



U.S. Office of Surface Mining

News Release



June 9, 2010

OSM DIRECTOR JOE PIZARCHIK ADDRESSES THE 2010 JOINT MINING CONFERENCE

OSM Director Joe Pizarchik served as the plenary session speaker at the 2010 Joint Mining Conference in Pittsburgh, PA, on Monday, June 7th.

The organizers asked the Director to discuss his vision of what OSM is working toward with respect to reclamation, new rules, and increased oversight of coal mining.

Text of the speech given by the OSM Director at the 2010 Joint Mining Reclamation Conference appears below.

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Text – OSM Director Joseph Pizarchik

**SPEECH TO THE 2010 JOINT MINING RECLAMATION CONFERENCE,
FEATURING THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MINING AND RECLAMATION,
THE PENNSYLVANIA ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION CONFERENCE,
AND THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL REFORESTATION INITIATIVE MINE
LAND RECLAMATION CONFERENCE.**

June 7, 2010

Pittsburgh, PA

GOOD MORNING, AND THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO YOU TODAY.

THIS JOINT CONFERENCE REPRESENTS THE 27TH ANNUAL MEETING OF A-S-M-R, THE 12TH ANNUAL MEETING FOR THE PENNSYLVANIA ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION CONFERENCE, AND THE 4TH YEAR OF THE RECLAMATION CONFERENCE FOR OSM'S APPALACHIAN REGIONAL REFORESTATION INITIATIVE.

YOUR COOPERATION IN SPONSORING THIS CONFERENCE DEMONSTRATES THE VALUE OF WORKING TOGETHER — AND THE NEED FOR CONTINUED COLLABORATION AMONG A WIDE RANGE OF PEOPLE.

EACH OF YOU HAS DIFFERENT SKILLS AND EXPERTISE THAT CAN BE APPLIED TO SOLVE PROBLEMS. THERE'S A MIX OF EXPERIENCE IN THE PEOPLE GATHERED HERE, WHICH WILL LEAD TO FRESH NEW IDEAS. THE MORE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE

GIVE A SENSE OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE, WHILE THOSE NEW TO THE FIELD BRING PERSPECTIVES AND APPROACHES THAT CAN DRIVE INNOVATION.

IDENTIFYING THOSE NEW PERSPECTIVES AND APPROACHES IS AS IMPORTANT TODAY AS EVER. THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT COAL MINING IS AT A CROSSROADS.

IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS, OSM HAS MOVED TO ADDRESS THE CONCERNS OF PRESIDENT OBAMA AND HIS SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR, KEN SALAZAR, ESPECIALLY IN THE AREAS OF ACTIVE COAL MINING, POST-MINE LAND USE, AND ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION.

THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY HAVE CALLED UPON OSM TO TAKE A STRONGER POSITION THAN IT HAS IN THE IMMEDIATE PAST TO BETTER ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS DURING ACTIVE MINING, AND DURING RECLAMATION. AS YOU HAVE HEARD DIRECTLY FROM THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF, WE ARE TO BASE OUR ACTIONS ON SOUND SCIENCE, AND WE ARE DOING THAT.

IN ITS NEARLY THIRTY-THREE YEARS, SMCRA HAS PROVEN TO BE A USEFUL TOOL TO PROTECT PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT, AND TO ENSURE THE NATION'S ENERGY SUPPLY. THE INDUSTRY HAS DONE A GOOD JOB IN PRODUCING AFFORDABLE COAL, AND BOTH THE INDUSTRY AND THE STATES ARE DOING A BETTER JOB OF RECLAMATION TODAY THAN THEY WERE EVEN A FEW YEARS AGO.

HOWEVER, AS A NATION AND AS AN AGENCY, WE HAVE NOT FULLY UTILIZED ALL THE TOOLS AVAILABLE TO US UNDER SMCRA TO CARRY OUT OUR MANDATE. UNDER THIS ADMINISTRATION, WE WILL.

MOUNTAINTOP MINING, TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS, AND COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUES ARE ALL MATTERS WE MUST ADDRESS BECAUSE THE PEOPLE DEMAND IT. WE WILL ANSWER THE DEMANDS TO BETTER PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT WHILE PROVIDING FOR AMERICA'S ENERGY NEEDS.

WHETHER YOU ARE A SCIENTIST WHO DEVELOPS MINE DRAINAGE PREVENTION OR TREATMENT;

A MEMBER OF A WATERSHED GROUP THAT CLEANS UP PAST MINING PROBLEMS;

A GOVERNMENT REGULATOR OR A RECLAMATION SCIENTIST;

OR A COAL MINER; WE ALL HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON.

WE ALL LIVE OFF OF COAL.

LET ME BE CLEAR: WHAT THE PRESIDENT AND OSM ARE PROPOSING IS NOT A "WAR ON COAL MINING." THIS IS NOT ABOUT DOING AWAY WITH COAL. IT IS AN EFFORT TO FULLY IMPLEMENT AND ENFORCE THE SURFACE MINING LAW AND BETTER PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THIS NATION.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? IT MEANS WE ARE COMMITTED TO CHANGING HOW WE USE COAL. FOR EXAMPLE, JUST THIS YEAR ALONE, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS INVESTED MORE THAN \$2 BILLION ON DEVELOPING CLEAN COAL TECHNOLOGIES.

LAST FEBRUARY, THE ADMINISTRATION OUTLINED A PLAN RECOGNIZING THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL RELY ON AFFORDABLE DOMESTIC COAL FOR DECADES TO COME. THE PRESIDENT CALLED FOR FIVE TO TEN DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS FOR CLEAN COAL TECHNOLOGIES TO BE BUILT NO LATER THAN 2016.

IT IS CLEAR THAT WE NEED COAL, BUT THE COAL INDUSTRY — AND GOVERNMENT — MUST CHANGE.

BOTH THE INDUSTRY AND ITS REGULATORS HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE. THEY CAN STAY ON THE SAME ROAD THEY HAVE TRAVELED FOR YEARS AND FIGHT THE ADVANCES IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, OR THEY CAN TAKE THE HIGH ROAD.

YOU HAVE ALREADY SEEN OTHER EVIDENCE OF OSM'S COMMITMENT TO BETTER PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND OUR ENERGY SUPPLY. LAST YEAR, WE SIGNED A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO REDUCE THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF COAL MINING IN CENTRAL APPALACHIA. WE ARE CONTINUING OUR WORK, AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS ARE DOING THEIR PART. AND, THERE ARE AREAS WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE PERMITTING PROCESS.

WE ANNOUNCED OUR ACTIONS TO IMPROVE OVERSIGHT AND OUR INTENT TO DEVELOP A NEW STREAM PROTECTION RULE TO REPLACE THE 2008 STREAM BUFFER ZONE RULE. THE NEW RULE IS BASED ON SOUND SCIENCE AND TAKES A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO BETTER PROTECT MOUNTAIN STREAMS. THE RULEMAKING EFFORT IS GOING ON AS WE MEET TODAY.

THESE CHANGES MEAN OUR STAKEHOLDERS — CITIZENS AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS, THE STATE AND TRIBAL REGULATORY AGENCIES, AND COAL MINING OPERATORS — NEED TO CONSIDER HOW OUR IMPROVED OVERSIGHT ACTIONS AND STREAM PROTECTION RULEMAKING WILL AFFECT WHAT THEY DO.

WE ARE MOVING ALONG IN THE PROCESS QUICKLY, BUT THERE IS STILL TIME FOR ALL OF THOSE STAKEHOLDERS TO PLAN, TO BE PROACTIVE, AND TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RULEMAKING PROCESS.

AT THE SAME TIME, OUR RULEMAKING EFFORTS ARE SUBJECT TO JUDICIAL SCRUTINY. WE HAVE COMMITTED TO THE FEDERAL COURT AND THE PLAINTIFFS TO CHANGE THE STREAM BUFFER ZONE RULE NO LATER THAN MID-2012. WE WILL MEET THAT DEADLINE.

SOME HAVE SAID EVEN THAT IS TOO LONG TO WAIT FOR A NEW RULE. HOWEVER, IT IS THE TIME NECESSARY TO FOLLOW THE LEGALLY MANDATED RULEMAKING PROCESS. IT IS ALSO ABOUT HALF THE TIME IT TOOK TO COMPLETE THE 2008 RULE. REALISTICALLY, THERE IS NO FASTER PATH.

SO THE QUESTION BECOMES, HOW MIGHT YOU AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS HELP?

I ENCOURAGE YOU, THE CITIZENS AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS, THE GOVERNMENT REGULATORS, SCIENTISTS AND INDUSTRY TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR RULEMAKING PROCESS, TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS RULEMAKING PROCESS, TO PARTICIPATE IN EPA'S POLICY AND SCIENCE DEVELOPMENT.

GOVERNMENT IS ONLY AS GOOD AS ITS PEOPLE, AND WE NEED YOU TO BE GOOD CITIZENS, GOOD SCIENTISTS AND ENVIRONMENTALISTS. THE BETTER THE INFORMATION WE USE IN MAKING DECISIONS, THE BETTER DECISIONS WE MAKE. THE PUBLIC PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN PROVIDING A PERSPECTIVE BEYOND THAT OFFERED BY GOVERNMENT OR BUSINESS.

A NUMBER OF THESE GROUPS ARE TO BE RECOGNIZED FOR COLLECTING DATA AND HAVING THE RESULTS REVIEWED IN AN ACADEMICALLY SOUND MANNER. IT IS THAT EXTRA STEP, THAT QUALITY OF INFORMATION, THAT PROVIDES POLICY MAKERS WITH A GREATER SENSE OF TRUST IN WHATEVER DATA IS PRESENTED. PEER REVIEWED WORK IS DRIVING THE EMERGING SCIENCE, AND WE NEED MORE OF IT.

HOWEVER, THAT IS NOT THE ONLY WAY CITIZENS CAN HELP. WE NEED OUR CITIZENS TO PROVIDE THE CAPABILITIES THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CANNOT.

ONE SUCH GROUP THAT COMES TO MIND IS THE WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COALITION FOR ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION. THE COALITION BRINGS TOGETHER 24 COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICTS AND COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATIONS IN PENNSYLVANIA'S BITUMINOUS COAL REGION.

I MENTION THE COALITION NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF ITS SUCCESSES BUT BECAUSE OF ITS VISION AND ITS STRUCTURE. THE COALITION MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES NOT JUST GOVERNMENT, INDUSTRY, AND CITIZENS BUT ALSO HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS. BRINGING IN STUDENTS AND YOUTH IS HOW WE WILL SUSTAIN OUR SUCCESS. THEY ARE THE NEXT GENERATION OF SCIENTISTS, MINERS, ENVIRONMENTALISTS, REGULATORS, AND EVEN OSM DIRECTOR.

THAT IS HOW WE MUST PROCEED. GOVERNMENT CANNOT DO THE JOB OF RECLAMATION AND REMEDIATION WITHOUT HELP FROM GROUPS LIKE WPCAMR.

WE ALSO MUST SPEAK TO WHAT THE COMING CHANGES MEAN FOR OUR STATE REGULATORY AGENCIES. OSM PROVIDES OVERSIGHT, TRAINING, TECHNOLOGY, AND OTHER RESOURCES TO 28 STATES AND TRIBES, AND THAT MEANS WE MUST ADDRESS NOT ONLY DIFFERENCES IN GEOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHY, BUT ALSO DIFFERING FORMS OF GOVERNMENT, BUDGET REQUIREMENTS, EVEN CULTURAL NORMS.

IN THE PAST 18 TO 24 MONTHS, MANY STATE PROGRAMS HAVE FELT THE EFFECT OF THE ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN. IN SOME CASES, THEY HAVE BEEN FORCED TO CUT STAFF OR ALLOW VACANCIES TO GO UNFILLED. SOME STATES HAVE SEEN AND CONTINUE TO SEE A HIGHER RATE OF RETIREMENTS AND JOB LOSSES. SOME STATES ARE NOT ABLE TO FUND A FULLY STAFFED PROGRAM FOR OTHER REASONS. WE AT OSM RECOGNIZE THAT MANY STATES ARE WORKING UNDER STRESSFUL BUDGET ALLOCATIONS.

THAT IS WHY WE HAVE EXTENDED OSM'S SUPPORT FOR YOUTH BEYOND VISTA AND THE AML PROGRAM - TO SUPPORT AMERICORPS AND STUDENT INTERNS - TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO THE STATE REGULATORY PROGRAMS. WE EXPECT TO BRING IN A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF YOUTH TO WORK IN THESE PROGRAMS IN THE NEXT YEAR.

THE NEW STREAM PROTECTION RULE WILL MORE FULLY IMPLEMENT EXISTING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS. WE WILL EXPECT STATES TO MONITOR AND OVERSEE MINING OPERATIONS IN A MORE DETAILED FASHION.

THE NEW RULE WILL GO BEYOND SIMPLY LAYING OUT A BUFFER ZONE. WE ANTICIPATE MORE EXTENSIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR BASELINE DATA ON HYDROLOGY, GEOLOGY, AND AQUATIC BIOLOGY.

WE EXPECT APPLICANTS TO BETTER DETERMINE THE PROBABLE HYDROLOGIC CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR MINING, AND TO DEVELOP A HYDROLOGIC

RECLAMATION PLAN. WE EXPECT TO DEVELOP MORE SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR A CUMULATIVE HYDROLOGIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT.

WE WILL DEFINE THE TERM “MATERIAL DAMAGE TO THE HYDROLOGIC BALANCE OUTSIDE THE PERMIT AREA.”

WE WILL REVISE REGULATIONS THAT GOVERN MINING ACTIVITIES IN OR NEAR STREAMS, OR THROUGH STREAMS. WE PLAN TO ADD MORE EXTENSIVE AND MORE SPECIFIC MONITORING REQUIREMENTS FOR SURFACE WATER, GROUNDWATER, AND AQUATIC BIOTA DURING MINING AND RECLAMATION.

WE INTEND TO REVISE THE BACKFILLING AND GRADING RULES. WE WILL DEVELOP NEW EXCESS SPOIL RULES.

EXPECT TO SEE NEW APPROXIMATE ORIGINAL CONTOUR RESTORATION REQUIREMENTS THAT INCORPORATE GEOMORPHIC RESTORATION PRINCIPLES.

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING THE STREAM PROTECTION RULE IS A HUGE TASK THAT WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN, BUT WE WILL SUCCEED.

THIS BRINGS ME TO THE REGULATED COMMUNITY. THEY, TOO, WILL EXPERIENCE MAJOR CHANGES WHEN THE RULE IS FINALIZED. THESE CHANGES ARE FOR THE GOOD.

LAST DECEMBER, SENATOR ROBERT BYRD OF WEST VIRGINIA EXPRESSED HIS VIEW OF HOW COAL MINING COMPANIES SHOULD APPROACH THE ISSUE OF ENVIRONMENTAL OVERSIGHT, PERMITTING, AND THE INDUSTRY IN GENERAL.

THE SENATOR SAID, AND I QUOTE, “THE FUTURE OF COAL AND INDEED OF OUR TOTAL ENERGY PICTURE LIES IN CHANGE AND INNOVATION.”

OUR INTENT IS TO HELP COAL OPERATORS MOVE TOWARD GOOD SCIENCE AND EMBRACE THAT CHANGE, TO RETAIN PROFITABILITY WHILE BETTER PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE PEOPLE.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MINING AND RECLAMATION ARE CHANGING. WHAT WAS ACCEPTABLE IN THE 1940’S BECAME LESS ACCEPTABLE IN THE 70’S. LIKEWISE, WHAT WAS OK IN THE PUBLIC EYE IN THE 80’S IS NOT NECESSARILY OK TODAY.

IT IS TIME FOR COAL OPERATORS TO STEP FORWARD AND PROVIDE SOUND SCIENCE — PEER REVIEWED, ACADEMICALLY DEFENSIBLE, REPRODUCIBLE SCIENCE — TO MAINTAIN THEIR STANDING IN THE POLICY DEBATE ON MINING METHODS AND POST-MINING RECLAMATION.

IN THE PAST, WHEN GIVEN THIS CHALLENGE, OPERATORS SHIED AWAY FROM FUNDING OR ACTUALLY DOING THIS KIND OF RESEARCH THEMSELVES. ONE OF THE REASONS THEY GAVE WAS THAT THEY FELT SUCH RESEARCH WOULD BE CONSIDERED BIASED. TODAY, THEY LACK THE ABILITY TO SUPPORT THEIR POSITION WITHOUT SUCH STUDIES.

ONE POSSIBLE SOURCE OF HELP IS THE NATION'S COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF INTELLECTUAL TALENT AT THESE SCHOOLS. RESEARCHERS THERE WOULD GLADLY UNDERTAKE THESE STUDIES. THE INFORMATION THEY PROVIDE WOULD ALLOW US TO DETERMINE THE TRUE POTENTIAL HAZARDS AND BENEFITS OF MINING, AND TO DEVISE MINING AND RECLAMATION PLANS THAT PREVENT ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS.

THE SOLUTIONS ARE OUT THERE. INDUSTRY, PARTNERING WITH ACADEMIC EXPERTS — MANY OF WHOM ARE IN THIS ROOM — CAN FIND WAYS TO PREVENT DAMAGE AND RESTORE STREAMS AFFECTED BY MINING. TOGETHER, INDUSTRY AND ACADEMIA CAN RENDER RESULTS THAT ARE UNBIASED AND ACCEPTED BY DECISION MAKERS.

OSM HAS FUNDED TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND OTHER PROJECTS OVER THE YEARS. I WOULD DO MORE IF OSM HAD THE RESOURCES.

WHEN THE STUDIES ARE DONE, THEY WILL ALLOW THE OPERATORS, ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY GROUPS, AND GOVERNMENT TO MAKE BETTER DECISIONS.

IN ADDITION TO ACADEMIC SOLUTIONS, THERE ARE ALSO COMMON-SENSE SOLUTIONS: SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS THAT HAVE COST THE COAL INDUSTRY AND THE STATES GREATLY.

A FEW MONTHS AGO, I TRAVELED TO SEVERAL COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO INTRODUCE MYSELF. I MET CITIZENS, PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN COAL COUNTRY. MANY WORK IN COAL MINES THEMSELVES. THESE ARE GOOD, HARD-WORKING, HONEST AMERICANS WHO RARELY, IF EVER, HAVE ASKED ANYONE ELSE FOR HELP.

I OBSERVED SOME THINGS THAT SHOULD BE SEEN THIRTY PLUS YEARS AFTER THE ENACTMENT OF SMCRA. THEY WERE EGREGIOUS EXAMPLES OF WHY SOME COAL OPERATORS — AND IN SOME CASES, STATE REGULATORS — HAVE REPUTATIONS AS BAD NEIGHBORS.

IN WEST VIRGINIA, COAL TRUCKS TRACKED MUD ON TO PUBLIC ROADS. THE ROAD WAS A MUDDY MESS, DIFFICULT TO PASS, AT BEST, DURING WINTER RAINS AND SNOW.

I HAVE RECEIVED FIRST HAND ACCOUNTS OF HOW A MINE OPERATOR'S DISREGARD OF ITS LEGAL OBLIGATIONS CREATED ANTI-MINING ACTIVISTS.

THESE ACTIVITIES WILL BE STOPPED.

IT IS UNFORTUNATE THESE MATTERS OCCUR AND PLACE THE INDUSTRY IN A BAD LIGHT.

IT IS CLEAR THAT SOME COAL COMPANIES HAVE HARMED EVERY COAL OPERATOR'S REPUTATION SIMPLY BY BEING A BAD CORPORATE CITIZEN.

OSM INCREASED ITS OVERSIGHT INSPECTIONS IN THE 2009 EVALUATION YEAR, AND CONDUCTED 1,162 OVERSIGHT INSPECTIONS.

SO FAR, AND WITH TWO MONTHS TO GO IN THE 2010 EVALUATION YEAR, WE HAVE COMPLETED OVER 1550 OVERSIGHT INSPECTIONS.

OSM HAS BEEN WORKING ON A NUMBER OF OVERSIGHT IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS AND YOU WILL BEGIN TO SEE THEM POSTED FOR PUBLIC COMMENT.

I WILL CONTINUE TO REMIND INDUSTRY AND STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATORS THAT CITIZENS AND ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE NOT THE ENEMY.

THEY ARE THE REASON BOTH SMCRA AND OSM ARE HERE TODAY.

I BEGAN THIS TALK WITH A STORY OF HOW PEOPLE WITH A MIX OF EXPERIENCE CAN PRODUCE VALUABLE RESULTS. I WANT TO CLOSE WITH ONE ABOUT HOW THAT CAN WORK ON THE GROUND.

LET ME MENTION THE “MORE EXPERIENCED” PART OF THE STORY FIRST. HIS NAME IS DR. ALLAN COMP. <LAUGHTER> HE IS IN THE SAME AGE GROUP AS MUCH OF THE OSM WORKFORCE. <LAUGHTER: PHOTO OF COMP WITH JOE IF COMP IS NOT IN ATTENDANCE>

AL RECEIVED A SERVICE TO AMERICA AWARD LAST YEAR FOR HIS WORK IN ORGANIZING AND TRAINING MEMBERS OF OSM'S VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA — OR "VISTA" — PROGRAM. THE APPALACHIAN COAL COUNTRY WATERSHED TEAM IS ONE OF THE PROGRAMS OUR VISTAS WORK WITH, AND I AM CERTAIN THAT MANY OF YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH THEIR WORK. THEY ARE DEPLOYED TO TEN STATES, AND THEY ARE A VITAL LINK TO THE AML PROGRAM.

LAST MONTH, COMP AND OTHERS FROM OSM GOT TOGETHER WITH THE VISTAS FOR A TRAINING SESSION. THIS IS WHERE THE YOUNGER PART OF THE STORY COMES IN.

ONE YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAD RECEIVED VISTA TRAINING UNDER OSM'S AUSPICES CAME TO LEARN ABOUT GRANT WRITING.

NOW, WRITING A GRANT APPLICATION IS NOT THE EASIEST THING TO DO. IF YOU HAVE WRITTEN A GRANT, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

IN ANY CASE, AT THE END OF THE TRAINING, SHE MADE AN ANNOUNCEMENT: IN CONCERT WITH HER LOCAL CONSERVATION DISTRICT IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA, SHE HAD SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING AND HELPING ADMINISTER A ONE POINT SIX MILLION DOLLAR GRANT. <APPLAUSE>

THIS IS MIRANDA SHOEMAKER, AND I WANTED TO LET YOU RECOGNIZE HER SERVICE.

UNTIL MAY 15TH, MIRANDA SERVED THE ARMSTRONG CONSERVATION DISTRICT IN KITTANNING, PENNSYLVANIA, ABOUT 40 MILES NORTHEAST OF PITTSBURGH. SHE WILL BE SPEAKING AT THIS CONFERENCE LATER TODAY AT FOUR O’CLOCK. SHE HAS A NEW JOB AND THAT’S WHY SHE WAS NOT ABLE TO JOIN US THIS MORNING. BUT PLEASE ATTEND HER SPEECH ON WATERSHED GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND DIVERSIFIED FUNDING FOR SUCH GROUPS.

THIS IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF HOW OLD AND YOUNG CAN WORK WELL TOGETHER. IT IS ALSO A MODEL OF THE KIND OF THING WE HOPE TO SEE COMING FROM CONFERENCES LIKE THESE.

OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS, I HOPE YOU AGREE THAT MUCH OF WHAT I HAVE TALKED ABOUT THIS MORNING — FROM THE STREAM PROTECTION RULE TO THE STORY OF MIRANDA SHOEMAKER — IS IN THE SPIRIT OF THIS CONFERENCE.

THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION, THROUGH ITS COMMITMENT TO SOUND SCIENCE, HAS LAID A FOUNDATION THAT PROMOTES SOUND DECISION MAKING.

IT IS UP TO OSM, AND ALL OF YOU HERE TODAY, TO USE THAT FOUNDATION TO BUILD A BRIDGE BETWEEN CITIZENS AND GOOD SCIENCE.

THANK YOU.

(The previous text is from a speech given by OSM Director Joseph Pizarchik at the 2010 Joint Mining Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on June 7, 2010)