

WPCAMR Regional Coordinator's Report

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LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

STATE

- We invited Acting Secretary Quigley on a field tour earlier this spring. We're happy to report that the Acting Secretary has taken us up on our offer. We are currently working on a list of candidate sites and a tour agenda.
- Also, as a reminder, until we have further clarification, with regard to the Wolf Administration's rules on no gifts, we'd like to remind our constituents to notify their DEP partners when you intend to provide a meal to participants when inviting them to field tours or other events.

FEDERAL

OSMRE Budget and Power + Plan

- It appears that the Administration's Power + plan (which includes the FY 16 OSMRE budget) is gaining momentum. There are several legislative actions that are proposed to be part of this budget. Among those are shoring up the UMWA combined benefits fund. We understand that the fund needs an infusion of funding within the next 18 months or risk not being solvent. We have been in contact with OSMRE and the office of the President with questions on how the Power + Plan would work and how it could affect payouts to states from SMCRA's Title IV. Understanding the momentum with this plan, this may be a good time to propose an amendment to SMCRA to ensure continuation of fee collection past the current expiration date of 2021.

SMCRA

- We are working with TU and OSMRE on the first cut of draft legislative language for the re-authorization of the Title IV fees for SMCRA and will present that to the PA AML Campaign members for review. Our next step will be to locate a legislative champion to carry the language to Congress. The PA AML Campaign has met three times since December to refine our needs for reauthorization and have come to consensus on what we would like to see in an amendment.

Sequestration

- Still goes on with PA losing funding from its annual Title IV grant. We understand that both sides of the political aisle want to remove sequestration as soon as possible. It's interesting to note that with the OSM proposed budget for FY2016, the additional funds proposed by the legislative proposal would likely be subject to sequestration if the legislative proposal passes and sequestration is still in effect.

OTHER ITEMS

Quick Response

We are currently expending funds from QR6 and QR7. We will likely be finishing up QR6 during the summer. No Quick Response projects were paid out since the last quarterly meeting in February: We've been in communication with DEP regarding more work that needs to be done at the Kalp Discharge treatment system. This project will be costly. There is the possibility of using Watershed Cooperative Agreement Program funding from OSMRE to cover most of those costs rather than tying up too much of the Quick Response funds.

2015 Statewide AMR Conference

We continue to be involved in the planning of the 2015 AMR Conference. The 2015 conference will be held in late June 2015. I'm attempting to get various federal and state agency leaders to present. Anne will provide a more in-depth update of the conference in her report.

OM&R Workgroup

We continue to work with Amy Wolfe from TU as part of the OM&R Workgroup to fashion a proposal that addresses the OM&R need for treatment systems not in Qualified Hydrologic Units. We have received some positive comments from our government agency partners.

Administrative

The WPCAMR office moved our office to a temporary location in the upper floor of the Greenforge Building (suite 201). The lower floor has been rented out to the PA Dept of Agriculture. We're working cooperatively with Greenforge and the County and hope to have a more permanent office space in the future.

2014 Financial Audit

I'm providing information to our auditor for our 2014 audit.

Meetings

- PA AML Campaign, Huntingdon