

WPCAMR Regional Coordinator's Report

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LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

STATE

Senate Bill #411 in the PA General Assembly

Earlier this year, Senate Bill #411 was introduced in the Senate. In a nutshell, that bill addresses liability issues for landowners and gas companies who wish to use AMD for gas well development. To my knowledge, this bill still has not been re-introduced yet.

FEDERAL

SMCRA-Related that are still out there

- S.222 and H.R. 488. Allowing for non-coal use of states' smcra grant funds. **Latest Major Action on S.222:** 4/22/2013 Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. **Latest Major Action on H.R. 488:** 2/8/2013 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
- S. 468 introduced by Sen. Rockefeller (D-WV) and H.R. 980 introduced by Rep. Rahall (D-WV)—revival of CARE Act regarding use of accrued interest and excess treasury funds under Title IV to pay for UMW retirees.to expand coverage for miners who were impacted by recent bankruptcies, such as with Patriot Mining. **Latest Major Action:** 3/6/2013 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.
- OSM's FY2014 proposed budget: Two main actions, one to eliminate payments to certified states and tribes, next regards setting up a hardrock AML fee and program.

Sequestration

- PA's annual AML grant is still down due to sequestration. Uncertain as to whether that will be restored. Appears that sequestration will be part of FY2014.

Other Initiatives on the Federal Front

- Talk of a potential Good Samaritan Bill to help coalfield AML work. Still nothing tangible yet.
- HR2218 sponsored by McKinley (R-WV)--encourage recovery and beneficial use of coal combustion residuals and establish requirements for the proper management

and disposal of coal combustion residuals that are protective of human health and the environment. Passed in the House. **Latest Major Action:** 7/30/2013 Read the second time. Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders

- Mine Placement of CCRs – rule has begun the surname process at Interior. Then will proceed to OMB. OSM still hopes to propose a rule by year's end.

Federal Environmental Good Samaritan Protection

I've had several conversations with EPA staff over the past year regarding the need for Federal Environmental Good Samaritan protection for watershed groups, Conservation Districts, and others who run AMD treatment systems. It appears that they are beginning to understand our situation and talks have been very constructive. We, as a group, need to craft a needs statement regarding Good Sam. Once we have a unified message to present to EPA, we may be able to see some progress, either administratively, by EPA or if that doesn't work, to take the message as a community to Capitol Hill. WPCAMR is working with Amy Wolfe from Trout Unlimited to determine interest in the issue from our PA community. Other members of our Ad Hoc Good Sam group will be approaching national environmental groups to determine their interest.

OTHER ITEMS

2013 Statewide AMR Conference

The 15th Annual Statewide AMR Conference was, August 8-10, 2013. The venue for the Conference was the Ramada Inn and Conference Center in State College. Attendance was lower this year with few watershed groups present.

We are continuing to plan out the 2014 conference which will be held at an earlier date than this year. The 2014 conference will be in conjunction with ARIPPA's annual meeting.

Anne will also provide more information on the activities surrounding the conference planning in her report.

Meetings

- 2013 AMR Conference, State College. Presentations on legislative update regarding SMCRA and co-presented another talk about the need for Federal Environmental Good Samaritan protection.
- Organized meeting with members of waste coal power generating community at Colver Plant to discuss their needs with FPW.

- Visited with Clearfield CD staff and TU staff and discussed potential use of AMD by gas industry.
- Attended the 2013 Shale Gas conference in Philadelphia in September. Met with EPA as well as with gas industry reps.
- Met with ARIPPA and Ramada at State College in November to go over particulars for the 2014 AMR conference.
- Meeting at FPW to discuss plan to address the need for federal environmental good Samaritan protection on November 8, 2013.

2013 Financial Audit

Henninger Associates has sent us an engagement letter to do our 2013 audit. Related to the 2012 audit comments from Henninger, I have prepared draft “Whistleblower” and “Conflict of Interest” policies for board review.