



**NEWSLETTER**  
Spring 2020 Vol. 42 No. 1

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**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**2020 NAAML P CONFERENCE**  
Cancelled - Rescheduled for  
Lake Tahoe Nevada  
September 12 - 15, 2021

**MISSION STATEMENT**

1. To provide a forum to address current issues, discuss common problems and share new technologies regarding abandoned mine land reclamation;
2. To foster positive and productive relationships between the states and tribes represented by the Association and the federal government;
3. To serve as an effective, unified voice when presenting the states'/tribes' common viewpoints; and
4. To coordinate, cooperate and communicate with the Interstate Mining Compact Commission and all other organizations dedicated to wise use and restoration of our natural resources.

**Dear Membership,**

Three very short months ago, we were all together at the Winter Business Meeting here in Charleston, West Virginia. I was truly impressed with the level of involvement from each of the Programs. The committee meetings received an astounding level of interest and participation. So much, that extra tables and chairs had to be brought into the meeting space. I would like to commend all of you for keeping the topics moving forward, and making it through the agenda in a timely fashion. Even with several hiccups and schedule changes, we were able to finish a little early. I would also like to thank Ray Tsingine and Rose Grey, of the Navajo Nation, for a heart-warming dedication to Madeline Roanhorse.

Unfortunately, we had to say goodbye to another great colleague recently. Marvin Ellis passed away on May 16, 2020. He committed the last 16 years to the Indiana AML Program. Marvin was as a prominent member of NAAML P, a great friend to many, and he will be missed.

I would like to thank Greg Conrad for keeping the Association abreast of pending legislative action on Capitol Hill, particularly with the COVID-19 Recovery Bill. Tom Clarke also provided promising news with the EPA and US Corps of Engineers' final rule re-defining "[Waters of the United States.](#)" The new rule repeals and replaces the 2015 definition, which should greatly benefit AML reclamation efforts by loosening regulations.

The reclamation of legacy mine features presents a variety of challenges, and each site contains a unique set of circumstances. As AML professionals we often run into difficult situations and need to evolve to an ever-changing world. This has certainly been the case in 2020 as the COVID-19 Pandemic took the world by storm. Learning how to balance work and family at home has certainly provided its own share of difficulties. Many of us have been forced to create make-shift office spaces, take on home-schooling, provide entertainment, tackle home improvement projects, and cook three meals a day. Quarantine has certainly changed how we work and live. My dishwasher has never seen so much action. Amidst the fears and uncertainty, AML reclamation has continued. I am so impressed with the resilience of all the AML staff. Clearly, nothing can stop the spirit, or the people, of this amazing program. We have once again adapted to a changing environment and continue to fulfill our mission.

Unfortunately, the conditions surrounding COVID-19 made it necessary to postpone the 2020 NAAML P Conference in Lake Tahoe, Nevada. This was a very difficult decision, but is in the best interest of our colleagues, sponsors, and federal partners. Many people were looking forward to visiting Lake Tahoe, and discovering all the amazing sites of the area. I have great news...you still can. The conference will now be held September 12-15, 2021. I want to give a huge shout-out to Rob Ghiglieri, and the Nevada AML Staff. They were able to negotiate with the hotel properties, get our conference moved to 2021, and not lose any deposits or accommodations. Registration remains open at <http://naamlp2020.com/registration/>. Conference details can also be found on the <http://naamlp2020.com/> website.

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I optimistically await our 2021 Winter Business Meeting in Gulf Shores, Alabama. The modern amenities will provide a wonderful setting and opportunity to recommence our assembly. You may be thinking that 9 months is a long time not to see each other or have a meeting. I have more great news. We plan to have a virtual Business Meeting, Wednesday, September 23, 2020. The agenda will be condensed and limited to one day, in consideration of everyone's time. Details will be made available in the coming months. One subject to consider is the voting on business matters. NAAML P Policies and Procedures allow voting by mail. Expanding this format to include email will be quicker, more efficient, and easier to manage. You will receive an email request to submit your vote via tracked parcel (Certified mail, UPS, FedEx). Agenda items that require voting will be sent in advance of the business meeting to allow ample time to receive responses. Please watch for these notifications and respond expeditiously.

Thanks to Suzan Kozak (Vice President) and Jeff Graves (Secretary-Treasurer) for their hard work and support. They are amazing people, and I am very thankful to serve with them. Please stay engaged with the Association initiatives as we work through the current constraints. I am so proud and grateful to be a part of this magnificent Association. All of you are rock stars, and I look forward to seeing you again soon.

*Sincerely,*

*Travis Parsons, NAAML P President*



# The Collector App

What comes to mind when you think of Iowa? Corn? Iowa State Fair? Pork production? Hawkeyes? Birthplace of John Wayne? Those would all be correct!

A lesser-known fact... coal mining! In fact, most Iowans don't even know this, unless they are from the southeastern part of the state.

Coal mining started to take off in Iowa around the 1870s. This was largely due to the development of the railway system that traversed the landscape. Most of the mining from the 1870s through the 1920s was done underground. A common technique utilized in Iowa was the room and pillar method. There are pros and cons to this method. The pros: nonstop production, rapid development rate, and moderate operating costs. The cons: moderate capital costs, limitation on depth, higher costs with partial extraction, and risks associated with subsidences.

The Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program administered by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship – Mines and Minerals Bureau, investigates all potential coal mine related subsidence emergencies. Our program investigates roughly 7-10 emergencies a year.

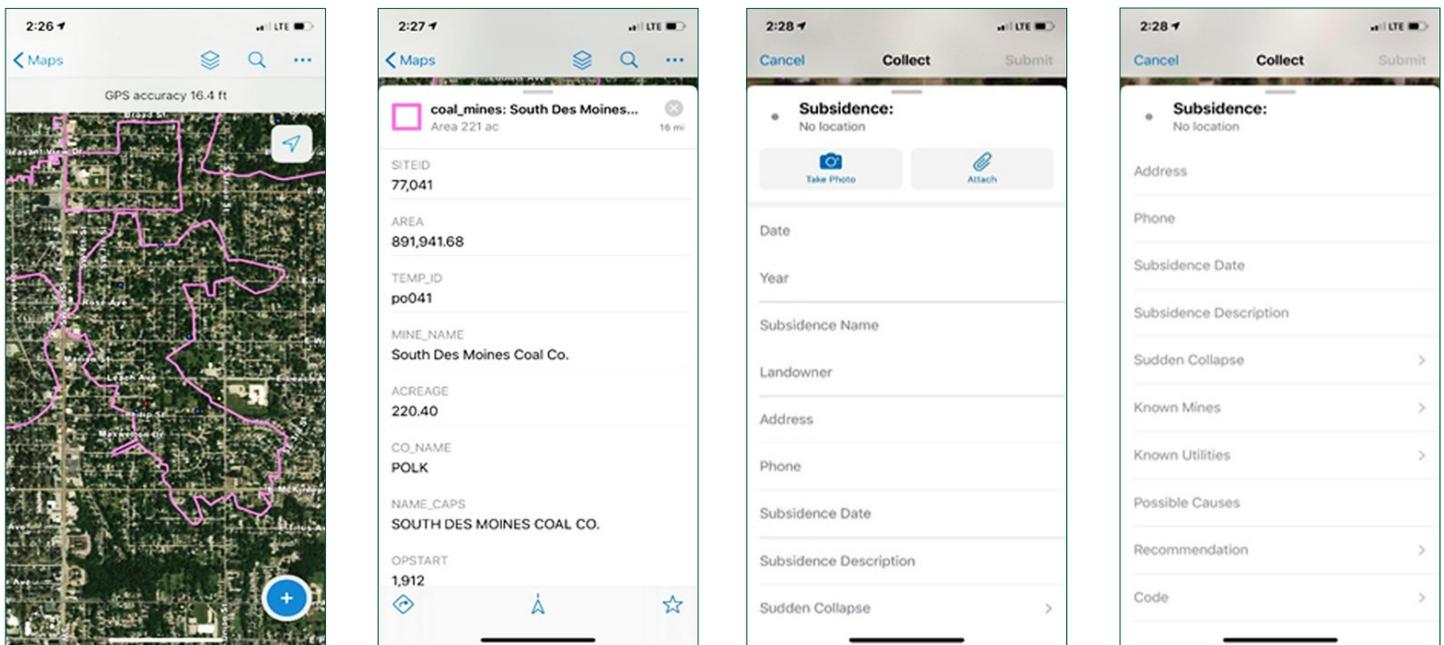
A typical investigation consisted of researching known mining in the area, locating utilities, identifying historic land uses, and determining if any mine-related investigations were previously completed in the area. This information was then put into a database and identified and coded in ArcGIS, but it was not user friendly and outdated in terms of today's technology.

This past year, staff realized the need to create and maintain an updated user-friendly database which created consistency and efficiency. The new database allows staff access to historical investigations going back to 1999, maps of all known coal mines in the state, and the ability to enter data for new investigations. The database is published to ArcGIS online and can be used in conjunction with a Collector App on handheld devices.

The App, allows staff to create point data, lines, and polygons. This was found to help measure priority features like highwalls or dangerous piles and embankments. The only issue that staff has encountered is a loss of connectivity to cellular service. However, a workaround was found by downloading the project area before going to the site to allow for offline use. The data could then be synced up when the user was back in cellular service range.

The Collector App has become a very powerful tool for the Iowa AML program as staff no longer need to do the front end research before going out to a subsidence. Using the App in the field, allows staff to mark locations, take photos, and input all the information that is needed to determine the correct course of action.

**Ryan Starkey**  
Iowa AML Program



these two photos show known coal mines and any previous investigations

Example of data to be collected for a subsidence

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## Covid-19 Update:

### Dear NAAML P Annual Conference Stakeholders and Participants,

After much deliberation the NAAML P officers and 2020 conference planning committee have decided to postpone the annual conference until September 12th – 15th, 2021. We regret having to make this decision, but believe this decision to be in the best interest of the health and safety of all. The conference is still planned to be held in Lake Tahoe, Nevada.

We are currently working with MontBleu on how to handle bookings for next year. Once we receive more information, we will post it here and send an email to anyone subscribed to our “updates” distribution list.

If you have registered for the conference and would like information regarding your registration or a refund, please send an email to: [gwake@minerals.nv.gov](mailto:gwake@minerals.nv.gov).

Check back in over the coming months for updates on the planning of the 2021 conference. If you would like to receive periodic updates by email, contact [updates@naamlp2020.com](mailto:updates@naamlp2020.com) with the word “subscribe” in the subject line.

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you at Lake Tahoe in 2021.

*-The NAAML P 2020 Conference Planning Committee*



### NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SPECIFICATIONS

400 - 500 words. Articles subject to editing. Submit in e-mail or hard copy. Include author's name, title of article, captions for photos. Submit photos in TIF (preferred) or JPG format, and original photo size.

E-mail photos as individual files, not embedded.

**Deadline for Fall Edition is November 15, 2020.**

Email articles to **Bob Scott** ([bobf.scott@ky.gov](mailto:bobf.scott@ky.gov)) or

mail articles to: **Bob Scott**, Director  
Division of Abandoned Mine Lands  
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