

(F) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

[(f)] (G) "Land" means the surface of the land upon which surface mining is conducted.

[(g)] (H) "Landowner" means a person who possesses legal title to the land.

[(h)] (I) "Minerals" means any solid material, aggregate, or substance of commercial value, whether consolidated or loose, found in natural deposits on or in the earth, including clay, diatomaceous earth, gravel, marl, metallic ores, sand, shell, soil, and stone. The term does not include coal.

[(i)] (J) "Mining and reclamation plan" means the operator's written proposal as required and approved by the Department for the conduct of mining and the reclamation of the affected land.

[(j)] (K) "Neighboring" means in close proximity or in the immediate vicinity, but not in actual contact.

[(k)] (L) "Operation" means the pit located upon a single tract of land or a continuous pit embracing or extending upon two or more contiguous tracts of land.

[(l)] (M) "Operator" means a person engaged in surface mining as a principal, as distinguished from an agent or independent contractor who owns the minerals as a result of the mining.

[(m)] (N) "Overburden" means the strata or material overlying a mineral deposit, or in between mineral deposits in its natural state, and before its removal by surface mining.

[(n)] (O) "Person" means an individual, receiver, trustee, guardian, executor, administrator, fiduciary, or representative of any kind, or any partnership, firm, association, public or private corporation, or any other entity.

[(o)] (P) "Pit" means the place any minerals are being mined by the surface mining method.

[(p)] (Q) "Pre-law surface mine" means a noncoal surface mine which was mined prior to issuance of a permit under this subtitle.

[(q)] (R) "Reclamation" means the reasonable rehabilitation of the affected land for useful purposes and the protection of the natural resources of the surrounding area including ponds.

[(r)] (S) "Refuse" means all waste soil, rock, mineral, scrap, tailings, slimes, and other materials