

## **2011 Reclamation and Sustainable Mineral Development Awards Program**

Sponsored by the United States Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management

The Department of the Interior (DOI) is the Nation's principal conservation agency that protects America's natural resources and heritage, honors our cultures and tribal communities, and supplies the energy to power our future. The DOI manages more than 500 million acres of surface land, or about one-fifth of the land in the United States. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for more than 245 million surface acres, as well as 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate. Much of this land is managed for resource protection, but other lands are managed for multiple-use benefits, including mineral development.

The DOI created the Reclamation and Sustainable Mineral Development Awards Program to showcase some of the finest examples of responsible mineral resource development. The DOI, through the Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), has presented reclamation awards to coal operators since the initiation of the awards program in 1986. In 2002, the Department requested that the BLM institute its own annual awards program open to nationwide solid mineral operations (non-coal), without regard to land ownership and the program be open to non-coal solid mineral operations nationally without regard to land ownership.

The underpinning of the BLM awards program is sustainable development—development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet future needs. The five award categories are *The Hardrock Mineral Environmental Award*, *The Hardrock Mineral Community Outreach and Economic Security Award*, *The Hardrock Mineral Small Operator Award*, *The Hardrock Mineral Director's Award*, and *The "Fix a Shaft Today!" (FAST) Award*. The purpose of the awards is to recognize work in any of the three components of sustainable development: environmental health, social responsibility, and economic security. Coal operators will not be eligible for recognition through this program, but are encouraged to participate in the awards program managed by OSM. Below is a description of the five categories of awards.

*The Hardrock Mineral Environmental Award* highlights the component of sustainable development that relates to environmental stewardship. This award recognizes achievements demonstrating continuous or repeated efforts to successfully meet or exceed Federal, state, or local reclamation requirements with minimal oversight. Candidates may qualify for this award if they have demonstrated outstanding efforts in working with the public, the DOI, or other regulators to further multiple use objectives in a solid minerals area. In addition to high quality reclamation, an operator may have undertaken extraordinary measures to reduce the footprint of the operation on the land, decreasing the need for reclamation. When evaluating nominations in this category, the judges will consider the extent to which the non-coal operator consulted and

cooperated with other stakeholders to determine the goals of reclamation and post-mining land use. This award may be granted to operators or organizations that provide outstanding examples of any of the following:

- Adopting best practices to minimize environmental degradation and adapting them to local conditions as necessary;
- Preventing pollution and minimizing noise and dust during operations;
- Handling hazardous materials safely;
- Reclaiming the land to prevent erosion and planting native species, targeting the same plant communities as existed prior to mining;
- Being a leader in developing, establishing, and implementing good environmental practices.

***The Hardrock Community Outreach and Economic Security Award*** highlights the component of sustainable development that relates to concern shown for community responsibilities and the economic benefits of mineral development. This award recognizes the successful coordination of projects with local and regional stakeholders. Projects that contribute to the quality of life or demonstrate concern for the long-term health of the local community can be recognized in this category. When evaluating nominations in this category, the judges will also consider any particularly creative ways non-coal operator have incorporated community concerns in their development or closure plans. Particularly notable examples of the following kinds of activities would qualify a nominee for this award:

- Engaging local communities and other affected organizations in an open, honest and effective process of consultation for the entire project life;
- Promoting health and safety both on and off the project site;
- Investing in programs that improve the skills and productivity of the workforce;
- Developing strategies for sustaining the local economy after mine closure; and
- Being a progressive and constructive partner in advancing the economic and social infrastructure of the community.

***The Hardrock Mineral Small Operator Award*** recognizes achievements in environmental stewardship of operators with less than 15 employees. Like The Hardrock Environmental Award, this award recognizes operators or organizations who have demonstrated continuous or repeated efforts to successfully meet or exceed Federal, state, or local reclamation requirements with minimal oversight. Candidates may qualify for this award if they have demonstrated

outstanding efforts to work with the public, the DOI, or other regulators to further multiple-use objectives in a solid minerals area. In addition to high-quality reclamation, an operator may have undertaken extraordinary measures to reduce the footprint of the operation on the land, reducing the need for reclamation. When evaluating nominations in this category, judges will consider the extent to which the operator consulted and cooperated with other stakeholders to determine the goals of reclamation and post-mining land use. For examples of activities that may merit this award, please see the above description for The Hardrock Mineral Environmental Award.

***The Hardrock Mineral Director's Award*** will be awarded to one operator for outstanding achievement in a particular area of sustainable development. This award recognizes an operator whose dedication and commitment to excellence has resulted in the use of a new or innovative design or technique that allows or enhances successful operations in technically challenging conditions or in critical environmental settings. The nomination should include specific information about the innovative design or technique as well as reasons why the award is merited.

***The Fix A Shaft Today! (FAST!) Award*** recognizes active participation in the FAST! Campaign, which is a partnership initiative aimed at eradicating unsafe abandoned mine land (AML) features, especially open mine shafts. The FAST! Campaign is focused on six southwestern states (Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah) where hardrock AML accidents are on the increase. High-use areas where accidents are occurring include recreation areas, such as high-use off-highway vehicle/motorcycle lands, trails, campgrounds, and special use permit areas.

Individuals or organizations can be nominated for this award. Examples of types of activities eligible for recognition with a FAST! Award would include one or more of the following:

- Locating and reporting open shafts using global positioning system equipment and digital photography;
- Assisting in posting warning signs, fencing, and other access controls;
- Conducting required surveys for threatened and endangered species (e.g., bats) in order to meet National Environmental Policy Act obligations; constructing bat gates/grates/cupolas;
- Public education and outreach about AML dangers; and
- Filling of shafts.

In addition to any of the above activities, providing funding or in-kind contributions to support *the activities or providing funding in support of mitigation should also be noted on a nomination*, provided that the mitigation actions occur on private land.

Nominations are to be made by FAST! sponsors or organizations familiar with the completed activities. Nominations should provide a succinct description of the challenges related to the FAST! project, the nominee’s achievements or contributions, and the subsequent results. Estimated cost savings to the government may be included.

**Who is eligible for an award?**

Operators or organizations in the solid minerals industries (non-coal) can be nominated for **The Hardrock Mineral Environmental Award, The Hardrock Mineral Community Outreach and Economic Security Award, The Hardrock Mineral Small Operator Award, The Hardrock Mineral Director’s Award, or The “Fix a Shaft Today!” Award.** Solid mineral development includes mining for a wide variety of commodities including precious metals, base metals, industrial minerals, and construction materials. Nominees must clearly demonstrate a commitment to excellence. Please note that nominations are not limited to operations on BLM-managed land, even though the BLM is providing administrative support for this award to the DOI. In furtherance of the BLM/U.S. Forest Service “Service First” initiative, operators or organizations conducting activities on lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service are encouraged to apply, as are those operating on private lands.

**How do I nominate an operator or organization for an award?**

Nominations are the beginning of the selection process. Mining companies, regulatory authorities, nearby landowners and members of the general public may nominate operations. Company officials and employees may nominate their own operations for recognition.

Nominations must contain all the information listed in the “Required Information” section of this announcement and indicate the award category. If a candidate is being nominated for more than one award category, please submit a separate nomination package for each award category. Nominations should be sent to the BLM state office (**Attention: Solid Minerals**) with jurisdiction for public lands in the state the operation is located. Nominations must be received by the BLM state office by **April 29, 2011**. The addresses for the BLM state offices, their areas of their jurisdiction, and phone numbers (of the Public Room) are shown in the following table.

BLM State Office an Mailing Address	Area of Jurisdiction
Alaska State Office Bureau of Land Management 222 West 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, #13 Anchorage, AK 99513-7599 907-271-5960	Alaska
Arizona State Office Bureau of Land Management One North Central Avenue, Suite 800 Phoenix, AZ 85004-4427 602-417-9200	Arizona

<p>California State Office  Bureau of Land Management  2800 Cottage Way, Room W-1834  Sacramento, CA 95825-1886  916-978-4400</p>	<p>California</p>
<p>Colorado State Office  Bureau of Land Management  2850 Youngfield Street  Lakewood, CO 80215  303-239-3600</p>	<p>Colorado</p>
<p>Eastern States Office  Bureau of Land Management  7450 Boston Boulevard  Springfield, VA 22153  703-440-1600</p>	<p>Subsurface federal lands in Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.</p>
<p>Idaho State Office  Bureau of Land Management  1387 South Vinnell Way  Boise, ID 83709  208-373-4000</p>	<p>Idaho</p>
<p>Montana State Office  Bureau of Land Management  5001 Southgate Drive  Billings, MT 59101  (P.O. Box 36800, Billings, MT 59107-6800)  406-896-5004</p>	<p>Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota</p>
<p>Nevada State Office  Bureau of Land Management  1340 Financial Boulevard  Reno, NV 89502  (P.O. Box 12000, Reno, NV 89520-0006)  775-861-6400</p>	<p>Nevada</p>
<p>New Mexico State Office  Bureau of Land Management  301 Dinosaur Trail  Santa Fe, NM 87508  (P.O. Box 27115, Santa Fe, NM 87502-0115)  505-954-2000</p>	<p>Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas</p>
<p>Oregon State Office  Bureau of Land Management  333 S.W. 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue</p>	<p>Oregon and Washington</p>

Portland, OR 97204 (P.O. Box 2965, Portland, OR 97208) 503-808-6001	
Utah State Office Bureau of Land Management 440 West 200 South, Suite 500 Salt Lake City, UT 84101 (P.O. Box 45155, Salt Lake City, UT 84145-0155) 801-539-4001	Utah
Wyoming State Office Bureau of Land Management 5353 Yellowstone Road Cheyenne, WY 82009 (P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, WY 82003) 307-775-6256	Wyoming and Nebraska

**Required Information**

Each nomination should include the following:

**Cover Sheet containing:**

- Company, organization, or person’s name submitting nomination;
- Name and location of the nominated operation or organization;
- Award category; and
- Name, address, phone number, and email address (if available) of a contact person in the company or organization and of the person submitting the nomination, if different.

**Narrative Description including:**

- Brief history and background of the mining practice, reclamation, or community activity nominated for the award;
- Description of the specific activity or practice, including specifics on problems, solutions, benefits, and unusual circumstances;
- Effectiveness of the work, quantified where possible;
- Transferability of the work or value of the accomplishments to other mining or mineral management operations; and
- Long-term benefits to the land owner, neighboring properties, and the community
- Statement summarizing why the award is deserved.

**Photographs:**

Photographs should be included if they help to document the success of the nominated activity. Not all nominated activities can be photographed, but pictures should be included when available. Photographs should be 8” by 10” or smaller and include a description explaining what is illustrated and a date.

**Format:**

Please submit seven copies of the nomination on 8½” by 11” paper. A copy of the nomination will be provided to each judge. There is no limit on the number of photographs that may be included.

**Supporting Documentation:**

Supporting documentation, such as letters of recognition from regulators or community officials, is not required but may be submitted with the nomination. In addition, videos or DVDs highlighting the success of the nominated activity may also be submitted.

**Selection of Award Winners**

Each BLM state office will review the nominations it receives, verify the information contained in the nomination, and determine if the operation or program complies with applicable regulations. All nominations will be accompanied by the statement of findings, prepared by the BLM state office, and then forwarded to the BLM Washington Office for referral to a panel of judges.

The panel of judges will consist of mining experts and may be state or Federal employees, employees of academic institutions, or members of the public. Each judge will rate each application based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Maximum Points
Clarity and thoroughness of the nomination	10
Effectiveness of the project or program	25
Transferability of the technique, practice, or program	20
Difficulty presented by the problem addressed by the project or program	20
Extent to which the project or program exceeds regulatory requirements or public expectations	25

The judge’s scores are tallied and the finalists are selected. Judges will be encouraged to use their personal experience to guide them when evaluating the unique aspects of each application. There may be situations when the criteria do not adequately capture all of the unique characteristics; judges may then modify the categories by consensus if there is a need to do so. Award winners will then be selected from the list of finalists. Judges determine the number of finalists that are selected. There is no minimum or maximum number of awards that may be granted in any one year and there also does not necessarily have to be a winner in each category every year.

## **Important Dates**

Nominations for the 2011 awards program are due to BLM state offices by ***April 29, 2011***. BLM state offices will complete their review and forward nominations to the BLM Washington Office by ***June 2, 2011***. The awards event will be held in the fall of 2011.