

# *Award-Winning Reclamation*

*2006 Excellence in Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Awards*

## ***National Award***

Montana Department of  
Environmental Quality,  
Abandoned Mine Section  
Comet Mine and Millsite

One of the oldest mines in the Basin-Cataract Mining District, the Comet Mine was first mined about 1880, yielding copper, gold, zinc and silver while its mill served neighboring mines.



The mine was closed and dismantled in 1941, leaving a sterile stream, abandoned mine pits and eroded toxic waste piles as reminders of the past activities at the 35-acre site.

When reclamation began, heavy metals and metalloids including lead, zinc, copper, and arsenic had degraded water quality in High Ore Creek and significant amounts were being transported downstream to the Boulder River. In fact fish could survive only 72 hours in High Ore Creek. The area was a danger to wildlife, livestock, and people.



A cooperative effort by the State of Montana, Bureau of Land Management, twenty private landowners, Montana Conservation Corps, the Western Resource Institute, and several contractors resulted in the restoration of four miles of stream channel on High Ore Creek, and the reclamation of the Comet Mine and Millsite as well as other mines in the watershed.

# National Award, Category II

Maryland Department of Environment,  
Bureau of Mines  
Shallmar Coal Refuse Site  
Garrett County, MD

Mined first by pick and shovel, this area was active until 1977. Abandoned, deep mine portals were in danger of collapsing, abandoned highwalls were within 300 feet of a road and nearly 300,000 cubic yards of coal waste had been dumped downslope from the mine leaving an unstable refuse bank behind the town of Shallmar.

Acid drainage was uncontrolled and ditches had to be constructed to protect the town from refuse bank runoff during rainstorms.

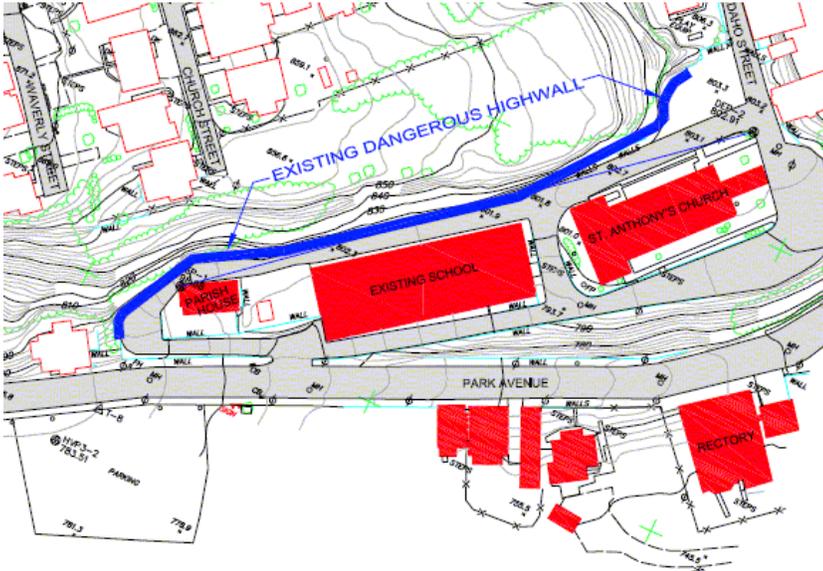
Using OSM Clean Streams and Watershed Cooperative funds as well as AML money, Maryland Bureau of Mines contractors sealed two mine portals, removed 140,000 cubic yards of unstable coal refuse, installed a water powered doser to reduce acidity and revegetated 17.5 acres with trees and grasses.



Crews work on steep slope during reclamation.



The large, dangerous gob pile (above) has been replaced by a pleasing, productive landscape.



## Appalachian Regional Award

*Pennsylvania Department of  
Environmental Quality  
Bureau of Abandoned Mine  
Reclamation*

Monongahela South No. 1 Highwall  
Mine, Washington County



An 800-foot highwall from mining operations in the 1940s had become unstable and presented a severe landslide risk to the local community, including houses, a church and a school which had to be closed.

Innovation and expertise were required to stabilize the highwall and make the area safe for the public.



**Mid-Continent Regional Award  
Iowa Department of Agriculture  
and Land Stewardship  
Trinkle Reclamation Project**

At this 100-acre site, a dangerous long-wall mine, toxic gob-piles and hazardous water bodies were replaced by beautiful grassland supporting a growing wildlife population. Acid mine drainage from the stripped land which clogged streams and impacted roadways, bridges and nearby farmland has been corrected.



**Western Regional Award  
North Dakota Public Service  
Commission  
Garrison Abandoned Mine Land  
Project**

Tackling a series of collapsing – and often hidden and forgotten — underground coal mines, the Public Service Commission developed a detailed, persistent approach to locating, mapping and filling underground mines before they could create dangerous sinkholes.

This proactive approach has resulted in safer conditions for ranchers, farmers, houses, city streets and modern highways located over abandoned mines.

