



Locatable Minerals

Application Overview

Natural Resource Manager's (NRM) Locatable Minerals application manages information about locatable minerals (e.g., gold, silver, copper, lead) and mining operations on our National Forests. The application supports the Agency's compliance with the Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR 228 Subpart A – Locatable Minerals) and the Forest Service Manual 2800 – Minerals and Geology. It also helps the Agency meet its policy to foster and encourage mineral development on National Forest System lands in an ecologically sound manner.

Key Features

- Securely stores information with limited access to assigned users (e.g., Bonding, Plans of Operation, Notices of Intent, Inspections, Unauthorized Operations)
- Tracks the status of on-the-ground mineral extraction and reclamation activities
- Allows for efficient and accurate reporting on locatable minerals to the Agency, Department, and Congress

Agency Benefits

- Maintains data on reclamation bonds which financially guarantees Forest Service lands will be restored to pre-mining conditions
- Provides continuity on locatable minerals management through program staff transitions
- Helps Forest staff quickly identify needed work (e.g., inspections) and prioritize efforts for field season



Case Study

Mining Plans of Operations require reclamation bonds to financially guarantee that Forest Service lands will be restored to or near-to pre-mining conditions.

In 2017, the NRM Locatable Minerals application was critical in helping the Forest Service assess the status of reclamation bonds for roughly 600 locatable-mineral operations during a review of the Agency's bonding policy by the Forest Service Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The application compiled data from all acceptable bonding mechanisms—cash, certificates of deposit, surety, and letters of credit—and identified the current value of bonds to the Agency.

The application also helped the Agency review its compliance with regulations, and it highlighted deficiencies with existing Agency processes. Staff used this information to develop recommendations for improving Forest Service's tracking of bonds into the future.

"The Locatable Minerals application proved instrumental in supporting the CFO review. I was able to generate Forest Service-wide detailed bonding reports which will serve as a baseline for new and existing reclamations bonds. This will help the Agency ensure Forest Service lands will be reclaimed properly."

Chad Hood
Locatables Database Program Manager