

WRTT Conference Call

November 1st, 2010

Monday 1:00 PM Mountain Time

Call: 1-877-612-4949 Passcode: 8870122

WRTT

TIPS, Technology Transfer, Training and General Information:

- Please check out the updated **TIPS** website for recent updates! These are located in the “What’s New?” section of the page.
<http://www.tips.osmre.gov>
- Please check out the updated **NTTT** website for recent updates! These are located at: <http://www.techtransfer.osmre.gov>
- Check out the newly designed **OSMRE** website at: <http://www.osmre.gov>
- Check out the newly designed **OSMRE-WR** website at:
<http://www.wrcc.osmre.gov>
- Please review the *new* **WRTT** *SharePoint* site at:
<https://nttt.osmre.gov/TechTransfer/default.aspx>
- Upcoming events: <http://amd.osmre.gov/ttcalroot/TTCalendar.aspx>

Discussion Topic(s):

The annual ASMR (American Society of Mining and Reclamation) meeting will be held in Bismarck, ND on June 12-16, 2011. We propose having a meeting titled “*Challenges of Bond Release for Western U.S. Coal Mining*” and would like to invite all states/tribes to attend and/or present at this meeting. We are also proposing having a WRTT (Western Region Technology Transfer Team) meeting during the conference. Would you:

- Be interested in presenting your thoughts/ideas concerning bond release during this meeting?
- Like to have a half day WRTT workshop, or, would you like to have a “normal” hour long WRTT meeting?

Note: Brenda Schladweiler, consultant, will be our guest speaker during the call and will fill us in on the planned “*Challenges of Bond Release for Western U.S. Coal Mining*” meeting and just what this meeting may entail.

Brenda Schladweiler, consultant, was the guest speaker on the WRTT call today. Brenda mentioned that the workshop: “Bond Release Challenges in Coal Mining Operations for the Western U.S.” would be offered on June 14th, 2011 during the ASMR conference and would most likely be a ½ day event. She also stated that she would like to get a commitment from any states/tribes that would like to participate in this workshop by

December 1st, 2010. Presentations would last, on average, 20-30 minutes. A panel discussion was also suggested.

The term “embrace flexibility” came up during the call. This applied to the workshop and, Steve Schroeder embraced this concept stating that the workshop could take a full day if needed. Anna Waitkus approved of this term also, as, she stated that some presenters may need much more time than the 20-30 minute sessions allowed to fully present their ideas. She also noted that OSMRE should be listed as an active participant. Brenda suggested that all participants give her a reasonable estimate on just how long their presentations may last. Lists of workshop topics are:

Topics:

1. Requirements of bond release verification

- Specific requirements for various bond phases for specific land categories (if there are existing land categories e.g. WY has five)
- how the specific requirements for various bond phases are verified in the field and stored for further processing and e.g. topsoil application, backfill and grading to the post mine topography etc.

2. Phases of bond release

- What’s the difference for various states as compared to three phases required by OSMRE?
- Land categories e.g. Wyoming has 5 land categories with different requirements for various phases of bond release
- Summary of acreage and money that was released from different phases as compared to area that was disturbed and reclaimed

3. Tracking of bond release requirements (e-tools, geodatabases, and others)

- How states/mines are tracking areas that were verified for specific requirements
- How states/mines are tracking areas that were bond released (various phases)

5. Others

- bonding instruments
- How to calculate bond

Wyoming suggested that Dave Buckner participate in the workshop as he has multi-state experiences with bond release applications.

North Dakota liked the idea of having such a workshop as they may be able to use the ideas they learn about bond release from other states.

Navajo Nation stated that consultants weren’t really necessary in such a workshop and that just federal, state and tribal organizations, along with the companies themselves, should be the only ones involved.

WRTT has, at this time, a time slot on the ASMR agenda from 1:30-4:30 pm, Wednesday June 15th, 2011.

WRTT Member Reports/Information

Alaska: Ongoing AML projects: North Jones Shafts, Slipper Lake fire rings. There is a possibility of reclaiming a large Usibelli Corporation highwall. There is a new exploration permit (Chuitna) that has been submitted. Alaska noted that more public outreach is needed to inform the public about new mine permits.

Arizona (Navajo): V: The division plans on hiring two new folks by May, 2011. A 2005 permit that had been renewed is now remanded. The EIS needs to be redone (see document posted to the WRTT SharePoint site). Two new bond releases are going to take place in the near future at the McKinley mine in New Mexico.

IV: A technical assistance request was submitted to OSMRE regarding geomorphic design. An overview of both the La Plata Mine and the Navajo Mine were given by OSMRE personnel to show geomorphic design in the field. A December trip is planned to look at sites on the Western end of the Navajo Reservation.

Arizona (Hopi): Not present.

Colorado: IV: Coal work is to be done in both the Southeast and Southwest areas of Colorado. These will involve projects like coal waste cleanup and portal closures. A lot of work was accomplished in the hardrock field. Much of this work took place in the Central City/Blackhawk/Fremont areas.

Montana: Present/nothing to report.

Montana (Crow): Present/nothing to report.

New Mexico: V: There is an ongoing Sierra Club lawsuit regarding fly ash disposal at the San Juan mine. The opening of a new mine is being discussed for the Cuba, NM area. Discussions are being held with the BLM. Linda Delay is working with Dianne Osborne on the McKinley Mine (part of the pilot project). Three bond releases are soon to take place: La Plata mine/McKinley mine/York canyon mine. Please read the MMD newsletter (just posted it to the WRTT SharePoint site).

IV: There were seven ongoing construction projects this fall. We received \$125,000 for a stream re-construction project to be completed near Raton, NM.

North Dakota: Ongoing revisions. A review of the Falkirk mine is taking place. There are numerous bond release applications pending. A new mine may be developed (South Heart).

Utah: Three ongoing AML projects. One is a coal project and two are hard rock projects. Public meetings are taking place in regards to the reclamation needed at a coal mine in the Grand Staircase area. In the San Rafael swell area, an interesting note: Before work can commence on some AML sites, oral history is being taken in regards to that area. The White Oak bond forfeiture work is ongoing.

Wyoming: A new mine application was submitted (Haystack mine). The e-permitting initiative is back on track. The GIS database is well developed. A recent political move may cause future permitting to be done by consultants. Wyoming noted that recent public comments show many misunderstandings by the public and that more outreach is needed.

Casper Field Office: A new GIS position has been advertised and will close on November 9th, 2010. Otherwise, everything is status quo.

Program Support Division/Albuquerque Area Office/Farmington Area Office: **Not present**

Denver Field Division/ Olympia Area Office: **Present/nothing to report.**

TIPS: The recent budget has affected the TIPS program. Last year we had 27 classes. This year, we will have 20.

Next Call: December 14th, 2010 (subject to change)