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LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

STATE

A \$50.8 billion state budget was signed into law on July 12, 2026, for the 2026–27 fiscal year, passing about 12 days after the June 30 deadline

FEDERAL

Senate Bills

The Senate passed HR6938 (PL 119-74) earlier this year which redirected a portion of the IIJA funding that was meant for AML. These funds will be redirected to DOI for wildfire management in western states and general operations at the Forest Service.

Because of this, Pennsylvania will lose approximately \$169M from the remaining 11 years of IIJA funding. OSMRE has been working on how they will redirect the funds to the western states and seems intent on doing it in a way that is the least problematic for the states. However, this summer, we understand that their lawyers decided that the cut was required to be taken evenly over the remaining years of the IIJA.

FY 2027 Budget

It appears as though the IIJA AML funds will remain through their 15 year period as stipulated in the IIJA...for at least this year. Congress is actively debating FY 2027 spending levels via stopgap continuing resolutions and appropriations bills, with sharp divisions remaining between lawmakers.

AML Campaign Work

The AML Campaign continues to meet weekly with regard to understanding and potentially mitigating issues surrounding implementation of the Infrastructure funding . The Campaign communicated with the PA Delegation on the importance of the IIJA funding and was opposed to the redirection of a portion of those funds. Unfortunately, our (and other groups) efforts were unsuccessful in preventing the redirection. The Campaign now has set its sights on preventing any further redirection in the 2027 budget.

The National Coal Council recently put out a US Coal Exports report. In it they have several recommendations. The most concerning of them all for our AML community addresses the AML fee:

"Suspend collection of the coal Abandoned Mine Land fee and develop a process to assess if or when collection of subsequent fees will be necessary going forward. After nearly 50 years, the U.S. coal industry has made AML payments well in excess of the amount required to clean up historical sites. The AML represents yet another friction cost that renders U.S. coals less competitive in global markets."

WPCAMR, through the PA AML Campaign has been in contact with DEP about this. In response to the National Coal Council (NCC) report suggestion on elimination of AML fees, DEP has reached out to staffers for Senators Fetterman and McCormick and Congressman Thompson to explain the need for continued fee-based AML funds to help address the reclamation needs of the state. We provided the attached IMCC two pager for their information. The Department has also shared the report with Ryan Ellis and Benny McCament from the Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC) to bring the report to the IMCC membership's attention.

The Campaign encourages our non-profit partners to reach out to federal legislators and voice your concerns over the NCC report as well.

The report can be found here:

https://nationalcoalcouncil.energy.gov/ncc/sites/default/files/studies/2026/NCC_Coal%20Exports%20Report.pdf

OSMRE

Tom Shope continues to work in DC for the foreseeable future while Lanny Erdos has been assigned the DOI assistant Secretary position as well as the directorship of OSMRE. We are happy to report that the AMD class will be happening in September and have NGOs signed up for the class.

OSMRE has been in contact with the states to try to determine the best way to redirect the IIJA funds without causing too much disruption to the States. But, as already reported above, their attorneys have decided that OSMRE should take those funds yearly.

2026 AMLER direct payments were announced in April by OSM. PA is to receive \$29.5 Million more for AMLER.

ACOE

Regarding the WRDA (Water Resources Development Act) funding from the Army Corps of Engineers, Section 1345 AMD funding. It is not being implemented just yet as they continue to develop implementation guidance. According to what we know, sites up to 1982 may be eligible.

Visit this site for any updates:

this website to track when the guidance for this section is published:

https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Project-Planning/Legislative-Links/wrda_2024/

OTHER ITEMS

Growing Greener Quick Response Program

We are getting toward the end of our funding to conduct urgent repairs to water quality BMPs, not just for AMD-related projects but other water quality BMPs under our Growing Greener-funded QR10 grant. We applied for an extension on QR10 and have received it. We have approximately \$5,0000 left to spend on it. I applied for a QR11 grant during the last round. We have received that grant contract executed and are now spending from that pot.

2026 Statewide AMR Conference

The committee is planning the 2026 conference which will be in Grantville, PA (near Hershey). Anne will have more information about our conference and the planning.

Administrative

I continued to perform the usual administrative duties and work with our Treasurer Kelly Williams on account reconciliations, check signing, etc. Kelly's term is up and we're looking for a new Treasurer. If you would like to be Treasurer, please let me know.

Due to oversights from section 319 staff and us, we will be getting our new 319 grant funding around Oct/November 2026 instead of July 1 2026 (when our current grant expires). I requested an amendment to our existing 319 contract in the fall of 2025 to bridge the gap between where our current grant ends (June 2026) and fall 2026 . However, in order to amend the current grant, we will have to go without reimbursements for about 3 or 4 months. Those funds will come to us but only once the extension approval process is completed. We received a working capital loan for our salary and benefits from FPW while we wait on our extension request to be approved. EPA approved our extension request and we've started the extension request process. We past the 3 month wait time and have used the FPW loan to meet payroll. We started to received

reimbursements from Feb, Mar, and April. But we haven't received official notice that our extension is approved. 319 staff says it's at the comptroller. Assuming we have the extension, we will continue until we get our new contract in late fall 2026. Once we received the backlogged reimbursements, we will pay back the FPW working capital loan.

Additionally, I have found general liability insurance for us and vehicle insurance for when we operate vans to shuttle AMD class participants. I plan to use existing grant funding for those expenses but need to ask the board to OK the higher liability premium and the insurance to drive vehicles as it wasn't in this year's budget.

Other Meetings

- PA annual AMR conference planning committee
- Weekly AML Campaign phone calls ongoing as required.
- Various phone calls from watershed groups, NGOs, and/or others.