

U.S. EPA's Hardrock Mining Framework

Purpose of Hardrock Mining Framework

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Hardrock Mining Framework is designed to help EPA implement a multi-media, multi-statute approach to dealing with the environmental concerns posed by hardrock mining. Although the Framework focuses on understanding and improving the use of existing EPA authorities it does so with a clear recognition of the role of other parties. Building effective working relationships with other mining stakeholders is a key element of the EPA's efforts to improve the effectiveness of its own programs.

Goals of the Framework

- **Environmental Protection** - to protect human health and the environment through appropriate and timely pollution prevention, control and remediation. This goal will apply at proposed, active and abandoned mine and mill sites on both Federal and non-Federally-managed lands, consistent with Agency statutory authorities.
- **Administrative Efficiency** - use available resources and authorities on the highest priority concerns, using a multi-media/multi-statute geographic approach and working closely with other Federal, State, Tribal and local stakeholders.
- **Fiscal Responsibility** - promote cost-effective environmental controls at existing facilities as well as historic mining sites and minimize both current and future costs incurred by the public at all mining sites.

Guide to the Framework

The Framework is divided into two parts. The first section (Chapters 1-5) provides a brief problem statement and then focuses on how EPA can improve its mining program. The second section is a set of Appendices that contain a more thorough discussion of specific issues to provide greater context for the Framework's recommendations.

Hardrock Mining Framework

[USEPA's Hardrock Mining Framework \(Chapters 1-5\)](#)
[Appendix A: Mining Industry Profile](#)
[Appendix B: Potential Environmental Impacts of Hardrock Mining](#)
[Appendix C: Regulatory and Non-Regulatory Tools](#)
[Appendix D: Other Federal Regulatory Tools](#)
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[Summary of Comments on the April 1996 Draft and EPA's Responses](#)