



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE LAND RECLAMATIONISTS

<http://www.crc.siu.edu/naslr.htm>

**Fall 2011**

### **President's Message**

*Ed Haigler*

*South Carolina Department of Health and  
Environmental Control*

On behalf of NASLR, I would like to thank our outgoing president, Mr. Joe Hager, for a job well done. It doesn't seem all that long ago Joe was new to NASLR (time flies); however since that time he has been a key contributing member with many ideas and leadership. In addition to his responsibilities as President, Joe pulled double duty with his state hosting the 39th Annual NASLR Conference.

Appreciation is extended to the staff of the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection for hosting an outstanding conference at the Resort at Glade Springs. It was evident many staff contributed to the success of the conference. A diverse group of speakers, an informative field trip, and fellowship were enjoyed by all.

A common goal of many of NASLR's incoming presidents has been to increase membership. New members are critical to any organization striving for new ideas and energy. The economic downturn has made this difficult, especially for an organization such as NASLR whose active membership consists mostly of employees from budget-stressed state regulatory programs. I am not aware of any other organization that can match the "Bang for your Buck" that NASLR offers through the collective years of mine reclamation experience, exposure to technology, and sharing of successes as well as failures. I encourage all members to share the benefits of attending the conference with your peers and supervisors and bring along someone new next year.

I look forward to serving the organization the coming year. I would like to recognize the new slate of officers including Tom Gragg (NY) as Vice President, Anna Caswell (IL-SIU) as Secretary/Treasurer, and the Executive Committee consisting of Ashley Rodgers (NC), Cindy Cross (WV), and Joe Hager as Past President (WV). I applaud this group, who represents several new faces to NASLR's leadership, for serving. Feel free to contact any of us as needed. I may be reached at [haiglewe@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:haiglewe@dhec.sc.gov) or 803-896-4266.

### **Outgoing President's Message**

*Joseph E. Hager II*

*West Virginia Department of Environmental  
Protection*

Having completed my term as President for the National Association of State Land Reclamationists during the 2010-11 term, I have a new appreciation for those who have done so in the past. The officers and executive committee that comprise NASLR's leadership body possess outstanding professional knowledge and experience which promotes the common goal of effective reclamation across the country. Without their insight and guidance, my experience would have been far less enjoyable.

During the planning for the 2011 Annual Conference I was blessed to have outstanding in-state assistance from Allen Kuhn, Ron Sheets, Cindy Lawson, Brent Wiles and so many others, as well as advice from the aforementioned officers.

I found that even through the diversity of the organization we all share many similar objectives and goals focused toward environmental stewardship. Ed Haigler from South Carolina will

serve as NASLR's President during 2011-2012. I look forward to serving on the Executive Committee during the 2011-12 term with Ed and the other professionals who are officers in the Association.

Thanks to each of you in NASLR who helped me over the past year.



## 2011 NASLR Conference Review

*Joseph E. Hager II*

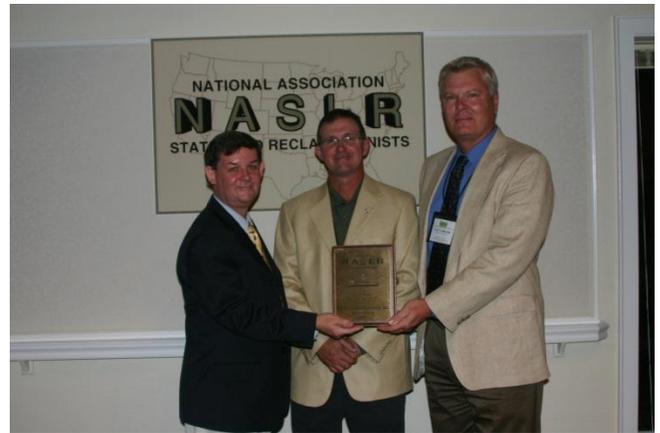
*West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection*

This past September, West Virginia hosted the 39th Annual National Association of State Land Reclamationist's Conference at the Glade Springs Resort near Daniels, West Virginia. Delegates from nine states attended this year's conference with associate members coming from four additional states. The conference attendance was significantly higher this year than in the recent past with one hundred fifteen participants taking part in the presentations and field trip.

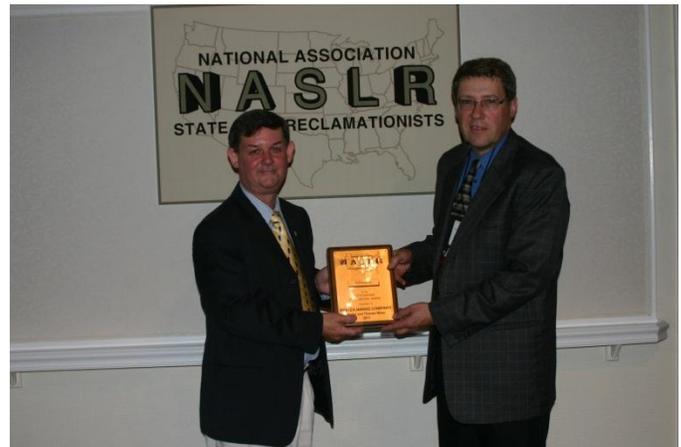
The award winners included Baker Construction from Kansas, Vigo Mining from Illinois, Apogee Coal from West Virginia and Fisher Mining from Pennsylvania. Educational Grant recipients were Calene Thomas and Amy Burt, both students at West Virginia University.



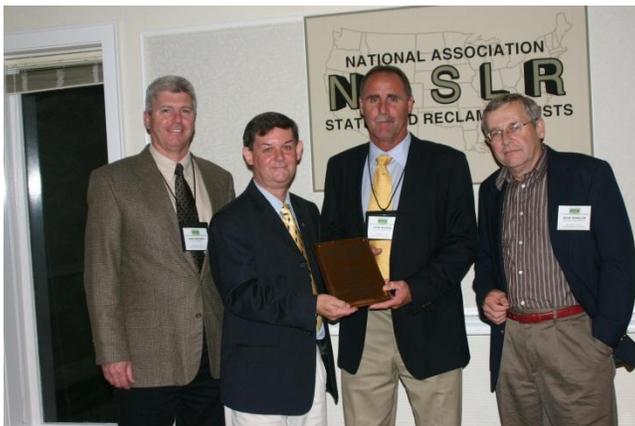
Representatives from Apogee Coal Company accept the 2011 Outreach Award.



Stan Hambright of Bayer Construction accepts the Reclamation Award in the non-coal category.



Mike Smith of Pennsylvania DEP accepts the Reclamation Award on behalf of Fisher Mining Company.



Representatives from Vigo Coal Company accept the NASLR Reclamation Award.



**Calene Thomas accepts a big check as one of the recipients of the NASLR Education Award. Amy Burt (not shown) was also a recipient.**

A special word of thanks goes to Tyler Morgan Coal Company and ICG Eastern, both West Virginia companies that hosted portions of the field trip on Wednesday. An additional word of appreciation is extended to “Adventures on the Gorge Outfitters” and Appalachian Stream Restoration for their hosting of the other field trip visits.

Numerous corporate sponsors and government agencies contributed to the overwhelming success of this event. I feel that it is important to note our sponsors for 2011.

- Alpha Natural Resources
- Acculab, Inc
- Analabs
- Apogee Coal
- Appalachian Streams Restoration
- Aquafix Systems, Inc.
- Bailey and Glasser, LLP
- Coal-Mac, Inc
- Consol Energy
- Evergreen Reclamation, Inc
- Greer Industries
- Hy-Tech Mushroom Compost
- Metikki Coal, LLC
- Southern Construction
- United States Office of Surface Mining
- West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection

Finally an extra special word of appreciation goes to all of those who took time from their busy schedules to make presentations at this year’s conference; each session had interesting information that is applicable in all that we do to “Protect Tomorrow’s Waterways thru Responsible Land Reclamation Today”.



## **NOTES FROM THE FIELD**

*Dean Spindler*

*Illinois Office of Mines & Minerals*

I am an instructor at several teachers’ conferences each year which focus on minerals, mining and reclamation. Some are sponsored by government agencies, some by the mining industry. Some people question the motives for having teacher conferences as propaganda if sponsored by an industry, so participation by an agency has to be very objective. Whenever we give a talk about our profession, we feel more comfortable talking about the positives which show the pride in a job well done. This past year I rewrote the introduction one of my reclamation talks to add a bit more balance and have the reclamationist and the teacher walk in each other’s shoes. Here are some excerpts.

A Mine Reclamation Specialist’s job is like a Teacher’s because?

### **THE MYTH**

- All companies are “good students”
- Neighbors, local leaders, advocacy groups and parents are always well informed, helpful, and have no hidden agendas.
- The federal government or school board always establishes standards or goals that are effective, achievable, and make total sense.
- There are plenty of staff and financial resources to accomplish what is expected.

- There is no stress to meet all the needs of their constituents, students or parents.

## THE REALITY

- Most mines and most students want to comply with the regulations
- The “Mine Personality”, to get a “C or D” versus an “A” on complying with the regulations is very dependent on the mine superintendent. MINING IS LOCAL
- The same goes for how they treat their neighbors and the community.
- “F” companies don’t last long. There is a progressive system of discipline which can be very aggravating. We try to get them to reform before they are suspended.
- Some neighbors, groups, and parents play well with others. Some don’t trust anybody, some try to be bullies, some will say the sky is falling when they know better, some just want some attention, some are just greedy, and many are just afraid of change.
- The newspaper rarely prints a complete story of all the issues.
- Some regulations are written for a problem in one part of the country or school and end up with one standard for everyone, even if it doesn’t make sense everywhere.
- The public/parent expectation is typically “I want personal, immediate attention with all the resources of the agency/school dedicated to my concern to make me happy. There will never be enough staff to meet this expectation.”
- Most reclamation specialists and teachers believe their job is more than a job and do their best to their ability with the resources they have. Nothing will be perfect-Murphy’s law prevails.
- We will not have an immediate answer to every question at the tip of our tongue. Most of us are better at our job now than when we first started because we never stopped learning.
- My session will focus on the current issues and will point out when work is done by the “A vs C” student. We regulate because not every mine will play by the rules on their own. We teach because our students don’t know all the answers before class.

- Not every mine will get a reclamation award nor will every student grow up to be a rocket scientist.

The above did get the attention of the teachers. I went on to show them how reclamation laws have changed and what is required under today’s standards and what can be done in the “award” category. Should I get any feedback on this approach, I will share in a future newsletter.

**The next newsletter will feature articles from Arkansas, Indiana, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Washington. Deadline for copy to be received at the Coal Research Center is January 31, 2012.**

