

## **HOOKER CREEK WINS TOP AWARD FOR BEST LAND RECLAMATION PROJECT IN OREGON**

On June 26, The Oregon Concrete & Aggregate Producers Association (OCAPA) held its annual convention at Eagle Crest Resort here in Central Oregon. The Oregon Department of Geology & Mining Industries (DOGAMI) used that venue to distribute its annual announce the winners of their Mined Land Reclamation Awards, and for the second time since Hooker Creek was formed as a company (in 1993) we were honored with the Oregon's top award for the best land reclamation project!

The award winning location is nine miles Northeast of Redmond in Crook County. The Alves site (previously former Governor Tom McCall's Ranch) was permitted in March 1999 for a one-time extraction project. Between then and late 2000 Hooker Creek mined approximately 30 acres were mined. Reclamation was completed in late 2000.

The Alves site was a twenty-five foot high bench whose slope prevented the landowner from farming this parcel. Our mining effort was structured so a previously useless parcel became a very useful and productive piece of farmland. Simultaneously we mined nearly 1,000,000 tons of sand and gravel that were used in the local market making this project ideal for both the landowner and Hooker Creek!

As regulations become stricter and resources less available, the mining industry must look towards non-traditional aggregate sources to fulfill the growing demand for processed aggregates. One of those non-traditional sources is productive and non-productive agricultural lands. Hooker Creek has invested strong, continuous efforts in developing relations with local farming neighbors, and now has completed several successful mining projects on farmlands. As the agricultural community sees that it is possible to strike a balance between preserving the productivity of the land and extracting the resources below more opportunities for both will begin to open up for both industries.

### **UNIQUE APPROACH**

The top 10 feet (approx.) of top soil was carefully salvaged and set aside. The sand and gravel was then extracted. At the pre-determined elevation mining stopped and the contouring was completed. Once the final grade was accomplished the on-site soil was supplemented with imported material and replaced. The farmer planted the ground using standard farming practices. This site has been returned to agricultural production.

Hooker Creek has been recognized for our efforts to bridge the long standing mistrust between miners and farmers by successfully mining once unproductive lands and reclaiming them into productive fields.

“What we are mostly looking for is sites that perform mining work above and beyond state requirements and use innovative techniques”, said Gary Lynch – Deputy Director of DOGAMI. “What we were really impressed with was the cooperation between the aggregate & agricultural communities & Hooker Creeks efforts in working through the permitting process (both county & state). When Hooker Creek was finished mining, the landowner ended up with about two additional acres on farmable property from what was available on the original land.