

Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Federal Program

FY2024 Request: \$4,330,000
Reference No: 6855

AP/AL: Appropriation

Project Type: Life / Health / Safety

Category: Natural Resources

Location: Statewide

House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)

Impact House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)

Contact: Theresa Cross

Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2023 - 06/30/2028

Contact Phone: (907)269-6398

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

This federal program does not require state match and contractually employs up to 75 Alaskans in private sector construction jobs each year. The request for federal authority has increased due to the infrastructure bill.

Funding:	<u>FY2024</u>	<u>FY2025</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>FY2027</u>	<u>FY2028</u>	<u>FY2029</u>	<u>Total</u>
1002 Fed Rcpts	\$4,330,000	\$4,330,000	\$4,330,000	\$4,330,000	\$4,330,000		\$21,650,000
Total:	\$4,330,000	\$4,330,000	\$4,330,000	\$4,330,000	\$4,330,000	\$0	\$21,650,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ongoing
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	
Totals:	0	0

Prior Funding History / Additional Information:

- Sec11 Ch1 SLA2023 P90 L24 HB281 \$4,533,000
- Sec8 Ch1 SLA2022 P74 L27 HB69 \$3,200,000
- Sec8 Ch1 SLA2021 P74 L27 HB69 \$3,200,000
- Sec5 Ch8 SLA2020 P66 L19 HB205 \$3,200,000
- Sec1 Ch3 SLA2019 P5 L13 SB19 \$3,200,000
- Sec1 Ch19 SLA2018 P7 L22 SB142 \$3,200,000
- Sec1 Ch1 SLA2017 P5 L26 SB23 \$3,200,000
- Sec1 Ch2 SLA2016 P5 L17 SB138 \$3,200,000
- Sec1 Ch38 SLA2015 P5 L17 SB26 \$3,200,000
- Sec1 Ch18 SLA2014 P57 L8 SB119 \$3,200,000
- Sec1 Ch16 SLA2013 P71 L12 SB18 \$3,000,000

Project Description/Justification:

The Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation (AML) program performs reclamation on qualifying sites within Alaska. For the next eight to ten years, the program will focus on the reclamation of several highwalls located in the Healy Valley. Highwalls are created as result of strip mining; strip mining is the method commonly used to mine coal seams from the surface. Highwalls are vertical cliff like faces which were left after the coal was extracted, and pose a threat to public health, safety, and general welfare by falling from a highwall cliff or by being hit from falling rock.

All funding for this program comes from federal grants; no general funds are required. This program contractually employs up to 75 Alaskans in private sector construction jobs each year.

The current AML project is Phase I of the Cripple Creek Pit. All major construction activities have been complete as of June 11, 2022, the contract will be closed out by August 31, 2022. The AML program has been reclaiming a series of abandoned strip mines near Healy, Alaska. These pits are located on state land and have been given a high priority to be reclaimed. The AML program has been working to reclaim the state's abandoned mine inventory since the early 1980's and the Cripple Pit is currently the focus. The AML program must work on reclamation projects each summer to keep the federal grants active and not expire. The program has three years in which to spent grant money.

Operating costs for the AML program are determined by a combination of salaried program staff and construction costs. The AML program currently has 3.5 full-time employees on staff including two Engineering Assistant 2's, one Engineering Associate, and .5 of an Administrative Assistant. Construction costs for reclamation work are ultimately decided by the size and scope of a project. Program staff work on reclamation designs and are responsible for estimating project costs based on engineering and earth science practices. Large scale projects are then put out to bid and follow all state required contracting procedures.

What was accomplished with prior funding?

(2022) Construction of Cripple Creek Phase I project was completed in mid-June of 2022. The AML is also working on reclamation designs for Phase II of Cripple Creek. That project will be put out to bid later in February of 2023 with an expected start date of May 2023. The expected cost for Phase II is \$6.5 million. Also, in August of 2022, a historical mining road will be reestablished to allow access to future projects, estimated costs are \$230,000. Once access has been established, a geotechnical and hydrologic study will be conducted at Coal Creek to determine suitability for a bridge or other type of stream crossing that will allow access to the Coal Creek abandoned coal mine. The studies are expected to cost approximately \$200,000 and will take place during September of 2022.

(2021) Construction on Phase I of the Cripple Creek project resumed in mid-May 2021 and continued through the duration of the field season, early October. The AML staff are also working on designs for Phase II of the Cripple Creek pit and are in the planning stage to develop access to future reclamation projects. This includes reestablishing previously constructed but now abandoned mining roads. Construction of a crossing across Coal Creek will also be required and is currently in the planning phase.

(2020) On April 15, 2020 construction of the Cripple Creek bridge began. The project was completed on June 30, 2020 at a total cost of \$955,441.52. In late August, reclamation activities began on Phase I of the Cripple Creek Pit project. Phase I of the project is estimated to cost nearly \$5 million. The project is scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2022.

(2019) In the fall of 2019 the AML Program completed the Vitro Pit Reclamation Project. This project addressed 2,100 linear feet of dangerous highwall while also eliminating severe erosion issues in the Healy Creek area. The total cost of the project was \$5,079,208.64.

The remaining months of 2019 were spent developing designs for a small modular bridge to be installed over Cripple Creek to provide access to the Cripple Creek pit. The AML staff also spent significant time designing reclamation plans for Phase I of the Cripple Creek pit.

(2018) Ongoing reclamation activities on the Vitro Pit Project.

(2017) Hydraulic Pit Reclamation Project was completed in 2017. This project addressed 1,600 feet of dangerous highwalls and erosion issues in the Healy Creek area. In June of 2017 the Vitro Pit reclamation project was started and is currently on-going.

(2016) Three mine openings associated with the Inspiration Mine were closed in September of 2016.

(2016) The AML Program funded an archaeological survey of the Hudson Mill. Demolition was planned for 2019.

(2014) The AML Program demolished the old Healy Creek Washplant and completed backfilling three shafts on Ester Dome known as the Equinox Trail Shafts.

(2012 and 2013) The AML Program constructed two bridges in the Healy Valley area which provide access to previously mined and abandoned areas. These bridges will support at least a decade's worth of reclamation work with future funding that the program expects to receive.

(2011) The AML Program completed reclamation of 20 acres of smoldering coal fines near Sutton by capping the area with a two-foot layer of clay followed by a one-foot layer of gravel. The project also improved two miles of an existing mining road which will provide better access to State land for recreational users.

(2010) The AML Program completed cleanup of five acres of land known as the historic Vitro Camp in the Healy Valley. This work consisted of removing derelict equipment and disposing of asbestos.

(2010) The AML Program placed gravel along on the north and west side of Slipper Lake to improve access to camping areas.

(2009) The AML Program closed two shafts in the Sutton area and placed jersey barriers at the edge of an old highwall to block access to an old strip pit.

(2009) The AML Program completed road improvements to a 1/4 mile of the Jonesville Road near Sutton, established a fire truck turnaround near the fire hydrant at Slipper Lake, and placed gravel on 10 acres near Slipper Lake to improve camping areas and the boat launch.

Line Item Detail

Line Item	Amount
1000 Personal Services	\$500,000.00
2000 Travel	\$35,000.00
3000 Services	\$3,784,000.00
4000 Commodities	\$11,000.00

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5000 Capital Outlay	
7000 Grants	
Total	\$4,330,000.00