

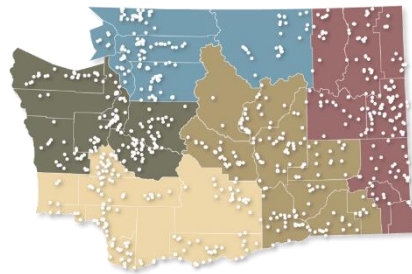


HB 1647 | SB 5319

Surface Mine Reclamation Permit Fees

The Surface Mining Act and Reclamation of Mined Lands

Across Washington State, more than 850 permitted surface mines produce rock, sand, and gravel to support Washington's economy and build and maintain its infrastructure. The Legislature recognized the importance of surface mining to the State's economy through the Surface Mining Act (RCW 78.44 and WAC 332-18). The law requires comprehensive regulation and thorough reclamation of mined lands to help prevent or mitigate conditions that would be detrimental to the environment and to protect the general welfare, health, safety, and property rights of Washingtonians.



Returning Mined Lands to Productive, Secondary Use

Through its administration of the Surface Mining Act, DNR regulates the reclamation of surface mined lands across Washington state. The purpose of this is to provide that the usefulness, productivity, and scenic values of all lands and waters involved in surface mining within the state will receive the greatest practical degree of protection and reclamation at the earliest opportunity following completion of surface mining

Reclamation Permit Fee Increase Proposal

The DNR Surface Mine Reclamation Program (SMRP) is an entirely fee-funded regulatory program. The fee structure is described in RCW 78.44.085. The current fee structure was established by the Legislature in 2017 with strong bipartisan support, and fees have not increased since. In order for DNR to continue administering the Surface Mining Act, permit fees must be adjusted to current economic conditions. With the new fee structure as described below, SMRP is projected to be funded for the next 7-10 years.

Annual Permit Fee Adjustment

DNR proposes to increase the annual permit fee for private and public mines to align permit fees to the cost of doing business. Flat fees for private and public mines will increase from \$2,000 to \$3,500, with an exception for public agencies with mines used for public works projects. DNR proposes to increase annual permit fees for public mines used for public works projects to a flat fee of \$2,500.

Permit Application Fee Standardization

SMRP processes applications for new surface mine reclamation permits, revisions to existing permits and reclamation plans, expansions of existing permits, and combining existing permits. Under the current fee structure, application fees for revisions are \$2,500, while all other application fees are \$4,500. Applications for permit revisions require as much or more time for review, analysis, and processing. As such, DNR proposes to standardize all permit application fees to \$4,500.

