

## What is the Partners For Reclamation program?

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and area Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Councils have joined together to provide an opportunity to help local citizens fix the adverse effects of coal mining on their property. This program covers **Clay, Fountain, Owen, Parke, Sullivan, Vermillion, and Vigo Counties.**

Landowners work with their local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to develop a plan to correct the mining related problems unique to their property. Once a reclamation plan has been accepted by the county SWCD, DNR's Division of Reclamation will review the proposed project for compliance with all applicable regulations to determine if it is appropriate for this program. Funding is available on a competitive basis, and based upon the technical and financial aspects of the individual site. If a site is selected, the Division of Reclamation (DoR) will fund up to eighty-five percent of the project costs through the RC&D. The RC&D may assist the property owner with contracting and other aspects of the project.

### Who is the program for?

This program is designed to assist property owners who have been adversely impacted by abandoned coal mining operations. Typical submittals do not exceed \$20,000 in total DoR contributions. Examples of typical mining related problems that may be appropriate are:

- Acidic water impacting land use
- Barren or poorly vegetated mine spoil
- Coal refuse and gob material
- Old mine haul roads
- Erosion problems associated with steep slopes
- Reduced drainage capacity that results in periodic flooding
- Drainage problems associated with sag type mine subsidences

- Other mining related issues on a case-by-case basis

**NOTE: Safety hazards such as dangerous mine subsidences, dangerous highwalls, structures, and coal refuse fires are typically addressed directly by the Division of Reclamation. DoR will review problems of this nature brought to our attention by local citizens.**

### How do I get started?

Property owners are responsible for the identification of the problem area and providing a physical description of the project area. The use of photographs and plat or topographic maps is encouraged in order to fully illustrate the problem area. The landowner may also develop a proposed plan of reclamation with assistance from the Project Coordinator.

The Coordinator then presents the application package to the local SWCD board for its consideration. If the SWCD board determines that the proposed project meets all of the guidelines of the program, they work with the landowner to complete the plan and forward it to the Sycamore Trails RC&D council for delivery to the IDNR Division of Reclamation.

Initially, proposals are reviewed for completeness by DoR staff. Projects missing key components may be returned to the RC&D for further work. A determination is made as to the eligibility of the site if a preliminary determination has not already been made. DoR then determines if any specific factors need to be addressed to comply with state and federal regulations, and may provide technical comments on the plan of reclamation. The submitted plan should be as simple as practical to ensure that it is both understandable and capable of being bid. Guidance from the RC&D and the

DoR should be sought early on in the process to ensure a proper reclamation plan is developed.

### What makes up a complete project proposal?

Submittals to DoR will be the responsibility of the Project Coordinator and should usually contain the following components to make sure it is not returned to Sycamore Trails RC&D.

- Scope of work
- Cost estimate, highlighting the landowner match and not-to-exceed estimate for DoR contribution. In-kind labor may be used as a portion of the landowner's matching funds.
- Location of the site on a USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle map, to include the project boundaries and the location of the features to be addressed within the site.
- Reclamation quantities sheet detailing the areas/volumes of features to be reclaimed
- Timeline for completion after approval is given
- Landowner contact information
- Signed maintenance agreement

Those reclamation proposals which meet program guidelines will then be given an authorization to proceed up to the agreed upon cost. This notice is sent to Sycamore Trails RC&D.

As a part of the authorization, an agreed upon timeframe for completion must be met. Activities anticipated taking longer than 18 months should normally be broken into phases.



Partners for Reclamation projects typically will **not** be:

- Long-term projects that cover several years
- Experiments in reclamation techniques or technologies
- Exceeding \$20,000 in DoR share funds
- Involving multiple landowners

Partnering funds will generally **not** be authorized for design or construction supervision expenses, or maintenance of completed projects in the future. Future enhancements to the property are generally covered by the maintenance agreement completed between the landowner and the RC&D. Exceptions to these policies may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Landowner**

- Complete application for assistance to reclaim property
- Determine size and extent of reclamation activity required
- Materially participate in reclamation either through cost share or in kind work on the site
- Coordinate preliminary and final applications to the SWCD for assistance
- Submit and abide by maintenance agreement on completed project

#### **Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)**

- Determine technical soundness of proposed project
- Ensure owner compliance with the terms of project and maintenance agreements.

#### **Sycamore Trails Resource Conservation and Development Council**

- Coordinate all application, contractual, and technical aspects of each project

- Contract for services as required to complete construction on the reclamation project
- Act as a liaison between the landowner and DoR for the submittal of project proposals
- Handle all financial transfers between DoR and contractors, landowners, etc.
- Submit necessary billing and reclamation quantities information to DoR upon completion of construction

#### **Department of Natural Resources - Division of Reclamation (DoR)**

- Provide technical and administrative guidance
- Make final determination on eligibility of project
- Secure all regulatory approvals for project
- Provide requested funding for completion of the reclamation project
- Inspect completed project for adherence to reclamation plan

#### **Who do I contact?**

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Restoration Program  
RR2 Box 129 Jasonville, IN 47438  
1-800-772-6463

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1007 Mill Lane, Suite B,  
Greencastle, IN 46135  
(765) 653-9785

## *The Partners for Reclamation Program*



***A Cooperative Effort Between  
Landowners,  
Soil and Water Conservation Districts,  
Sycamore Trails Resource Conservation  
and Development Council,  
and Indiana Department of Natural  
Resources - Division of Reclamation***

***Eligible Counties:  
Clay, Fountain, Owen, Parke, Sullivan,  
Vermillion, and Vigo Counties***