U.S. Office of Surface Mining

# News Release

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Contact: Christopher Holmes
(202) 208-7941
cholmes@osmre.gov

## OSM Solicits Nominations for National Mine Reclamation Awards

**WASHINGTON, D.C. –** The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) is accepting nominations for the 2011 Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards and the 2011 Abandoned Mine Reclamation Awards. These awards recognize exemplary mine reclamation results and techniques in use across the Nation.

ñProperly reclaiming abandoned and active surface coal mines is crucial to protecting nearby communities and the environment from the adverse effects of surface coal mining,ò OSM Director Joe Pizarchik said. ñI encourage state abandoned mine land programs and active mine operators to demonstrate they can achieve excellent results that exceed past results and to nominate their best projects to be considered for these national awards.ò

Nominations for the 2011 Excellence in Surface Coal Mining Reclamation Awards are due March 30. These awards are presented to active mine operators nationwide for exemplary reclamation results once they have completed mining. OSM gives awards in three categories: National Awards, presented to coal mining companies for achieving exemplary mining and reclamation practices; Good Neighbor Awards, given for mine operatorsô successful relationship with surrounding communities; and the Directorôs Award, which this year will recognize the project demonstrating the best use nationwide of geomorphic reclamation techniques. This approach to land reclamation involves creating stable slopes and stream channels in balance with a siteôs natural conditions. This year marks the 25th anniversary of this awards program.

Nominations for the 2011 Abandoned Mine Reclamation Awards are due by April 19. Abandoned Mine Land (AML) reclamation projects are eligible for these awards, which recognize the best results in reclaiming mines abandoned before Congress passed the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA). These awards recognize the best AML project nationwide, the best projects in each of OSMôs three regions, and the best small-scale AML project.

For nomination forms and more information about eligibility criteria, please visit http://www.osmre.gov/topic/awards/Awards.shtm.

*The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement carries out the requirements of SMCRA in cooperation with states and tribes. OSM's objectives are to ensure that coal mining activities are conducted in a manner that protects citizens and the environment during mining, to ensure that the land is restored to beneficial use after mining, and to mitigate the effects of past mining by aggressively pursuing reclamation of abandoned coal mines.*

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