

# WRTT Conference Call

July 19th, 2011

Tuesday 11:00 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. **\*Note: A new version of the TIPS website will be unveiled soon (TBA). Please check the site frequently.**  
<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>
- Please review the WRTT annual meeting notes!

### Discussion Topic:

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) is dedicated to, as our website states, “Regulating coal mines, reclaiming abandoned mine lands and applying science and technology”.

One way we attempt to do this is via “technical assistance” through our Technical Innovation and Professional Services (TIPS) program. Currently, we provide technical assistance by loaning equipment to federal, state and tribal offices in an effort to help each office accomplish their mission of regulating active coal mines and reclaiming abandoned coal mines.

Do you like the way we currently administer this type of technical assistance? Do you have any suggestions on how OSMRE might increase the effectiveness of its loaned equipment program? For planning and budget purposes, do any of you have an immediate need of one of our pieces of loaner equipment?

UT began the meeting by asking if Arcmap 10 was now available. TIPS responded by saying that, yes, it was available. There had been flaws with patches associated with the original release. ESRI had further changes to make in regards with the agreement between OSMRE and themselves. TIPS stated that, if needs be, the program could be sent to UT.

MT stated that more guidance may be needed in regards to the equipment (i.e. the FLIR camera). For instance: What are our expectations? How do you use the equipment? What's the best time of day to use it? Can it be used from an airplane/helicopter? In essence, a better instruction manual (or even a "cheat sheet"). NM mentioned that a "red-eye" used by the national park service worked very well from an aircraft to detect fires (they only flew during night time hours). TIPS thought that ND had done something very similar to that with our old FLIR camera and gotten mixed results.

NM stated that service had been great so far and that they had not had to wait for equipment at all. ND stated that the "seed technology" equipment had not arrived yet. OSM noted that all the equipment should come with a "cheat sheet".

AK noted that they could use the FLIR camera for a project near Healy, AK.

UT noted that the new TIPS page already had an error: The equipment site has links to PDF files describing each piece of equipment. Those links were broken.

UT also noted that water quality meters might be nice pieces of equipment to have as "loaners". TIPS noted that purchase of water quality testing equipment is not currently provided by TIPS because it is a relatively low-cost item that SMCRA programs normally purchase on their own. TIPS purchases equipment that is new technology and higher cost that a state or tribal program may be reluctant to purchase until they have been shown that the technology is of use to their program. This is the premise for the TIPS "seeding technology" program. Several folks in the group remarked that their programs already have water quality test equipment available. OSM asked the question to the group: How many of you defer your responsibilities to another agency in regards to water sampling? The resounding answer was that most did. NM noted that sampling water extended out to other areas other than for regulatory reasons.

OSM noted that a planning calendar would be nice for planning purposes in regards to the distribution of equipment. TIPS stated that this was in the works for the newly revised website.

Hopi stated that they may not know how to use a piece of equipment, but, may want to use that piece of equipment. How were they supposed to handle that situation? OSM responded that: 1) A demonstration by the company might do the trick, or, 2) An OSM representative could come down with the equipment and show them how to use it. Hopi also noted that a demonstration to a group might be good. A quarterly meeting would be a good place to show off OSM loaner equipment. UT noted that a field symposium would be a good idea.

No one else had any comments/questions.

### **WRTT Member Reports/Information**

Alaska: AK is reviewing applications from Linc Energy Operations, Inc. to conduct coal exploration under AS 27.21 on Mental Health Trust Lands near Healy and Anderson to assess potential for underground coal gasification. Linc proposes to drill two exploration holes to a depth of approximately 3500 feet each.

They are also reviewing another Tyonek Exploration permit submitted by Linc Energy Operations to conduct exploration for UCG evaluation. Two drill holes have been proposed.

Arizona (Navajo): Not present.

Arizona (Hopi): Ongoing program development. Consultants are working on tribal government, and, working on how tribal government and SMCRA relate to each other. Hopi requested assistance on area J-23 for “pre-planning” purposes. This would be in regard to redesign of reclamation practices.

Colorado: Not present.

Montana: Montana is currently waiting on amendment comments. MT DEQ just hired a new hydrologist! Otherwise, it is business as usual.

Montana (Crow): Not present.

New Mexico: The FLIR camera is tentatively scheduled for a mine fire exercise during the month of October. Chuck Thomas retired and Fernando Martinez is the new director. The MMD notes are on temporary hiatus as the person doing those notes has left the agency. A large phase I bond release- 3400 ac- is soon to take place at the McKinley mine. AML has 3 ongoing projects. NM recently hired two new archeologists!

North Dakota: Steve Schroeder has officially retired. An informal conference was conducted for the new South Heart mine permit.

Utah: One new underground permit has been approved near Scofield, UT. UT is in need to hydrologists as two of their hydrologists recently retired.

Wyoming: Not present.

Casper Field Office: Not present.

Program Support Division/Albuquerque Area Office/Farmington Area Office: Pending...

Denver Field Division/ Olympia Area Office: Not present.

TIPS: The TIPS website is now up and running! OSM is in need of a GIS Geographer.

**Next Call: August 16th, 2011 (subject to change)**