

# Integrating Reclamation Oriented Water Management Within Regulation<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** Large scale projects like coal mines are typically regulated by several permits, often within a single agency with overarching goals and directives. Despite common interests, regulation from separate permits may unintentionally compete or conflict resulting in stalled progress or performance within these goals. A need was identified to integrate permitting requirements for coal mining and reclamation with point source discharge regulation in a manner that protected natural resources and promoted the progression from coal mine to post-mine land use. Through integrating existing regulations for coal mine reclamation, the Western Alkaline Coal Mining effluent limit guidelines, demonstrating science-based rationale, and working to build awareness across programs and decision-makers, policy guidance was developed to transition outfalls to promote reclamation rather than hinder progress. Implementing this policy is a matter of consistently integrating performance benchmarked goals within permitting actions, with the net effect of incentivizing mine operators to pursue drainage basin oriented reclamation.

**Additional Key Words:** NPDES, Western Alkaline, Coal Mine, Reclamation.

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1. Oral policy paper presented at the 2019 National Meeting of the American Society of Mining and Reclamation, Big Sky, MT. Welcome Back to Montana: The Land of Reclamation Pioneers, June 3–7, 2019. Published by ASMR, 1305 Weathervane Dr., Champaign, IL 61821.
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