



**Appalachian Region Technology Team Teleconference  
April 7, 2014**

Arielle Avishai, Office of Surface Mining Appalachian Regional Office (OSM ARO)  
Peter Michael, Office of Surface Mining Appalachian Regional Office (OSM ARO)  
Michele Hamlin, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP)  
Cheryl Socotch, Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR)  
Charles Sturey, West Virginia Department of Environmental Resources (WV DEP)  
Jeff Trump, Office of Surface Mining Appalachian Regional Office (OSM ARO)  
Sheila Walton, Office of Surface Mining Appalachian Regional Office (OSM ARO)

**ARIELLE AVISHAI (OSM):**

Arielle gave an overview and update of Applied Science Projects. A copy of her presentation is attached.

**TEAM DISCUSSION:**

Peter Michael led a discussion concerning changing water quality standards. There are still ongoing problems and questions surrounding effluent standards. At the face to face meeting held in February at the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) academy, there were questions raised about this issue. The Team had decided to ask Greg Conrad from the Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC) about the changing parameters and concern about changes in effluent standards for long term discharges. Other questions were brought up about the impact on trust funds and other concerns. Jeff Trump will draft an email to Greg regarding questions posed by the team.

**TEAM REPORTS:**

**CHERYL SOCOTCH (OH):** Nothing reportable this month.

**MICHELE HAMLIN (PA):**

The USGS is finalizing a proposal for a study requested by PA DEP Bureau of Mining Programs (BMP) to characterize natural stream flow in small headwater streams. In southwest PA, these streams often lose flow as a result of longwall mine subsidence. The study will evaluate several methods of characterizing the components of natural stream flow which may provide additional tools that the mining program can use to better evaluate the impact of mining on stream flow. A final report is expected in 2017 and will be published in a USGS Scientific Investigation Series Report.

**SHEILA WALTON (TN):** Nothing reportable this month.

**CHARLES STUREY (WV)**: Nothing reportable this month.

The next scheduled teleconference will be held May 5, 2013.



**Appalachian Region Technology Team Teleconference  
June 2, 2014**

John Carey, Maryland Bureau of Mines (MD BOM)  
Michele Hamlin, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP)  
David Lane, Office of Surface Mining Appalachian Regional Office (OSM ARO)  
Harve Mooney, Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (VA DMME)  
Paul Rothman, Kentucky Department of Natural Resources (KY DNR)  
Cheryl Socotch, Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR)  
Charles Sturey, West Virginia Department of Environmental Resources (WV DEP)  
Jeff Trump, Office of Surface Mining Appalachian Regional Office (OSM ARO)  
Sheila Walton, Office of Surface Mining Appalachian Regional Office (OSM ARO)

**TEAM REPORTS:**

**PAUL ROTHMAN (KY):** Nothing reportable this month.

**JOHN CAREY (MD):** Nothing reportable this month

**CHERYL SOCOTCH (OH):**

- Over the past year, Ohio DMRM has been beta testing the use of mobile GIS (Trimble Tough-Pads) systems which has been very fairly successful among Division reclamation inspection and permitting field staff. Additional units are being requested this fiscal year so that all field inspection, permitting and two AML program biologists will utilize as their primary computer hardware unit.
- Ohio DMRM has been provided an opportunity to comment and work with the Ohio EPA (OEPA) in the drafting of the renewal for the Coal Surface Mining General NPDES Permit. Some of the provisions included as part of the proposed renewal include limitations and restrictions for the General NPDES permit in certain watersheds and counties throughout the coal-bearing region of Ohio. Those surface mining permits located within the proposed geographic areas or units, will likely see specific numeric limitations for sulfate and total dissolved solids as part of their NPDES discharge permit (similar to all new recently or pending individual NPDES Permits for coal mining operations).

**MICHELE HAMLIN (PA):** Nothing reportable this month. Keith Brady retired effective May 2, 2014.

**HARVE MOONEY (PA):**

- Currently the proposed use of Unmanned Aerial Systems by the DMME is on hold. This is due to the moratorium placed on their use by the office of the Governor. The only exceptions are research use by the emergency services for damage assessment and the National Guard. Enforcement use is expressly forbidden. The moratorium will expire in 2015 when regulation is promulgated.
- Due to the current impasse on the budget in Virginia, there is a possibility of State employees being furloughed in July. The implementation of the Web- based permitting application has been pushed back to finalize additional modules in the application. The target date is now July, 2014. This however depends on whether or not the furlough takes place.
- The Department of Mines Minerals and Energy is currently undergoing operational planning. The proposed plan calls for implementation of new technologies to achieve the goals of the Agency. These will included the newly developed web-based permit application as well as other social media (Face book and Twitter) and the newly upgraded website.
- The General Assembly of Virginia passed legislation to eliminate self-bonding in Virginia. The legislation also raised the cap of the Coal Surface Mining Reclamation Fund to \$20,000,000.00.

**SHEILA WALTON (TN):** Nothing reportable this month.

**CHARLES STUREY (WV):** Nothing reportable this month.

The next scheduled teleconference will be held July 7, 2014 at 1:30 PM.



**Appalachian Region Technology Team Teleconference  
July 7, 2014**

Harve Mooney, Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (VA DMME)  
Danny Rehenema, Office of Surface Mining Appalachian Regional Office (OSMRE ARO)  
Paul Rothman, Kentucky Department of Natural Resources (KY DNR)  
Cheryl Socotch, Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR)  
Jeff Trump, Office of Surface Mining Appalachian Regional Office (OSMRE ARO)

**TEAM REPORTS:**

**PAUL ROTHMAN (KY):**

- Due to budgetary cuts of approximately 5 million dollars by the Kentucky Legislature this past spring, staffing within our mine safety and licensing agency will be trimmed from 142 employees to 88, or a 38% reduction in personnel. Kentucky lawmakers also reduced the number of annual inspections the state must make of each mine from six to four.
- The work that was previously performed by 69 “mine safety inspectors”, 8 “safety instructors” and 31 “mine safety analysts” will be combined, and these duties will be performed by reduced work force of 64 employees with the new title of "mine safety specialist."
- The coalfield lawmakers who voted for these cuts pointed to the sharp drop in coal employment (approximately 7,000 miners have been laid off in our eastern KY coalfields over the last 3 years), and production (KY coal production is at levels that haven't been seen since the 1920s).

**TEAM DISCUSSION:**

The Team briefly discussed the following topics and recommended more detailed discussions be included in the agenda for future ARTT conference calls:

- New 402 Permits
- Clean water act issues
- Primacy States approach with EPA/SMCRA issues
- 401, 402, 404 permits
- Workshops
- Applied Science Projects

**NEXT CONFERENCE CALL:**

The next scheduled teleconference will be held August 4, 2014 at 1:30 pm.