



**Land Reclamation Division  
Operator Memorandum No. 2023-03 (Revised)**

To: All Coal Operators

From: Daniel W. Barkley, Supervisor  
Land Reclamation Division

Date: July 3, 2024

Re: Agricultural Land Productivity Formula (ALPF) and Visual Testing Requests  
This memorandum replaces Operator Memoranda Nos. 2019-02 and 2019-02 (Revised)

The Department has updated the “SCML-8 Productivity Request Form” used to request annual field testing under the Agricultural Land Productivity Formula (ALPF). The form has been updated to eliminate unnecessary information, and now has two tabs, the first tab (SCML-8 form) is specific to fields that are greater than four (4) acres, and the second tab (SCML-8V form) is specific to fields that are less than or equal to four (4) acres. In accordance with 62 Ill. Adm. Code 1816/1817.116(a)(3)(F), fields submitted on the SCML-8V form are eligible to be visually tested to ensure the area supports the approved post-mining land use and exhibits the same productivity as surrounding non-mined areas.

The SCML-8 and SCML-8V forms can be found on the Department’s website under Miscellaneous Permittee/Operator Forms:

<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/mines/LRD/Pages/FormsApplicationsMemoranda.aspx>

**SUBMITTAL GUIDANCE**

The SCML-8 and SCML-8V forms include all information required pursuant to 62 Ill. Adm. Code 1816.116(a)(4). All ALPF testing request submittals, including maps, are required to be submitted in the electronic format specified in LRD Operator Memorandum No. 2018-02 (Revised), only the most current version of the forms will be accepted. Please note the following:

1. The **SCML-8** form is to be used for all cropland and pasture fields that are **greater than** four (4) acres in size.

2. The **SCML-8V** form is to be used for all crop and pasture fields that are **less than** or equal to four (4) acres in size.
3. All post-mining land use pasture fields, regardless of the acreage, that are located over covered refuse (e.g., above-grade refuse disposal facilities and incised slurry cells) shall be submitted for testing on the Department's SCML-5 form and are also eligible for a visual test.
4. Visual testing for all crops (corn, beans, wheat, and hay) and pasture fields will be conducted by Department soils and/or bonding staff.
5. Productivity for all fields and crops submitted on the SCML-8 form will be tested by USDA enumerators in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA).

#### PIPELINE CORRIDOR TESTING GUIDANCE

Due to the significant number of narrow corridors for pipelines that typically pass through multiple landowners and multiple soil capabilities, the Department requests that operators or consultants contact the Division Soil Scientist or Bond Unit Manager for guidance prior to defining field boundaries for revegetation reports and prior to initiating testing requests using the SCML-8V form.

Department policy allows an operator to submit an SCML-4 Revegetation Report form and begin the applicable revegetation responsibility period, including crop or pasture visual testing, one (1) year after the pipeline has been installed and soil and vegetation have been replaced in accordance with the approved plan. Where a break or leak occurs in the pipeline that requires soil excavation or soil augmentation, the Department will re-start the revegetation responsibility period, and visual testing will re-start. Although the responsibility period may begin one year after soil and vegetation replacement, bond shall not be released on these areas until the pipeline is non-functional (e.g., no fluids are pumped through the pipe, the line is disconnected from the trunk line, and the extraction well that ties into a given line is permanently taken out of service).

You are reminded to submit all requests for testing, including maps, to the Department in the required electronic format by February 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. In addition, two hard copies of the SCML-8 requests and maps are to be submitted to the IDOA. **Please do not submit SCML-8V or SCML-5 forms, in any format, to the IDOA, to do so may result in delays in visual testing.**

**Should you wish to add or remove fields from testing or change the requested crop, those updates are due to the Department by July 15<sup>th</sup> of each year.**

Please note that changes to hay or wheat fields should be submitted as early as possible to ensure that the wheat harvest and the first hay cutting are not missed.

**Additionally, the Department policy is to assign “fails” to fields that are requested for testing that are not subsequently planted and “fails” for fields that are planted to a different crop than what is listed on the SCML-8 or SCML-8V forms** (e.g., a field that is requested for corn testing but is planted in beans will result in a “fail” for the evaluation year).

Finally, requests to use the ALPF Alternative Formula are subject to the provisions outlined in LRD Operator Memorandum No. 2006-01.

Should you have any questions regarding the testing program, or this memorandum, please contact the Division Soil Scientist or Bond Unit Manager.