

2012 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 principle 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 and the program be open to non-coal solid mineral operations nationally without regard to land ownership.

The underpinning of the BLM award program is sustainable development—land use 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 FAST! Award was introduced in 2009. The purpose of all five 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 awards categories of the BLM awards.

The Hardrock Mineral Environmental Award:

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. Outstanding efforts to work with the public, the DOI, or other regulators to further multiple-use objectives in a solid minerals area would qualify candidates for this award. 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 non-coal operator consulted and cooperated with other stakeholders to determine the goals of reclamation and post-mining land use. Recognition with this award may be granted to 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; or
- Being a leader in developing, establishing, and implementing good environmental practices.

The Hardrock Mineral Community Outreach and Economic Security Award:

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, judges will also consider any particularly creative ways a non-coal operator has incorporated community concerns in their development or closure plans. Particularly notable examples of the following kinds of activities that would qualify a nominee for an award include:

- 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:

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 who have demonstrated continuous or repeated efforts to successfully meet or exceed Federal, state, or local reclamation requirements with minimal oversight. Outstanding efforts to work with the public, the DOI, or other regulators to further

multiple-use objectives in a solid minerals area would qualify candidates for this award. 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, the 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 earlier description for the The Hardrock Mineral Environmental Award.

The Hardrock Mineral Director’s Award:

The Hardrock Mineral Director’s Award will be awarded to one operator for outstanding achievement in a particular area of sustainable development. As in the past, the award will recognize 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!” Award:

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 increasing. 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 anticipated activities eligible for recognition in a nomination for a FAST! Award would most likely 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; or
- Filling or controlling access to shafts and adits.

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 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, or The Hardrock Mineral Director's Award**. Individuals or organizations can be nominated for a "The Fix A Shaft Today!" (FAST!) Award. Solid mineral development includes mining for a wide variety of commodities including precious metals, base metals, industrial minerals, and construction materials. Operators who are nominated must clearly demonstrate a commitment to excellence. Please note that nominations need not be limited to operations on land managed by the BLM, even though the BLM is providing administrative support for this award to the DOI. To further the BLM/United States Forest Service "Service First" initiative, operators 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 where the operation is located. Nominations must be received by the appropriate BLM state office by **March 30, 2012**. The addresses for the BLM state offices, their areas of their jurisdiction, and phone numbers (of the Public Room) are shown in the table below.

BLM State Office an Mailing Address	Area of Jurisdiction
Alaska State Office Bureau of Land Management 222 West 7 th 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
California State Office Bureau of Land Management 2800 Cottage Way, Room W-1623 Sacramento, CA 95825-1886 916-978-4400	California
Colorado State Office Bureau of Land Management 2850 Youngfield Street Lakewood, CO 80215 303-239-3600	Colorado
Eastern States Office Bureau of Land Management 7450 Boston Boulevard Springfield, VA 22153 703-440-1600	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.
Idaho State Office Bureau of Land Management 1387 South Vinnell Way Boise, ID 83709 208-373-4000	Idaho
Montana State Office Bureau of Land Management 5001 Southgate Drive Billings, MT 59101 406-896-5000	Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota

Nevada State Office Bureau of Land Management 1340 Financial Boulevard Reno, NV 89502 (P.O. Box 12000, Reno, NV 89520) 775-861-6400	Nevada
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	Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas
Oregon State Office Bureau of Land Management 333 S.W. 1 st Avenue Portland, OR 97204 (P.O. Box 2965, Portland, OR 97208) 503-808-6001	Oregon and Washington
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 82003-1828) 307-775-6256	Wyoming and Nebraska

Required Information

Each nomination should include the following:

Cover sheet containing:

- Company, organization, or person’s name making nomination
- Name and location of the nominated operation or organization
- Award category
- 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;
- 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;
- Long-term benefits to the land owner, neighboring properties, and the community; and
- Statement summarizing why the award is deserved.

Photographs:

Photographs should be included if the photographs 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 can be included.

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 submitted to that office, 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 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 of 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 then 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 where the categories above do not adequately capture all of these unique characteristics. The judges may modify the categories by consensus if there is a need to do so. Award winners will then be selected from the list of finalists. The 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. There may not be a winner in all of the categories each year.

Important Dates

Nominations for the 2012 awards program are due to the BLM state offices by **March 30, 2012**. The BLM state offices will complete their reviews and forward nominations to the BLM Washington Office by **April 27, 2012**. It is anticipated that the results of the judging will be announced in late July 2012. The awards event will be held in the fall 2012 in conjunction with MINExpo.