved mountains!



*Waste material moved to it's proper storage location since taking over.*

# MOUNTAINS MOVED

When we took over as manager, the property was completely out of compliance. Because of lapsed regulatory oversight, the prior operator accumulated three massive mountains of waste created from the prep plant's refuse material. This material should have been moved to its approved location per the permit, but it was up to us to get it done safely and efficiently. By some estimates, it was going to take over \$2.7 million to achieve this and would burn an estimated 86,000 gallons of pollutive diesel fuel.

Instead of letting this environmental predicament fall back to the taxpayers, we successfully accomplished this task, all while doing it with an environmentally friendly process and equipment and by utilizing less than 1/8<sup>th</sup> of the diesel fuel consumption.

## Before our involvement



*Improperly stored refuse material first being moved by us*

## After our involvement



*All three mountains of waste material now properly stored*

# SETTLEMENT PONDS CLEANED

The main settlement ponds at the Landree Mine were in complete non-compliance when we took over. As shown in the images below, the ponds prior to our involvement were completely full of sludge material, magnetite, and were incapable of retaining water as they should. Furthermore, from several discussions with regulators, we discovered that repeated actions by the prior operator, during the two years that they operated, created an environmental issue for years to come as a result of the acidic water created by the lack of properly-functioning settlement ponds.

To correct the problem, we immediately purchased a long boom excavator out of our own funds, as Platinum would not, to clean out the ponds and create adequate settlement time in the ponds to bring them back into compliance.

## Before our involvement



*Completely full and out-of-compliance settlement ponds.*

## After our involvement



*Ponds that are subsequently "dipped" by us and in-compliance.*



# OBSOLETE EQUIPMENT REMOVED

Since we began managing the Landree Mine, the scrap and junk yard that was present, along with all the obsolete and broken equipment has been removed from the property and is no longer rusting and littering the environment.



# WASTELAND FILL & SCRAP YARD REMOVED

For the entire five years prior to our control of the Landree Mine, the property was used as a garbage fill, junk yard, scrap yard, and equipment graveyard all-in-one. Thousands of pieces of metal, plastics, scrap, and waste littered the property that was owned by Indiana Fish and Wildlife – scrap that would have stayed onsite if we did not assume control.

Once we became involved with the property, we immediately began to clean up the land fill and remove all junk equipment. Almost all the remnants of the old material that was left on site to rot has been removed and disposed of properly by our team in an expeditious manner. Even to this day during COVID-19, we are utilizing a safe and socially-distanced plan of action to continue the environmental remediation of the Landree Mine.

## Before our involvement



*Junk and waste litter the Indiana Fish and Wildlife property*

## After our involvement



*All junk and scrap nearly removed, and will be completely removed once remediation is complete*





**WE ASSUME FULL CONTROL OF THE PROJECT**

# FINALLY IN FULL CONTROL

In the August of 2019 Platinum Partners was put into liquidation by the government and a trustee, which resulted in running an extensive marketing process to sell the assets of the Landree Mine to potential buyers.

Our affiliate, American Resources Corporation, notified them they lacked the desire to participate in the bidding process and hoped that a party that wanted to create jobs in the area would acquire the complex and run the mine.

In August 2019, the bankruptcy trustee approached American Resources again stating that no parties submitted a bid and that the property was most likely going to fall back to the citizens and taxpayers of the state to incur the cost of environmental reclamation, thereby hurting all parties involved, including the community.

Not wanting that to occur, we, in turn, structured a transaction that would result in the environment being protected, while downsizing the footprint, reducing the liability and bifurcating the property to keep the mining permit for further evaluation and releasing the other property to a third party distillery to be built onsite to create jobs for the community.

Once in full control of the property, we immediately ramped-up efforts to further remediate the property and seek viable alternatives for the balance of the site:

1. Transfer the Landree Mine to an operator who wants to run the mine and create jobs;  
  
-OR-
2. Or complete full reclamation and partner with another company that seeks to use the balance of the property for positive outdoor recreational purposes for the community and environment.



*Permitted refuse storage area*



# SLOPE EQUIPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE REMOVED

To begin the process of placing excavated material back into the mine pit as these alternatives were evaluated, we removed all slope infrastructure, head drives and other equipment and infrastructure that was present on the slope itself. This resulted in over 300 foot of belt, structure and head drives removed. A few pieces of deep mine equipment and underground infrastructure remains in the deep mine itself as the situation is evaluated.



*Rusting infrastructure left in-place*



*Infrastructure removed from pit slope to prepare for re-grading*

# PIT ROCK BEING RETURNED TO PIT

Furthermore, we began, in an environmentally friendly and fuel-efficient travel loop, the process of moving the original pit excavation material from its temporary storage yard back into the pit. From there, it will then be pushed into its final location should the mine go into full reclamation.

Currently, an estimated 500 cubic yards of pit material is placed back into the pit daily, six days a week. Based on our calculations, the entire 44,000 cubic yards of material will take approximately 88 days to move assuming good weather, well less than the 180 days required + additional days for inclement weather.



*Material currently being moved to the pit.*



# OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND POLLUTION MITIGATION

When analyzing the processes of the former, bankrupt mine operator, we concluded very quickly that the “legacy” way of performing certain function is not necessarily the best or right way.

For instance, when evaluating the proper equipment to move earth material from one location to another part of the mining complex, we felt that minimizing the negative impact on the environment was just as important as moving the material itself. The traditional way of moving dirt typically involved excess and inefficient equipment (such as multiple trucks, an excavator, a bulldozer and/or a loader and compactor). Each one of these excess pieces of equipment consumes upwards to 50 gallons of fuel a day, for a total of at least 300 - 400 gallons of fuel daily.

We evaluated a more efficient and cleaner process: the use of a modern-era tractor with a scraper pan typically used in farming and highway jobs to efficiently and quickly move material. There was no reason that couldn’t work for the mining industry as well. The concept behind a tractor and scraper pan is that it loads itself, hauls and spreads the loaded material at its destination, and performs the desired soil compaction itself. The result is a replacement of at least 300 gallons of fuel burned per day with approximately 50 gallons. The tractor also travels twice as fast, given it does not stop to load or spread material and its speed is twice that of trucks over similar terrain.

This is just one example of better and more efficient ways to accomplish the same goal, all while reducing long term environmental impact.



*Tractor and Pan performing work*



## TRANSITION TO A PRODUCTIVE COMMUNITY PROPERTY



# A PROPERTY IN TRANSFORMATION

What was once a non-compliant, environmental disaster consisting of a landfill, scrapyard, mountains of waste refuge and non-functioning settlement ponds, the remaining footprint is now a streamlined property that is being held as an active permit should the coal market improve, where a company could purchase the project and create high-paying jobs.

However, in the meantime and in order to hedge against a coal market that does not improve, we are preparing the property to be transformed into a place for community enjoyment, coupled with the future adjacent Betterment Spirits Distillery, which served as the prior mine's warehouse and office location.

In either case, the community and the environment are in a significantly better position as a result of our environmental solutions at this site.



*Site preparation for future mining or community enjoyment*

# A PROPOSED PRIVATE-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMUNITY ENJOYMENT

To reduce the environmental liability, we minimized the footprint of the mining property by bifurcating the impacted land between the mining permit and releasing the other land to be repurposed into Betterment Spirits Distillery. Betterment Spirits is transforming the bifurcated land into a community destination that includes a craft spirits distillery, a visitor center, outdoor activities, and a small amphitheater to showcase regular local musicians.

The result is a win for all parties involved.

The distillery will utilize and renovate some of the existing infrastructure to produce farm-to-bottle small batch craft spirits brand grown with a focus on environmental stewardship, quality and perfectionism.

COAL  
CRAFT SPIRITS



The primary goal of Betterment Spirits is to transform previously-impacted land into a viable, long-term and sustainable business that provides both local employment and a destination for the community and visitors. By combining the sustainability of local business with the natural beauty of the adjacent public property (called the Hillenbrand Fish and Wildlife area), private industry and public use land can provide a mutual benefit for everyone.

Betterment Spirits, a subsidiary of Land Betterment Corporation, is also actively working on a plan should the remaining Landree Mine enter into full reclamation to repurpose the remaining land with a true “solution” that provides a further win to all parties given the impacted lands specific attributes.

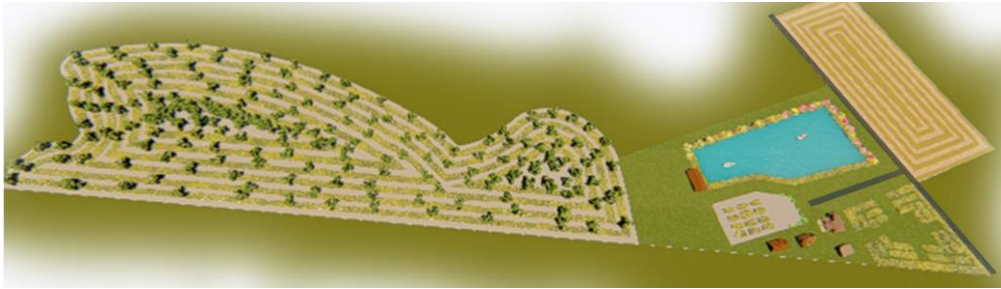


# FUTURE SITE LAYOUT

We partner with leading experts in each division to successfully scale the business lines to profitable, highly scalable platforms.

- ✚ We contracted to reclaim the property and obtain future development rights through contractual arrangements
- ✚ We commenced environmental solutions work
- ✚ We evaluated the landscape, employment force and property availability

**Result: Real impactful change!**



COAL Craft Spirits is small batch craft spirits brand that is earth grown from the roots of organic craftsmanship with a focus on environmental stewardship, quality and new traditions.



Gold Star Harvest is a Land Betterment Company, is a sustainable farming company that has acquired the land that has been previously impacted from prior mining and industrial activity. We provide the highest quality of agriculture while providing job opportunities to a region that is in need of sustainable employment.

# FINDING A POSITIVE SOLUTION TO A CHRONIC PROBLEM CREATED 70+ YEARS AGO

The Hildebrand property, including the Landree Mine footprint, has a long history of over 70 years of various coal mining activities. The result is impacted land that has mixed acidic soils with high-quality topsoil. From our due diligence and investigations, there is no reliable record to identify what type of soil quality will be encountered throughout the property as the prior companies did not record or isolate the various soil qualities during the pit excavation.

Should the remaining mine permit go to full reclamation, Land Betterment Corporation has developed a productive, positive, and natural solution to the impacted land, with mixed acidic soil, surrounding the Landree Mine:

Turning the impacted land into a series of orchards that thrive on the soil quality combined with an education center allowing visitors to learn about the history and nature on the property.

Land Betterment has devised a plan to help return nature to the site by creating various apples, blueberries, and strawberry orchards, which thrive under acidic soils. An apple orchard would involve utilizing the naturally occurring water to be recirculated on-site for irrigation purposes, creating an environment that the community can enjoy while also enjoying the Betterment Spirits distillery and associated facilities.

Everyone wins in this scenario, given the end result would be a real solution that takes the “problem” of the property and utilizes its natural components to create an organic fruit farm that the community could enjoy for many years to come.





# PROVIDING COMMUNITY EDUCATION TO HILDEBRAND

Land Betterment anticipates providing further public benefit through education of the wonders within the Hildebrand Fish and Wildlife preserve. With activities such as hayrides, wildlife sightseeing guides, educational tours, and informational plaques, Land Betterment's goal is to share the history and educate its visitors of the Betterment Spirits operations to the Hildebrand properties and the history of the region as a whole.

