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From: POLITICO Pro
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Subject: U.S. firm reaches agreement to export coal to Ukraine

By Darius Dixon

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Trump administration officials today cheered the announcement that a Pennsylvania-based mining company is expected to begin exporting U.S. coal to a Ukrainian electric utility this year.

Xcoal Energy and Resources agreed to sell Ukraine's Centrenergo PJSC roughly 700,000 tons of coal by the end of 2017, according to the U.S. Energy Department.

Energy Secretary Rick Perry and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross lauded the deal, which their agencies helped negotiate, according to an administration fact sheet.

"Today's announcement will allow Ukraine to diversify its energy sources ahead of the coming winter, helping bolster a key strategic partner against regional pressures that seek to undermine U.S. interests," Ross said in a statement.

Perry added: "This announcement will also boost our own economy by supporting jobs in the coal and transportation industries. This Administration looks forward to making available even more of our abundant natural resources to allies and partners like Ukraine in the future to promote their own energy security through diversity of supply and source."

Xcoal CEO Ernie Thrasher's statement announcing the deal praised "President Trump's efforts to create a regulatory and business environment that allows the U.S. coal industry to freely, and fairly, compete in a global market."

The move would significantly increase the amount of coal being shipped from the U.S. to Ukraine for power generation, compared to 32,211 short tons of thermal coal last year, according to the Energy Information Administration. About 2 million short tons of metallurgical coal, used in industries like steelmaking, was exported from the U.S. to Ukraine in 2016, according to EIA.

WHAT'S NEXT: Xcoal's first shipment is expected to arrive in Ukraine in late August, according to DOE.

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