

Glossary

MINING AND MINERAL RESOURCES

M

mineral a natural, usually inorganic solid that has a characteristic chemical composition, an orderly internal structure, and a characteristic set of physical properties

O

ore mineral a mineral that contains one or more elements of economic value

P

placer deposit a deposit that contains a valuable mineral that has been concentrated by mechanical action

R

reclamation the process of returning land to its original condition after mining is completed

S

smelting the melting or fusing of ore in order to separate impurities from pure metal

subsidence the sinking of regions of the ground surface with little or no horizontal movement

subsurface mining a mining method in which ore is extracted from beneath the ground surface

surface mining a mining method in which soil and rocks are removed to reach underlying coal or minerals