

## **EVALUATION YEAR 2001 'RECLAMATION SUCCESS' WORK PLAN - ILLINOIS**

**OBJECTIVE:** For evaluation year (EY) 2001 (October 1, 2000 through September 30, 2001) the Office of Surface Mining (OSM), Indianapolis Field Office (IFO) will continue to evaluate and report on the effectiveness of Illinois' program in ensuring successful and timely reclamation on lands affected by surface coal mining operations. Information will be collected to measure program performance in the following areas:

- a. Land form / approximate original contour
- b. Land capability
- c. Hydrologic reclamation
- d. Contemporaneous reclamation

**METHODOLOGY:** The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the methods and guidelines described in OSM Directive REG-8, July 28, 1999, the EY 2001 Illinois Office of Mines and Minerals, Land Reclamation Division (LRD) and IFO Performance Agreement and this workplan. After verification by the IFO of successful achievement of reclamation on a sample of bond releases (proposed or final), overall reclamation success will be determined based on the number of acres on which bond has been released by the LRD during the EY.

A general picture of how successfully reclamation is staying current with mining (contemporaneous reclamation) will be made by comparing the numbers of acres affected each year during the last five State fiscal years (July 1, 1995 through June 30, 2000) to number of acres released from phase III bond liability each fiscal year during the same five year period.

In addition, the evaluation will include a determination of the success of the LRD in achieving timely repair or restoration of resources (land, water, structures, roads, utilities, etc.) impacted by subsidence resulting from both long wall and room and pillar mining methods during the period October 1, 1998 through September 30, 2000. Long wall mining permits are conditioned by the LRD to require permittees to submit quarterly reports identifying subsidence that has occurred and what actions the permittees have taken to repair or restore affected resources. These reports will be reviewed for the long wall mines that were active during the review period to get a general picture of the timeliness of repair or restoration of resources impacted by subsidence. In addition, other documented actions taken by the LRD during the review period to ensure timeliness of repair or restoration of resources impacted by subsidence will be reviewed. Such actions include but are not necessarily limited to: written responses to complaints regarding the timeliness of subsidence repairs; LRD letters notifying permittees of the requirement for subsidence repairs; and LRD inspection reports notifying permittees of the requirement for subsidence repairs.

**IFO TASKS:**

1. Select a sample of ten (10) mines to be evaluated from the group of bond releases recommended or made by the LRD during EY 2001. An effort will be made to select proposed permanent program bond releases to evaluate with as large a number of acres, especially phase III acres, as possible.
2. Notify LRD inspectors of dates of scheduled IFO mine site evaluations to allow opportunities for joint mine site evaluations.
3. Conduct the mine site evaluations within 30 days of notification of the LRD recommendations on the bond release requests, especially for phase III releases. Complete the sample of mine site evaluations by September 15, 2001.
4. Information will be collected during the mine site evaluations to measure program performance in the following areas:
  - a. Land form / approximate original contour
  - b. Land capability
  - c. Hydrologic reclamation
5. Provide the LRD with copies of the Minesite Evaluation Reports (MSE) resulting from these site visits.
6. Provide to the IFO staff person responsible for coordination of this evaluation with a copy of the MSE and completed reclamation success information collection form.
7. Query the LRD coal database to obtain the number of affected acres for all surface coal mining and reclamation operations in Illinois and the number of acres released from phase III bond liability for each year within the five year period July 1, 1995 through June 30, 2000.
8. Review the quarterly subsidence reports and LRD letters and reports addressing timeliness of repair or replacement of resources impacted by mining subsidence for the period October 1, 1998 through September 30, 2000.
9. Provide the LRD with a draft of evaluation findings by October 9, 2001 and a final report by October 26, 2001. This report will include detailed information on the collection and analysis of data, verification of data, and draw a conclusion on the effectiveness of the State program in ensuring successful and timely reclamation of mined lands.

**LRD TASKS:**

1. Provide the IFO with copies of bond release requests.
2. Provide the IFO with copies of the LRD inspection reports timely after completion of the bond release inspections.

3. LRD inspectors are encouraged to accompany IFO inspectors during the mine site evaluations.
4. Provide the IFO copies of the subsidence reports for the long wall mines that were mining or reclaiming during the period October 1, 1998 through September 30, 2000 or access to those reports. Provide copies of letters and inspection reports produced by the LRD within that same period with which the need for timely repairs or replacement of resources impacted by subsidence was identified.

**OUTPUT MEASURES:** The information collected during this review will allow the IFO to evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the State program in ensuring successful and timely reclamation on lands affected by surface coal mining operations.

**IFO PERSONNEL:** Larry Greene (evaluation coordinator) and Mike Kalagian

**DATE:** November 2000