

The background of the entire image is a deep blue space scene. On the left side, the curved horizon of the Earth is visible, showing a thin layer of white atmosphere and a dark, textured surface. The rest of the background is filled with numerous small, bright white stars of varying sizes, creating a starry night sky effect. The overall color palette is dominated by blues and whites, with a single red element in the ampersand.

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FALL/WINTER 2021



## Ben Beakes

Metallurgical Coal Producers Association

Ben Beakes is the President of the Metallurgical Coal Producers Association and the owner/managing member of Three Point Strategies, LLC, a West Virginia based government affairs and public relations firm. Prior to starting his company in 2015, he served as Director of External Affairs for Alpha Natural Resources (now Alpha Metallurgical Resources). In 2020, the newly formed Metallurgical Coal Producers Association retained Beakes and his firm to manage the association and serve as its president.

# Met Coal Makes Steel!

Have you recently driven an automobile, traversed over a bridge or opened a stainless-steel refrigerator? Did you think about coal when you did so? Probably not.

Much of Appalachia's history is steeped in the heritage of our coal miners, of which many take great pride. The predominant lens through which we have viewed coal contains images of coal-fired power plants and turning the lights on. But for the members of the Metallurgical Coal Producers Association (MCPA), we view the future of coal differently – and we are on a mission to elevate the profile of metallurgical, steel-making coal.

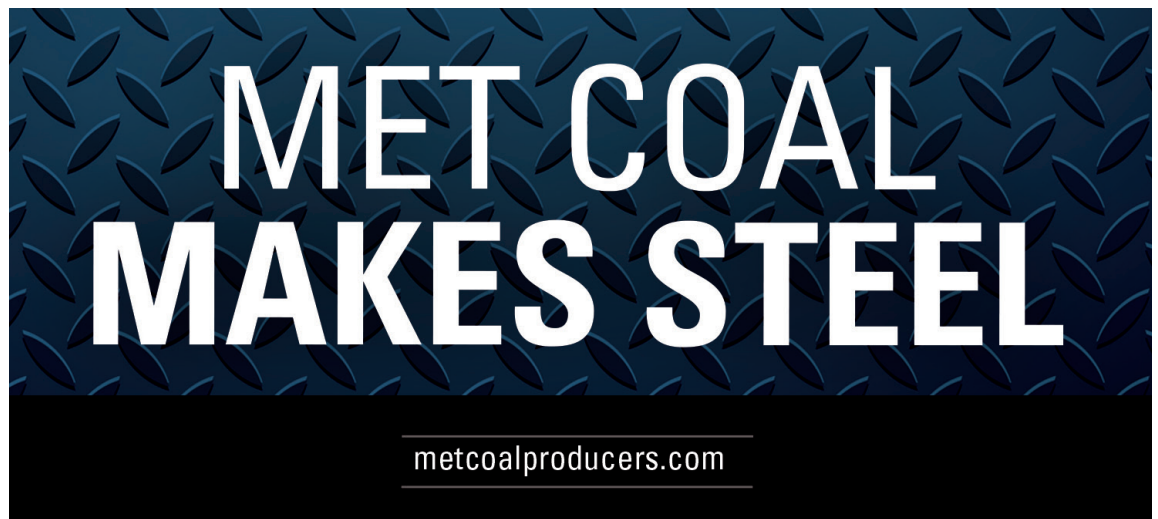
The coal industry has drastically changed in the past few years. According to the Energy Information Administration, since 2008, coal-fired electricity generation has dropped by 61 percent. The realities of a changing coal industry brought on by reduced demand for thermal coal prompted several leading coal producers to shift focus to an almost

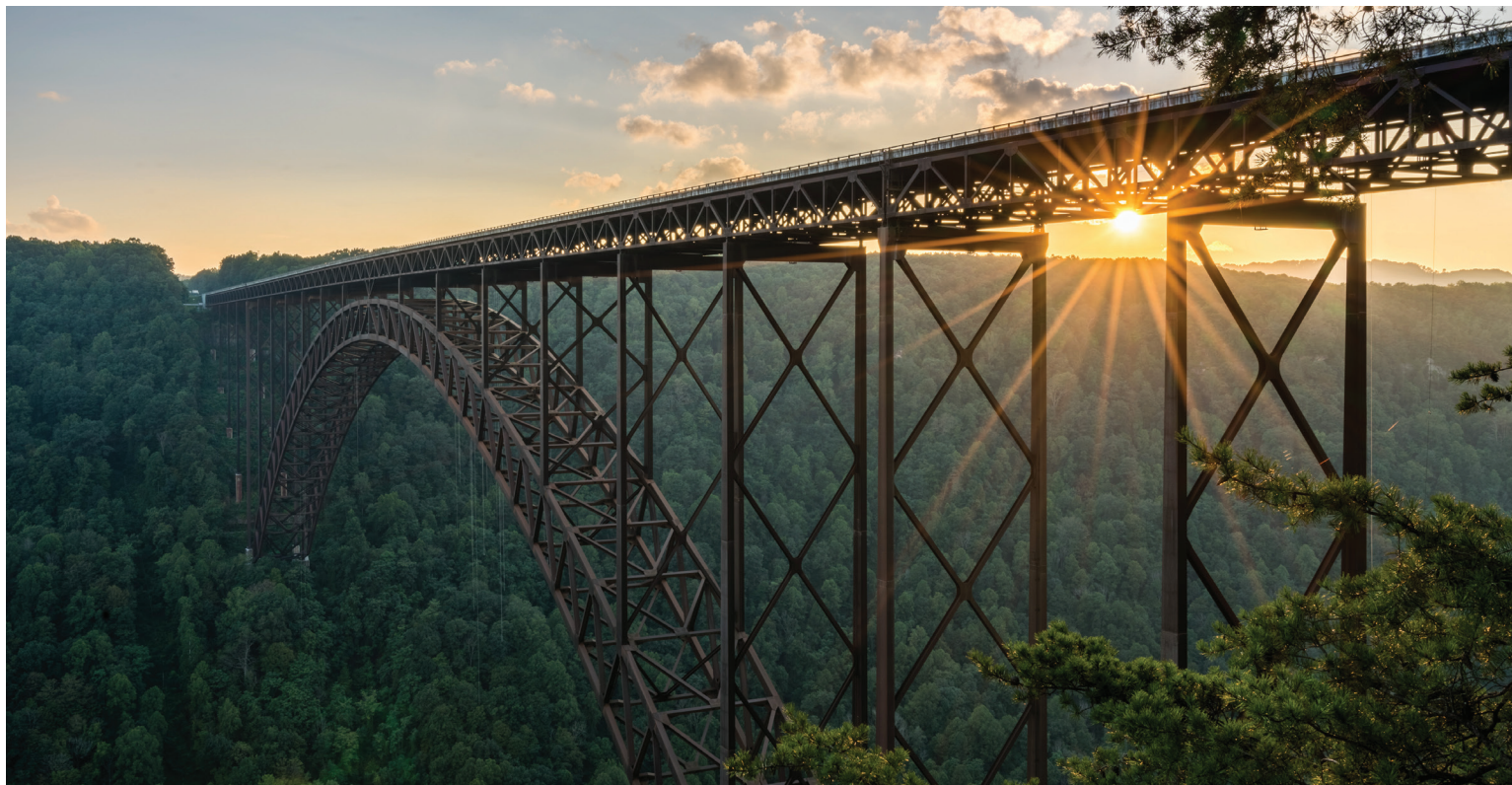


**METALLURGICAL**  
COAL PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

solely metallurgical coal production model. Subsequently, several of those producers formed the Metallurgical Coal Producers Association.

The association's five producing members – Alpha Metallurgical Resources, Coronado Coal, Ramaco Resources, Robindale Energy, and United Coal, a subsidiary of Metinvest – and their 5,800 employees mined 24 million tons of metallurgical coal in 2020, which represents 43 percent of the nation's total. Roughly one-third of metallurgical coal produced in this country is used to make steel domestically while the remaining two-thirds are exported. Since the association's creation last year, over 100 entities and companies have joined our movement as associate members.





## **“You cannot upgrade infrastructure without steel, and you cannot make steel without metallurgical coal.”**

From our members’ points of view, the future remains bright for metallurgical coal, both domestically and internationally. As the United States and countries around the globe look to increase manufacturing and reinvest in critical infrastructure, it creates potential for the next several years. Despite the historical highs and lows in metallurgical market pricing, we believe metallurgical coal will continue to serve as a vital ingredient in the production of steel.

Coming off the heels of one of the worst years in recent history due to COVID-19, this year is a welcome rebound for metallurgical coal and the steel industry. The leading conversations in our nation’s capital are centered around investments in infrastructure. Steel shipments are up 14.8 percent over 2020 levels. This all bodes well for the metallurgical coal industry. Why? You cannot upgrade infrastructure without steel, and you cannot make steel without metallurgical coal.

The correlation between our economy, steel and metallurgical coal was said best in a recent statement by Randall Atkins of

Ramaco Resources. He said, “Met coal is just a proxy for the steel industry, and the steel industry is a proxy for general GDP. I think both in the United States and certainly in the developed world, with a little bit of luck, 2021 is going to be a very strong market all around.”

We have an opportunity to chart a positive path for metallurgical coal. Like our coal miners, the image of the New River Gorge Bridge is a source of great pride and magnifies the beauty of our state and her people. It is also a symbol of how metallurgical coal affects our everyday lives. The list of common products impacted by steel and metallurgical coal is quite extensive – and we hope to make that connection for key stakeholders and the public generally. Appalachia can play a prominent role in the rebuilding of our country.

Five leading coal producers have taken a giant step to reinforce that message by forming the MCPA. We encourage others to join our effort. Please visit our website at [metcoalproducers.com](https://www.metcoalproducers.com) or our Facebook page @MetCoal to learn more. And remember: Met Coal Makes Steel! 