



# NASLR

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE LAND RECLAMATIONISTS

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<http://www.naslr.org>

**Spring 2013**

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

*Thomas Gragg  
New York State Dept. of  
Environmental Conservation*

As a rookie to this position, I will give this a try. First off, I would like to thank the officers and executives who served during last years' term, a job well done. More importantly, I hope I can speak on all of the attendee's behalf by saying of the 40<sup>th</sup> annual conference held again in West Virginia, that a tremendous job both organizing and running this event was truly remarkable. Special thanks go out to Ms. Cindy Lawson, for making sure everything went smoothly and making any changes/alterations that needed to be done on a minute's notice. It is people like her that make this association a step above the rest.

This years' conference was a little different than most, as we sent out invitations to the past presidents. I believe we had nine of these individuals show up, from North Carolina to Nevada, and locations in between. Of these, some are still employed in state government, some retired from the bureaucracy, yet still active in the role of reclaiming our earth for the betterment of all. It was great to see them again, and even meet a few of them who pre-dated my involvement. Keep up the good work.

Again, thanks go out to the WV staff for setting up a great group of speakers. Each one gave a little bit different presentation on the many idiosyncrasies (didn't know I knew big words, did 'ya) that we encounter on a daily basis. The conference presents a great opportunity to learn if you want. The field trip and the tour of MSHA's facility were interesting to say the least.

As what we have stated for some time now, we need to recruit new members to keep this association running, and developing, to remain tops in the industry. This years' administration is made up of three, so called rookies, myself, VP Cindy Cross, WV, and Secretary/Treasurer, Ashley Rodgers, NC. Our Executive Committee consists of three seasoned members, all past presidents, Mike Kromer, WV, Bruce Ragon, TN, and last but not least, Ed Haigler, SC. Together, we will make an honest effort to carry out that commitment, and promote the importance of reclaiming our mined lands.

Lastly, feel free to contact me, or any of the above mentioned with any questions, ideas, or concerns. Hope to see you all in Hot Springs, AR in 2013.



## 2012 NASLR Conference Review

*Amie Gregory  
Coal Research Center  
Southern Illinois University*

During October 2012, I had the pleasure of attending my first National Association of State Land Reclamationist's Conference at the Glade Springs Resort near Daniels, West Virginia. This year's conference was the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual conference and was again hosted by West Virginia. The conference was well attended by many different states.

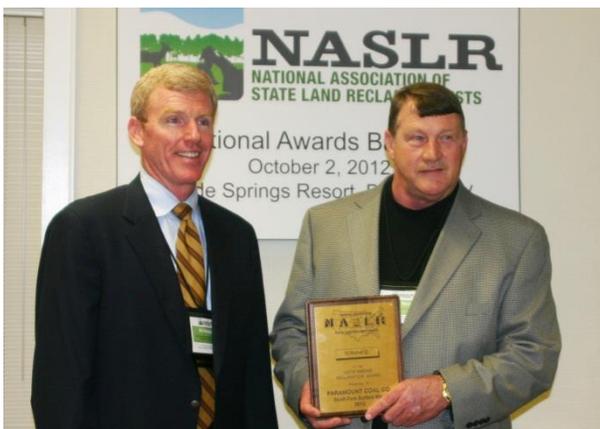
2012 award winners included Paramount Coal Company, Alpha Natural Resources and Virginia Vermiculite. This year's "Dean Spindler Reclamationist of the Year Award" went to Danny Robinson. The 2012 Educational Award went to Barry Curry and a special appreciation award was given to Cindy Lawson from the WV Department of Environmental Protection for all of her outstanding, hard work on hosting the conferences for the past two years.



**Representatives from Alpha Natural Resources accept the 2012 Outreach Award.**



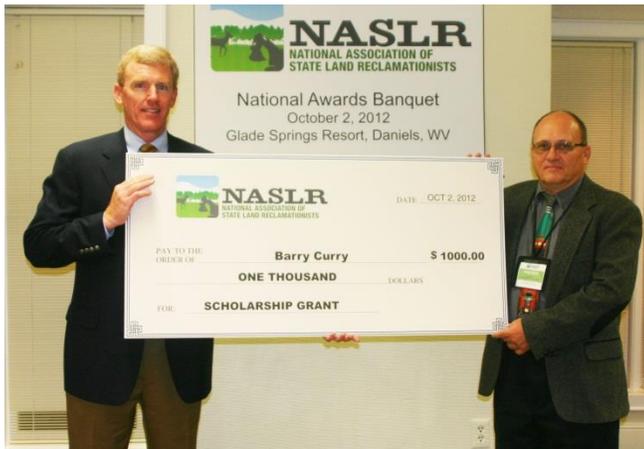
**Virginia Vermiculite, LLC accepts the 2012 NASLR Reclamation Award in the non-coal category.**



**Representative from Paramount Coal Company accepts the 2012 NASLR Reclamation Award.**



**Danny Robinson accepts the 2012 NASLR Outstanding Reclamationist of the Year Award.**



**Barry Curry accepts a big check as the recipient of the 2012 NASLR Education Award.**



**Cindy Lawson, Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, accepts an Appreciation Award.**

Also during this year's conference, many of the past NASLR presidents were invited to attend. This was a great opportunity to share experiences throughout the years. A special word of thanks goes to The United States Department of Labor's Miner's Safety and Health Administration Academy in Beckley, WV for the wonderful opportunity for the tour of their facility. Also, an additional thank you to the Affinity Mining Company at Sophia, WV for the Coal Preparation Plant tour led by Dale Birchfield and to the Pounding Mill Quarry tour at Ingleside, WV hosted by Scott Crimm.

Numerous corporate sponsors and government agencies contributed to the overwhelming success

of this event. It is very important to recognize all of these groups for their generosity.

- Alpha Natural Resources
- Acculab, Inc
- Cliff's Logan County Coals
- Consol Energy
- Greer Industries
- Hy-Tech Mushroom Compost
- Southern Construction
- T & C Contracting
- West Virginia Department of Environmental

For a final note, I want to thank everyone personally for making my first conference a very memorable one. I learned so much listening and talking with the folks from all of the different states. I hope to see you all again in 2013.



**Public Relations & Education Committee**

*Cindy Cross*

*WVDEP/Division of Mining and Reclamation*

On behalf of NASLR President, Tom Gragg (NY), and the 2013 Executive Committee, I want to thank Dean Spindler (IL), David Dean (WV), Paul Emerson (WV) and Derek Giebell (WV) for joining the Public Relations and Education Committee. Per the *Constitution, Bylaws and Policies of the National Association of State Land Reclamationists*:

“The Public Relations and Education Committee will be appointed by the President. The committee shall consist of at least six members. It is the responsibility of the Public Relations and Education Committee, with the approval of the President and Executive Committee, to prepare news releases, newsletters, publications, brochures, etc., that will assist the Association in accomplishing its objectives. In addition, this committee at least on a semiannual basis, will prepare and distribute, with the approval of the President and the Executive

Committee, an Association newsletter informing member states and other interested parties of reclamation accomplishments, needs, trends, research results, personnel changes, etc.”

The Public Relations and Education Committee is a standing committee, meaning that although members may change with a new President’s term, the committee is to remain in place every year. As some might be aware, it has been several years since this committee has been in existence. The Executive Committee feels that the Public Relations and Education Committee is vital in generating interest and enthusiasm for NASLR and its events. People in regulatory agencies and industry alike have no way of knowing what NASLR is doing if no one is spreading the word and keeping things current.

Many thanks to these gentlemen for agreeing to be a part of this committee! Since we currently have only four members, Tom Gragg and I will sit in as committee members until such time that we can fill the remaining two seats. If anyone is interested in being a member of the Public Relations and Education Committee, please contact NASLR President Tom Gragg at [tagragg@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:tagragg@gw.dec.state.ny.us) or Vice-President Cindy Cross (WV) at [cindy.m.cross@wv.gov](mailto:cindy.m.cross@wv.gov).



## **NOTES FROM THE FIELD**

*Dean Spindler  
Illinois Office of Mines & Minerals*

These two programs are usually the first two to be cut when budgets and staff availability becomes limited. After all, the positive impacts of education and public outreach are long term with little immediate impact. In addition, regardless of how much local outreach you do, there will always be the not so silent minority that will get the attention of the media and make themselves known at public meetings. Still, agencies need to get the word out to the affected public as to what they do, what

authority they have and equally as important what you don’t regulate.

Even though regulatory agencies do not promote the mineral they regulate, there is merit to informing the public in an education venue such as a state fair or conservation day, as to what minerals are used for. Most of the adult and young public, including many teachers, have little understanding what mined rocks and minerals are used for. For example, most people don’t know that plastics and most medicines are made from oil; limestone and carbonates are used in hundreds of products; rare earth minerals are critical to car emission controls and for the electric motors in hybrid cars, or that coal or coke is needed to make the steel in wind turbines.

The largest venues for public and education outreach are your web site, the state fair or a large public event in the mining regions. In our state we fill a 2400 square feet tent and have displays for every division as to who we are and what we do regarding environmental or safety protection. There are also mining models and posters about coal, non-coal minerals, oil and gas production, including a full size moving oil pump jack. Every year we feature a rock or mineral which is produced in the state and what it is used for. The two biggest draws area the Illinois Minerals in the Bathroom display and quiz. After completing the quiz, children are allowed to dig in a big sandbox and get to keep their favorite find of a rock or mineral. We get over 4000 kids to this 10 day event. The second biggest draw is the “Are you undermined” display, complete with the known boundaries of the underground mines on county maps. In addition, this always brings in a few leads on previously unknown mine maps. It is manned for 10 days/ 2 shifts per day, which is a huge demand on the headquarters staff. It is felt this outreach effort is worth the investment in our resources. Another venue that has been hugely successful in reaching the agricultural community is having a booth at the annual state Farm Bureau convention. Here is our web site <http://dnr.state.il.us/mines/education/index.htm> . You will also find links to our citizens guides there as well.

The goal should never be that public outreach will eliminate controversy. No matter what, certain

interest groups will continue to propagandize to the public about how bad your agency is and provide misinformation about the public input process and the purpose of public hearings. By the way, OSM has an excellent program on public outreach method.



### **2013 NASLR Conference News**

This year's NASLR conference will be held September 30<sup>th</sup> – October 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Embassy Suites in Hot Springs, AR with an arrival date of Sunday, September 29<sup>th</sup>.