

in depth

west virginia

department of environmental protection

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March 2016

"SPRING FORWARD!"

Remember to set your clocks
ahead one hour before you go to
bed on Saturday, March 12!

DEP Responds to Chemical Leak in Wetzel County

Leaked chemical
spurs temporary
"Do Not Use"
water order

by Jake Glance

Residents of the Wetzel County town of Pine Grove were told not to use their water for anything but flushing toilets for several days starting Feb. 20 after a chemical leaked into the stream used as source water for the public drinking water treatment plant.

The chemical, [DOWTHERM MX](#) Heat Transfer Fluid, leaked from a MarkWest facility in Smithfield. MarkWest initially reported that approximately 10,000 gallons of the chemical leaked, but has revised that estimate twice now, with the latest estimate being 260 gallons. An unknown amount made it into a small tributary of the North Fork of Fishing Creek.

Soon after the leak was discovered, absorbent booms were placed at the spill site and along the creek to try to catch as much of the chemical as possible.

The DEP's Environmental Enforcement Section of the Division of Water



and Waste Management was on the scene quickly, working with local and state health officials as well as officials from MarkWest and from the U.S. EPA.

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Sustainability Workshop Focuses on Small Changes

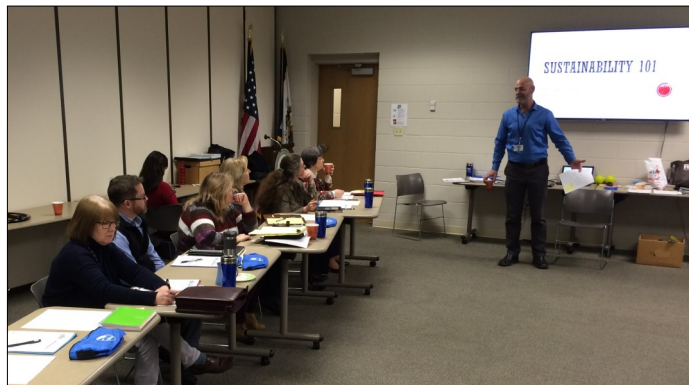
by Jake Glance

When confronted with the facts and figures, many of which paint a bleak picture of the state of the environment on a global scale, it might be easy to feel overwhelmed.

Some of those facts and figures: UNICEF estimates that nearly 40 percent of the world's population lacks basic sanitation facilities; the world's population is growing by about 77 million people per year; more and more people are fighting for basic resources like food, and there is a limited amount of farmland to grow it.

But one of the lessons of the [Sustainability Institute](#) offered by Bridge-Valley Community and Technical College - held Feb. 9 at DEP headquarters - is that you don't have to change the world. You only have to change yourself.

And if a lot of people



Greg Adolfson, the DEP's sustainability officer, welcomed the attendees of the Sustainability Institute Workshop. The workshop focused on the "Nine Opportunities for Sustainability."

change themselves, that change can be felt around the world.

"People are creatures of habit and they believe their actions would be too small to make a difference and usually choose to do nothing," said Greg Adolfson, DEP's sustainability officer.

"However, once they see the financial reward of consuming less stuff and making less trash, they start to see the benefits to the environment and the community as well."

The sustainability workshop focused on the "Nine Opportunities for Sustainability."

Those "opportunities" are: eliminate waste; go non-toxic (with household cleaners); fight climate change; reduce, reuse, recycle, redesign; make transportation efficient; get healthy; add value in our communities; engage others; and challenge the future.

See [WORKSHOP](#), Page 5

Application Extender Expected to Reduce FOIA's

by Jake Glance

Some folks in IT are hoping the phrase "[Beware the Ides of March](#)" does not portend ominous events when it comes to launching the publicly viewable side of Application Extender.

The publicly searchable online database is set to launch on March 15.

The document management system, which is used by divisions across DEP, is expected to make it easier to find important information and reduce the amount of time spent responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

DEP receives about 1,700 FOIA requests every year - and it takes an untold number of hours for staff to fulfill those requests.

See [EXTENDER](#), Page 5



Painting the Portrait of Paint Creek

Smartphone app will highlight history, wildlife, and people of the Paint Creek Watershed

by Jake Glance

A new downloadable app will allow people hiking, fishing, or just traveling through the Paint Creek area of Kanawha, Fayette, and Raleigh counties to hear all about the area's rich history and wildlife.

The website, paintcreekwv.org/, already has information about Paint Creek. But the app will make it easier for smartphone users to hear the story of Paint Creek as they move through the area.

The official launch of the app is set for April 19.

In one clip, the app explains how Paint Creek got its name. During the 1700's, when the area was full of wildlife and hunting parties were common, Native Americans would use paint made from bear grease to record their deeds on the trees that lined the creek.

Another section called "Solidarity

Forever" details the history of the mine wars that happened in the areas in the early 20th Century. Along Paint Creek, travelers can hear about the [mine strike](#) that lasted for more than a year and left more than 50 people dead.

Dwight Siemiaczko, the founder of the Paint Creek Watershed Association and the organization's current president, said the overall goal is to instill pride in Paint Creek.

"We are losing our history, where we come from, our roots," he said.

Siemiaczko credits the National Coal Heritage Trail for being the driving force behind the entire project, saying the partnership between that group and everyone involved with the watershed association has made this project possible.

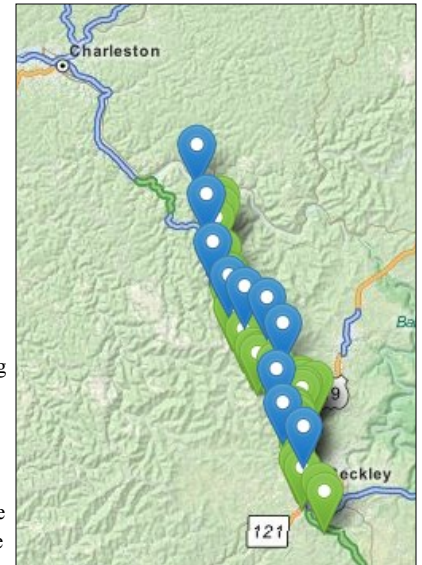
"I am a retired coal miner. Coal in this area is pretty much gone. And we

have to start thinking outside the box. I have not seen a good 'plan B' for what do you do when the coal runs out. And my fear is that the Paint Creek Watershed is going to turn into what we are seeing in other areas where businesses and people are leaving."

Siemiaczko said Paint Creek is in a great location because of the number of travelers who are on the West Virginia Turnpike and the fact that there are several exits that have access to the Paint Creek area. It is a great opportunity to promote the history of the area and give a new view of West Virginia, he said.

In addition to mine wars, the app can share stories such as that of [Mary Draper Ingles](#), Siemiaczko said.

Ingles was a settler in the area



The new app and website allow users to click on icons to hear stories and read about the history, wildlife, and people of Paint Creek.

around Blacksburg, Virginia. In the mid-1700's, she was captured by the Shawnee and taken to the area around present day Chillicothe, Ohio.

See CREEK, Page 5

Getting to Work in West Virginia

A column by Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin

(February 11, 2016) - At the halfway point of the legislative session, it's important to recognize there is still much work to be done. West Virginia is experiencing budget challenges unseen in a generation, and we must take action – both legislative and administrative – to ensure our fiscal house is in order.

Over the past three years, we have implemented budget cuts of 20 percent.

For the first time in anyone's memory, our state's base budget for the past two fiscal years has been lower than previous years, and the proposed 2017 budget is \$110 million lower than the FY 2015 budget. As our economy shifts, we can no longer rely on declining severance tax collections to be our main source of revenue. We must make the tough decisions to ensure our budget is structurally sound – putting us on the path to a stable financial future for the long term.

During my State of the State address, I introduced a balanced budget that uses no money from our state's Rainy Day Fund and does not include any across-the-board budget cuts, beyond those already in place. Putting together the fiscal year 2017 budget required hard work and difficult decisions. My proposed budget is fiscally responsible, continues to provide the services on which so many West Virginians rely, gives business and industry the flexibility they need to operate, and projects a return of budget surpluses by 2019.

This session, I've proposed a plan to increase our state's tobacco tax by 45 cents a pack – an increase that is projected to generate nearly \$71.5 million in new revenue each year. Combined with savings from a new prescription drug contract, a portion of this revenue will support my responsible plan to fund PEIA, ensuring state employees do not see dramatic benefit reductions proposed for the coming year. So far, my proposal is the only plan on the table. I urge legislators to take up this piece of legislation and do what's right for our teachers, state employees and others across the state who rely on PEIA coverage.

I've also proposed eliminating a sales tax exemption on cell phones and land lines – putting us in step with 41 other states across the country. By placing the

same 6 percent sales tax on cell phones and land line usage our residents are already paying on other goods, the state can collect an extra \$60 million each year.

In keeping with promises of the past, I've proposed legislation to pay off our workers' compensation debt more than a decade ahead of schedule (update: this bill was signed into law this week).. We've come too far and worked too hard to go back on these commitments. Removing these excess taxes can provide relief to our coal and natural gas industries, allowing these companies to deal with current economic realities to continue employing West Virginians and supporting our economies.

Other proposals to significantly reduce the severance tax on coal have been discussed, but the impact on our state budget could be well in excess of \$100 million and would cripple many of our local economies.

At this point in the session, the Legislature appears to lack consensus on the best way to balance our state's budget. Some have suggested we can make up the deficit by an additional 6.5 percent across-the-board cut, while others believe we should fill our budget shortfall by taking large sums from the Rainy Day Fund. We can no longer rely on cuts and one-time sources of money to get us through these budget challenges, and we cannot raid our state's savings account because we aren't living within our means.

At a time when our state is facing serious budget challenges and a lack of funding for essential services, we must seriously consider these – and other – new revenue opportunities. I commend the Legislature for coming together to pass supplemental bills that allowed us to pay our current bills on time and without delay and look forward to working with them to ensure both the current and next budget are balanced.

Serving our state and her people comes with great responsibility. We must work together, not as Democrats or Republicans, but as West Virginians. This is West Virginia, not Washington, and it's time we put partisan politics aside and focus on issues critical to our state's continued growth. There is more work to do, and I challenge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to come together and get to work to do what's right for West Virginia.



Gov. Tomblin

Ten Questions with 37-Year DEP Veteran Mavis Layton

How long have you been with DEP? I started July 23, 1979, so almost 37 years. Back then it was DNR. Andrew E. (Jack) Strode hired me. I worked for him two weeks and then he had a heart attack (some say I caused that) and was off work for a good while. Pravin Sangani, who worked in the Industrial Section, got promoted to the Municipal Branch as supervisor. Not sure where I would have ended up if Pravin hadn't moved up.

What is your current title with DEP and how long have you been in that position? I was hired as a stenographer 1. These days, a lot of folks don't even know what a stenographer does. I actually only used my stenography skills three or four times back then. I had a great working relationship with Pravin; he was a wonderful supervisor. I was able to spread my wings and was not afraid to work and learn different tasks and worked my way up from a clerical position to where I am today, an environmental resources specialist in the Division of Water and Waste Management, where I've been for the past six-and-a-half years.

Where did you grow up? I grew up in Harts Creek, 25 minutes outside of Chapmanville in Logan, West Virginia. We just got city water there in November 2015.

Other than technological advances, what has been the biggest change that you have seen? The turnover at DEP and lack of communication. In 1997, DEP spent a lot of money and time on team training. Coworker groups would meet and have an idea of what was going on and new issues coming up and the workload tasks people had, and every so often a bigger group would meet. Since we've moved to Kanawha City, there is hardly any communication. If you took a poll of workers relative to rating communication, you'd probably find that it's an issue overall in

DEP. We have a Quality Assurance Team (QAT), but that's totally different.

Without using the words "environment" or "protect," what do you think is the mission of DEP? To provide excellent customer service and make folks aware of the reason for not only stream preservation, but the reason that we have laws is to provide for the future and health of our grandchildren and their children.

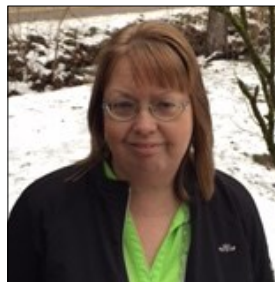
What do you think is the most serious environmental issue facing West Virginia? Mountaintop removal probably.

What is something that you do for fun outside of work that would surprise your co-workers? I like taking our dogs for walks in the woods, antique window shopping - taking myself back in time, spending time at home with my husband. I'm actually a relatively quiet person.

What is your favorite movie or TV show? Chicago PD and I've become a fan of Family Feud in the last eight months. Steve Harvey is a hoot and the game show is a great way to wind down and have a good laugh. Laughter is good for the soul.

What did you want to be when you grew up? You know, I can't remember. I've been finding lately that some things are worth remembering and those that take up extra space in my brain are a waste of good space. My husband calls it 'getting old.'

If you could put a message in a time capsule to the DEP cabinet secretary in the year 2066, what would you say? We have finally gone paperless!



Mavis Layton

DEP HQ to be "Closed POD" in Emergency Event

by Jake Glance

The DEP headquarters in Kanawha City will serve as a "Closed Point of Dispensing," or Closed POD, in the event of an emergency disease outbreak or biological attack.

Tammy Thornton, an assistant chief with the Business and Technology Office over administrative services, is helping to organize the Closed POD and train volunteers to staff it. The plan, she says, is to reduce the wait time for state employees to get medication in such an event, which in turn will ensure continuity of state government.

The Closed POD is meant to serve as a dispensary of medicine in the event of an outbreak of a disease like the flu or the use of an agent such as anthrax in a terrorist attack.

Thornton said at the Closed POD, medication can be collected not only for state employees, but for family members in their households as well.

"This is emergency planning that is absolutely necessary, but at the same time we hope we never have to open this Closed POD because that means the potential for a lot of people to get sick for whatever reason," Thornton said.

There will be nine other Closed PODs in Kanawha County. The DEP Closed POD will serve state employees of the DEP's Kanawha City office, PEIA, DMV, the Housing Development Authority, Rehabilitative Services, Consolidated Retirement Fund, the Supreme Court City Center, the state Treasurer's Office in Kanawha City, the state Auditor's Office in Malden, the DOH at Dry Branch, and the Parkway Authority.

State employees are asked to visit the [Dispense Assist website](#) to print a voucher that will ensure that emergency officials do not dispense medications that may have adverse affects if combined. No medical information is stored on that website. Also, Thornton says volunteers are needed to help staff the Closed POD.

"There will be dispensers, exit monitor information providers, form reviewers, greeters and line assistants," she said.

Training sessions for volunteers will be scheduled soon. [Volunteers can contact Tammy Thornton here.](#)

Special Visitor at the Logan Field Office



"The Logan Field Office has had many special visitors over the years," said Benny Campbell, the assistant mining director who heads up that office. "This is another example of the DEP providing everyone who comes by with real customer service." This [Virginia opossum](#), often simply called a "possum," was spotted in the trees next to the parking lot of the Logan Field Office on Feb. 18. Possums are known for "playing dead" when threatened, which is where the term "playing possum" comes from.

Restoring A Classic Chevy

How admiration for classic cars turned into passion for restoration

by Colleen O'Neill

His passion for cars, trucks, and motorcycles became a reality when he took the step to turn the daydream into a real life effort.

"My parents bought me and my brother a minibike when I was nine, and it was love from that day until now," said Terry Ramey, an environmental resource program manager with the Department of Environmental Protection's mining program. He



Terry Ramey

works out of the Logan Office.

He explained how he and his brother raced motocross for three

years, and how his parents would take the boys to area dragstrips.

"Once I got older, every year I would attend NASCAR at Bristol and Charlotte, and also the Bristol and Columbus NHRA (National Hot Rod Association) Drag Racing events. I still ride my Honda Goldwing motorcycle as much as possible.

"All my life I have attended classic and hot rod auto shows everywhere I could, time permitting," Ramey said.

"I really enjoy the Charleston Rod Run and Doo Wop car show, Capital Car Show, and the Rod Run spring and fall shows at Pigeon Forge, Tennessee."

Definitely a car guy, Ramey was initially an admirer rather than an owner.

"I always wondered why anyone would want to go through the trouble of rebuilding an older vehicle," he said.

He explained how a friend, who was the proud owner of six hot rods, helped him become an owner too.

"I told him that I would like an older truck with the patina still on and a real nice motor – in other words, a daily driver. The friend, Randell Adkins, did happen to know a man with



Terry Ramey, an environmental resource program manager with DEP, is restoring this classic Chevrolet C10 truck.

this Chevy C10 for sale. A week later, I was the proud new owner."

Rebuilding this truck involved more than just replacing car parts. Ramey found camaraderie with other car guys.

"I am so blessed to have three mechanic friends – Mike Vance, David Hager and Gary Cadd – that are unbelievable mechanics and true car guys through and through," he said.

"These guys have such abundant knowledge and it makes all the small challenges so much easier. Gary Cadd has a car lift in his home garage that he proudly calls 'JEB'S Garage,' named after the initials of his grandchildren, and that's where the majority of the work has been completed.

"If you have never restored an older vehicle, you wouldn't understand, but almost every part and nut and bolt has to be removed, inspected, and in most cases, replaced."

And that's what the car guys did. They made a trip to a salvage yard and bought a front clip off of a 1986 C10 pickup truck and changed it out.

"This gave me power steering, disc brakes, and five lug wheels for the front to replace the six lug wheels the C10 came with."

There was a method to all of this madness. Replacing some parts with updated versions changed the ride.

"This, in essence, made the truck

perform and sound better," he said. "Plus, it has a more modern running gear for the improved ride and handling."

But renovating an automobile involves more than just mechanics.

"I have had the seat redone, as well as the door panels," Ramey said. "And I added a new stereo. The patina is the paint fade, rust, and age. The only thing I am doing there is lightly sand the truck and shoot a clear coat over the existing patina to protect it. I want the truck to continue to look old



Ramey says restoring old cars includes much more than a fresh coat of paint and new tires. It also means replacing almost every nut and bolt, and in this case completely rebuilding the engine.

but run more modern and perform better."

He hopes to be done with his car project by this spring.

"No matter where you go, these vehicles always draw a crowd of lookers and admirers," he said.

"Once the weather breaks, I am looking forward to driving the reborn 1969 Chevy C10 on a daily basis and stopping to chat with anyone about my winter project adventure."

PINE GROVE

con't from Page 1

Water samples taken at the Pine Grove water treatment facility indicated that the intake portion of the plant was contaminated, but there were no detectable levels of the chemical in the treatment area of the plant or the distribution system.

Bottled water was being trucked in to the area for residents to use in the days following the spill.

Residents were given the option to request free testing of the water in their homes or in their wells.

About 360 households were under the "Do Not Use" order, which was lifted on Feb. 23 after multiple samples from homes and other locations in the distribution system showed non-detectable levels of the material. Water from other treatment facilities is being brought in to be pumped through the Pine Grove distribution system until there is no remaining chemical found in the creek. MarkWest has said that sampling from the creek continues to show reduced concentrations.

What enforcement action, if any, will be taken against MarkWest has not been determined. The investigation into what caused the leak is still ongoing.



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CREEK

con't from Page 2

Ingles escaped and made her way back to her family, passing through the area of Paint Creek.

The app is part of what Siemienczko calls the "grand plan," which also includes working with the New River Trail Alliance to get Paint Creek Road designated a "share the road" bike trail. The name of the trail would be the "Mary Ingles Trail."

The app was developed by i-Trek in Lewisburg, and works even without cell coverage. All of the content is downloaded and then plays automati-

cally in a certain area thanks to a GPS tracking system.

Catherine Moore, the project director, said the stories along the 44-mile trail will make trekkers want to keep going to see what is next. In addition to the downloadable app, the watershed association is also going to be burning CD's that people can listen to as they drive or hike the trail.

"We want to show this really beautiful well-kept secret to the public," Moore said. She said she hopes many people download the app – but the program is already a success because the stories of local people and Paint Creek's history have been preserved.

The West Virginia Department of

Environmental Protection and the Paint Creek Watershed have a long and successful partnership, said Tomi Bergstrom, an Environmental Resources Specialist in the Watershed Improvement Branch of the Division of Water and Waste Management.

"Communities taking pride and expressing interest in their watershed is the goal of the Watershed Improvement Branch. We do our best to support watershed groups like this through trainings, grant opportunities, and partnerships. This watershed association is doing a fine job of reaching out to not only their neighbors within the state, but to tourists and outdoor adventure goers. The more people you appeal to,

the more attention your watershed gets, the faster you see results and start meeting goals."

The group also won a DEP Environmental Award in 2015 for Environmental Stewardship.

"At one time, Paint Creek was described as a diamond in the rough. And the watershed association wants to turn it into a shining gem that everyone would be proud of, something that we can promote an image of West Virginia. When people drive the turnpike, we want it to have the 'awe' factor," Siemienczko said.

A kickoff event for the smartphone app is scheduled for May 21 at the Ash Camp fishing pier and park.

WORKSHOP

con't from Page 1

"One thing I learned was that sustainability involves things other than just products," said Jean Sheppard of the DEP's Business and Technology Office. "It includes your health and adding value to your community."

Jamie Chambers, DEP's internal auditor, said what she took away from the workshop is that making the change to more sustainable practices doesn't

have to be difficult.

"I went into the workshop thinking I did not know anything about sustainability, but quickly found out that sustainability is not necessarily this hard, complex, scientific process – it's rather a method for good living," she said.

Sometimes practicing sustainability may take more time, she pointed out, but is worth the difference that is made.

"Some of the cost saving – and more environmentally friendly – practices such as hanging clothes out to dry in the spring, summer, and fall have

been pushed to the wayside for the sake of time."

"When people start incorporating the Nine Opportunities for Sustainability into their everyday lives and are willing to share that with others, then change starts happening in their community," Adolfsen said.

This workshop was designed to show how one person's actions can have a ripple effect. Therefore, you can help start that ripple by encouraging friends and neighbors to also adopt more sustainable practices.

Another part of the workshop showed how many planet Earths it would take to sustain all humans – if everyone behaved like the attendees. This involved questions such as how fuel-efficient the attendees' vehicles are, how big their homes are, how much trash they generate, etc.

The simulation showed that if all humans acted like the average attendee of the workshop, it would take six planet Earths to sustain humanity.

More information can be found online at www.sustainwv.org.

EXTENDER

con't from Page 1

At this time, only select documents from the Division of Water and Waste Management (DWWM), the Division of Air Quality (DAQ), and the Office of Oil and Gas (OOG) will be visible online, said Neil Chakrabarty, DEP's Information Technology (IT) manager.

"Application Extender is a better tool for the public and for the people here at DEP," Chakrabarty said.

"Not only will it give them both less grief and allow them to do what they want to do, but it also comes at a lower cost."

"Application Extender also gives people consistency that they didn't have before with previous systems," said

Christina Richmond, an environmental analyst.

"Different divisions used different systems. Application Extender allows for consistency, as we are transitioning to it being the only system used across the agency."

Application Extender also allows internal users to fix things that are wrong with documents. If someone opens a document that was indexed wrong, or if a page needs deleted, the user – based on his or her administrative rights – has the ability to correct those issues.

Richmond also said there are routine Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QAQC) checks to ensure documents are being indexed and maintained correctly.

The idea is that having properly

maintained and accurate information such as permits from DWWM, DAQ, and OOG available in a searchable online database will reduce the amount of time spent fulfilling FOIA's since the public can be directed to access the information on the DEP website.

Information such as permits has been available on the DEP website before – so the public knows to look for it online. But Chakrabarty and Richmond say Application Extender will make those searches easier.

"For example, say I am from Wetzel County and if I want to look at all oil and gas permits from Wetzel County issued in a certain period of time, I will be able to do that using this online search tool," Richmond said.

Other DEP divisions could be added to the online database.

"The hope is that eventually all divisions within DEP will use Application Extender to publish information online, but this will take time as some divisions are further along in the process than others," Richmond said.

"The concerns that some divisions have with going this route are real concerns that are being addressed," Chakrabarty said. He also said another huge benefit of Application Extender, regardless of whether or not files are available for public viewing, is employee access to that information.

"Before, you had a file room in one building and if you weren't in that building you couldn't see those files. Application Extender solves that by allowing viewing of files from anywhere internal users will have web access."



New Hires

- Charles Carl, Business and Technology Office
- Mitchell Kalos, Abandoned Mine Lands and Reclamation
- James Kennedy, Division of Water and Waste Management
- Alanna Slack, Division of Air Quality
- John Simpson, Division of Water and Waste Management

Recent/Upcoming Retirements

- Robert Betterton, Division of Air Quality
- Mark Church, Division of Land Restoration
- James Gaston, Division of Land Restoration
- Debbie Martin, Business and Technology Office
- James Randolph Ramsey, Abandoned Mine Lands and Reclamation