

As always, if you have any questions you may contact me at: bruce.ragon@tn.gov or (865) 594-5547. See you in September.

The next newsletter will feature articles from Illinois, Kansas, Ontario, Oregon, and South Carolina. Deadline for copy to be received at the Coal Research Center office is September 30, 2009.

STATE NEWS/ACTIVITIES

FLORIDA

Lou Neuman

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

There are many items that might be of interest to other NASLR members but I will only list five.

PERMIT FEES. Fees for Environmental Resource Permits (ERP's) processed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection increased April 21, 2009. We do not process mining permits. We issue permits for the management and storage of surface waters. The ERP's fees below are based on work in on or over wetlands or other surface waters. The shortened version of the fee schedule for ERP's are as follows:

Greater than or equal to 100 acres: \$14,020

Less than 100 acres but greater than or equal to 50 acres: \$11,220

Less than 50 acres but greater than or equal to 10 acres: \$9,120

Less than 10 acres but greater than or equal to 5 acres: \$7,710

Less than 5 acres but greater than or equal to 2 acres: \$5,610

Less than 2 acres but greater than or equal to 1 acre: \$4,210

Less than 1 acre: \$3,510

Major modification fees have the same fees as a new permit

Minor modification fee: \$420

A complete list of fees can be found in Chapter 62-4, Florida Administrative Code.

ERP for Northwest Florida. There are five water management districts in Florida. With the exception of the panhandle of Florida, ERPs have been in place for over 10 years in the other four districts. Phase I of the ERP rule is in effect in northwest Florida. At this writing, full implementation of ERP rules (Phase II) in northwest Florida has not been approved.

Limerock Mining in Miami-Dade. In the Miami-Dade area (think South Florida-Miami area for out-of-staters), there is a large amount of limestone. The limestone is close to the surface. Extraction of the limestone results

in the formation of lake(s). This area is also known as the Lake Belt. The mining industry has proposed an expansion of mines in this area. U.S. District Judge William Hoeweler reinstated an earlier overturned order that halted mining in hundreds of acres surrounding a well field that supplies drinking water. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently sent a letter to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) recommending denying nine requests for expansion into wetlands bordering Everglades National Park based on loss of wildlife habitat, drainage of adjacent marshes, and potential degradation of water quality. The EPA and USACOE are discussing the concerns with the industry. **Sand and Limestone.** Sand and limestone are two major resources extracted in Florida. These resources are used in vast quantities in the construction industry. With the housing industry in a slump, the demand for the sand and limestone also dropped. Due to the economic downturn in the economy, some mines have decreased the shifts worked, the mining rate has slowed down, and some mines have ceased or nearly ceased operations. Some ERP applications for projects involving mining operations have also been withdrawn. Staff in the nonphosphate section of Bureau of Mining and Minerals Regulation is still overloaded with applications received from the past few years and continues to process modifications for existing permits.

Attendance at NASLR. I will not be able to attend the upcoming NASLR meeting. To give you an idea of what is occurring here, a main newspaper headline last week was about 158 state workers being laid off. The article indicated these were not vacant positions but filled positions. Fortunately, the positions did not involve staff from this Bureau. State workers again received no general raise this year. This is the third year without raises. A 2.5 pay cut was proposed for state workers making over \$50,000, but that was vetoed. Travel restrictions with extra scrutiny for out-of-state trips are still in place. All travel must be deemed critical to the mission of the agency. While I will not be physically present at the meeting, my thoughts will be with you. I wish you a safe and productive meeting.

Florida Dam Owner Workshop

The Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) are offering a special training event for Florida dam owners and operators in conjunction with the ASDSO Annual Conference in Hollywood, Florida. The Florida Dam Owner Workshop, covering dam safety, operation and maintenance, as well as other practical applications, will be held on September 29-30, 2009. For further information, please contact FDEP at 850-488-8217 or the ASDSO at 859-257-5140 or go to www.damsafety.org.