

Abandoned mineral lands

By Linda Dansby

Abandoned mineral lands (AMLs) are lands, waters, and surrounding watersheds that contain facilities, structures, improvements, and disturbances associated with past mineral exploration; extraction; processing; and transportation, including oil and gas features and operations, for which the National Park Service takes action under various authorities. During 2010–2013 the National Park Service completed a comprehensive inventory of AMLs that identified 37,050 individual abandoned mine and oil and gas well features in 133 national park units. Of these, 1,799 features (4.9%) already have received long-term remedial action to address human health and safety and environmental problems, and 3,814 features (10.3%) in 76 parks still need remedial action. The remaining 31,437 features were recorded for purposes of general site characterization, but these require no action. The National Park Service estimates that \$141 million will be required to address this need over the course of 12 years beginning in 2016. The results of this study are summarized in the September 2014 report published online at <http://nature.nps.gov/geology/aml/publications.cfm>.