



# DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

## OFFICE OF MINE RECLAMATION

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### California Abandoned Mine Lands Forum

Wednesday, June, 18, 2008

10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

### MINUTES

<b>ATTENDING</b>
1. Alan Coyner, Nevada Department of Minerals
2. Charles Alpers, U.S. Geological Survey
3. Craig Turner, Department of Conservation, Abandoned Mine Lands Unit
4. Cy Oggins, Department of Conservation, Abandoned Mine Lands Unit
5. Dave Lawler, U.S. Bureau of Land Management
6. Dave Seter, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
7. David Sederquist, Youngdahl Consulting Group
8. Grant Eisen, Nevada County
9. Greg Pelka, State Lands Commission
10. Jim Tjosvold, Department of Toxic Substances Control
11. John Hillenbrand, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
12. Mike Zabaneh, Department of Parks and Recreation
13. Randy Adams, Department of Toxic Substances Control
14. Sarah Reeves, Department of Conservation, Abandoned Mine Lands Unit
15. Tracy Gidel, Facilitator
16. Victor Izzo, RWQCB
17. Brad Hall, ERRG
18. J.C. Isham, Shaw Group, Inc.
19. Curtis Lindskog, Shaw Group, Inc.
20. Gene Mullenmeister, Shaw Group, Inc.
21. Greg Reller, Burleson Consulting, Inc.
22. Wendell Smith, Blue Sky Technologies
23. Bill Whiteside, Blue Sky Technologies
24. Rick Fears, Department of Toxic Substances Control
25. James Ramos, Department of Toxic Substances Control
26. Greg Mclver, The Source Group, Inc.
27. Melissa Brito, Barrick
28. Matthew Lesh, Geocon
<b>PARTICIPATING BY PHONE</b>
29. Syd Brown, State Parks
30. Bill Harmon, Placer Co. Environmental Health Department
31. Pat Rath, ISP Minerals

**1. Welcome, Introductions, & Announcements** (start time: 10:05 a.m.)

Cy started the meeting by introducing Tracy Gidel as the new meeting facilitator. Tracy welcomed California Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Forum attendees and reminded participants to sign in to help update the Forum distribution list. Tracy then asked for introductions (name and agency/organization).

**2. Review Agenda and Previous Meeting Minutes**

Tracy directed the forum's attention to the current agenda and previous meeting minutes and asked if there was a need for any additions to the agenda or errors or omissions in the draft minutes for the March 19, 2008 meeting. No changes were recommended and they were approved for posting. Anyone who wishes to suggest corrections to the minutes can do so by email to Sarah Reeves of the AMLU at: [Sarah.Reeves@conservation.ca.gov](mailto:Sarah.Reeves@conservation.ca.gov).

**3. Overview of Nevada's AML Program and Site Selection Process** (Alan Coyner, Nevada Department of Minerals)

Alan provided an overview of the State of Nevada's AML program. The Nevada Legislature created the Abandoned Mine Lands Program in 1987 as a result of the number of deaths and injuries related to abandoned mines. The program is addressing the result of over 150 years of mining activity. This activity has resulted in over 200,000 mining-related features identified of which an estimated 50,000 are considered hazardous to people. Nevada's AML program has three mandated activities: statewide inventory of sites, securing of hazardous mines and implementing a public awareness campaign.

The program is implemented through the Nevada Division of Minerals. The Nevada Division of Minerals is not a regulatory agency but rather is a state agency reporting to a commission, the Commission on Mineral Resources. The Commission is made up of seven representatives from the mining industry appointed by the Governor. The Division budget is \$1.2 million with two offices and 10 staff: an office in Carson City, NV with eight staff and the other in Las Vegas with two staff. The entire program budget comes from fees, the majority of which is from a mining claim fee of \$6.50. There are approximately 220,000 claims currently in Nevada.

Nevada's program uses college interns and Eagle Scouts to assist in the locating, identifying, hazard ranking and securing of hazardous mine sites. As of 2007, the program has secured approximately more than 600 hazardous features, including 156 by six summer interns, 21 by Boy Scouts, and 108 sites backfilled through multi-agency and industry volunteer efforts. In addition, 965 new sites have been logged and 3,100 non-hazards identified.

Public education is also a mainstay of Nevada's AML program. The program's 2007 "Stay Out, Stay Alive" Campaign included a Public Service Announcement (co-produced with BLM), educational materials provided to public schools, 100 AML

presentations to more than 2,900 school children, and AML brochures sent to 4th and 8th grade classrooms statewide.

To address environmental issues associated with AML sites, in March 1999, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) - Nevada State Office initiated the formation of an Interagency Abandoned Mine Land Environmental Task Force (IAMLET) to begin remediating abandoned mine land (AML) environmental problems associated with watersheds in Nevada. A subsequent IAMLET report led to the formation of the current Nevada Abandoned Mine Lands Environmental Task Force (NAMLET). NAMLET participants include: BLM, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Nevada Division of Minerals, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, Nevada Division of Wildlife, Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology, and the Desert Research Institute. This taskforce credits its success in focusing on 33 sites and addressing those things that are "doable."

NAMLET's accomplishments are aided by outside resources such as assistance from the Restoration of Abandoned Mine Sites (RAMS) Program implemented through the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). This has often been the economic driver for NAMLET projects. Funding occurs through a leveraging process started with the ACOE and then picked up by a land management agency. The process requires commitment, agency cooperation, and time.

Alan's power point presentation is viewable on the AML Forum web page at: [www.conservation.ca.gov/omr/abandoned\\_mine\\_lands/Pages/amlu\\_forum.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/omr/abandoned_mine_lands/Pages/amlu_forum.aspx)

**4. Presentation on the Investigation of a Collapsed Adit under a Residence near Placerville (David Sederquist, Youngdahl Consulting Group)**

David showed a PowerPoint presentation and short video covering his firm's response to a reported depression appearing in the back yard of a residence. During the investigation, access to reliable historical data was necessary. David used the local library, historical maps and aerial photos for clues on the possible cause of the reported irregularity. A field investigation was then conducted taking into consideration the findings from his research. At the site in question, several clues of past mining were noted. Ultimately, a drift tunnel from an abandoned mine was located crossing below the residence.

In order to keep the response cost under control, David recommends whenever possible to keep the owner and his contractors involved in the investigation and to be prepared to consider suggestions that may seem unorthodox, if practical, while maintaining site safety. David's options allowed for the use of low-tech and medium-tech methods, including trace wires and sewer cameras to assess the extent of the drift tunnel hazard and to allow for the timely low cost mitigation with 21 cubic yards of cement slurry. The project was completed in approximately 6 hours saving time and thousands of dollars. David's presentation is viewable on the Forum web page: [www.conservation.ca.gov/omr/abandoned\\_mine\\_lands/Pages/amlu\\_forum.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/omr/abandoned_mine_lands/Pages/amlu_forum.aspx)

## **5. Brainstorm of Details for a New Web-Based AML Clearinghouse (Tracy Gidel/All)**

Tracy introduced the topic of developing a new statewide web-based AML Clearinghouse (CH) and queried Forum members for ideas on its development: What types of information should be included? In what formats should information be provided? What access to the information should be given? The intent is to have the CH fit the needs of Forum members, clients, educators, and the public.

This effort is a continuation from a prior AML meeting held in Nevada City approximately 18 months ago and at the March AML meeting. Members expressed a desire for one location to go to locate information pertaining to AML issues in California. Currently the public may call AMLU staff asking for information on mitigating physical mine hazards or State Water Quality Control Board staff for information regarding water quality.

For this reason the Department of Conservation has agreed to fund the development and set up of the CH. The AMLU is not looking for control over other agencies regulatory powers but rather the development of a location where people can go to find the information they need.

The ensuing discussion covered:

- Agencies are interested in seeing information that covers what is being worked on currently, the status of the work and what is being planned for the future. For example, a Priority List, something that will allow for planning and assist in getting the full scope of the AML issues currently on the table.
- Several consultants were interested in seeing information site location, site ownership, the lead agency for the issues identified at the site, the nature of the hazards on site – Physical / Environmental, and how is it ranked. Note: Hazards ranking may be difficult due to a lack of uniformity among the agencies regarding issues and the method of ranking or scoring them.
- Cy Oggins indicated a desire of the AMLU to provide a listing of the contractors involved in AML projects. There would be no implied or given recommendation for those listed, simply a list, information on how to build a fence, the laws relating to AML, how to report an AML, section to make the public aware of the most recent methods and technologies, and something to make agencies at the local level aware of the AML issues.
- Jim Tjosvold, Department of Toxic Substances Control noted that DTSC has done some work in Nevada County regarding the development of property. DTSC is currently working with USEPA to improve information access.
- Another hurdle is that of the formats and types of current data available. To address this, Forum members expressed a desire to use the mapping program that Tracy Gidel developed in his 2006 AML presentation In Nevada City. This map may be expanded to include the information discussed today and others

that will be identified as necessary to include in the CH. This map will then be provided to the IT staff charged with making the CH web page. To this end there is a need for the AML Forum participants to identify the databases of interest along with supporting information on each. This should include a brief history on the database, how to access it, what format it is in, and the information available in it. This information can be e-mailed to Tracy at: tgidel@dishmail.net.

## **6. Other Items / New Business**

Cy indicated that the Mt. Diablo project in Contra Costa County recently received funding, \$560,000. There will be a stakeholders meeting on June 19 to get input from those who may be interested in the project.

## **7. Future Meeting and Agenda Ideas (All)**

The next meeting will be tentatively scheduled for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in August 2008.

The next Agenda will include:

- The review of the proposed survey regarding the development of the CH.
- A continued discussion on the development of the CH
- Jim Tjosvold, Department of Toxic Substances Control will provide a presentation on their Brownfield grant to address AML issues in Amador County at Sutter Creek.

## **8. Summary of Action Items from Meeting (Facilitator)**

- Members should submit ideas for inclusion in the CH or the proposed survey by August 1, 08. Things to consider:
  1. What databases do you want to include?
  2. What questions do you want to include in the survey?
  3. Who do you want to have included in the survey, including e-mail addresses.
- Tracy is to begin formatting a draft survey for review at the September AML meeting.

**ADJOURN:** 12:05 p.m.