

# NAAML P

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ABANDONED MINE LAND PROGRAMS

**NEWSLETTER**  
 Fall 2020 Vol. 42 No. 2

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**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**Winter Business Meeting**

Virtual - Go To Meeting  
 Feb 23 - 24, 2021  
 11:00 - 4:00 CST  
 Details and meeting links  
 will be sent by e-mail

**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.

**Letter From the President**

Dear NAAML P members, friends and partners,

Our world has dramatically changed this year but one thing that has remained constant is our commitment to reclamation and our important AML work. COVID-19 has disrupted every aspect of our daily lives and I know this has been an extremely challenging time for everyone. But despite these challenges, we have found ways to safely continue our work with landowners, partners and local governments. I love hearing about the creative ways AML programs have continued outreach efforts with videos and virtual field days, continued bid lettings in new and creative ways, and continued collaboration with other States and Tribes to learn from each other.

In preparing to write this message, I enjoyed looking back at several fall newsletters and the messages from past Presidents. In a year that has felt a bit isolating at times, it was encouraging to reflect on all the friendships I have made from being a part of this association. There is a strong line of leaders to rely on and I truly appreciate all the dedication and history they bring to the association. I want to take a moment to thank everyone that encouraged me to leap into a leadership role and for electing me President this year. The trust and confidence granted to me in this position is daunting but challenges me to live up to all your expectations. And, I have to thank outgoing President, Travis Parsons, for all his support and insight. Travis was able to navigate a year of challenges with reauthorization and RECLAIM, continue managing his AML program in West Virginia, and then postpone our fall conference and rearrange it into a virtual meeting. He quickly came up with solutions and pulled off a very successful meeting – he even found a way to include some social time! Because, let’s be honest, the true value of our conferences and meetings are the personal interactions – the conversations on a bus tour, the chatter during a social hour, the moments caught in the hallway to tackle an issue. While we have had to make the difficult decision to go virtual for our February winter business meeting, hopefully we can find some creative ways to make it enjoyable and have meaningful interactions. We also need to share our gratitude to the Nevada and Alabama programs for all their hard work planning the meetings, tours and events and the added effort of rescheduling to a later date. Fingers crossed that we will all be back together at State Line, Nevada in September of 2021!

We can’t lose focus that this is an important time for the AML Program with the need for reauthorization looming in less than a year. Meaningful interaction will be needed at the virtual February meeting and likely many times in the next year. I encourage everyone to be engaged and review the transition items that are included in this newsletter. I want to give a big thank you to Greg Conrad and the staff at IMCC for drafting our transition piece for the new Biden/Harris administration. Greg, as usual,



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crafted a document that clearly lays out our positions and concerns, while using well-placed adjectives to drive the points home. The work and outreach that IMCC provides for the association are hard to quantify. I appreciate all the connections they have made over the years with congressional leaders and how willing IMCC is to keep us updated as conversations occur. Here's hoping 2021 is a productive year that leads to a successful reauthorization and a predictable future for our programs to move forward.

As we have said many times over the last few years, [Our Work's Not Done](#), but together we can continue our commitment to AML reclamation and improve our lands for future generations. Jeff Graves (NAAML P Vice President), Ben McCament (NAAML P Secretary/Treasurer) and I look forward to serving you in the coming year – please reach out with any thoughts you may have for the association.

*Sincerely,*



**Susan Kozak**  
**NAAML P President**

## **Stan Barnard Award - Brian Bradley**

**Brian J. Bradley, Assistant Bureau Director**  
**Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection**  
**Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (Pennsylvania AML Program)**

Brian began his career with the Pennsylvania DEP in the mine regulatory program in 1985 as a Mining Specialist Trainee reviewing surface mining permit applications. He moved to PA's abandoned mine land (AML) program in 1986 as a geologist Trainee. Brian began his career in the AML Program as a project developer working to complete project development for pre-SMCRA AML sites and bond forfeiture sites. Within the project development group in the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation's Harrisburg office, he steadily advanced up the career ladder. He advanced to a Hydrogeologist 1 in 1987, to a Hydrogeologist 2 in 1990, to a Professional Geologist Manager in 1993, to the Chief of the Division of Project Development in 2005, and finally, in 2016, to the position of Assistant Bureau Director. Brian has spent the last 34 years working to reclaim PA's large inventory of AML features and to restore AMD impacted streams. Brian recently achieved 35 years of service with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Brian is a dedicated public servant committed to the elimination of health and safety hazards and the restoration of environmental degradation resulting from abandoned and unreclaimed coal mining sites located across both the anthracite and bituminous coal fields of Pennsylvania. He has not only worked on abandoned mine land issues in Pennsylvania but has been involved in national AML issues by actively serving as Pennsylvania's alternate delegate to the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs since 2012. Brian is an active member of NAAML P who shares his perspective and thoughtful advice during NAAML P business meetings.

Brian has served in a variety of capacities during his involvement with NAAML P. Since its inception in February of 2014, he has served as the co-chairman of NAAML P's Reauthorization Committee. The role of the committee has changed significantly over time, and Brian has been able to quickly adapt and continue undeterred with the main goal of seeing the AML fee reauthorized beyond its current expiration in September 2021. He also accepted another leadership role as the chairman of the Data Reporting Workgroup which grew out of the December 2017 AML Summit. The AML Summit was a collaboration between NAAML P, OSMRE, and the IMCC to look at several SMCRA Title IV issues of mutual concern to all involved and work together to share a common message related to the need for reauthorization of the AML Program. More recently, these two roles grew together and NAAML P decided in September 2018 to form the Title IV Oversight Steering Committee (or Workgroup). Brian has served as a hardworking member of this committee since its establishment. Brian has served in leadership roles on many of these committees and workgroups. He has worked hand in hand with staff from OSM Regional offices, OSM Headquarters, IMCC, other NAAML P member states and tribes, and various NGOs.

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In support of NAAML P, Brian played a key role in several of the annual NAAML P Conferences hosted by Pennsylvania (1999 – Seven Springs; 2010 – Scranton; and 2019 – Pittsburgh). For the most recent conference which took place last September in Pittsburgh, Brian served on three standing committees including Budget and Finance, Registration, and Hotel and Meeting Space. He played a key role with the Hotel and Meeting Space committee assisting with the negotiating of contracts with the facilities and ensuring that all details required for a successful conference and business meeting were addressed. He wanted to ensure that his fellow NAAML P colleagues would not only have a facility where they could conduct both a productive and successful conference and association business meeting, but they would also be able enjoy their time in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

During Brian's involvement with NAAML P, he has been involved at some level in a host of AML issues including review and analysis of proposed legislation and evaluation of several initiatives being pursued or considered at the national level. These include the Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization or AMLER proposal in 2015; multiple versions of the federal RECLAIM Act (a.k.a: The Revitalizing the Economy of Coal Communities by Leveraging Local Activities and Investing More Act) in 2017 and 2019; the AML Pilot Program beginning in 2016 and continuing to the present; continued federal budget sequestration and its impact on AML grants since 2013; reauthorization of SMCRA Title IV (including various bills and proposals); various issues related to federal budgets and associated continuing resolutions; coal Good Samaritan bills; Abandoned Mine Land Inventory System (e-AMLIS) analysis and issues; undelivered orders; and OSMRE AML Program oversight issues.

Working in concert with his efforts on behalf of NAAML P, Brian has been very active with the IMCC and its AML Committee, pursuing many of the same issues and initiatives as NAAML P. In many ways, he has served as an adjunct staff member to IMCC, assisting Greg Conrad, Tom Clarke and, in the recent past, Ryan Ellis, with the Commission's legislative and policy work. According to Greg Conrad, IMCC could not have accomplished all that they had, especially on AML reauthorization, without Brian's diligent, thoughtful and consistent advice, counsel and input.

Brian is well respected among the members of NAAML P as well as the staff of the Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement. In fact, OSM has from time to time requested his input on and review of AML-related issues and work products. In all that he does, Brian exudes Stan-like qualities. Like Stan, his positive attitude and never give up approach to solving problems are infectious, and similarly, his demeanor has a way of putting people at ease and getting everyone to work together.

Stan Barnard had a warm personality and enjoyed the company of his colleagues and friends. Brian Bradley shares these traits. He is a very positive and warm-hearted person. He is very committed to NAAML P and the AML Program and is always willing to offer advice or to help others out with any AML or NAAML P issues. He takes great pride in the work the Pennsylvania AML Program does as well as the combined accomplishments of all of the member AML programs of NAAML P. He is a team player dedicated to ensuring the Association advances the cause of successful reclamation of AML in his home state of Pennsylvania and across the nation.

## **Tom Henderson Award - Mike Sharp Enhancing Reclamation through Technology**

### **Mike Sharp, Oklahoma Conservation Commission (Oklahoma AML)**

Mike has been a long time teacher and leader in the Technical Innovations and Professional Services (TIPS). He has used his technical background to impart wisdom to AML and OSMRE students by serving as an instructor in the Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) series of courses offered by TIPS for 20 years. Mike served on the Steering Committee for TIPS when that was a standalone committee. When TIPS and the National Technical Training Program (NTTP) steering committees merged into one, Mike still continued to serve as a member of the TIPS Technical Advisory Group (TAG). The TIPS TAG promotes a SMCRA-wide perspective regarding technical innovations and services that TIPS provides to the SMCRA community and Mike has been a key contributing member.

Mike is an expert in AutoCAD and SurvCADD programs and has been instrumental in keeping these programs available to the NAAML P community. Mike has a professional understanding of the course participants' various degrees of experience with CAD software and adapts his teaching to their abilities. He has participated on revisions and updates to the various CAD course series. Mike can relate the training materials and exercises back to real-world problems and field work situations that he has dealt with in AML.

Mike is a very deserving candidate to receive the Tom Henderson Award as Mike demonstrates a comprehensive application of technology to solve reclamation challenges and has a drive to pursue excellence. Mike employs his unique talents to enhance the implementation of SMCRA and solve some of the most difficult abandoned mine land impacts affecting the citizens of the nation. By sharing his skill set, Mike has had a ripple effect throughout all of the coalfields in helping reclaim historic mine scarred lands.

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## Dave Bucknam Award - John Mack

**John Mack, P.E. (Retired, now an ad hoc instructor) Civil Engineer  
Federal Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement  
Pittsburgh Field Division (PFD), Program Support Branch**

John has instructed AML Design Workshops for more than 20 years including Dangerous Openings (20 times), Mine Subsidence (8 times), Landslides (2 times) and Mine Fires (at least 12 times). Even in retirement, he is on OSM-NTTP's schedule to instruct 3 of these AML-related courses for OSM this year, although the pandemic may impact some or all those courses. He has taught and influenced somewhere between 500 to 1,000 AML practitioners over the years.

John has been very committed to his role as an instructor and is always committed to providing the most up-to-date and state-of-the-art information to his students. John has been involved in not only instructing several of the AML Design Workshops, but as a lead instructor has worked to update and revise the courses over the years to constantly improve and keep the course materials up-to-date. He always develops a good rapport with both the students and with his fellow instructors. John also invests time to locate and document good field sites to enhance the training experience of the students. He is very hands-on and genuinely cares about the reclamation work being completed across the country and training the next generation of AML reclamationists to continue that work. John retired at the end of 2019, and the Dave Bucknam Award would be a great tribute to his long career with OSMRE and his passionate commitment to the National Technical Training Program.

## NAAMLPScholarship Awards

### Western Recipient - Tanzila Alam, Yale University



Tanzila Alam is a rising junior who plans to study Environmental Engineering at Yale University this fall. Previously, she attended California State University, Fresno, where she majored in Civil Engineering and Environmental Sciences. Outside of the classroom, Tanzila is an undergraduate researcher, a community volunteer, and a student leader in various organizations on her campus and within the Central Valley. Growing up in California, Tanzila developed a strong interest in engineering and the environment over the years. Both of these fields play an integral role in her hope to become an environmental engineer within her state, which is home to many inactive mine sites. In the future, she is excited to pioneer solutions for land reclamation to combat mine subsidence, abandoned mine drainage, and landslides that pose a threat to human health and the environment.

### Graduate Recipient - Md Abu Raihan Chowdhury, Kent State University

Md Abu Raihan Chowdhury finished his undergrad from the Department of Geology at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Having been born in Bangladesh, he has witnessed communities suffer from the lack of safe drinking water. Bangladesh experiences naturally occurring high arsenic concentration in its groundwater and the consumption of the contaminated water by marginal communities has resulted in what many refer to as the largest mass poisoning in history. The struggle of the relatively poor communities for safe drinking water has made him very passionate about the global water crisis and groundwater contamination. For his master's at Wright State University (WSU), OH he examined the effectiveness of the Nanoscale Zerovalent Iron and Powdered Activated Carbon composites for the contaminated groundwater remediations. After finishing his master's, he came to Kent State University for his Ph.D. in 2017. He started to work with his advisor Dr. David Singer who introduced him to the extent by which abandoned mines



impact the surrounding environment and the communities. After conducting more research on the impact of abandoned mines he came to realize that even though scientists have been studying abandoned mine sites for decades, there is still a lot we do not know regarding the abandoned mines and its impacts; such as the occurrence and fate of the colloidal pyrite generated from abandoned mine spoils. He also realized that there is a vast scope for future research on abandoned mines. Future research on abandoned mines should also focus on new and improved technologies to remediate abandoned mine sites so that we can return the abandoned mines to the communities where they belong. More research needs to address possible extraction of rare earth elements from mine spoils and the acid mine drainage impacted areas. As a researcher, he wants to lead the future developments in the field of abandoned mine reclamation in a way that will benefit the communities around them and ensure those areas will not have to be abandoned anymore.

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## Alan Edwards, DEQ Deputy Director and AML Administrator, Retires

CHEYENNE – After many years spent enhancing Wyoming’s environment, Alan Edwards is turning his attention closer to home.

Edwards, deputy director and Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Division administrator for the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), is retiring this month.

“Alan has shared a wealth of knowledge during his time here at DEQ,” said Todd Parfitt, DEQ Director. “He provided a powerful example of leadership and a significant record of accomplishments.”

Edwards came to work for DEQ’s Water Quality Division in 1982. He served in many roles, including supervisor of the EPA Wastewater Construction Grants program, DEQ representative to the State Loan and Investment Board and governor’s lead for the Brookhurst subdivision superfund site near Casper.

In 1986, he began working on environmental issues for Governor Mike Sullivan. That work included serving as governor’s representative for the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and the Powder River Basin Regional Coal Team, and as a member of regional organizations such as the Western Interstate Energy Board.

In 1989, Edwards spent seven months serving as DEQ’s interim director.

He left to pursue other interests in 1991, but returned to DEQ in May 2010, this time as the AML administrator, a position he held for the past 10 years. Edwards also spent the past five-and-a-half years as deputy director of the agency.

Edwards regularly worked with the Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC), spearheading efforts on the Stream Protection Rule and the 2015 reversal of a prior reduction in AML funds.

Recently, Edwards worked toward the reauthorization of AML funding, which is set to expire in September 2021.

Don Newton, an AML project manager for DEQ, said Edwards has been in the trenches on that project, testifying to Congress and acting as a spokesman for AML programs across the country.

“Without reauthorization, then funding for AML projects across the country goes away. We still have a lot of work to do,” Newton said.

Edwards spearheaded an effort to increase visibility of successful AML projects, as well as AML needs across the nation. That effort includes a website and social media for a project called “Our Work’s Not Done,” which compiles and promotes information about AML programs and accomplishments across the nation.

Edwards began that project as part of his work on a communications group through the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs (NAAML). He co-chaired the group with Eric Cavazza, director of the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.



Cavazza explained that Edwards worked hard to ensure that all AML programs in the country understood how the AML revenue is generated and how the funds are distributed. These efforts helped to create stronger relationships between AML programs across the country.

Edwards served as the Wyoming representative to the NAAML. In 2018, Edwards received the Stan Barnard Memorial Award. This award is presented annually by the NAAML to an individual who, according to the organization, has shown “outstanding dedication, commitment and hard work toward the enhancement of the association.”

Edwards also brought attention to the economic benefits Wyoming’s AML projects provide to the state. He gives credit for that effort to his AML employees.

“They have worked together as a team to accomplish the mission and to support each other. One example of this is the significantly increased volume of consultant and construction work that is being done to support Wyoming workers, contractors and to provide economic benefit to the state and local governments,” he said, adding that he expects to see more than \$80 million in economic benefits to the state in 2020.

Edwards was instrumental in the establishment of the AML Native Plants Project, a multi-faceted project to restore the sagebrush steppe and protect sage grouse in Wyoming that includes partnerships with the Bureau of Land Management, The Nature Conservancy, the Wyoming Department of Corrections, Lander Middle School and several others.

Newton said it started when Edwards made a casual comment in a staff meeting that perhaps the AML program should return to old reclamation projects that had poor revegetation success to see if they could improve the sagebrush revegetation using more recent knowledge. The effort evolved into the much larger AML Native Plants Project.

Bill Locke, a former AML program manager, said, "It took a long time to get that project going, but he was more than willing to put the effort in and did. Consequently, we have a great program up and running."

He added that Edwards never shied away from some of the more difficult projects. "Alan was not afraid to jump in with both feet, roll up his sleeves and work with us to get things straightened out," Locke said.

Although much of Edward's work took place within the AML Division, he worked in nearly all of DEQ's divisions.

He served as acting administrator for the Solid and Hazardous Waste Division, during which time he led efforts to establish DEQ's Cease and Transfer and Landfill Remediation programs, both of which continue to be successful.

Edwards twice served as acting administrator for the Land Quality Division and served in that role to manage the Brook Mine LLC permit. Similarly, he acted in the capacity of Air Quality Division administrator to manage a permit for the Kemmerer power plant.

Notably, Edwards also helped create an agency-wide bonding program that brought all bonding efforts under one program.

"I could not have been as successful as I have been able to be without the support of the AML team and others that I have had the pleasure to work with across the agency as well as, especially, the director," Edwards said.

"I am looking forward to the next journey, but I leave with mixed feelings. To move on, some things will be left behind."

Luke Esch, administrator of DEQ's Solid and Hazardous Waste Division is taking over as deputy director of the agency. He will serve as interim administrator for the AML Division, as well.

Of Edwards, Esch said, "I have always been impressed at the level of dedication and hard work he puts in every situation. He has been a champion for the AML Program nationally and been a leader in the field. He has been a great example and a mentor to me and many others who will work together to continue the legacy that he leaves behind."

**Published: Oct. 23, 2020**

**By Kristine Galloway**

## **Ehrenfeld AML Pilot Project - Pennsylvania**

### **Reclamation/Recreation & Watershed Improvement**

### **National Award Winner**

Approximately 70 acres of coal refuse piles located along the "Johnstown Path of the Flood Trail," posed multiple environmental threats to the area. Frequent erosion clogged an unnamed tributary to the Little Conemaugh River, as a result, highly acidic water leached into and subsequently impaired local streams, burning areas of refuse piles and degrading air quality for the residents. To address these hazards, Pennsylvania's AML Program removed the refuse piles, eliminated the surface burning conditions and improved the Little Conemaugh watershed. The reclamation project has resulted in new opportunities for recreation and tourism with the addition of a community park and safer walking trails.



[Watch a video about the Ehrenfeld Pilot Project](#)

[\*\*Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection\*\*](#)  
[\*\*Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation\*\*](#)

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## Ridgeway Drive Landslide Emergencies - West Virginia

### Appalachian States Regional Award Winner

In 2018, West Virginia received two different reports of landslides within the same neighborhood. Calls from concerned residents regarding these slides, and the subsequent investigations by West Virginia's AML program, revealed that more than 10 homes were threatened, while another home had slid partially downhill. With the threat to people's lives and property imminent, West Virginia's quick response abated the threats to the residents and helped to stabilize their properties, preventing further damage and economic loss.



[Watch a video about the Ridgeway Drive Slide](#)

[\*\*West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection\*\*](#)  
[\*\*Office of Abandoned Mine Lands and Reclamation\*\*](#)

## Buttermilk Highwalls, AML Site 1820 - Indiana

### Interior States Regional Award Winner

Two large and dangerous highwalls located near a public road posed a danger to anyone driving, hiking, hunting or fishing near the Sugar Ridge Fish and Wildlife Area. Indiana's AML program worked with one of its sister agencies in the Indiana DNR to address the hazards. This collaborative effort eliminated 1,615 linear feet of dangerous highwalls while mitigating future acid mine drainage (AMD) problems, improving wetland areas, and providing better wildlife habitat, all of which improved recreational opportunities at the site.



[Watch a video about the Buttermilk Highwalls](#)

[\*\*Indiana Department of Natural Resources\*\*](#)  
[\*\*Abandoned Mine Land Program\*\*](#)

## The Carrick Mine AML Project - North Dakota

### Western States and Tribes Regional Award Winner

A 20-acre abandoned mine site located near two popular recreation areas contained dangerous highwalls and a large, water-filled pit. The site not only posed a hazard to the public, but also raised liability concerns for private landowners who used the property as horse pasture and a hunting area. North Dakota's AML program addressed these issues by eliminating approximately 1,300 feet of dangerous highwalls, creating a pond that recharges fresh water, and preserving a prehistoric, petrified tree stump, estimated to be between 55 and 60 million years old.



[Watch a video about the Carrick Mine Project](#)



[North Dakota Public Service Commission](#)  
[Abandoned Mine Lands](#)

## Ruffner Mountain Portals AML Project - Alabama

### Small Project Award Winner

Open mine portals in a nature preserve adjacent to several popular hiking trails posed a danger not only to the public, but also to the over 600 Tricolor bats that called the portals home. When a bat study confirmed the presence of White-nose syndrome within the bat population, the urgency to limit human entry to the portals was heightened. Alabama's AML program reclaimed the site, resolving public safety concerns while minimizing the ecological impact to the local area.



[Watch a video about the Ruffner Mountain Portals Project](#)



[Alabama Department of Labor](#)  
[Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation](#)

### NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SPECIFICATIONS

Articles subject to editing. Submit an article by e-mail. 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 Spring Edition is April 15, 2021.**

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