



NASLR

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
STATE LAND RECLAMATIONISTS

Summer 2024

<http://www.naslr.org>

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Vickie Broomhead - Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Mines and Minerals, Land Reclamation Division

October 8-10, 2024 is the 52nd Annual NASLR Conference, being held in Carterville, Illinois at the Walker’s Bluff Casino Resort. NASLR has secured a block of rooms at Walker’s Bluff you can call 618-993-7777 using “NASLR Conference” to reserve your room at the conference rate. NOTE: All room reservations must be made by September 7, 2024.

The NASLR Illinois Conference Planning Committee has secured 12 of 13 speakers we still need ONE more presentation to fill our available time. If you are interested in presenting a topic, please reach out now.

NASLR Conference t-shirts and hats are available for purchase. Information for both is on the website. All shirts and hats will be available for pick-up at the conference, along with your conference information packets.

The Conference Field Trip is planned for Wednesday, October 9th. NASLR will provide transportation, lunch and drinks. The underground portion of the trip is limited by the mine – a total of 52 people can go underground, broken into two groups of 26. If you are planning to attend, please register yourself soon and indicate you intend to attend the field trip. You will need a hard hat and steel-toed boots. The mine will provide headlamps and protective coveralls. There is a limited number of hard hats available.

The NASLR Awards Banquet is scheduled for the evening of October 8th Illinois DNR Director, Ms. Natalie Phelps-Finney will give the keynote address. Presentations of the Coal and Non-coal Reclamation Awards, the Dean Spindler Reclamationist of the Year Award, the Outreach Award and an educational scholarship will occur after dinner.

Tyler Straight, current NASLR Vice-President/incoming President has set-up and presented two NASLR webinars (April and June) and has a 3rd and 4th webinar in the works. If you haven’t attended one, please try to do so they have been informative and interesting topics so far but like all of NASLR, Tyler needs help with topic ideas that interest NASLR members. If you have a topic you would like to see presented, please reach out to Tyler.



Inside This Issue

Message from the President.....	1
Conference Flyer.....	2
Conference Agenda.....	3-5
Travel Logistics.....	6
Conference Gear.....	7
Illinois Spotlight.....	8-9
Notes from the Field.....	10-11

NASLR and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Mines and Minerals, Land Reclamation Division is pleased to welcome you to Illinois for the 52nd Annual NASLR Conference October 8-10, 2024.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION –

Conference and hotel registration deadline is September 7, 2024.

Conference Fees can be paid online or via Check.

In-Person Registration \$275 - Virtual Registration \$30

See www.naslr.org for registration forms.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE LAND RECLAMATIONISTS

2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

CARTEVILLE, IL

Monday, October 7th – Friday, October 11th, 2024

Walker's Bluff Casino Resort

Carterville, IL 62918

Monday, October 7, 2024 – Out-of-State attendee arrivals; Hotel Check-in.

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm – NASLR Registration Table in Lobby

8:00 pm – 10:00 pm – Informal Gathering Hospitality Suite

Dinner On Your Own

Tuesday, October 8, 2024 - TECHNICAL SESSIONS

6:30 am – 8:00 am – Continental Breakfast- Event Center

8:00 am – 8:10 am – Conference Welcome – Vickie Broomhead, NASLR President

8:10 am – 8:20 am – Opening Remarks

8:20 am – 8:30 am – Logistics/Break Info – Tyler Straight, NASLR Vice-President

8:30 am – 10:00 am – Presentations

Matt Vonda, Bluff City Materials, Inc. *"Bartlett Ball Fields & Bluff Springs Fen – Reclamation Success Stories"*

10:00 am – 10:15 am – Break

10:15 am – 11:45 am – Presentations

Kristi Dodson, IL DNR *"Illinois GIS Role in Conversion of Mined Land to State Parks...and More!"* and

Scott Elrick, Illinois State Geological Survey, *"Mined Out Area Documentation Efforts in Illinois: From Mine Notes to ILMINES"*

11:45 am – 1:00 pm – Lunch – Event Center

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm – Presentations

Gary Downen, IL DNR *"Mining Equipment & Methods Over the Years"* and

Jim Bowling, IL DNR *"Transforming Coal Mine Property Into a Recreational Opportunity"*

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm – Break

2:45 pm – 4:15 pm – Presentations

Dr. James Parham, Trutta Environmental Solutions *"High Definition Stream Survey – Hurricane Creek, AL: A rapid inventory and assessment of a full stream system to identify legacy mine impacts"* and

Tom Hasenstab, Knight Hawk Coal, LLC *"Knight Hawk Coal – A Walk Through Their History"*

5:30 pm – 8:30 pm – Happy Hour (Open Bar)/Awards Banquet Dinner – Event Center

6:30 pm – 7:30 pm – Keynote Speaker - Ms. Natalie Phelps-Finney, IL DNR Director

9:00 pm – 11:00 pm – Hospitality Suite Open

Wednesday, October 9, 2024 – FIELD TRIP

6:30 am – 7:30 am Continental Breakfast/Field Trip Check-In – Event Center

7:45 am – Depart Walker's Bluff

8:30-4:30 Field Trip - LUNCH PROVIDED

5:00 pm – Return to Walker's Bluff

6:00 pm – 11:00 pm – Hospitality Suite Open

Dinner On Your Own

Thursday, October 10, 2024 – TECHNICAL SESSIONS & BUSINESS MEETING

6:30 am – 8:00 am – Continental Breakfast – Event Center

8:00 am – 10:15 am – Presentations

Clay Kolar, IL DNR (Retired) *"Forgotten Surface Mine Tree Plantings, Should They Remain Forgotten?"*

Josh Quinn, Southwind Industries, Inc. *"Clean Construction Demolition Debris – Responsible Reclamation"* and

Steve Thelen, Thelen Sand & Gravel *"From Cornfields to Lakeview Home Sites"*

10:15 am – 10:30 am – Break

10:30 am – 12:00 pm – Presentations

Derek Launius, Peabody Arclar Mining, LLC “TBD” and

Tyler Straight, NY DEC *“Challenges of Regulating Bluestone Quarries near Timber Rattlesnake Habitat and 2025 Conference Preview”*

12:00pm – 12:15 pm – Conference Closing Remarks/Invite to Attend NASLR Business Meeting – Vickie Broomhead

12:30 pm – 2:30 pm – NASLR BUSINESS MEETING & Working Lunch – All Full Members are Welcome and Encouraged to Attend

PM – Out of State Attendees Begin to Depart

Friday, October 11, 2024 – All Remaining Attendees Check-Out of Hotel and Depart

DRAFT

GETTING TO SOUTHERN ILLINOIS!

PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES

The conference venue, Walker's Bluff Casino Resort, is located in Carterville, Illinois. The closest airport (approximately 20 minutes away) is a regional airport, Veterans Airport of Southern Illinois, located in Marion, Illinois.

Veterans Airport of Southern Illinois (MWA) operates two flights per day to and from Chicago O'Hare (ORD). Hertz Car Rental Company serves the airport. NASLR and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Land Reclamation Staff (your hosts) can offer a shuttle service for those of you traveling to the regional airport. If you would like to utilize this shuttle service, please indicate on your registration form.

GROUND TRANSPORTATION – There is limited ground transportation in the Southern Illinois region. From Veterans Airport, there are 4 listed taxi/shuttle companies and Lyft available.

OTHER AIRPORTS –

- 1) St. Louis Lambert International Airport (STL) in St. Louis, Missouri is an approximate 2-hour drive to Walker's Bluff (130 miles one way). STL offers multiple flights per day via American Airlines, Delta, Frontier, Southwest, Spirit and United. STL offers rental cars through Alamo, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Enterprise, National, Payless and Thrifty.
- 2) MidAmerica St. Louis (BLV), located in Mascoutah, Illinois is an approximate 90-minute drive to Walker's Bluff (84 miles one way). BLV offers seasonal and year-round flights via Allegiant Airlines. The airport is serviced by Enterprise Rent-a-Car.
- 3) Evansville Regional Airport (EVV) in Evansville, Indiana is an approximate 2-hour drive to Walker's Bluff (135 miles one way). EVV offers flights on Allegiant, Breeze, American Airlines and Delta. Car rental companies in the airport are Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise and National.
- 4) Barkley Regional Airport (PAH) in Paducah, Kentucky is an approximate 75-minute drive to Walker's Bluff (70 miles one way). PAH is serviced by flights to and from Charlotte Douglas International Airport in Charlotte, North Carolina. The airport offers rental cars through Enterprise and Hertz.

AMTRAK – There is an Amtrak Station in Carbondale, Illinois. Carbondale is approximately 8 ½ miles from Walker's Bluff Casino. There is no ground transportation available, but NASLR can offer a shuttle to and from the train station with prior notice.

DON'T BE LEFT OUT - ORDER YOUR 2024 CONFERENCE GEAR NOW!

2024 Conference Hats Now Available!

Visit the NASLR Website to pre-order
<https://naslr.org/hat-orders/>

Price only \$12.75 each

Hats must be pre-ordered by
September 7th
Pickup at the conference



SEE THE NASLR WEBSITE - www.naslr.org - TO ORDER



STATE SIZE

57,915 square miles (35.8 million acres)

MEMBER OF NASLR SINCE

1972 – ILLINOIS WAS ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBER STATES

YEAR PROGRAM STARTED

1962 – Land Reclamation Division (LRD) Coal and Non-coal regulatory program begins.

1975 – Abandoned Coal Mine Reclamation (AML) program begins.

1977 – SMCRA established the Title IV (AML) and Title V (LRD) programs.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Mines and Minerals is made up of four (4) Divisions – the Land Reclamation Division (LRD), the Abandoned Mine Lands Division (AML), the Explosives and Aggregate Division (EAD) and the Mine Safety and Training Division (MST). The LRD and AML Divisions focus is on the regulation and reclamation of coal mining-related sites. The EAD works with both coal and non-coal mining, as well as regulates the use of explosive materials, including those of the fireworks industry. The MST oversees the safety of miners in Illinois and maintains four (4) mine rescue stations and teams, which train regularly to aid Illinois mines in the event of an emergency; MST also conducts mine health and safety training and certification for Illinois' coal miners.

Illinois' major mine types are coal, industrial sand and gravel, limestone, sandstone, peat and tripoli. Illinois also produces clay, construction sand and gravel, crushed/dimension stone, montmorillonite, gemstones and Portland cement. As of 2023, Illinois produced 6% of the nation's coal, its coal reserves are the second largest in the nation and Illinois is the nation's fourth-largest coal producer after Wyoming, West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Coal underlies about 2/3 of the State of Illinois.

NUMBER OF ACTIVE MINES 45* (COAL ONLY)

NUMBER OF PERMITS ISSUED To Date – 392, of which 104 remain active (COAL ONLY)

ANNUALLY – 1 to 2 large permits (COAL ONLY)

AFFECTED ACREAGE

SURFACE COAL MINING – 319,737 acres (as of 2023)

UNDERGROUND COAL MINING – 949,038 acres (as of 2023)

AGGREGATE MINING – 32,000+ acres

TOTAL VALUE OF FINANCIAL SECURITY (COAL ONLY)

\$399,048,045.11

TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF

LRD – 24 – CONSISTING OF MANAGERS, ADMINISTRATION, BONDING, SOILS, ENGINEERING, WILDLIFE, HYDROGEOLOGISTS AND INSPECTORS

AML – 29 – CONSISTING OF MANAGERS, ADMINISTRATION, ENGINEERING, GEOLOGISTS, AND PLANNERS

EAD – 13 – CONSISTING OF MANAGERS, ADMINISTRATION, BLASTING EXPERTS AND INSPECTORS

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

LRD

AML

EAD

16.7 % WITH > 20 YEARS	27.6% WITH > 20 YEARS	38.5% WITH > 20 YEARS
25% WITH 11-19 YEARS	17.2% WITH 11-19 YEARS	15.4% WITH 11-19 YEARS
33.3% WITH 5-10 YEARS	24.1% WITH 5-10 YEARS	31% WITH 5-10 YEARS
25% WITH < 5 YEARS	31% WITH < 5 YEARS	15.4% WITH < 5 YEARS

NUMBER OF TIMES HOSTING THE NASLR CONFERENCE

SIX

(1972 – Marion; 1978 – Peoria; 1989 – LaSalle; 2004 – Springfield; 2010 – Carbondale; 2024 - Carterville)



Notes from the Field

The Importance of a Librarian Thought Process

By Dean Spindler

I have written in the past about the initiative and importance of documenting institutional information, regulatory interpretation, and the decisions made by the agency into a searchable system to serve as history and references for the new generation of reclamationists. In another case of documenting history and providing reference, a few years into the Illinois program, we adopted the requirement for mines to provide an underground mine map depicting the pre vs. post permanent program underground works and the requirement to submit annual updates. Illinois has also had the luxury of having annual aerial photography taken of the surface mines since the first state reclamation law in 1962. This practice continued up until the last few years when imagery became publicly available on the web.

Now comes the topic of this article. Few regulatory agencies have had adequate staff over the years to consider long term planning, basically, what will be important in another 5, 10, or 40 years. In our case, the original administrative staff had the foresight to obtain aerial imagery at the effective dates of both the interim program and permanent program. These were key environmental liability dates regarding what was affected, when, and under what program. The above-mentioned underground workings maps were also converted to a GIS format to provide a visual reference for SMCRA permanent program liability issues for both surface disturbance and underground mining subsidence.

The current issue with that visual information is the revelation that the ability to use this valuable data years later when all the “old guys” are gone was not fully vetted. For example, our GIS data attributes for pre and post permanent program liability are having to be redone so that newer staff can interpret the information without the “old guy” background knowledge. Another example is that Illinois has a 57 year history of thousands of aerial photos simply labeled by year and company mine name at the time of the image. What do we do with this visual history with no other reference information? As we all know, a mine name may change numerous times over the years due to company name changes, mine sales, permit transfers, re-mining for a deeper seam, or carbon recovery.

One item on my bucket list was to figure out what to do with all this data and how to make it useable for newer staff. Why is it important to have this visual data in a useable format? As an example, before my retirement, it was not uncommon for someone from the AML program to search me out with a question about an old site. Because I was the “old guy”, I had the knowledge to show them how to access the pre permanent program GIS linework and imagery, how to interpret it, where to find the old photos, and what ancient name it was probably filed under. Sometimes multiple searches were necessary to find the right mine name. This would be used to prepare AML eligibility documents for abandoned sites. More recently, with federal tax incentives for solar projects on mined land, we have seen additional requests



Notes from the Field cont.

for this type of old information and documents. Land use real estate transactions involving mined and undermined acreage also commonly include requests to our agency for information. Land use development, both public or private, submit requests for this information as well. This is particularly important where reclaimed refuse is involved.

I started working on a photography indexing project to make this data more useful, and it has taught me a few things. Even with the above-mentioned foresight to obtain the imagery and establish some of the information in a GIS format, we did not “think like a librarian”. What does it mean to think like a librarian? This thought process would consider the long term, end user of the information in the cataloging and storing of data. There were three main reasons our early staff did not have a librarian thought process: 1) no training, 2) the lack of adequate clerical staff, and 3) the lack of understanding the importance of future use of the data. When resources were available via student interns, the task was “get it imaged as quick as you can before you leave and we will figure out what to do with it later”. Hindsight is always better, and the bottom line is you do what you can with the resources you have. We should have ensured that the information was cataloged the same way, every time, by every person. Now we are dealing with sorting through years of haphazard data storage methods.

One example of adequate foresight for long term data tracking that Illinois did have was for bonds. In many cases when mining companies merge, our agency has better records than companies about reclamation bonds held. Equally important, bankruptcy courts need complete bond information that our agency retains in a searchable format. Even though keeping current addresses for bonding companies is a challenge, I don't ever recall a bonding company not having a good handle on what bonds they have issued, even when the bonds are 20 or 30 years old.

Although better late than never on indexing these photos for future retrieval, the old proverb of a “A Stitch in Time Saves Nine” would have saved hundreds of hours on this project. The significance of using a librarian thought process in storing regulatory data for the future has never been more clear than now, while I slave away over old photos and realize that hindsight is 20/20.

Postscript

The Covid pandemic and working from home has made the importance of being able to conveniently retrieve documents from an imaging system. The documents may all be in there but without an intuitive filing and indexing system it can be frustrating to find them

NASLR NEWSLETTER SPRING 2024

naslr.org



To submit material for future newsletters:

Please contact

Jeff Meitrott

jmeitrott@pa.gov.

Please use a

[NASLR Newsletter](#)

[Submission Form](#)