



# 2025 Checklist for Applications & Grading Rubric

## NSSGA Environmental Excellence Award

### About this document

This document provides NSSGA members with overall guidelines for completing the Environmental Excellence Award application. Below are the eleven application questions along with suggested materials, examples and content that may be included to maximize the value of each answer. When completing this application, please do so based on an individual operation's efforts in the calendar year prior to the application (answers should pertain to events and initiatives that occurred from January to December). Each question should be answered to the best of the applicant's ability. Answers can be submitted directly into the text box or attached with a branded pdf document or slide. Proper sentences, grammar and spelling should be used to answer each question. The judges for the Environmental Excellence Awards will also use this checklist to aid in scoring the applications.

### Question 1: Carbon Footprint

**What has this facility done to decrease its carbon footprint in the last 5 years?** Please use bullet points and upload supporting documents or files.

✓ *Only include documents unique to your quarry/facility. Attachments should be labeled clearly by project.*

### Question 2: Recycling

**Are there any SPECIAL or UNIQUE RECYCLING projects/initiatives this facility does?** Please describe (in 3,500 characters or less) how the facility went above and beyond industry standards and mandatory recycling processes in 2024. Provide specific examples of how you found ways to reuse, repurpose, and recycle.

✓ *Applicants should only include efforts that are beyond standard practice.*

✓ *Please include any relevant data, statistics, or media related to the question.*

### Question 3: Natural Resources

**Are there any other SPECIAL or UNIQUE PROJECTS NATURAL RESOURCES (e.g., air or water) projects/initiatives (beyond compliance) this facility does?** Please use bullet points and upload supporting documents or files.

✓ *The answer should include specific details, including the number of projects, hours/time involved, and resources contributed.*

✓ *Ensure all attachments are unique to your quarry/facility.*

### PLEASE NOTE BEFORE APPLYING:

Sites that have won Gold and/or Platinum awards in the past five years are ineligible to apply for an Environmental Excellence Award. Such facilities are again eligible once the five-year period following the presentation of their Gold/Platinum award has been completed.

Before starting, ensure that you have your MSHA ID & all relevant quarry information on hand.

### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

The described efforts should include planning, implementation, and results.

### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

The answer should specify the differences made by your efforts. Detail your practices and just how effective they have proven to be.

### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

Projects should only be those that go beyond mandatory/standard practices.

#### Question 4: Biodiversity

Does your operation have a biodiversity management plan?

- ✓ *Include any documents showcasing your current biodiversity plan and the implementation.*

#### Question 5: Land/Species

Has this site engaged in activities with a focus on any category from the drop-down menu?

Land:

- Wetlands
- Land remediation
- Marine/intertidal zones
- Land conservation agreements
- Grasslands
- Forests
- Deserts

Species:

- Reptiles and amphibians
- Pollinators
- Mammals
- Bats
- Birds
- Other

- ✓ *Ensure all attachments are unique to your quarry/facility. Attachments should be labeled.*

#### Question 6: Project Goals

For each category checked in Question 5, in 250 words or less describe the activity.

A) Give a high-level overview of the project. Include:

- Project goals
- How long the project has been on the ground
- Partners
- How it is managed
- how it is monitored.

B) What measurable impacts have there been?

- ✓ *Ensure all attachments are unique to your quarry/facility. Attachments should be labeled.*

#### Question 7: Reclamation

What is the reclamation plan for this quarry (planned or concurrent)?

- ✓ *Include any materials detailing reclamation plans. Label all attachments.*

#### Question 8: Engage Staff

What has this facility done to engage staff in sustainability efforts (e.g., staff took a sustainability class, staff gained new certification, brought in outside speaker for staff on sustainability, etc.)?

- ✓ *Attach any curriculums provided, specific certificates completed, or other internal communications to engage staff on sustainable efforts.*

#### Question 9: Sustainability Education

What has this facility done to engage in sustainability education for the community?

- ✓ *Attach any educational materials used, programs participated in, or other contributions to sustainable education in your community.*

#### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

Attach a detailed plan for biodiversity management at your specific facility/quarry

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Attach any official reclamations plans related to this specific quarry. The more detailed the better.

#### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

Provide examples of internal communications related to sustainability initiatives. Provide details on incentives, educational tools, and efforts to engage staff.

#### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

Provide detailed examples of educational outreach done by this specific facility.

### **Question 10: Sustainability Awards**

Has the quarry received any sustainability awards, certifications, etc. in the last 5 years?

✓ *Please attach any relevant awards, certificates, and photos.*

### **Question 11: Special Projects**

Are there any other SPECIAL or UNIQUE PROJECTS/INITIATIVES this facility does (beyond compliance) that you have not yet shared?

✓ *Include any relevant documentation/media.*

#### **TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:**

Please be sure to list all awards received in the past five years.

#### **TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:**

Please be sure to list any relevant information not already included elsewhere in this application.