

the newsletter of the **Mineral Land Regulation & Reclamation** program



ENGAGe

Winter 2020

Exploration, Non-aggregate, Gas/oil, Aggregate, Geothermal

ENGAGe Feature: Cari's Compliance Corner

In July 2019 MLRR introduced our Civil Penalty implementation plan. The first phase was focused on non-payment of renewal fees and has been very successful. Prior to implementation a significant amount of staff time was spent trying to obtain compliance with a sequence of Notices of Violation, Notices of Intent to demand the reclamation security, and then demanding the reclamation security. This was an inefficient and ineffective method for deterring this type of violation. We were often travelling down that path with two to four sites per month. Since implementing civil penalties, we have had only one site eligible for a civil penalty. That is one site in roughly six months! This is an amazing success! Now our staff has more time available to focus on the rest of our program functions.

The next phase of our Civil Penalty implementation plan is focused on violators mining without a permit. Depending on the severity of the violation this could result in a maximum penalty of \$10,000 per day. What you may not realize is that any mining activity conducted outside of your permit boundary is considered mining without a permit. This includes (but is not limited to) activities such as storing overburden, stockpiling, and excavation. This is an easily avoidable violation. To help permittees avoid mining outside their permit boundary or within their setbacks, DOGAMI will be more consistently enforcing the requirement to permanently mark your permit boundary and setbacks in the field. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

DOGAMI is striving to improve consistency and fairness in our enforcement program, while also providing support and advocating for voluntary compliance. We encourage you to ask questions and seek information if you are unsure what is approved and allowed at your site. As Mining Compliance Specialist, my focus is to help you achieve and maintain compliance.

- Cari Buchner, MLRR Mining Enforcement & Compliance Specialist

Reminder: Update DOGAMI on land ownership changes

Landowners are a very important part of operating a mining operation. They provide permission (via signature on the Operating Permit application) for the applicant to mine on their land. Without that initial permission, DOGAMI can't move forward with processing or approving an application. Mining operations can last decades, and over time landowners may change. Whenever a change occurs in landownership, it is the permittee's responsibility to notify DOGAMI. To document a landownership change, DOGAMI requires a listing packet (also known as a TRIO) from a title company, proving the new ownership. Permittees can mail or even email the TRIO to DOGAMI, making sure to label it with the DOGAMI site number, and a note letting us know about the landownership change. Please contact us for land ownership changes to other types of permits issued by DOGAMI.

Contact Us at 541-967-2039 mlrr.info@oregon.gov

<https://www.oregongeology.org/mlrr>

Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries

Mineral Land Regulation & Reclamation

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PHOTO BY BECKY JOHNSON - OFFICE OPERATIONS ASSISTANT/RANGELAND IN NIGHTHAWK, WASHINGTON

Requesting Site Closure from DOGAMI:

A large portion of closing any site is meeting the reclamation obligations described within your site's Reclamation Plan. This site-specific Plan is provided by the permittee and accepted by DOGAMI after interagency coordination. The reclamation process can take *years* to complete. It is important that permittees are aware of the details in their Reclamation Plan; especially the post-mining beneficial use. If at the end of mining you planned to return your site to forest land, and now you want it to be rangeland, this may require a permit amendment or change in land use. DOGAMI reclamationists are happy to help you understand what your Reclamation Plan requires.

DOGAMI needs a minimum of 90 days to initiate the closure process. Completion of the process is dependent upon meeting reclamation obligations. The permit **MUST** be maintained in good standing until the department determines that reclamation obligations have been met, and the site is officially closed. **This means annual permit renewals must be paid until the site is officially closed.**

Did you know?...

Each month MLRR's own GIS Technical Specialist, Ed Buchner, uploads the most current public permitting information into a spreadsheet, and then loads that spreadsheet onto our website for public consumption. This spreadsheet provides groups of information like the type of permit held (Operating Permit, Exclusion Certificate, etc.), "current" permit status (whether it's closed or active at the time the information is gathered), where the site is located, and who the registered permittee for the site is. He also uploads a spreadsheet of annual production information by county.

Both spreadsheets are updated monthly, as information may change on a monthly basis.
<https://www.oregongeology.org/mlrr/surfacemining-report.htm>

Nominate For MLR Awards

Each year, the MLRR Program recognizes outstanding reclamation in several categories. We are continually seeking nominations for our annual Mined Land Reclamation Awards, and we encourage operators to nominate themselves, even though some are hesitant to do so.

With your help, we would like to identify those operators who excel at the day-to-day operations of a site, perform high-quality reclamation, involve their companies in community service, or work to meet the goals of the Oregon Plan.

Nominations collected through March 15th are considered for the previous year's award (in 2020, we present awards for 2019). For more details, or to make a nomination, please email Ben Mundie at mlrr.info@oregon.gov or call 541-967-2149.

Please help DOGAMI-MLRR provide excellent service by taking our customer satisfaction survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2020_Stakeholder_Satisfaction_Survey_DOGAMI_MLRR_ENGAg