

NAAML P

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ABANDONED MINE LAND PROGRAMS

NEWSLETTER

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UPCOMING MEETINGS

NAAML P Winter Business

Meeting

February 5-8, 2006
Austin, Texas

NAAML P Annual Conference

September 24-27, 2006
Billings, Montana

IMCC Annual Meeting

April 30-May 3, 2006
Bismarck, North Dakota

MISSION STATEMENT

1. To provide a forum to address current issues, discuss common problems and share new technologies regarding abandoned mine land reclamation;
2. To foster positive and productive relationships between the states and tribes represented by the Association and the federal government;
3. To serve as an effective, unified voice when presenting the states'/tribes' common viewpoints; and
4. To coordinate, cooperate and communicate with the Interstate Compact Commission, Western Interstate Energy Board and all other organizations dedicated to wise use and restoration of our natural resources.

Greetings Members and Friends of the Association,

I would again like to take the opportunity to thank Roger Williams and his crew from Virginia for hosting an excellent conference. It was great to see everyone and to have a chance to visit beautiful Virginia! The conference provided us an opportunity to hear about some exciting reclamation work, to participate in efforts to broaden program partnerships, and we saw some excellent award winning projects. I am so impressed by the professional level of the winning projects submitted by States and Tribes, and the technical advances mine land reclamation has made since its early beginnings.

I am honored to serve as the President of the Association for this year. Serving after such an effective President as we had in Steve Hohmann will surely be a tough job, but with the assistance of John Husted as Vice President and Loretta Pineda serving a second term as Secretary and Treasurer I feel confident we will be able to achieve the Association goal of re-authorization.

I am amazed at the level of effort each of you and the Association have dedicated to AML re-authorization over the past two years. I would like to thank the Re-authorization Committee and in particular Greg Conrad, Steve Hohmann, Paul Ehret, Madline Roanhorse, and Evan Green as well as other



members who have taken the time to make the numerous journeys to Washington D.C. to educate lawmakers on the importance of AML to a nation with such a rich and diverse mining history.

Again, I want to thank the Association for the opportunity to serve as its President. I look forward to the coming year and the challenges we will face. And in particular I look forward to working with the members of the Association. See you all in Austin.

Mark Mesch, President

Virginia Hosts 27th Annual NAAML P Conference

The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) hosted the 27th annual conference of the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs September 18-21 in Bristol, Virginia. The conference theme "Keeping the Circle Unbroken", reflected how abandoned mine land reclamation returns land to a condition that no longer adversely impacts human

health, safety, and the environment.

DMME conducted a pre-conference tour on September 16 and 17. Participants traveled through the coalfields of southwest Virginia to examine mining and reclamation, view spectacular natural beauty, and experience the hospitality and culture of the southern Appalachians. The pre-conference tour concluded with an evening of old-time

and bluegrass music at the Carter Fold, a venue to promote old-time music and pay tribute to the Carter Family, the first family of country music.

On Sunday, September 18, early conference arrivers enjoyed a round of golf at The Virginian, rated among the finest private courses in America. Sunday's reception allowed participants to "catch up" with old friends, make new acquaintances, and enjoy some old-time mountain music.

Technical sessions and workshops began Monday morning and continued through Wednesday morning. Presenters shared experiences with mine fires, acid mine drainage, GIS technology, and other reclamation successes. Workshops offered sessions on managing the media, and partnering and leveraging the finite AML

resources.

DMME offered informative field trips on Monday and Tuesday. Monday's trips allowed participants to examine a highly successful AMD treatment project, view an award winning reclaimed gypsum mine, and explore research efforts to restore the American chestnut tree. One Tuesday trip examined the incredible biodiversity of southwest Virginia while the other trip offered beautiful scenery, geology, and history on a 17-mile bike ride (downhill) on the Virginia Creeper Trail.

The highlight of the conference was Tuesday evening's banquet and award ceremony. After a delicious meal, the Association paid tribute to the late Dave Bucknam, retired Colorado Director of the Office of Active and Inactive Mines. A video produced by the Colorado staff kindled many fond memories of Dave and reminded us of his dedication to reclaiming abandoned mine lands, especially through training AML personnel. Susan Bucknam, Dave's wife, gave a moving presentation on Dave's life.

The Office of Surface Mining publicly recognized the outstanding reclamation accomplished by state and tribal AML programs. For 2005, OSM honored these programs with awards:

- Kentucky Division of Abandoned Mine Lands: Appalachian Regional, National, and People's Choice Award
- Indiana Division of Reclamation: Mid-Continent Regional Award
- Colorado Inactive Mine Reclamation Program: Western Regional Award

Through the efforts of states and tribes throughout the nation, the lands and waters we reclaim and the citizens we serve are also winners.

The Association honored Interstate Mining Compact Commission Executive Director Greg Conrad with the 2005 Stan Barnard award for his outstanding assistance with many aspects of AML reclamation.

Virginia DMME sincerely appreciates all of the assistance that Association members provided in making the conference a success, especially Steve Hohmann, Loretta Pineda, and Greg Conrad. DMME is making the conference proceedings available on DVDs. To obtain a copy, please contact Roger Williams at

276-523-8208 or Richard Davis at 276-523-8216 or Richard.Davis@dmme.virginia.gov.

Photographs of the conference can be downloaded at DMME's ftp site:

ftp://165.176.6.36/Dmlr/downloads/AML_Conference_2005/



Conrad Selected for 2005 Stan Barnard Award

Greg Conrad, Executive Director of the Interstate Mining Compact Commission, was announced as the 2005 recipient of the Stan Barnard Award. Each year the Association presents the coveted Stan Barnard Award to a person who most represents the qualities of former NAAMLPLP President Stan Barnard, and for outstanding contributions to the advancement of the AML program. The winner is honored at the Award Banquet during the NAAMLPLP Annual Conference. NAAMLPLP President Steve Hohmann presented the award to Conrad at the recently completed 2005 Annual Conference in Bristol, VA.

"In the last three years, no single person has done more to advance the position of the NAAMLPLP on (AML) reauthorization than Greg Conrad. This fact,

along with the advisory role to the Association he has assumed for many years, makes Greg Conrad his year's recipient of the Stan Barnard Award," Hohmann stated during remarks at the Conference Banquet. "I am humbled and honored to receive recognition of this caliber from my peers and from an organization that I highly respect and enjoyed working with over the years," said a joyful Conrad.

The presentation of the Award culminated a night of award winning, including the presentation of OSM reclamation awards and the announcement of a new training award dedicated to the memory of Dave Bucknam. (See related stories.)

By Steve Hohmann



Greg Conrad with past Barnard Award winners Loretta Pineda and Luci Malin

Association Pays Tribute to Dave Bucknam Announces Namesake Award

In a touching ceremony the NAAMLPL announced the creation of an award to honor the memory of Dave Bucknam. Bucknam was past president of the Association and former Colorado Inactive Mine Program Supervisor. He was an outspoken advocate for AML training and was the Association's representative to the OSM National Technical Training Steering Committee for many years. He passed away in November 2004.

The Award, simply called "The Trainer", will be presented annually in Bucknam's honor to the outstanding OSM NTTTP trainer as chosen by the voting among the trainers themselves.

Susan Bucknam, Dave's wife, addressed the Awards Banquet at the Annual Conference in Bristol, Virginia, by sharing her husband's struggle with melanoma and his valiant fight to overcome it. Ms. Bucknam's presence and recollections of her husband was a fitting memorial to the impact that his life had on the AML Association. It is appropriate that his hard work and contributions will live on by virtue of the Dave Bucknam Outstanding Trainer Award.

By Steve Hohmann



David Bucknam

Kentucky Earns "Hat Trick" With Refuse Project Wins Three Awards

The Kentucky Division of Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) has received the National Award for Outstanding Reclamation for the cleanup of a 60-acre coal refuse dump in Floyd County. In addition, the project – Spewing Camp Branch Refuse—received a People's Choice Award and the Appalachian Regional Award for Outstanding Reclamation from the federal Office of Surface Mining. "The completion of this project eliminated the hazards associated with AML sites," said Susan Bush, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Natural Resources. "Citizens downstream from the site no longer see coal waste eroding the creek and causing periodic flooding. The site is no longer a blight and is a success attributable to the AML program in the state." Sterling Rideout, Deputy Director of the OSM, presented the three awards to Kentucky AML personnel and the project contractor at the NAAMLPL Annual Conference in Bristol, VA.

The Spewing Camp Branch Refuse AML Project completed reclamation on a 60-acre coal refuse dump that had been abandoned since 1974. The Kentucky Division of Abandoned Mine Lands (DAML) began construction work on the site in late 2002 under a contract with Hawkeye Construction Co. LLC, of Robinson, Kentucky. Hawkeye completed the majority of the reclamation with a year and the contract was closed in October 2004. The total project cost was \$3,517,367 that included the cost of the two satellite projects.

The Spewing Camp refuse dump had long been one of the worst remaining abandoned mine sites in eastern Kentucky. From 1952 to 1973 the site had received coal refuse generated by

the Price coal preparation facility located on the opposite side of the mountain. Over 7 million cubic yards of refuse was placed in the pile from an aerial tram that transported the material from the coal washer, over the crest of the mountain, and dumped it. The pile is up to 165 feet deep in the middle.

After the Buffalo Creek waste dam failure in West Virginia, the Spewing Camp refuse dump received serious attention from MSHA and the Kentucky Division of Water Resources. The agencies were concerned that the refuse could slide into Spewing



View of Project After Reclamation

2004



Refuse Dump on Spewing Camp Branch

Camp Branch creek and dam it up. Failure of that dam would cause catastrophic downstream flooding. Because of this concern, the creek was relocated to its present channel, farther away from the dump.

Eventually, the dump became inactive in 1973 and was formally abandoned in 1981. The site was left in an unvegetated state and began to erode. The deterioration caused coal sediment to wash into the stream clogging the channel and polluting the water all the way into the Left Fork of Beaver Creek, more than a mile away. Giant gullies over ten feet deep eroded into the sides of the refuse pile.

In the late 1980s, a company named Enerpro attempted to extract the coal from the refuse on-site by running it through a



Reclamation in progress

reprocessing plant. The effort ended in failure, and the Enerpro reclamation bond totaling \$296,100 was forfeited to the state in 1993. The site was again abandoned. It continued to degrade the environment and became an attractive location for illegal dumping, partying, and hazardous off-road vehicle activity.

DAML began efforts to reclaim the Spewing Camp refuse pile shortly after the Enerpro failure. However, other parties continued to express interest in reprocessing the coal waste causing DAML to indefinitely suspend reclamation plans. In 2001, it became apparent that reprocessing the waste was not economically feasible and DAML began design work for a reclamation project to reclaim the pile.

Design was completed in 2002, and construction began in spring 2003. The coal waste was graded in place, and covered



Hawkeye Construction's Jeff Sands, Rusty Rowe, Mitch Potter

with two feet of earth. The earth cover came from three sources. An area adjacent to the dump owned by Progress Land Co. was used to cover the upper reaches of the pile. The lower areas received cover from material generated at two other AML projects. The Hoods Fork and Curtis Johnson AML projects involved the reclamation of two landslides caused by abandoned mines. These two landslides were located within trucking distance of Spewing Camp Branch. Since both projects required DAML to locate an area to place the excavated landslide material, DAML decided to make these projects satellites of the larger refuse project. Earth material from these two sites was transported to the Spewing Camp refuse project and used for cover.

After the refuse was covered, drainage features were installed. Ditches were constructed and lined with rock to prevent erosion, and the area was reseeded. DAML employed a seed mix that contained a wildlife-friendly blend of species including clovers particularly attractive to elk.

Funding for the Spewing Camp Branch Refuse Project came from four different sources. The primary source, contributing \$2.1 million, was the Commonwealth's Federal Abandoned Mine Land Grant. Also, \$723,297 in funding from the Appalachian Clean Streams Initiative, made available by the federal Office of Surface Mining, was used. DAML also contributed \$406,665 from the state supplemental reclamation fund to supplement the forfeited Enerpro reclamation bond.



Aerial View of Refuse Prior to Project

2002

Indiana Wins Midcontinent Award With Sugar Ridge Project



Reclamation activities at AML Site 380, within Sugar Ridge Area 1, won the 2005 Mid-Continent OSM Award. The Sugar Ridge Fish & Wildlife Area located in Pike County in Indiana offers nearly 100 pits and lakes, some with trout, and thousands of acres of forested spoils that provide prime opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife watching. Both the State endangered Bobcat and River Otter make their home in the woods and waters of this property. Unfortunately, as was often the case, parts of this property contained the scars of past coal mining activities including barren coal refuse and acid mine drainage.

Problems at this site were the result of the operations of an old tipple site, rail load out and coal refuse area that occurred in 1939 and 1940 by an unknown operator. Negative aspects of these operations resulted in approximately 19 acres of mostly barren coal refuse and two acres of pit bottoms that produced off-site drainage with an average pH of around 3 and elevated heavy metal concentrations.

Objectives of the reclamation project included reducing the adverse off-site contamination caused by the barren coal refuse and acidic pit bottoms, improving the aesthetic value of the area, and creating valuable wildlife habitat. Reclamation consisted primarily of consolidating and burying the coal refuse in a designated area, redirecting drainage through constructed channels, covering barren pit bottoms, cleaning up trash and concrete foundations, building both a passive treatment wetland and a wildlife wetland and revegetating all disturbed areas.

During the early design phase, we discovered that there was only limited available borrow material to cover the exposed coal refuse at this site. This would force direct re-vegetation on much of the area, compromising the acid mine drainage remediation process. When approached, Sugar Ridge personnel were more than willing to offer adjacent, undisturbed, fallow fields to be used as a source of high quality borrow material. In return we would not dig a typical, deep, straight sided, borrow pit that offers limited wildlife value, but instead, create a highly variable, shallow water wetland complete with adjustable water control structure and native vegetation. This collaborative effort resulted in a much higher quality reclamation project.

Coal refuse that was scattered throughout this site was gathered up and consolidated into a refuse disposal area. Refuse was heavily limed and then covered with two feet of high quality

clay in an effort to encapsulate the acid forming material and reduce, if not eliminate, the production of acid mine drainage. A part of the site was shaped so that drainage would flow off the area and into designated channels, reducing sedimentation as well as recharge of the acid forming materials below. As a final attempt to improve water quality, a small passive treatment wetland was developed in the main drainage channel just prior to where it leaves the site.

The fallow field where the borrow area was developed consisted of a very heavy, very deep clay soil. This heavy clay was an ideal cover material, as it would form a barrier to water infiltration into the coal refuse. However, excavation of this material proved to be extremely difficult. Not only was this a naturally low lying field, but an unusually wet spring and summer



season only exacerbated the situation. Instead of excavating borrow with scrapers, unsuccessful because the wet clay soil, the contractor used large excavators and trucks, which required a major revision of the contractor's equipment. With a little ingenuity and a lot of persistence, he was finally able to excavate the required yardage and shape the final contours.

Former barren areas, now well vegetated, are used by many species including rabbits, deer, turkey and bobwhite quail. Wetland areas have already attracted large numbers of waterfowl, and are also utilized by many other mammals, reptiles, birds and amphibians. The response of the wildlife was the ultimate "seal of approval" for this wetland and was topped off by the arrival of a pair of endangered Whooping cranes that stopped over briefly on their northern migration. The public enjoys all of this while fishing, hunting or wildlife watching. Not only has an abandoned mine land area been restored to a productive land use with improved water quality, but a public area has been greatly enhanced by this project.

By Bruce Stevens



Aigner Construction's Jeremy Aigner and Darren McClellan with Steve Herbert of Indiana AML

Unique Project Wins Colorado Western Reclamation Award



Sterling Rideout - OSM, Loretta Pineda and Julie Annear - Colorado AML, Henry Austin - OSM

Colorado was the recipient of the Western Region reclamation award. The winning project was a cooperative effort with the Environmental Science and Technology Program at Mesa State College. This cooperative effort matches two program missions of educational outreach and reclamation design and project implementation for a substantially reduced cost.



Mesa State College (MSC) in Grand Junction, Colorado (enrollment 6,300 students) is near areas of inactive coal and non-coal mines in western Colorado. MSC graduates ten to fifteen students each year with a B.S. in Environmental Science and Technology.

This program (which dates back to 1990) provides students with a solid foundation in the traditional sciences (such as biology, chemistry, and geology), then builds on this foundation in its Environmental Science courses, applying knowledge from the traditional sciences to the study and resolution of environmental problems. The program balances theory with many hours of hands-on, practical field training. Because of this initiative, over the past three years, the program faculty has increased the emphasis on reclamation and restoration in both classroom and field.

Originated by the Division of Minerals & Geology, the project was set up for students in the Environmental Science and Technology Program at MSC to participate in reclamation of real world abandoned mining sites. Five students were involved in the project over a two-year period. Their first step was to complete a special topics course in Mined Land Reclamation taught by Paul Krabacher (Colorado Inactive Mine Reclamation Program). These students continued their efforts through independent projects, conducting site inventories, developing reclamation alternatives, and drafting construction specifications. The students conducted mandatory pre-bid meetings and concluded their efforts by overseeing construction. Krabacher and Russ Walker (Professor of Environmental Science and Technology) supervised the students.

The hazard abatement work associated with this project is typical of hundreds of reclamation projects completed by the Colorado Inactive Mine Reclamation Program over the past 25 years, however the unique partnership with Mesa State College and opportunity for young people to learn about abandoned mines and environmental restoration from a reclamation professional and then participate in the actual real-world mine closure work is rare.

The project is also exemplary for several other reasons:

Hazards Abated: Four hazardous mine openings were sealed; three features now provide bat habitat for sensitive species and the historical and natural character of the sites was maintained.

Educational Opportunities: Mesa State College environmental science students had the unique opportunity of participating in a real-world mine reclamation project – from “cradle-to-grave”, from original site inventory work through overseeing the closure of abandoned mines sites and safeguarding 4 mine sites in Western Colorado. Abandoned mines present a clear and present danger to many visitors in western Colorado. The students learned about the hazards and environmental problems associated with abandoned mines and the tasks related to designing specifications. “This is an unusual opportunity for our students to take what they’ve learned in the classroom setting and actually apply it at a real mine site,” said Dr. Russ Walker, professor of environmental restoration. “It may be the only student-facilitated project of its kind in the country.”

Thanks to the Division of Minerals and Geology, my students were able to work through the step-by-step process associated with mine closures,” said Walker. “They participated in the initial assessment, developed a workable closure procedure and, now, will also be able to see the project’s culmination.”

“This is an awesome training experience because it’s a real work situation,” said

Robert Wilson, MSC student.

“I appreciate the opportunity to apply skills learned in my classes. This work has given me extra confidence”, said Danika Urban.

Wildlife Enhancement: At the request of the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the bat habitat was taken into consideration as closure method for the three of the four mine sites and native vegetation was also reintroduced.

Public Land Management: The mine sites are on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management’s Glenwood Springs and Grand Junction Field Offices. Both offices provided NEPA clearances.



Pennsylvania Showcases Dangerous Highwall Reclamation Project Monongahela South No. 1

A unique reclamation project was completed by the PA-DEP, Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation during 2004-05. The project involved the stabilization of a dangerous and deteriorating highwall that threatened the parishioners of St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Church in the City of Monongahela, Washington County. The eastern 2/3 of the highwall was stabilized by cutting the slope back to a stable slope. The western 1/3 of the highwall was stabilized by constructing a retaining wall. The highwall could not be cut back in this area due to residential properties and a city street located at the top of the slope.

The Monongahela South No. 1 Site is located in the City of Monongahela, Pennsylvania, just off Park Avenue approximately 500 feet from the intersection with Main Street. The site is on the hillside on the north side of Park Avenue, adjacent to St. Anthony's Church and School. The site consisted of a deteriorating highwall approximately 1,000 feet long, which ran along a driveway next to the church, parochial school, and a parish house. The highwall was typically 40 feet high with the following profile from bottom to top: approximately six feet of Pittsburgh coal; approximately 20 feet of sandy shale; approximately 3 to 4 feet of sandstone; and a soil mantle that varied in thickness. The hillside immediately above

the highwall was very steep (approximately 1H: 1V) with residential streets and homes located immediately at the top of the slope.

Differential weathering on the exposed highwall had caused the more competent sandstone layer near the top of the highwall to jut out from the less resistant underlying shale causing treacherous overhangs that eventually would break off and fall onto the driveway located behind the church and school. Several automobiles were severely damaged by rock falls from the highwall during church services. The school at the site had been closed for several years due to the dangerous condition posed by the highwall. The highwall poses the danger of falling rock to pedestrians and automobiles traveling along the driveway at the base, as well as the danger of falling off a cliff to individuals walking along the top of the highwall. St. Anthony's Parish plans to re-open the school once all reclamation work is completed. A secondary benefit for the parish of cutting the highwall back was the widening of the driveway next to the church to provide an additional parking area.

Eric Cavazza, P.E., PA-DEP, Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation



Ohio's Lindentree AMD Reclamation Project



The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mineral Resources Management (MRM), in conjunction with the Office of Surface Mining and the Huff Run Watershed Restoration Partnership, Inc. (HRWRP) has completed the Lindentree Project, an acid mine drainage (AMD) mitigation project in Eastern Ohio. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency awarded an implementation grant to pay for construction costs associated with the Lindentree site and three additional projects in the Huff Run Watershed.

Ed Taggart, President of the Huff Run Watershed Restoration Partnership in Mineral City, Ohio announced the completion of the \$200,000 project. "The project involves draining old mine pits and treating the water with limestone rip rap to take the acid out," Taggart said. "It is the fifth project completed in partnership with our citizen's group," he added.

The project is located in the Northeast Hills Region of Ohio in the counties of Carroll and Tuscarawas. The watershed covers approximately 14.7 square miles. Huff Run originates in northwest Carroll County and flows southwesterly into Tuscarawas County where it empties into



Conotton Creek, a tributary of the Tuscarawas River. The total stream length is approximately 9.9 linear miles with only 2.9 miles in full attainment of its potential warm-water habitat. Two miles are listed as fair quality and five miles listed as poor quality with a total of seven miles not in aquatic use attainment.

In the year 2000, Gannett Fleming Consulting completed an Acid Mine Drainage Abatement and Treatment (AMDAT) plan for the Huff Run Watershed Restoration Partnership through the MRM. The study was an intensive investigation of the watershed and identified priority problem areas including the Lindentree site. AMDAT noted that the most upstream adverse biological conditions exist in the vicinity of the project. The project area includes four acidic impoundments contributing a net acid load of 20.97 lbs/day with a metals loading (iron and aluminum) of 1.23 lbs/day. The AMDAT suggests that stream restoration occur in an upstream to downstream manner, eliminating site metals discharges while buffering in stream low-flow pH excursions. The Lindentree project meets these criteria due to its relative upstream location.

To mitigate the AMD discharge problems while minimizing impacts to Huff Run, the following mitigation measures were implemented: draining the existing four acidic impoundments with alkaline treatment of AMD during dewatering and thereby eliminating the main sources of AMD seepages; excavating, backfilling, and grading the dewatered impoundment areas to provide positive drainage; constructing grass-lined and alkaline rock (limestone riprap and basic steel slag) channels for collection and diversion of surface water; construction of alkaline rock channels followed by settling pond and aerobic wetlands as part of passive treatment system for future AMD seepages; and restoration of the existing central main drainage channel.

Following a November 2004 completion, seven months of post construction sampling indicating that the pH has been raised from 3.9 to 6.7, net alkaline discharges are averaging 63.2mg/L and total iron concentrations reduced from 6.5 mg/L to 1.1mg/L.

By: Jim Gue –
Project Officer &
Cheryl Socotch –
Hydrologist



NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SPECIFICATIONS

400 - 500 words. Articles subject to editing. Submit in e-mail or hard copy. 2 photo limit. Include author's name, title of article, captions for photos. Submit photos in TIF (preferred) or JPG format, 300 DPI, and original photo size. E-mail photos as individual files, not embedded.

Deadline for the Spring edition is April 15, 2006.

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