

MINING AND RECLAMATION ADVISORY BOARD (MRAB)

Monday, August 15, 2005

4:00 P.M.

**Waterfront Room, Sheraton Station Square
Pittsburgh, PA**

Members/Alternates in attendance: David Osikowicz (Chair), Jack Chamberlin (Member), Stan Geary (Alternate), Sue Germanio (Alternate), David Mankamyer (Member), Margaret Urban (Alternate) and Walter Heine (Member).

Others in attendance: Jim Charowsky (DEP), Deb Simko (Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation), Mike Terretti (DEP), Scott Horrell (DEP), Joe Pizarchik (DEP), Rick Lamkie (DEP), and Lara Logan (DEP).

Meeting Called to Order

Chairman David Osikowicz called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. He welcomed everyone and asked them to introduce themselves. The minutes from the April 28, 2005 meeting was unable to be voted upon, as the Board did not have a quorum in attendance.

Correspondence

Chairman Osikowicz received a resignation letter from Fred Wolf, citing health concerns as his reason for stepping down from the board.

Committee Reports

- No Policy Committee report.
- No Reclamation Committee report.
- No Regulation, Legislation and Technical report.

Botanic Gardens on Abandoned Coal Lands in Western Pennsylvania

- Lindsay Bond Totten and Robert Hedin from the Botanic Gardens of Western Pennsylvania gave a presentation on a proposed project to reclaim an abandoned coal mine area in Allegheny County and build a Botanic Garden on the site. The project is proposed to begin in 2006.

Proposed Shaft Blasting Regulations

- Rick Lamkie, Chief of Explosives and Safety for DEP, spoke on the development of new regulations regarding blasting entryways and shafts. Currently, District Mining Offices (DMOs) regulate surface blasting and the Bureau of Deep Mine Safety (BDMS) regulates underground blasting. The proposed new regulations intend to clarify responsibility between the DMOs and BDMS pertaining to slope development in deep mines. The draft rulemaking package will be available for the Board members by the October meeting, and will go before the Environmental Quality Board in November.

Key Obligation – Provide the MRAB members with the draft rulemaking package as early as possible.

Consistency in Reporting Miles of Acid Mine Drainage-Impaired Streams and Acres of Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Requiring Reclamation

- Mike Terretti and Scott Horrell of the Bureau of District Mining Operations spoke on reporting of statistical information. Both agreed that as more streams are assessed and additional complaints are investigated the total mileage of impacted streams and acreage of AML will increase.

Update on Land Maintenance Financial Guarantees (LMFG), Blanket Bonds and Regulations and Statutes

- Joe Pizarchik discussed LMFG, Blanket Bonds, and updated regulations and statutes.
- The LMFG final guidance is complete and is waiting for operators to take advantage of it.
- The Department is still trying to acquire funding for appropriate computer upgrades to aid in the new blanket bonding process.
- The shaft blasting regulations are currently in process, as well as a rulemaking package currently in preparation regarding elimination of the \$100/acre reclamation fee. The water supply replacement regulations have been delayed slightly due to staff restraints.
- Bonding regulations are scheduled to go before the Independent Regulatory Review Commission at their next meeting in August.

New Business

- Stan Geary asked the Department to bring someone to the next Board meeting to explain how to use the online PNDI resource.
- The Growing Greener 2 legislation includes provisions providing money for cleaning up watersheds, for dealing with AMD discharges and financial/technical incentives to encourage re-mining. A preliminary list of suggestions has been compiled by the Department.

Chairman Osikowicz concluded the meeting at 5:40 p.m.