



SPECIAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES



Photo by Jana K. Felt

INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

12 possible points NOT included in Project Total of 100 Points.

Special credit opportunities are envisioned to go beyond LEED and GY-Framework requirements and to address specific regional issues. Since the time of Native American migrations through development of permanent settlements, the creative contributions of individuals and projects to the region have been invaluable resources for today and the future. Encouragement and recognition of these contributions has been noted and can continue for future generations. This credit category recognizes "Other Innovations" that are specific to the project but replicable by other projects, sharing of lessons learned, and sustainable leadership in the region that has not been addressed in this document.

This credit category also recognizes the challenges and opportunities in two of the region's primary economic drivers, agriculture and extraction industries. Many of the practices of early pioneers teach sustainable strategies and techniques that preserve the land for future harvests. Many of these have been lost, overcome by technology advancements. Some new methods greatly improve environment over previous practices. The GY-Framework was developed to support cultivation of productive farm and ranch lands that are managed in concert with the ecosystem processes and that contribute to the stability of rural families and communities. Sustainable farms and ranches who take a holistic approach to lessening negative environmental impacts can be recognized for their achievements in this category.

Addressing site issues is an every day challenge for extraction industries, particularly since the region's ecosystem is so fragile and its protection is essential to the future of the region. Best practices and beyond are encouraged through this credit category for extraction projects that are able to demonstrate leadership during operations and upon closure of the site.

Throughout the GY-Framework, use of LEED as a design and rating tool is strongly encouraged. For those projects that invest in the rigor and leadership needed to third-party certify regional projects, this credit category recognizes exceptional LEED performance.

SCO CREDIT 1: EXCEPTIONAL LEED PERFORMANCE

1 - 3 POINTS

INTENT

To demonstrate exceptional green building leadership.

REQUIREMENTS

Certify a large percentage of habited buildings in the applicable Leadership In Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program at the Gold or Platinum level.

LEED Certification - Exceptional Performance		
	Gold	Platinum
50% of habited built area	1 point	2 points
At least 80% of habited built area	2 points	3 points



SCO CREDIT 2: SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

3 POINTS

INTENT

To support cultivation of productive farm and ranch lands that are managed in concert with ecosystem processes and that contribute to the stability of rural families and communities.

REQUIREMENTS

Manage farm and ranch land under one or more government, nonprofit, or cooperative program that follow the basic tenets of holistic or sustainable resource management. Credits will be awarded based on the extent to which agricultural practices:

- Build biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem functioning
- Enhance production and farm/ranch profitability
- Contribute to the quality of life of rural communities

Up to three points can be acquired as follows:

Participate in at least one of NRCS's (Natural Resources Conservation Service) reserve, watershed or stewardship programs. (1 point)

AND/OR

Achieve and maintain certification in Holistic Resource Management or an equivalent operator program that advances sustainable agriculture. (1 point)

AND/OR

Achieve certification in organic or natural food program or operate within a grower's cooperative (such as Country Natural Beef) that emphasizes sustainable practices. (1 point)

SCO CREDIT 3: SITE DEVELOPMENT FOR EXTRACTION PROJECTS

3 POINTS (ALL THREE PLANS MUST BE COMPLETED)

INTENT

To reduce the impacts of mining and energy resource operations during and following operations.

REQUIREMENTS

Extraction projects undergo two major phases: operation and closure. For GY-Framework certification, exploration and development activities will be considered part of operations. The emphasis is on operations, because closure activities tend to be well-regulated, assuming planning and enforcement are adequate. All extraction operations must "plan for closure" from the outset, to make sure that the economics of the project justify true closure costs.

1. Operations Plan. Extraction operations should institute a "Good Neighbor" policy beginning at the initial planning stages, by instituting an advisory council comprising representatives of their neighbors and other interest groups. Regular meetings should be held to allow neighbors to address complaints and concerns.

Visual impacts should be minimized by implementing the following:

- Interim reclamation ("bottom up"), whereby mine waste repositories are reclaimed as they are placed, rather than when completed
- Landscape architecture involvement during planning and operations

- Construction of berms
- Closure and reclamation of roads on a planned basis, as soon as possible in the extraction process
- Building exteriors that avoid typical industrial appearance and are more consistent with local construction
- Construction of excavations and repositories with irregular profiles designed to mimic surrounding natural slopes or cliffs. In some cases, coloring may be necessary to allow mine cuts and fills to more readily blend into the landscape
- If timber removal is required, it should mimic natural patterns of forest and open land to the extent possible

2. Stewardship Plan:

Extraction operations should practice good stewardship by:

- Reclamation of damage created by previous operations, whether or not the current operator has the direct responsibility
- Careful control of noxious weeds, including systematic removal of seeds from vehicle tires entering the site
- Use of alternative fuels and energy sources
- Recycling engine oil and other consumables

Water handling improvements should include the following:

- Diversions should preserve to the extent possible; channel pattern, sediment yield, and hydraulics
- Open cuts and sedimentation basins should be constructed to perform as wetlands and wildlife habitat during operations
- Dewatering discharges must be managed to avoid alteration of natural channel hydraulics that result in instability. Water quality of streams should not be degraded. Although existing regulations address limits to degradation, this requirement calls for a higher standard (total non-degradation). Professionals should be involved in planning and implementation
- Springs and ground water supplies must be protected. The operation should have the opportunity to provide approved temporary replacement sources

3. Closure Plan: Reclamation activities in most cases are addressed by existing regulations. A few possible exceptions are noted below. Others may present themselves depending upon local conditions.

- No approved project shall require long-term water treatment following closure
- No approved project shall leave soils permanently degraded from land application of produced water
- Reconstructed pre-mining drainages and waterways shall mimic local channel patterns and hydraulics



SCO CREDIT 4: OTHER INNOVATIONS

1 - 3 POINTS

INTENT

To recognize remarkable innovations and encourage exceptional performance in and beyond the scope of the GY-Framework rating system.

REQUIREMENTS

Submit in writing the details of the exceptional performance on any GY-Framework Prerequisite or Credit, and the innovative steps taken to be considered.

LEED innovation credits can be submitted for consideration in this category.