WASTE TO PLACE

A New Model for Reclamation in the American West

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**Acknowledgments**

**THE TIFFANY & CO. FOUNDATION**

Established in 2000, The Tiffany & Co. Foundation awards grants to nonprofit organizations working in the arts and the environment. Within its responsible mining program, the Foundation supports models of reclamation and restoration work throughout the world that bring together local communities, government, business and civil society in an effort to reclaim and remediate land on which mining has occurred. Tens of thousands of legacy mining sites are scattered throughout the world and this design project provides valuable and accessible guidance to communities ready to proceed with creative post-mine reclamation. The Tiffany & Co. Foundation is pleased to support both this publication and the creation of a new web portal as guides for abandoned mine reclamation in the American West and beyond.

*Further information on The Tiffany & Co. Foundation can be found at: [www.tiffanyandcofoundation.org](http://www.tiffanyandcofoundation.org)*

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*Further information on reclamation projects can be found at the associated web portal: [www.waste2place.com](http://www.waste2place.com)*

**Purposes**

**Booklet One**
To visually introduce the scales and types of abandoned mining sites across the United States, measure their unique landscape qualities, and describe the processes of mine reclamation to the general public. A brief background and history section details the efforts to reclaim mining sites along French Gulch in Breckeridge, Colorado and transform the area into a sustainable new neighborhood.

**Booklet Two**
To provide the Wellington Neighborhood, the Town of Breckenridge, Colorado and Summit County, Colorado with a visioning tool for integrating open space and landscape design in new development on former mining areas; second, to use this project as a case study, for application on any landscape revitalization project on former mining sites whereby ecological design and planning can be more effectively integrated with remediation and environmental cleanup activities.
“I have very large ideas of the mineral wealth of our Nation. I believe it practically inexhaustible. It abounds all over the western country, from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific, and its development has scarcely commenced…. and we shall prove in a very few years that we are indeed the treasury of the world.”

-ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1865
16th President of the United States
Visual Primer

Issues and Contradictions of Abandoned Mines

The following section of photographs and mappings is a visual primer for the reader. It is meant to reveal the sublime beauty and contrasting contexts in which mining takes place, while exposing some of the underlying, conflicting values and tradeoffs that accompany highly disturbed landscapes with abandoned mines. These values and tradeoffs are explored through a series of overlapping images and quantitative analyses meant to illuminate some of the concerns that must be considered when reclaiming mined landscapes.

To this day, mining occurs in big and small scales all over the United States. America extracts minerals for energy (coal), industrial and commercial uses (hardrock and metals), and construction (sand and aggregate) and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Ignoring the impact of mining, as we have done in the past by abandoning mine sites, is not an option if healthy ecosystems and sustainable post-mining land uses are collective national goals. These images represent a small sampling of sites in desperate need of creative solutions to solve myriad problems leftover from previous mines; they also inform future generations about the need to act to clean these sites and prevent the creation of new ones.
Inactive Mining Geography of the Western U.S.

167,000+ Inactive Mining Sites in the western U.S.

72,000+ Abandoned Mine Land Fund reclamation sites

47,200+ Inactive Mining Sites <10 miles from urban areas

1/2 mile
Average distance between Inactive Mining Sites


Top:
Trapper Coal Mine, Colorado

Bottom:
Breckenridge, Colorado

Top:
Acid mine drainage in Colorado

Bottom:
Treeless dredged valleys in French Gulch, Breckenridge, Colorado