



## **Center for Sustainable Shale Development Certifies CONSOL Energy Appalachian Operations for Completion of Air & Water Evaluation and Verification Process**

***Company Earns Full Certification against All 15 CSSD Performance Standards that center on environmental stewardship and continuous improvement for Air and Water***

**PITTSBURGH, Pa., April 7, 2015** – The Center for Sustainable Shale Development (CSSD), a collaborative of environmental organizations and energy companies that encourages responsible practices in development of shale gas resources in the Appalachian region, announced today that it has certified CONSOL Energy’s Appalachian Basin operations as having successfully completed the Center’s rigorous evaluation and verification process. Full CSSD certification confirms conformance with all 15 of the Center’s Performance Standards.

“By demonstrating it has met CSSD’s 15 Performance Standards, CONSOL Energy has shown that in 15 critical areas, its Appalachian Basin operations meet or exceed state and federal air and water management regulatory requirements,” said Susan LeGros, CSSD President and Executive Director. “CONSOL Energy is to be commended for making the commitment to meet these standards, and to serve as a model for other companies in the region that it will work to build trust among a diverse, cross-section of stakeholders by operating beyond a compliance mindset.”

LeGros pointed out that all producers operating in the Appalachian Basin region are eligible for and encouraged to apply for certification as a way to demonstrate their commitment to the highest performance standards.

Like all companies that earn CSSD certification, CONSOL Energy’s certified operations must continue to adhere to CSSD’s Performance Standards in the Appalachian Basin, integrating CSSD’s publicly available best practices into its long-term continuous improvement processes. CSSD will monitor adherence and continue to build and expand on its initial 15 Performance Standards. CSSD officially opened its certification process in January 2014.

(more)

## **The Audit Process**

The evaluation and verification process for CONSOL was conducted by auditor Bureau Veritas, a global leader in testing, inspection and certification under contract to CSSD. The auditor conducted a pre-audit to familiarize itself with the company's management system and determine audit readiness of its Appalachian Basin operations.

The audit teams conducted full-scale certification audits starting in October 2014 at the company. These audits consisted of in-depth documentation review, staff interviews at company's offices and a field-based component that verified that operational practices were in conformance with applicable standards. CSSD's Performance Verification Protocol details the frequency and intensity of the field and audit activities.

The Bureau Veritas audit team visited 30 CONSOL Energy sites (20 in Pennsylvania, six in West Virginia, and four in Ohio).

Once the audit was complete, Bureau Veritas, submitted its findings in a report to CSSD. CSSD's internal Certification Decision Committee, consisting of individuals not aligned with any CSSD participant, then reviewed the audit report and determined eligibility for certification.

Certification is valid for 24 months, after which companies can seek renewal. During the 24-month period, there is at least one assurance audit to make sure conformance with the standards is being maintained. A summary of a completed audit report will be made accessible on CSSD's web site - [www.SustainableShale.org](http://www.SustainableShale.org).

## **About Center for Sustainable Shale Development (CSSD)**

CSSD is an independent organization that promotes performance standards and third-party certification to advance responsible shale development and scientific knowledge in the Appalachian Region through a novel collaboration of environmental, industry and community stewards. For more information, visit, [www.sustainableshale.org](http://www.sustainableshale.org).

###

### **Contacts:**

Susan LeGros  
Center for Sustainable Shale Development  
412-804-4170  
[susan.legros@sustainableshale.org](mailto:susan.legros@sustainableshale.org)

Tim O'Brien  
O'Brien Communications  
412-854-8845  
[timobrien@timobrienpr.com](mailto:timobrien@timobrienpr.com)