# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# director of the office of surface mining, Department of the interior

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| **OVERVIEW** | |
| Senate Committee | Energy and Natural Resources |
| Agency Mission | The Department of the Interior protects and manages the nation’s natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives and affiliated island communities. |
| Position Overview | The director of the Office of Surface Mining is responsible for carrying out the requirements of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act, protecting people and the environment from the adverse effects of coal mining, and mitigating the effects of past operations by reclamation of abandoned coal mines. |
| Compensation | Level V $145,700 (5 U.S.C. § 5316)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management[[2]](#endnote-2) |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** | |
| Management Scope | In fiscal 2015, the Office of Surface Mining had $116 million in budget outlays and 294 employees.[[3]](#endnote-3) Employee numbers for the office have been declining for several years. |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Oversees and assists state mining regulatory and abandoned-mine reclamation programs; regulates mining and reclamation activities on federal and Indian lands, and in those states opting not to assume primary responsibility for regulating coal mining and reclamation activities * Establishes national policy for the surface mining control and reclamation program; reviews and approves amendments to previously approved state programs; and reviews and recommends approval of new state program submissions * Manages the collection, disbursement and accounting of abandoned-mine land reclamation fees; administers civil penalties programs; establishes technical standards and regulatory policy for reclamation and enforcement; and monitors and evaluates state and tribal regulatory programs, cooperative agreements and abandoned-mine land reclamation programs[[4]](#endnote-4) |
| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** | |
| Requirements | * Established subject matter expert * Prior government experience, either from Capitol Hill or a similar state function (helpful) * Prior agency experience (a plus) |
| Competencies | * Strong communication and interpersonal skills * Good leadership skills |
| **PAST APPOINTEES** | |
| Joseph G. Pizarchik (2009 to 2017): Director of the Bureau of Mining and Reclamation, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection; Assistant Director, Bureau of Regulatory Counsel, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection; Legal Counsel, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation[[5]](#endnote-5) | |
| Brent T. Wahlquist (2007 to 2009): Regional Director, Appalachian Region; Regional Director, Denver, Colorado, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement; Regional Director, Mid-Continent Region, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement [[6]](#endnote-6) | |
| Jeffrey D. Jarrett (2002 to 2006): Deputy Secretary, Mineral Resources Management, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection; Deputy Assistant Director, Regional Office in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement; Director, Bureau of District Mining Operations, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection[[7]](#endnote-7) | |

1. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31, May 5, 2017), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials at 2013 levels during calendar year 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.doi.gov/whoweare/orgchart [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Leadership Directories: https://lo.bvdep.com/OrgDocument.asp?OrgId=-1&LDIBookId=19&LDIOrgId=153483&LDISecId=180&FromRecent=0&Save=1&Position=-1#O153483 [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. OPM [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. http://www.emlf.org/clientuploads/past\_events/Past%20Events/1-Bios.Winters.2011.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. http://www.allgov.com/officials/wahlquist-brent?officialid=28535 [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/archive/news/archive/05\_News\_Releases/050901b.htm [↑](#endnote-ref-7)