

2015 Outstanding Stewards of America's Waters Awards

Applicant's Guide



Technology – Environment – Education – Social
Entries due 12/19/2014

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Background

Hydropower's proven track record of providing a domestic source of clean, renewable, and reliable electricity for more than 125 years is no accident. It has taken hard work, perseverance, creativity, innovation, and a collaborative spirit. Today, these same values are also driving a new generation of hydropower projects that harness the power of oceans, tides, man-made conduits and other waterways, in addition to rivers. Hydropower, defined as deriving power from any source of moving water, is an integral part of America's energy future.

Application Eligibility

- Specific projects, programs, activities or events (**collectively referred to as accomplishments from this point forward**) pertaining to hydropower in the United States or Canada that meet the three category criteria.
- An application for a specific accomplishment may be submitted in only one category; however, an applicant may submit applications for multiple different accomplishments.
- An accomplishment, or the intended effect or result of an accomplishment, must have occurred or have been substantially realized in 2014.

How to Apply

For 2015 we have introduced a new, completely digital online application process. To apply, simply visit www.hydro.org/osaw and follow the link to the application portal.

Categories

Up to three awards will be presented for each of the three categories. For each application, the submitted accomplishment must be clearly identified and have tangible results for activities undertaken in the year 2014.

1. Operational Excellence

This category focuses on leading projects that add value to hydropower generation and demonstrate significant technical contributions. This includes but is not limited to improving efficiency, safety, security, innovation, contribution to electric system operations, and overall operational effectiveness of

hydroelectric assets. This may be applied to engineering, construction, hydraulics, dam safety, land use, licensing, operations, maintenance, and/or economic utilization. Examples include innovative use of new technologies and/or waterways, mitigation facilities, upgrades and improvements, and the use of technological tools in licensing, etc. Projects include:

- Civil dam safety improvements
- Upgrades and improvements
- Development/Installation of new waterpower generation technologies
- Use of technological tools in licensing
- Security innovations
- Personnel safety programs
- Employee training and succession planning programs
- Innovative labor practices and union agreements
- Staffing and organizational innovations
- Operations systems innovations
- Hydrological optimization and water management applications
- Equipment and systems modification
- New hydropower technologies, such as hydrokinetic, tidal, ocean, in-stream, wave and/or conduit applications
- Life extension and work planning activities
- Management practices
- Improved unit availability
- Union agreements
- Employee transition programs
- Training programs

2. Public Education

This category highlights programs that effectively communicate and promote the benefits of hydropower to an outside audience. Examples include:

- School curriculum
- Educational videos
- Public education materials
- Learning centers
- Kiosks
- Other outreach programs
- Interactive media

3. Recreational, Environmental & Historical Enhancement

This category covers projects that provide enhanced recreational opportunities for the general public, offer measurable benefits that mitigate, conserve, preserve, or enhance the natural resources, and/or conserve historical aspects of hydropower facilities and their integration with the surrounding community. Examples include:

- Flows for whitewater and flat-water boating
- Interpretive programs
- Enhanced fishing access
- Hiking trails
- Campgrounds and picnic areas
- Use of technology to improve water quality
- Establishment or enhancement of aquatic or terrestrial habitat
- Protection or restoration of fisheries, vegetation, or wildlife
- Implementation of environmental management systems
- Historic preservation or enhancement of infrastructure at or near a hydropower project
- Climate change mitigation

Application – What You Will be Asked For

Application Outline:

- Section I- Contact and Project Information (Name, Location, Capacity, etc.)
- Section II- Project Summary (no more than 250 words)
- Section III- Project Details
 - **Background:** Include any necessary historical information (beyond that contained in the Section II summary) that might be useful for the judges to understand the context of the challenge.
 - **Challenge:** What was the challenge? Include a detailed description of its complexities and ramifications. What previous solutions were attempted? How long has this been a challenge? What were the Goals and evaluation methods?
 - **Innovation:** What were the specific and unique innovations used to solve the problem? What were some of the tactics used? How were the innovations executed? What materials and/or methods used?
 - **Results:** What were the quantifiable results, including the cost-effectiveness, impact on stakeholders, and goals achieved?
- Section IV- Stakeholder Quotes
- Section V- Supporting Materials (Two photos [required], other collateral [clippings, videos, etc.])
- Section VI- Permission Statement

Judging Criteria

- **Challenge (30%):** Level of difficulty, complexity, and resourcefulness in confronting obstacles.
- **Innovation (30%):** Originality of a solution or application of an existing technique; pioneering the use of materials and/or methods; unique mix of techniques, materials, and/or equipment; etc.
- **Results (30%):** Demonstration of goals set that lead to measurable, quantifiable results, including cost effectiveness; how the results advance social, environmental, educational/historical, and/or economic needs; adherence to budgets and/or time schedules.
- **WOW Factor (including collaboration, initiative, originality, leadership, etc.) (10%):** Work that was “above and beyond” and sets an example for other industry members; captures unforeseen exemplary quality that wasn’t outlined in other criteria; commitment to involve all stakeholders; examples of fostering communication, cooperation, exhibition of impressive initiative and understanding among diverse interests and viewpoints; etc.

2015 NHA OSAW Judging Panel

Entries will be judged by a 7 member committee composed of the following NHA members:

- A representative from NHA’s Board of Directors
- NHA’s Public Affairs Committee Chair or a NHA member chosen ad hoc by NHA’s Executive Director, who acts as the OSAW Judging Panel Chair
- A member of the industry press
- A representative from each of the following disciplines within the NHA membership, as chosen by the OSAW Judging Panel Chair:
 - Environmental
 - Engineering
 - Manufacturing
 - Generators

The Judging Panel will be moderated by a non-voting facilitator who is a member of the NHA Staff. This facilitator’s role is to remind the panel of the goals of the award program and to ensure discussion proceeds in a timely fashion, etc.

To avoid a conflict of interest, any NHA member who has worked on one of the accomplishments that is being reviewed may not participate in the judging panel.

Timeline

- Applications are due **December 19, 2014**. All applications will be retained by NHA and added to the association's reference library, which is available to all members.
- Winners will be notified in **February 2015**.
- The award ceremony will take place during the **2015 Annual NHA Conference, April 27-29, 2015** in Washington, DC.

Helpful Hints

- Organizations are invited and encouraged to submit applications for multiple accomplishments. However, each application needs to be in its own binder.
- The majority of the material for which the award application is based should have taken place in 2014. Continuation of activities which have previously received an award will not be considered unless a significant expansion from the original scope is clearly demonstrated and can be well documented.
- Stay away from industry-only verbiage. The content needs to be easily communicated to a lay audience.
- Even though Section IV asks for quotes from stakeholders, the collaborative process needs to be a theme that is interwoven throughout the application, if it is applicable to the accomplishment.
- Applications should tell a story, be compelling and interesting.

How the OSAW Awards Support Your Goals and Priorities

Hydropower is the largest renewable energy resource. Being the biggest – and staying on top – requires exceptional effort. And, as the National Hydropower Association's Outstanding Stewards of America's Waters (OSAW) Awards program demonstrates, hydropower generators around the country are pursuing initiatives every day that deserve special recognition.

We invite you to nominate your projects and initiatives for consideration under the OSAW Awards. Here's why:

- You've earned the distinction – When you compete through the OSAW Awards, judges review your application based on an objective scale of pre-established criteria. OSAW winners know that they've matched efforts against the best.

- Great work deserves recognition – NHA works closely with OSAW winners to promote your achievements through both regional and national media. Your key stakeholders learn that your work is on the leading edge.
- OSAW honors your leadership – You’ll receive your OSAW Award at the NHA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., where the hydropower industry – and key national leaders – will be in attendance. OSAW is true national recognition.
- OSAW extends your project’s impact – Information you provide for OSAW judging becomes part of the industry’s knowledge-base and its outreach resources. (Except, of course, for proprietary information). By sharing your experiences, story, and findings, you contribute to the improvement and growth of the entire hydropower sector.

Please take the time now to learn more about the OSAW Awards and identify the projects your company is pursuing that merit this special recognition. Through OSAW, you’ll be able to multiply the benefits of your efforts immediately.

Questions and contact information

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact NHA’s Matt Nocella at 202.682.1700 ext. 21 or matt@hydro.org.