

# **2026 Abandoned Mine Land and Abandoned Mine Drainage Grant Program GUIDANCE**

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (BAMR) is authorized through the United States Department of the Interior's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) to administer Pennsylvania's Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Program and issue grants for the purpose of AML reclamation and abandoned mine drainage (AMD) treatment or abatement. Depending upon the nature of the activities described in the grant application, funding from the passage of H.R. 3684 - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization (AMLER), or Title IV of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) may be applied to projects in accordance with Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200 ([2 CFR 200](#)) for the administration, cost principles, and audit requirements of grants awarded through the AML/AMD Grant Program (Program).

## **Application Rounds**

The first application round will open **April 6, 2026, and close at 11:59 p.m. on May 29, 2026**, and a second application round will open **October 5, 2026, and close at 11:59 p.m. on November 30, 2026**.

## **AML/AMD Grant Program Goals**

The goals of the Program include:

- Reclaiming serious human health and safety problems resulting from abandoned coal mines.
- Completing AMD abatement and treatment projects to assist in meeting watershed restoration goals where Hydrologic Unit Plans and Qualified Hydrologic Units have been established.
- Addressing the operation and maintenance needs and/or upgrades of existing AMD treatment systems to avoid the loss of restored stream miles.
- Achieving significant, measurable water quality improvements for watershed restoration.
- Completing AMD projects with alternate or third-party funding available for the operation and maintenance of the facility.

## **Grant Coordinator Contact Information**

The [territory map](#) indicates the counties within a particular coal district. The counties within the Ebensburg area are in the Bituminous District and the counties within the Wilkes-Barre area are primarily in the Anthracite District.

Each District is assigned a Grant Coordinator as follows:

Bituminous District  
Grant Coordinator  
**Heather Agosta**  
814.472.1877  
814.615.8661 (m)  
[hagosta@pa.gov](mailto:hagosta@pa.gov)

Anthracite District  
Grant Coordinator  
**Johnny Green**  
570.830.3134  
570.406.6536 (m)  
[jodgree@pa.gov](mailto:jodgree@pa.gov)

## **Project Eligibility**

Applicants must have a project site and plan in place. The AML/AMD Grant Program cannot be used to assign project sites to or assist applicants in finding project sites. Project sites must be determined eligible by BAMR, in both DEP's and OSMRE's AML inventory systems, and, in most cases, must be associated with a coal mine abandoned prior to August 3, 1977. **Applicants must contact the appropriate Grant Coordinator, referenced above, to determine project eligibility and feasibility in advance of applying for funding through the Program.**

Projects shall focus primarily on reclamation of AML, abatement of AMD through reclamation, and/or treatment of AMD through the construction, operation, and/or maintenance of an AMD treatment facility. **The reclamation of environmental and/or public health and safety problems unrelated to abandoned coal mines will not be considered.**

Projects must directly achieve or develop and/or design a project to achieve, quantifiable reclamation and environmental improvements through accepted and proven practices and theories as determined by DEP. **Projects not achieving quantifiable environmental improvement or are solely economic revitalization or research and development will not be considered.**

### **Initial Project Consultation Requirement**

Coordination with BAMR is required prior to the submission of an application to determine project eligibility and ensure federal and state AML inventory systems are updated, if required. The earlier an applicant begins coordinating with BAMR, the more time BAMR will have to effectively and efficiently determine project eligibility, update eligible inventory features in federal and state AML inventory systems, and work through and resolve any questions or issues the applicant has.

To assist in assuring this requirement, applicants must request an “Initial Project Consultation” (IPC) with BAMR staff at least **45 days** prior to an application round opening. The IPC must be held prior to the grant round opening to be considered eligible for grant award during the application round.

**Round 1** – “Initial Project Consultation” must be requested by February 20, 2026

**Round 2** – “Initial Project Consultation” must be requested by August 21, 2026, but not before May 29, 2026, the last day of the Round 1 application period.

An IPC must be requested by completing the electronic [“Initial Project Consultation”](https://forms.office.com/g/8xewBHV2Tp) request form found at <https://forms.office.com/g/8xewBHV2Tp>. Applicants not meeting this requirement will be deemed ineligible.

Once an IPC request is submitted, the appropriate Grant Coordinator will contact the applicant to complete a Project Data Form and submit documents required to assist in determining applicant and project eligibility. The IPC must be scheduled and held prior to the grant round opening to be considered complete.

Once an IPC is held, applicants will receive an IPC confirmation letter. This letter will list the date of IPC to be used when completing the application.

It is important to note, project sites involving AML reclamation and not listed in federal or state inventory systems may be ineligible for application during the round in which IPC was requested due to the amount of time necessary to effectively determine features, coordinate with OSMRE for field visits, and submit inventory updates.

### **Applicant Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants must be one of the following types of organizations:

- county or municipality
- county conservation district
- council of government
- municipal authority
- other appropriate ***incorporated nonprofit organization*** including the following:

- incorporated watershed association
- entity whose mission is to further the protection, enhancement, conservation, or preservation of Pennsylvania's environmental resources, including foundations, conservancies, environmental associations, and commissions.

Applicants must have met all contractual obligations from prior grants and demonstrated diligence and competency in the administration and use of DEP-disbursed, Commonwealth, or federal funds, including the timely submission of completed reports and reimbursement requests or be a new applicant. A risk assessment will be completed on all applicants.

All applicants must request and participate in an IPC at least 45 days prior to an application round opening, as outlined above, to be considered an eligible applicant.

Applications submitted by ineligible applicants will not be considered.

### **Application Eligibility Requirements**

The following items are addressed on the Program application and applicants must meet all these eligibility requirements (worth 25 points) to move forward in the scoring process:

- **Initial Project Consultation:** An IPC with Program staff is required, as outlined above.
- **AML/AMD Grant Program Guidance:** Review and understand the [AML/AMD Grant Program Guidance](#).
- **Requirements of Federal Award Subrecipients:** Applicant must acknowledge understanding of their requirement to adhere to requirements placed on federal awards.

Applicants awarded funding under the federal AML Program must adhere to all state and federal guidelines. Upon award, applicants must enter into an agreement with DEP as a subrecipient (grantee) of a subaward (grant) as defined in 2 CFR 200.1 and adhere to all [post federal award, procurement, performance and financial monitoring and reporting, audit](#), and other requirements as outlined in [2 CFR 200](#).

- **Project Narrative:** A detailed project narrative must be included with each application and include details pertaining to the how the project meets Program goals and eligibility.
- **Mining Operation Participation and Profits:** The property owner is ineligible for funding if they participated in or profited from mining operations at the project site.
- **Outstanding or Continued Legal Responsibility:** If the applicant faces continued or outstanding legal responsibility under applicable AML or AMD law would deem a project ineligible.
- **Project Permitting and Clearances:** Obtaining the necessary permits (specifically Chapter 102/105) and the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index (PNDI) and State Historical and Preservation Office (SHPO) clearances are an eligibility requirement if applicable. There are instances a lack of permitting would be acceptable but this must be addressed with the Grant Coordinator.
- **AMD Projects:** For projects with an AMD remediation component, water monitoring data and an AMDTreat report must be included in the application to support the claimed watershed improvement.

- **AMD Treatment Projects:** For projects seeking to treat AMD, the costs for treatment technology must be appropriate and cost effective over the life of the treatment system.
- **Costs:** A defined budget must be included in the application. Cost must be well defined and must be broken down to include hourly rates, etc.

Specific to indirect costs, the federal de minimis rate is 15% of the grantee's Modified Total Direct Cost unless the grantee has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). The grantee's direct costs will primarily consist of salaries and fringe benefits, direct materials and supplies, and up to the first \$50,000 of contractual services contract costs. Indirect costs cannot be calculated based upon a percentage of the total grant amount.

- **Property Owner Consent:** A Consent for Right of Entry (Consent) for all property owners affected by the study, design, construction, or operation and maintenance of AML reclamation or AMD treatment facility must be obtained before project work commences. A Consent must be on the appropriate BAMR-approved Consent form. To obtain the BAMR-approved Consent form, contact the appropriate Grant Coordinator listed above.

A letter of project acknowledgement and support will be required from all property owners affected by the development of a project concept or solution involving entry on to private property for project monitoring purposes.

**It is the applicant's responsibility to verify property ownership and other potentially affected property rights.**

#### **Vetting and Authorization to Proceed**

Projects with an economic revitalization component will require vetting issued by OSMRE as a requirement of the AMLER Program.

An Authorization to Proceed (ATP) is required for all projects with a construction aspect. The ATP is issued by OSMRE, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and must be obtained before reclamation (construction) work commences.

#### **Funding**

Depending upon the nature of the activities described in the grant application, funding from the passage of H.R. 3684 - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization (AMLER), or Title IV of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) may be applied to projects in accordance with [2 CFR 200](#).

- **IIJA Eligibility Requirements:** Most projects funded under the Program will be awarded IIJA funding. Applicants must ascertain they are in line with the Program goals and review IIJA eligibility. Please review the *Guidance on IIJA AML Grant Implementation* found at <https://www.osmre.gov/iija>.
- **AMLER Eligibility Requirements:** Applicants seeking AMLER funding must first ascertain Program Goals and Project Eligibility, as noted above, are met and then review AMLER eligibility. Please review the current *Guidance for Project Eligibility Under the AMLER Program* found at <https://www.osmre.gov/programs/reclaiming-abandoned-mine-lands/amlr>.

At least \$88 million is available under the 2026 AML/AMD Grant Program, with at least \$44 million available to award in each of the two Program rounds. The amounts, outlined in the following table, will be the minimum amounts available for each project category in each Program round:

<b>2026 AML/AMD Grant Program</b>	<b>Round 1</b> 4/6/2026– 5/29/2026	<b>Round 2</b> 10/5/2026– 11/30/2026
<b>AML Reclamation Projects</b>	\$15 million	\$15 million
<b>AMD Operation &amp; Maintenance Projects</b> (or replacement of existing AMD facility)	\$5 million	\$5 million
<b>New AMD Treatment Facility Projects</b>	\$10 million	\$10 million
<b>AMLER-Related Projects*</b>	\$14 million	\$14 million

*\*AMLER funding is contingent on the continuation of the AMLER Program in the federal budget.*

Eligible projects may receive funding from more than one funding source if the project contains both AML reclamation and AMD components. AMLER funding is available for both AML and AMD projects, if Program Goals and AMLER project eligibility requirements have been met.

The scoring system allows for statewide ranking of all eligible Program applications for each round. Applications deemed eligible by BAMR will be ranked based upon their application score, risk assessment, and project cost/benefit analysis, as required. Applicants will be awarded a grant based upon their ranking and available funds for the grant round.

### **Provisions of the Grant Program**

Applicants will receive a risk assessment during the scoring process. Applicants deemed moderate to moderate/high risk will only be awarded partial funding and applicants deemed high risk will not be awarded funding.

Proposed AML projects will receive a cost/benefit analysis to ensure the goals of the Program are met. Low to Moderate Benefit projects may receive partial funding or may not be funded.

Per state and federal regulations, payments to grantees shall be made on a reimbursable basis only. Match funding is not required.

The period of performance for each grant agreement will be determined by BAMR and will not exceed three years.

The [Davis Bacon Act](#) and [Build America, Buy America \(BABA\)](#) apply to all awards under the Program.

Applicants may apply for coverage under Pennsylvania's [Environmental Good Samaritan Act](#) for appropriate projects. Environmental Good Samaritan Act applications must be approved and the certificate attached to the application to be considered eligible for points associated with the Environmental Good Samaritan Act.

**Once an application is submitted, coordination with BAMR personnel, specific to the submitted application, will not be permitted until after the application is scored and the grant awards are announced.**

## Project Permitting

BAMR is unable to review, issue, or enforce permits issued under 25 Pa. Code Chapters 102, 105, and/or 106 related to projects that will be funded through a grant agreement. Any questions related to permitting requirements for potential or selected AML/AMD Grant Program project applications should be directed to the appropriate [county conservation district](#) or [DEP regional office](#).

## AMD Project Priorities

Priority will be given to the following types of AMD projects:

- Projects improving water quality through reclamation and/or AMD source abatement not dependent on a treatment system and does not result in unmanaged stream improvements. The selection of managed stream improvement and restoration projects depending on a treatment system will be prioritized based upon DEP's 2016 [AMD Set-Aside Program Implementation Guidelines](#).
- Projects providing measurable benefits, utilizing appropriate treatment technology selection, and assuring long-term (approximately 25 years) operation and maintenance of the treatment facility will be prioritized.
- Projects demonstrating long-term operation and maintenance funding has been secured. The applicant must include a disclosure of the amount of third-party operation and maintenance funding and the modeling used to support the funding claim with their application.

An AMDTreat program report or properly performed loading analysis demonstrating the watershed improvement must be included for all AMD projects. At least one year of water monitoring must be included with the analysis.

Proposed passive treatment systems treating net acidic discharges that fall under the "high risk" category in *Table 1 - Risk Analysis Matrix for Category (4) Passive Treatment Systems* must provide a description assuring long-term operation and maintenance. Applications for "high risk" passive treatment systems are acceptable if a schedule, reasonable assurance of monitoring and maintenance, and party responsible for continued operation and maintenance costs are identified.

Table 1 – Risk Analysis Matrix for Category 4 Passive Treatment Systems

Risk Analysis Matrix				
Summation of Fe and Al Concentration	Design Flow Rate for each treatment cell			
	< 25 gpm	≥ 25 < 50 gpm	≥ 50 < 100 gpm	≥ 100 < 200 gpm
< 5 mg/L	Low	Low	Low	Low
≥ 5 but < 15 mg/L	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
≥ 15 < 25 mg/L	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
≥ 25 < 50 mg/L	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
≥ 50 mg/L	High*	High*	High	High
Summation of Fe and Al Concentration	Design Flow Rate for each treatment cell			
	≥ 200 < 400 gpm	≥ 400 < 800 gpm	≥ 800 < 1600 gpm	≥ 1600 gpm
< 5 mg/L	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
≥ 5 but < 15 mg/L	Medium	High	High	High
≥ 15 < 25 mg/L	High	High	High	High
≥ 25 < 50 mg/L	High	High	High	High
≥ 50 mg/L	High	High	High	High
<p>* Systems in consideration for discharges in these two categories will drop to "Medium" risk if the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A thorough analysis of the proposed system determines that the design addresses plugging and short-circuiting concerns</li> <li>• An O&amp;M plan is developed that details added attention to O&amp;M (including identification of personnel who will provide O&amp;M, and identification of responsibilities) to address plugging and short-circuiting concerns and sludge management</li> <li>• Total treatment system costs are &lt;\$400,000 OR the Applicant indicates in writing that they will purchase a performance bond for an amount at least equal to the Engineer's cost estimate for construction and will maintain said bond for a period of no less than five (5) years from the date the system is placed into service. The level of performance guaranteed by the bond will be the design standard, which is what will be rated/considered during the evaluation.</li> </ul>				



**Applications noting an inappropriate AMD treatment technology, a treatment technology determined most likely to be unsuccessful based upon DEP expertise and experience, will not be considered.**

**How to Apply**

The application document and attachments must be completed and uploaded into the Commonwealth's electronic [Single Application for Assistance \(ESA\)](#) system by the application deadline for each round.

For assistance with the electronic application system please contact the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's Customer Service Center by email at [ra-dcedcs@pa.gov](mailto:ra-dcedcs@pa.gov) or by phone at 1.800.379.7448.

An example of a Program application is attached in the appendix.