



NASLR 2018 Conference: Midlothian Mines Tour

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Farewell

Farewell from the Outgoing President:

A Great Year at NASLR

By Ed Coleman

Montana Department of Environmental Quality



Wow - what a great year this has been as President of NASLR! My presidency started with an outstanding conference in Williamsport, Pennsylvania on the banks of

the Susquehanna River and ended with an amazing conference (and fleeing from an impending hurricane) on the James River in beautiful Williamsburg, Virginia. The best part of this year has been meeting people from member states and getting to know the NASLR Officers and Executive Committee members better. Once again, I'd like to say thanks to the gracious hosts of Pennsylvania and Virginia. I know how much work it is to put on a conference, and you all did a great job!

Along with the conferences, over the course of the last year NASLR has made some good progress in continuing to build this organization. We've updated our website, and have been recruiting states for membership. We continue to build relationships with other reclamation groups that will help to continue the information sharing and professional networking that is so critical in improving reclamation practices across the nation. We are also poised for continued and future success with Danielle Duhé as the President and Halina Duda in the Vice President seat.

One of the greatest challenges that I see for NASLR is finding people that have the time to help maintain the organization. With shrinking budgets, attrition, and numerous top priorities, we are all stretched thinner and have less time. However, my experience as NASLR President has shown me the value of networking with reclamationists from across the nation. I now have contacts in Pennsylvania who have decades of experience with long wall mining and can answer any questions that arise. I have learned about and conducted site visits that illustrate the value of the Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative. And although the precipitation differences between Montana and Virginia are significant, some of the best practices derived from that initiative are applicable in Montana. I've talked technology with people from all over the nation, and many of us are working towards finding solutions to very similar data storage and retrieval needs. Imagine if we all worked together.

NASLR is a wonderful organization and it was truly an honor to serve as President. I hope to see many of you at the annual conference September 8-11 in Pittsburgh.

From the President

“Get Involved”

By Danielle Duhé

Louisiana Department of Natural Resources



A few years ago, I never expected that when I made the switch from working in and regulating the oil and gas industry to regulating the mining industry, I would find an immediate group through which I could get involved on a national level. And yet, here we are. As Janet Yates, a previous President, said in her welcome letter a few years ago, The National Association of State Land Reclamationists (NASLR) is “something special,” and she was right. NASLR is a very well-rounded group of state reclamationists who are supportive of each of its members, from the most experienced and accomplished, to the brand new and eager. The organization fosters friendships, supports education, and encourages involvement in mining and reclamation across the country. I know without a doubt that my interactions with the various members of NASLR over the last few years has better prepared me to address issues that arise in my home state of Louisiana. For 2019, I would like to encourage everyone to get involved.

There are multiple avenues through which NASLR encourages involvement within the organization and industry. Our Executive Committee and Public Relations and Education Committee have a joint conference call once a month, and we welcome any representatives from our member states to join us. Especially for member states who may have challenges with traveling to conferences, this is a great opportunity for you to have your voice heard.

Our yearly conferences and their associated field trips promote continued research and technological advancement within the industry and are a great place

for involvement and networking. Speaking of conferences, I would like to send a huge thank you to Lesa Baker and VA DMME for their tireless work to host an amazing conference in Williamsburg, VA for the joint 2018 Conference with the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs (NAAML). The conference was a huge success and the technical sessions were very educational. You can view some of the conference photos at <https://naslr.org/galleries>.

In addition to conference attendance, I'd like to encourage anyone who has research or a project that you would like to share with others to please sign up to present in one of the technical sessions at this year's conference! Learning about each state's mining and reclamation activities, regulations, and challenges has a great benefit to all programs across the country. This year, I am happy to announce that NASLR will be partnering with NAAML and Pennsylvania's Abandoned Mine Reclamation (PA AMR) Conference for our 2019 Conference in Pittsburgh, PA! The conference will be from September 8th to the 11th, and I encourage everyone to go to <http://www.naamlp2019.com> for more information.

I am looking forward to working with such a great group of people and would like to give special recognition to our outgoing President, Ed Coleman (MT DEQ), for providing spectacular leadership for this organization over the past year. In addition, I would like to welcome and thank Halina Duda (NY DEC) for stepping up into the position of Vice President for the year. From Montana to Louisiana to New York, and many states in-between, NASLR continues to make a difference in mining reclamation, and I look forward to seeing everyone at the 2019 Conference in Pittsburgh, PA.

NASLR 2018 Conference Photos



From right to left:

- Poonam Giri (MT) and Danielle Duhé (LA)
- Robert Toole (OK) and Jeff Meitrott (PA)
- Lesa Baker (VA) at Thomas Jefferson's childhood home
- Thomas Jefferson's childhood home
- Colonial Williamsburg
- Mike Haney (PA) and Jeff Meitrott (PA) in Colonial Williamsburg

NASLR's 2018 Award Winners

Scholarship Award Winner



Jennifer Kane, West Virginia University

As the 2018 NASLR Scholarship winner, Jennifer Kane is currently a Master's student majoring in Applied and Environmental Microbiology at West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia. Ms. Kane is excelling in her education, holding a 4.0 Grade Point Average as she enters her final year of studies with the hopes of graduating in the Spring of 2019. Most recently, she received an Honorable Mention at the American Society of Mining and Reclamation conference in St. Louis, Missouri, where she presented a poster on her Master's thesis: "Restoration of the soil microbiome following mine land reclamation." Ms. Kane's graduate research focuses on soil microbial community dynamics existing in reclaimed mine sites. Her studies may help improve surface mine reclamation processes and foster more favorable conditions for soil microbes, thus increasing the overall health of the ecosystem.

Mined Land Reclamation Award—Non-coal



Mid-State Materials, Big Springs Quarry — Lecompton, Kansas

The 2018 winner of the NASLR Outstanding Reclamation Award in the Non-Coal category is Big Springs Quarry, operated by Mid-States Materials, LLC (MSM). The Big Springs Quarry is located near Lecompton, Kansas and is approximately 2000 acres in size. Three different types of limestone are extracted from the surface mine: the Ervine Creek Limestone, Rock Bluff Limestone, and Ozawkie Limestone. The quarry extracts the aggregate materials

and then manufactures high-quality materials for the local construction industry. MSM works with various departments and commissions at the county and state level to ensure the protection of the environment and that the quarry is reclaimed to suitable conditions.

The quarry pits of Big Springs Quarry range from 30-40 feet in depth, and the reclamation procedure is concurrent with active mining operations, ensuring the completion of quarry pit reclamation as soon as practically possible. Determined to go above and beyond basic reclamation, MSM has excelled in the creation of a thriving wildlife habitat. In addition to doing design and drainage studies, MSM made the effort to build wetlands with environmentally friendly grasses, stock the ponds with fish, and reintroduce quail and pheasant into the area.



The wildlife habitat created by MSM supports local ranching and fishing and blends in with the surrounding land uses, including agriculture use (haying and ranching) and residential housing. It has also provided additional acreage for surrounding wildlife to grow and thrive. Not only is the resulting wildlife habitat aesthetically pleasing, it is a self-sustaining habitat intended to continue providing many ecological and economic benefits to the area. MSM recognizes that it has a responsibility to protect its employees, the public, and the environment. This wildlife habitat is just one way that MSM strives daily to be environmentally conscious in its mining and reclamation processes.

NASLR's 2018 Award Winners

Mined Land Reclamation Award—Coal



Spring Creek Coal, Spring Creek Mine — Big Horn County, Montana

Spring Creek Coal LLC's, Spring Creek Mine (SCM) was nominated for the Mined Land Reclamation Award by Ed Coleman of the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's Coal and Opencut Mining Bureau. Spring Creek's impressive reclamation and innovative practices especially as they relate to the reclamation of sage-grouse habitat, including sagebrush densities that far exceed regulatory required densities, warranted this nomination. These achievements

can be visualized through this short video about Spring Creek's reclamation practices: <https://youtube/D9duYku5LCY>.

Reclamation plans at the 9,126-acre Spring Creek Mine incorporate a mosaic of livestock grazing, pastureland and wildlife habitats into the post-mining environment. However, one of the key aspects of the reclamation plan is protection and mitigation of potential impacts to wildlife. In particular, the Greater Sage-Grouse deserves special considerations because of population decline and a near listing as a threatened and endangered species by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in 2015. Spring Creek Mine's action to protect the bird is of significant importance because of the mines proximity to the habitat designated as "core." This "core" designation has been delineated by the state as having the highest conservation priority. These areas contain the highest concentration of breeding males and include the best areas in which to promote sage-grouse populations. Spring Creek Mine's approved reclamation plan will ultimately result in no net loss of habitat for the Sage-Grouse. Perhaps more importantly, SCM has demonstrated it can, in many ways, improve the habitat to ensure survival of the species.



Sage-Grouse conservation efforts are not new to Spring Creek's parent company, Cloud Peak Energy (CPE). CPE has been a member of the Thunder Basin Grassland Prairie Ecosystem Association Since 2003. This Association is a voluntary organization of ranchers, coal mining companies and oil and gas companies working together to achieve common conservation goals. The Association's conservation strategy is endorsed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management

and US Forest Service. The Association's coverage area is the largest such known conservation effort and spans 13.2 million acres. As a founding member, CPE has contributed over \$90,000 to off-site conservation projects dispersed across the region on area ranch lands.



NASLR's 2018 Award Winners

Outreach Award



Thalle Industries, Fishkill Quarry — Fishkill, New York

The Thalle Industries, Inc. Fishkill quarry was nominated for the Outreach Award by Matthew Podniesinski, Director of the Resource Development and Reclamation Bureau, Division of Mineral Resources, of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Thalle Industries, Inc. (“Thalle Industries”) impressive concurrent reclamation and innovative reclamation practices far exceeded the minimum regulatory standards for rec-

lamation in New York State. Thalle Industries has set the standard for bench reforestation of mined areas, in an effort to eliminate visual impacts to nearby public lands, by re-creating an oak-hickory forest which surrounds the mine site.



In 2002, Thalle Industries submitted an application to expand the mine site by 29 acres for a total of 64.9 acres. The final reclamation objective of this site, and the minimization of visual impacts to the Fishkill Ridge/Scenic Hudson lands, were paramount issues during the permit review process to add 29 acres to the existing mine. At the time the permit modification was approved, the management of the quarry was given to Glenn Pacchiana.

Mr. Pacchiana’s approach was markedly different than that of his predecessors. Glenn Pacchiana has taken this opportunity to embrace environmental stewardship concurrent with his extractive operations and asphalt plant. As quoted on the company’s website “I am an environmentalist, and I am also a quarry owner, and I show people that I can do both.” Mr. Pacchiana relies on his mining consultant to lay out shots and provide mining and reclamation direction to the blasting company and quarry manager to establish final bench configurations.



In addition, Mr. Pacchiana has also employed the services of an arborist who routinely inspects tree plantings and provides recommendations to the quarry. The plantings consisted of early and late succession trees as well as nitrogen fixing shrubs. Coarse woody debris was left on the benches to benefit the seedlings microsite. This provided shade, moisture retention, and an ability to better capture leaves to create more organic matter and provide a time-release fertilizer as they decay. It is important to note that this concurrent bench reclamation of a successional oak-hickory forest is the only bench reforesta-

Upcoming 46th Annual NASLR Conference

September 8-11, 2019

Welcome to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania!

This year's conference will be joint endeavor between the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Program's ([NAAML](#)) Pennsylvania Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference ([PA AMR](#)), and the National Association of State Land Reclamationists' ([NASLR](#)).

These three organizations share common goals and interests focused on successful reclamation and environmental restoration of previously and currently mined sites including the abatement or treatment of mine drainage. The multi-organization focus will provide conference attendees a broader range of mining and reclamation topics and issues as well as increased opportunities for both networking and sponsor & exhibitor outreach.



The conference will be held at the recently renovated Wyndham Grand Downtown Pittsburgh Hotel and will run Sunday evening, September 8th, through Wednesday September 11th ([View the preliminary conference schedule](#)). The conference will kick off with a welcome reception Sunday evening. Monday, September 9th, will begin with the opening plenary session followed by technical presentations and will conclude with the awards banquet. Field trips on Tuesday, September 10th, will feature a variety of AML, AMD and unique Pennsylvania historical and cultural stops that are sure to both educate and entertain. Tuesday will conclude with a dinner cruise on Pittsburgh's three rivers aboard the [Gateway Clipper Fleet's Empress Riverboat](#).

Wednesday, September 11th, the conference will wrap up with additional technical sessions including presentations about the national award-winning reclamation projects.

The technical sessions will provide a valuable exchange of information on issues specific to those involved in mine reclamation, mine drainage abatement/treatment, and mine reclamation policy and current issues. The networking opportunities between federal, state and local government officials; design consultants; watershed groups; NGO's; contractors; equipment manufacturers; and suppliers are sure to be key components of the Conference.

The Wyndham Grand is located at the Point in the Golden Triangle of Pittsburgh where the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers combine to form the Ohio River. While attending the conference, you will be able to experience all the excitement Pittsburgh has to offer. From museums, to outdoor activities, to cultural discoveries, to sporting events, Pittsburgh's bustling downtown landscape offers entertainment for all tastes. The Wyndham is located just 17 miles from the Pittsburgh International Airport and right across the street from the picturesque 36-acre Point State Park. The hotel is located within easy walking distance to Market Square, PPG Paints Arena (home of the Penguins), the Pittsburgh Light Rail station, and Pittsburgh's bustling North Shore where, among the many restaurants, shops and clubs, Heinz Field (home of the Steelers) and PNC Park (home of the Pirates) are located.



Upcoming 46th Annual NASLR Conference

September 8-11, 2019

Call for Papers

Abstract proposals should be submitted in PDF format on or before May 10, 2019. Abstracts should be 300 words or less, Times New Roman - 12 font, and should include the presentation title, along with the presenter's name, title, organization or company, business address, phone number and email address. In addition, please identify if you are presenting as part of the NAAML/AMR/NASLR technical session. Video presentations are welcome as well. Please keep video presentations to 20 minutes. All abstracts should be emailed to: CallforPapers@NAAML2019.com.

Selected presenters will be notified by June 28, 2019, and final presentation material will be due on or before August 16, 2019. Details pertaining to the final presentation format, speaker guidelines and other presentation information will be provided to authors and/or presenters at the time of abstract acceptance.

In an effort to facilitate scheduling, anyone interested in presenting should consider sending notification with anticipated topic early. Presentations are anticipated to be 20 minutes with a five-minute Q and A to follow.

For more information or for questions, please contact Tom Malesky, Environmental Program Manager, via email at CallforPapers@NAAML2019.com or by telephone at 814-472-1818.

Suggested Topics

AMD Characterization and Treatment	NEPA and/or Public Participation
AML or AMD Case Studies	Non-Coal/Hard Rock Issues
AML Pilot Program Case Studies	Partnerships
Beneficial Use of Waste Materials	Permitting Issues
Coal Combustion Byproducts	Program Policy Issues/Reauthorization
Coal Mining Heritage/Historic Preservation	Property Acquisition/Access Issues
Coal Refuse Reprocessing/Capping	Regulatory Issues
Economic Development and Reclamation	Remining and Reclamation
AML Emergency Projects	Resource Recovery
Endangered Species	Reuse of AMD Impaired Water
Geophysical Methods or Investigations	Revegetation/Reforestation Techniques
Grayfields and/or Brownfields	Slopes/Shafts Reclamation Techniques
Innovative/Unique Reclamation Techniques	Stream Restoration Techniques
Integration of GPS/GIS/Drone Techniques	Water Supply Replacements
Mine Fire Restoration Techniques	Wetlands
Mine Subsidence	Wildlife Habitat Enhancements

Have you seen great reclamation work?

Have you met someone who tirelessly promotes
great reclamation?

Do you know a student working in the field of
mine reclamation?

How about nominating them for one of the
2019 NASLR Awards or
have them submit for the Scholarship:

Awards



July 1st is the deadline to nominate companies and individuals in your state for the NASLR Mined Land Reclamation Award, the NASLR Outreach Award, and the Dean Spindler Reclamationist of the Year Award. More information is available on our website.

- Mined Land Reclamation Award (Coal & Non-coal): <https://naslr.org/awards/naslr-reclamation-award/>
- Outreach Award: <https://naslr.org/awards/naslr-outreach-award/>
- Dean Spindler Reclamationist of the Year Award: <https://naslr.org/awards/the-dean-spindler-reclamationist-of-the-year-award/>

Scholarship



NASLR is seeking applicants for the 2019 educational grant. Applications must be received no later than July 1st. The grant application can be downloaded from our website.

<https://naslr.org/awards/scholarship/>

IN MEMORY

On February 11, NASLR lost our friend Janet Yates.

Janet is survived by her loving husband, Zack Pearson; parents, Anthony and Carol Yates.

Janet attended the University of Virginia's College at Wise and graduated from Northwest Missouri State in 2007 with a bachelors in Geology. She loved spending her time traveling with her family, looking at antiques, classic cars, and loving on her six dogs and cat. She also thoroughly enjoyed spending time fishing with her father.

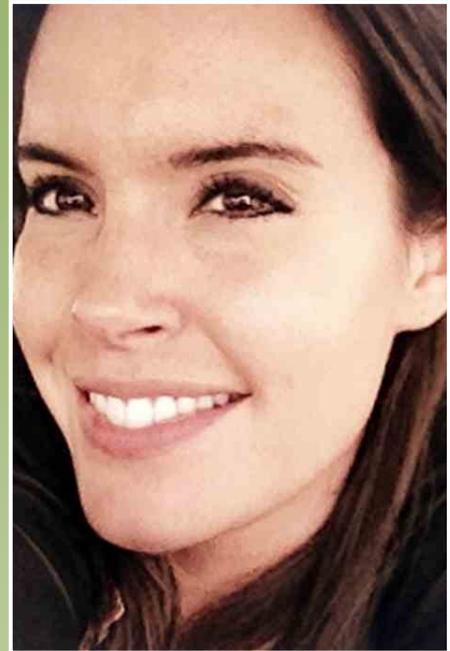


Halina Duda NYSDEC,

"Jeff's description of her at the Newburgh conference hit the nail right on the head – I have never laughed so hard at a work-related function EVER!! That's the way I know I will remember her."

Mike Smith PADEP (retired),

"As I recall, Janet almost single handedly organized the VA conference at a time when NASLR was pretty much at rock bottom and her hard work helped pull NASLR out of the slump. We owe her a lot."



Jeff Meitrott PADEP,

"I first met Janet at the NASLR Conference in Newburgh, NY in 2014, where she breathed life into NASLR with her enthusiasm when NASLR's future wasn't looking very bright. She continued to spread her optimism working on the PRE Committee and as NASLR's Vice President and President. Even after leaving VA-DMME, she continued to help promote NASLR. She will be missed by many."



IN MEMORY

On Oct. 18, DEQ lost our beloved colleague, teacher and friend, Tom Henderson. Tom was a Senior Project Manager with the Montana Abandoned Mine Lands Program. He was a leader in his field, and an inspiration to those who knew him as a friend and colleague. You may remember Tom as an instructor for TIPS Groundwater Vistas or from one of his colorful presentations at NAAML, ASMR or SME Conferences.

Tom is survived by his wife, Kate and their three children. For those of you who knew Tom, he was an immensely committed father and husband. He worked hard to take his family on epic backpacking adventures across Europe and the United States.



Tom earned a degree in Geology from Oberlin College, Ohio, in 1987. He worked as a mine inspector for OSMRE in Kentucky and hydrologist before coming to DEQ in 1997. In 2001, he moved his family to Vancouver, B.C., to pursue his doctorate in hydrogeology at the University of British Columbia. Tom returned to DEQ in 2004, and in 2006 moved to the Abandoned Mine Lands Program where he took over the program's most ambitious project to date: the McLaren Mine Cleanup in Cooke City near Yellowstone National Park.

The project prevented catastrophic failure of the site's tailings impoundment, and successfully returned a previously unusable area to its historical landscape. The cleanup involved two years of investigation and design work followed by five years of construction, and was recognized as a milestone for restoration of abandoned mine lands across the country. The project cleaned up Soda Butte Creek flowing into Yellowstone National Park, leading to the creek's removal this year from Montana's list of Impaired Waters.

The McLaren project was completed in October 2014, and in 2015 Tom and his DEQ team were awarded the American Council of Engineering Companies Engineering Excellence Award for the cleanup.

In 2016, the McLaren Cleanup won the first-ever National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs Hardrock Award for environmental cleanup.

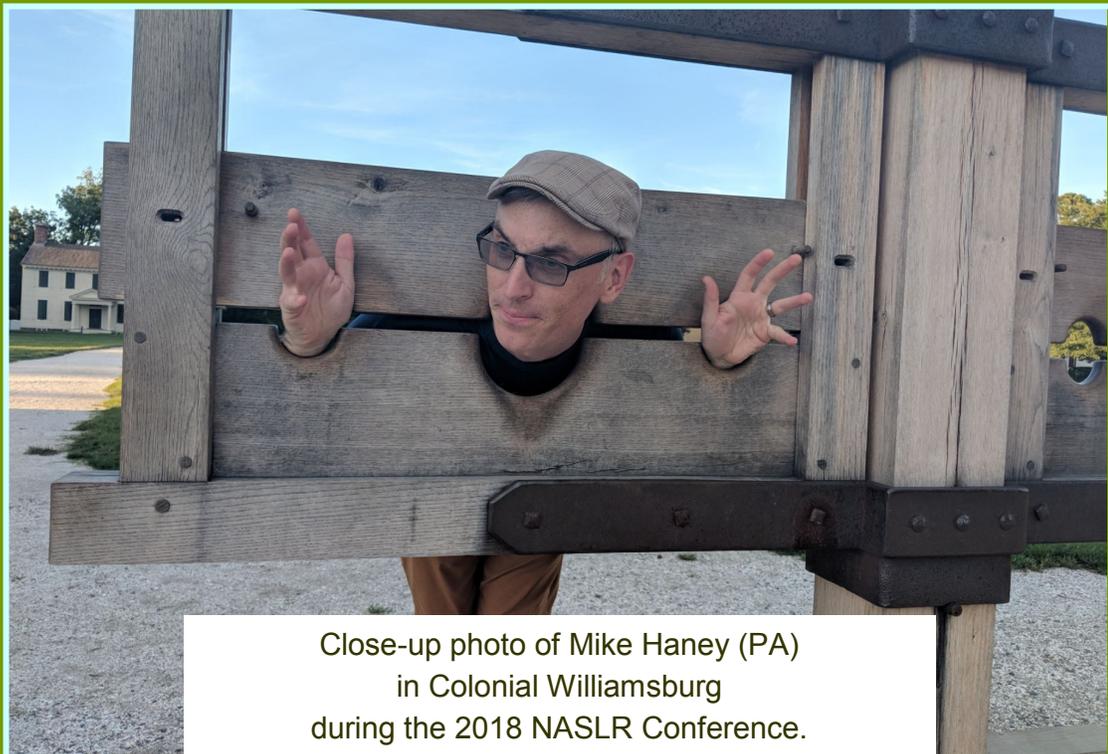
In the midst of the massive McLaren project, Tom became project manager for the construction of a new drinking water system for the community of Sand Coulee Montana. In 2016 the Sand Coulee Water System Project won National Award from the Office of Surface Mining for Abandoned Mine Reclamation.



Tom passed away after giving a joint presentation on the McLaren Cleanup with the National Park Service at the annual Conference of the American Water Resources Association where he stated that his work on McLaren and Soda Butte Creek was the highlight of his career.

If you are not already a member or know someone interested in becoming involved with a group of reclamation professionals promoting excellence in reclamation please contact us or forward this newsletter to them. You are cordially invited to join NASLR, a group of member state reclamation agencies throughout the United States, as well as government reclamation professionals and industry associates that seek to develop resources and strive to restore mined lands to productive uses.

The four categories of membership are *State, Individual, Associate and Corporate Sponsor*. To join, see conference information or request additional information, please visit our website at: www.naslr.org



Close-up photo of Mike Haney (PA) in Colonial Williamsburg during the 2018 NASLR Conference.

NASLR NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019

naslr.org

To submit material for future newsletters please contact Jeff Meitrott jmeitrott@pa.gov.
Please use a [NASLR Newsletter Submission Form](#) (or [download here](#)).

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