



NASLR

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE LAND RECLAMATIONISTS

Winter 2023

<http://www.naslr.org>

ENGAGEMENT and PARTICIPATION

en-gage-ment – noun – *The action of engaging or being engaged.*

par-tic-i-pa-tion – noun – *The action of taking part in something.*

The 2023 NASLR Conference welcomed 50 in-person and over 30 virtual attendees. Did you know that as a State member of NASLR you are allowed and encouraged to attend the Business Meeting to help elect new Executive Staff and Committee members? Did you know that your vote counts when changes are proposed to the By-Laws and Constitution? Did you know that your vote counts when electing members to the Executive Committee and to the offices of Vice-President and Secretary/Treasurer?

Out of the 80+ attendees to the conference only 24 people attended the Business Meeting? That's just 30%. NASLR needs more people to become engaged and to participate.

NASLR as an organization works solely on volunteers. There are no paid positions, there are no full-time staff. It is people like you, State employees with full-time jobs, that are taking time out of their workday to participate and engage to keep the group functioning.

NASLR needs more volunteers – not only are some of the longer-serving members getting closer and closer to retirement, but some people that have stepped up in recent years have changed jobs or been promoted (congratulations to all of them) and that takes them away from the organization.

NASLR can only be as interesting, full-filling and engaging as the members make it. As recently as 2014 the NASLR Executive Committee discussed disbanding the organization entirely; it was saved by new members stepping in, seeing the value NASLR brings to not only themselves, but to others and a desire to keep this 52-year-old organization around for future State reclamationists like yourself.

NASLR wants your ideas, your thoughts, your feedback.

What do you want to see?

What do you want to learn about?

What aspect of your mining program would you like to see covered in a conference topic?

What would you like to do or see on a future field trip?

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**“DEDICATED TO QUALITY
LAND RECLAMATION”**

A FOND FAREWELL, AND BEST WISHES

A message from the Outgoing President:

By Scot May, Pennsylvania

As I bid farewell, I want to take a moment to reflect on the strides we have made together over the past three years. It's been an incredible journey, first as PRE member, then Vice President, and finally President and I'm proud of the accomplishments we've achieved as a united force.

Firstly, we revamped our website, transforming it into a dynamic hub of information and engagement. The goal was to make it more user-friendly and accessible, ensuring that everyone— from seasoned experts to newcomers— could easily find the resources they need to contribute to our mission. It's not just a website; it's a digital home for our community.

In the age of social media, we recognized the need to stay connected and share our stories. Updating our social media accounts was a priority, and through these platforms, we've been able to showcase the impactful work of our members. It's not just about likes and shares; it's about spreading the message of land reclamation far and wide.

To adapt to the changing times, we integrated a virtual component into our conferences. This move allowed us to connect with even more passionate individuals who might not have been able to attend in person. It's not just about embracing technology; it's about expanding our reach and fostering collaboration in new and exciting ways.

I'm thrilled to share that we welcomed three new members into our organization. Each new addition brings fresh perspectives, skills, and enthusiasm, enriching the diversity of our community. It's not just about numbers; it's about building a stronger, more

inclusive family dedicated to the cause of land reclamation.

These accomplishments are not just checkboxes; they represent the collective effort and dedication of each member. Together, we've embraced change, adapted to new challenges, and strengthened our bonds as a community of environmental champions.

As I step aside, I'm confident that the National Association of State Land Reclamationists will continue to thrive and make an even greater impact. Thank you all for your support, collaboration, and unwavering commitment to the vital work of land reclamation.

Best wishes for the future, Scot May



Engagement and Participation (Continued from Pg 1)

This year, new PRE (Public Relations and Education) sub-committees have been created in the hopes that we can get more people engaged and participating. These sub-committees include Newsletter, Scholarship Outreach, Awards Outreach, Social Media, Scholarship Application Reviews, and Awards Application Reviews. Some of these sub-committees will meet more frequently than others, recognizing that your time is valuable. If you want to get started on a committee and have limited time, please reach out to any Executive or PRE-Committee member and they can help answer your questions and help find a spot for you to participate.

If you've gotten any value from NASLR since 2014, please consider volunteering yourself and your time to the organization to help keep it solvent and functioning at a high level that allows NASLR to continue to host an annual conference and provide informative, relevant presentations and undeniable networking opportunities with fellow State reclamationists like yourself.

HELLO FROM ILLINIOS!

A message from the incoming president

By Vickie Broomhead, Illinois

Hello from Illinois! I am Vickie Broomhead, your NASLR President for the 2023-2024 term. I have been in the regulatory field in one capacity or another for the past 28 years – the last 17 years I have been the Senior Hydrogeologist for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Mines and Minerals, Land Reclamation Division (the Title V program). I have been a member of NASLR for years, but only got actively involved after I attended the 2019 Conference.

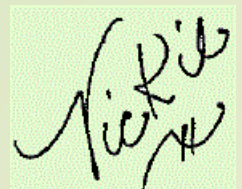
We have just wrapped up a successful annual conference in Altoona, Pennsylvania – thanks to Past-President Scot May, the staff of Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection and the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation. I hope that those in-person attendees enjoyed the conference, field trip, banquet, networking and social opportunities, as much as I did. To those virtual attendees, thank you for your participation and we hope to see you in-person at our next conference.

Your new NASLR Executive Committee – Past-President Scot May, Vice-President Tyler Straight, Secretary/Treasurer Simone Rodriguez and Members Shawna Riddle and Kristi Dodson along with the Public Relations and Education Outreach Committee (PRE) – Jeff Meitrott (Chairperson) (PA), Shawna Riddle (NC), Kevin Brown (IL), Tom Rigley (NY), Psalm Wycoff (NY), Ashlon Wasko (AR) and Jamie Brown (OSMRE), all work behind the scenes to help NASLR function and move forward all year long, not just for the conference. Please reach out to me or any committee member with questions or concerns. This is YOUR organization and we're always open to new participants, new members and new ideas!

My goals for my short term as President are to formalize those behind the scenes actions the organization undertakes – outreach for Scholarships, Awards and Membership, putting together the newsletter, and reviewing and updating the Constitution, By-Laws and Policies to reflect where we are today as an organization. I have big shoes to fill from the actions of the past officers. I hope I can do justice to the office of President.

NASLR began in Illinois in 1972, 52 years later Illinois will be hosting the 2024 Annual Conference where we hope you will join us, under our theme of *Reclamation to Recreation* where we hope to highlight some of the former coal-mined lands that have been converted to popular public recreation spaces in the Land of Lincoln. It's a true testament to the professionalism and commitment of the numerous volunteers over the last 52 years that NASLR is still a viable, functioning organization. We also need to recognize that some of the Committee members have served in their respective roles for a long time and eventually, someone new will need to step into those roles – and we need a plan in place for that to occur. Being near the end of my "first" career, I'm cognizant of the fact that change happens whether we want it to or not, so I want to ensure that all aspects of this great organization of State Land Reclamationists can continue for another 50+ years with as little interruption to the service you've all become accustomed to.

Finally, I look forward to engaging conversations with you regarding all aspects of mining and reclamation. We should all use this platform to share our successes and failures to help promote the great work that has and is occurring across our member states, to show others that we are not your "typical state worker" and we are out there everyday putting in the work to not only keep our respective states economy running, but we are doing our due diligence to ensure that the environment is being duly protected and mining operations are conducted in the most viable, responsible way possible.



NASLR's 2023 Mined Land Reclamation Award— Coal

Rend Lake Mine Complex

Nominated by Kristi Dodson
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Franklin County Land Resources, Inc.
Rend Lake Mine Complex

The Rend Lake Mine complex, a vast 1,070.4-acre area with four mining permits, went through a remarkable transformation from abandonment to an impressive reclamation effort. This site, which housed various mining activities and facilities, including underground mining and storage silos, was a part of the community for several decades.

Originally known as the Inland Mine, it began operations in 1967 under one company's ownership and later changed hands to Consolidation Coal Company in 1986. For 16 years, it supplied bituminous coal from the Herrin #6 coal seam, amounting to around 81.3 million tons. However, after it closed in the early 2000s, the site was left without proper reclamation for over ten years.

In 2013, a company called Murray Energy Corporation took over the mine but faced challenges, including bankruptcy in 2019. In 2020, Franklin County Land Resources, Inc. (FCLR), a subsidiary of American Consolidated Coal Resources, Inc., acquired the site. FCLR set out to not only meet but exceed minimum reclamation standards, aiming for exemplary reclamation.



Inland Steel – installation of Coal Hoist – June 1966



Inland Steel – Prep Plant and Surface Facilities – circa 1981

To make this happen, they collaborated with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Office of Mines and Minerals, Land Reclamation Division (IDNR) to create an economically feasible plan. Their goal is to complete the site's full reclamation by the end of 2024 and then release the remaining bonds. This approach has already led to successful reclamation and bond release for two permits.

Their reclamation work since 2016 involved demolishing structures, addressing issues with erosion, and enhancing environmental practices.

They've even focused on creating habitats, like wetlands for waterfowl and pollinator-friendly vegetation to support monarch butterflies.

Due to the mine's proximity to Rend Lake State Park, FCLR's efforts to restore portions of the permit area in an ecologically focused manner compliments the surrounding land uses. The local and region community and visitors to the Rend Lake area should benefit long-term by the creation of these new open water resources and proposed seeding enhancements.

NASLR's 2023 Mined Land Reclamation Award— Non-Coal

Anderson Quarry

**Nominated by Dean Baker
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection**

Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation—BD Crew Anderson Quarry

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation, Bituminous District Crew, was recognized for their outstanding work at the Anderson Quarry.

The Anderson Quarry, once a flagstone mining site, had been left in an unreclaimed state, with approximately 1.5 acres in need of restoration. The minimal bond of \$1,000 was forfeited, necessitating action. The Bureau, with its capable BD Crew, stepped up to the challenge of backfilling and revegetating the site.



The site presented several difficulties, including a 180-foot highwall with varying heights and a lack of topsoil. Despite these challenges, the Bureau's Bituminous District Crew, using their own equipment, successfully transformed the Anderson Quarry into a landscape that supports the natural beauty and wildlife of Potter County.

NASLR's 2023 Reclamationist of the Year

Halina Duda

Nominated by Simone Rodriguez
New York Dept of Environmental Conservation

Halina Duda has been a guiding force in the field of Mined Land Reclamation, making a substantial impact in her role as a Mined Land Reclamation Specialist and Program Supervisor for the Lower Hudson Valley at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Region 3.

During her extensive 24-year tenure with DEC, Halina took on the critical responsibility of ensuring that lands affected by mining were reclaimed to bring them back to productive use. Her work involved a delicate balance of managing complex projects and enforcement actions, often in challenging and controversial situations.

What set Halina apart was her unwavering commitment to finding common ground between resource development and environmental responsibility. She worked closely with those seeking mining permits, encouraging them to develop plans that not only harnessed valuable resources but also aimed at successful reclamation while minimizing harm to surrounding communities.

In addition to her regional contributions, Halina played an active role in the National Association of State Land Reclamationists (NASLR), where she even served as President. Her involvement in NASLR allowed her to promote excellence in reclamation and recognize achievements in the field.

Halina's dedication extended beyond her professional role. Her educational background as a Licensed Professional Geologist added depth to her expertise, reflecting her passion for the subject.

Halina's legacy is one of dedication, leadership, and a deep belief in creating a better, more sustainable future. Her work reminds us that resource development and environmental responsibility can go hand in hand. We celebrate Halina Duda today, not just for her career achievements, but for the inspiration she provides to us all, encouraging excellence and innovation in the field of Mined Land Reclamation.



Halina describing the Storm Valley Art Center "Wave Field" art installation at a reclaimed sand and gravel mine to the 2014 NASLR Conference Attendees.

NASLR's 2023 Outreach Award

Peckham Industries, Inc.

**Nominated by Psalm Wyckoff
New York Dept of Environmental Conservation**

Peckham Industries, Inc. is a fourth-generation family-owned enterprise has been a stalwart presence in the heart of New York for nearly a century, embodying values of safety, integrity, dedication, and efficiency that are truly commendable.

In the year 2023, Peckham unveiled their inaugural Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Report. This document stands as a testament to their commitment to transparency and sustainability. Within its pages, Peckham's goals, initiatives, and a rich tapestry of history, governance principles, and community-centric programs are artfully woven.

At the core of Peckham's operation lies the management of eleven permitted mines in upstate New York. They are proactively engaged with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Their compliance record speaks volumes of their ethos, with collaboration taking precedence over opposition when differences arise.

The pages of Peckham's story are further adorned with their profound dedication to the communities they touch. Their charitable endeavors, financial contributions, and the benevolent Peckham Family Foundation breathe life into environmental causes, arts in education, and the betterment of underserved populations.

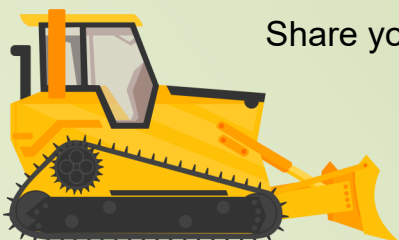
Beyond their philanthropic spirit, Peckham has been a beacon of innovation and knowledge sharing in the industry. Their presentations at conferences, including those at NASLR, offer captivating glimpses into their innovative approach to operational challenges, with a focus on their Wingdale Quarry. Their efforts underscore their commitment to responsible mining practices and environmental stewardship.

Peckham Industries, Inc., is an embodiment of excellence and dedication. Their legacy of integrity and innovation sets a shining example for the industry and beyond. The NASLR outreach award recognizes their tireless efforts in the service of community, sustainability, and knowledge sharing.



Do you have a reclamation story to tell? Advice for reclamationists or regulators?

Share your stories by submitting material for future newsletters!



Contact Jeff Meitrott jmeitrott@pa.gov with a
[NASLR Newsletter Submission Form](#)

NASLR's 2023 Scholarship Award

Kayode Komolafe

The NASLR 2023 Scholarship award winner is KayodeKomolafe , who is deeply committed to both environmental conservation and mine reclamation.

As an international PhD student at the Colorado School of Mines, Kayode is dedicated to his academic and research pursuits. However, he faces significant financial challenges exacerbated by his spouse's job loss due to the economic impact of COVID-19 and the challenges of finding new employment in Nigeria.



Kayode is the sole provider for the family, which includes his spouse, two children, and elderly parents who can no longer work. His responsibilities encompass the family's basic needs and the children's education.

What sets Kayode apart is his unwavering commitment to mine reclamation. His academic journey has been marked by a focus on environmental science, conservation, and mine reclamation, gaining insights through seminars, consultations, and conferences.

The grant will offer vital financial support, enabling Kayode to continue his academic journey and contribute significantly to the field of mine reclamation. In recognition of his dedication to family and his mission to make a positive impact in environmental conservation and mine reclamation, we proudly present this grant.

WELCOME GEORGIA!

The Peach State is the newest member of NASLR!

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division Surface Mining Unit reviews applications and approves surface mining land use plans, issues surface mining permits, conducts compliance evaluations of surface mining operations, reviews and approves bonding requirements for surface mining operations and ensures reclamation of completed mining operations. There are currently 795 permitted surface mines in Georgia (Borrow Pits, Pits, Dredges and Quarries). Minerals mined in Georgia include granite, sand, fill material, fullers earth, clay, heavy minerals, limestone, quartz, shale and peat. The Surface Mining Unit has four staff members (3 geologist and 1 manager).



GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

Notes from the field *by Dean Spindler*

The importance of Surveys to the reclamation community

Back in the 1980's our state, with OSM funding, put a significant effort into assembling the natural history resource information for Illinois into a comprehensive GIS database. The information housed in this repository included hydrologic, geologic, biologic, and historic data. This was around the time when GIS software started to become popular.

Over the 20+ years that I managed our GIS and Illinois State Geological Survey (Survey) and Illinois State Museum contract programs, the question of whether continued financial support was warranted came up often. Over the course of the past 20 years, entire spatial database libraries of historical information mining, coal drill log information and lands that have been surface and underground mined have been consolidated into one location. The other natural resource spatial databases are now maintained by their respective agencies but are available to our agency. Although the information is not maintained within our Land Reclamation Division (LRD) withing the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), the investment has paid off many times over by providing information services to LRD as the SMCRA regulatory authority. These services provide efficient and timely access to topographic, hydrologic, geologic, biologic, cultural and historical information during permit application reviews. Both quality and timely reviews of permit applications are key components to running an efficient and high quality regulatory program.

Every year we sit down with the state museum and the survey that we provide contractual support funding to in order to ensure that the previous year's goals and objectives are met and also to discuss data gathering or delivery improvements or future data needs. Besides getting the data deposited in the various repositories, other goals discussed were to be able to extract the data in a fast and convenient manner for the regulatory and science community, and for the public, where appropriate. Cultural and historic information carry confidentiality requirements; therefore this data is only delivered to authorized persons under a separate website. On the other hand, the Survey uses a public web site (<http://isgs.illinois.edu/ilmines>) complete with location matching features for the public to use to determine the existence and probability of undermining. All of these are examples outgrowths of program support.

There is an additional benefit of having agencies outside our program maintaining support duties. A common occurrence is for an unexpected site condition or regulatory issue to come up where preliminary information is needed in a hurry. These support agencies that maintain the data (e.g. the Survey and other divisions within IDNR) commonly have expertise, knowledge of additional data sets including the limits of the public data usability, other programs, and staff availability to answer questions in a timely manner and the ability to offer advice for long term questions.

The best example I can think of occurred several decades ago. The Survey maintained the underground mined data layer and we asked them to differentiate the pre/post 1983 undermining areas to assist the SMCRA Title IV vs. Title V eligibility/responsibility. Prior to that, all we had available were paper maps. As time went on, the effectiveness of using this information for subsidence events was reevaluated and improved. Additionally, the data was differentiated between room and pillar mining and longwall mining.

Now we are 39 years into the permanent regulatory program and unanticipated subsidence events have occurred in post 1983 undermined areas. Unfortunately, some of these events are traced back to mining companies that no longer exist, and no entity can be found to hold liable. Initiatives are being evaluated on the best way to deal with the problem both now and into the future.

Data is needed to determine both the spatial extent of the issue and to develop a model for future financial impacts. This requires both immediate information to explain the issue to the appropriate parties, and the ability to develop long term solutions. Having an established working relationship with the Survey and many already developed high quality data layers has been helping the project move forward, although more slowly than LRD would hope.



PHOTOS FROM THE 2023 NASLR CONFERENCE, ALTOONA PA



Top From Left to Right: NASLR field trip attendees at a Title V coal refuse valley-fill reclamation site, NASLR field trip attendees at a co-generation powerplant, the view from the roof of Colver Green Energy's coal refuse power plant. Bottom: NASLR attendees enjoying the awards banquet after a ride on the US Parks guided Amtrack ride on horseshoe curve.



PHOTOS FROM THE 2023 NASLR CONFERENCE, ALTOONA PA



Top From Left to Right: Halina Duda receives the Reclamationist of the Year Award. Madison Kappel and Cailyn Harrington accept the Outreach award on behalf of Peckham Industries, Inc.. Franklin County Land Resources, Inc. is presented with the Coal Reclamation award. Special Thanks to NPS Ranger Doug Bosley for giving the history of the Horseshoe Curve and surrounding communities.

Bottom From Left to Right: Scot May presents the President's Award to Todd Coleman. The Pennsylvania DEP BAMR BD Crew receives the Non-Coal Reclamation award.



10/06/2023.

The President,
National Association of State Land Reclamationists.

Sir,

Re: Mined Land Reclamation Educational Grant.
Appreciation Letter.


The Mined Land Reclamation Educational Grant Program is a motivation and stimulant for academic excellence and hard work for students willing to demonstrate unwavering commitment to environmental conservation through land reclamation to create useful landscapes that meet a variety of goals ranging from the restoration of productive ecosystems to the creation of industrial and municipal resources.

I commend the immense efforts of all NASLR members for their financial commitments to sustaining the noble course of promoting the reclamation of lands affected by mining activities through educational forum and grants. It is with immense honor that I accept this scholarship.

I pledge to continue working diligently to uphold the high standards set by NASLR. Your belief in my potential is both inspiring and humbling, and I am determined to make the most use of this opportunity. I hope to reciprocate this kind gesture by contributing my quota in restoring and revitalizing areas that have been adversely affected by human activities especially mining through cognate academic research, teaching and sustaining best field practices in accordance with the NASLR ethics.

Once again, I am proud to be one of the NASLR scholars.

Best Regards.


Kayode Komolafe.
Mining Engineering Department.



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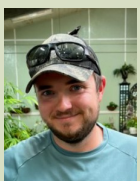


2023-2024 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

2023-24 NASLR Officers



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