



# 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 twelve 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/Energy Efficiencies

What has this facility done to decrease its carbon footprint and/or energy demand in the last 5 years? Please use bullet points and upload supporting documents or files. Measurable improvements and performance metrics are encouraged.

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

#### 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.

### 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.

#### 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.

### 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.

#### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

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

- ✓ 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.

## Question 4: Biodiversity

Does your operation have a biodiversity management plan?

✓ *Include any documents showcasing your current biodiversity plan and the implementation. Describe the scope and achievements of your plan.*

### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

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

## 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.*

### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

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

## 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.*

### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

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

## Question 7: Reclamation

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

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

### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

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

## Question 8: Renewable Energy

What has this facility done to implement renewable energy solutions as part of the production process (can include on-site renewable projects, biofuels usage, Renewable Energy Credits purchases, etc.)?

✓ *Attach any materials detailing renewable energy solutions.*

### TO RECEIVE A TOP SCORE:

Provide details and attachments describing the renewable efforts of the facility. Firm quantitative numbers and historical comparisons to show improvements are encouraged.

## Question 9: 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 complete, or other internal communications to engage staff on sustainable efforts.*

### 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.

## Question 10: 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.*

## Question 11: 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 12: 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:

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

### 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.