

## **TIPS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

Office of Surface Mining  
July 27-29, 2004  
Stanley Hotel, Estes Park, CO

### **Introduction, Agenda Review: Al Klein**

Theme: OSM's focus on Technical Transfer and Technical Assistance

### **Office of the Director: Tom Shope**

"In this century, the greatest environmental progress will come about not through endless lawsuits or command-and-control regulations, but through technology and innovation."- President George W. Bush, State of the Union, January 28, 2003.

### **Overview of TIPS Activities- Information, Decision Points, TIPS Future: Billie Clark**

- TIPS needs guidance from the SC to establish priorities
- The Training Program needs more instructors
- What is the SC's thoughts on TIPS acquiring new software such as ArcIMS/ArcSDE, Graphic Tool Usage, and GIS Connect software
- Strategic Planning (TIPS's plan for the next 5 years). TIPS has four (4) volunteers from OSM but needs a Steering Committee representative.
- OSM's workforce planning predicts the reallocation of several positions over the next five (5) years towards TIPS and other tech transfer activities.

### **LIST OF ATTENDEES:**

| <b><i>Name, State or Agency</i></b>    | <b><i>Phone Number</i></b> | <b><i>Email Address</i></b>  |
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| MCRCC                            |                        |  |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|
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### Steering Committee Members- Constituent Reports:

#### Mark Schlimgen (TX)-

Mark represents Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

Texas reports that they are having a hard time keeping hardware updated to support TIPS software. Texas has not updated their computers in 3 years, and may not replace them until 2006. (OSM is looking at making a nationwide refresh policy of 3-4 years). Texas IT is looking at a 4 year lease cycle for hardware. Texas is also hopeful to receive some mobile computing hardware, especially for AML purposes.

#### John Craynon (OSM HQ)-

John represents OSM Headquarters.

TIPS usage in HQ is limited. TIPS tools are mostly use for OSM's Underground Mine Mapping Initiative. MMI works extensively with MSHA and States to improve science. The primary technical issues are technical review criteria, mapping standards, and geophysical techniques. Concerns include getting maps into digital form, managing data and data standards, georeferencing and GIS, the availability of maps. The goals of the initiative are to make accurate UG maps available to as many as possible and to build on TIPS and other's efforts. Potential TIPS involvement includes coordination with existing state efforts, use of standard software, involvement of OSM team, and assistance in development of a distributed tool set. MMI may want TIPS to look into purchasing scanners that could be multi-purpose.

There are a number of problems in setting guidelines for mine map standards. No two mine maps are alike. Standardizing the data dictionary (scale and history info) may be a better approach.

#### Doug Mullins (VA)-

Doug represents Virginia, Ohio, Maryland, and IMCC.

Ohio says that the software and hardware support from TIPS is far better than that provided by industry. Ohio would like to see ESRI e-course results displayed online and feel that the expansion of e-training would benefit TIPS. (*Action Item 1*)

Tom Hines is the new contact for TIPS.

Virginia felt it was best for them to purchase some of the base software, so DOI internet shut downs would not shut them down. There have been no access problems, and they are pleased with the training program. Virginia would like a web interface to show VA TIPS usage statistics without bothering Mary. They like Map Guide, but feel that it's not robust enough. They would like OSM to look into ArcIMS. (*Action Item 12*) They also would like TIPS to offer an image processing class (using adobe or gimp) to help inspectors in the field. (*Action Item 2*)

Doug accidentally volunteered for the Strategic Planning Committee.

#### Larry Evans (WV)-

Larry represents West Virginia and IMCC.

WVDEP GIS users have increased greatly from January 2003. West Virginia DEP used TIPS for base GIS training for their employees then specialized on top of it for their specific needs. They have and are pleased with ArcSDE/Oracle Environment. It was used to create a seamless image for the whole state. West Virginia introduced GISConnect software to the offices. It lets CAD users use any GIS feature class or point, control GIS editing, view all GIS information with one click, and fully supports vector data. WV has experimented with some mobile computing software and equipment such as ArcGIS 8.X data check out and ArcPAD.

The DEP office will be moving to a new facility.

#### Willis Gainer (OSM-WRCC)-

Willis represents the OSM Western Region Field Offices and the Indian Tribes (Crow, Navajo, and Hopi).

The Albuquerque Field Office has increased access to data stored in the WGIS for use by inspectors. This brought on data inventories and identification of missing information. "How-to" documents were developed to facilitate use of TIPS applications. Assistance was given to the Hopi on TIPS software installation. Implementation of Mine CAD maps as background layers for GPS data collected by inspectors. This facilitates data sharing between the mine and OSM as well as allows for more efficient inspections conducted by the AFO staff.

AFO needs 3 ArcView licenses to use in the field (*Action Item 13*), 1 plotter for hard copy generation of WGIS data (*Action Item 15*), and on-site training in GIS. (*Action Item 3*)

The Casper Field Office suggests having students bring their own local project for GIS training to make the training more meaningful and productive (Gene Robinson). They also appreciate help they have received from Wilhelm and Boehms and commend Lou Hamm as a service manager. CFO needs assistance setting up the surplus plotter they received from ND. (*Action Item 16*)

Currently, the Crow Tribe has no TIPS equipment, but will need a GPS unit shortly to inventory AML sites. (*Action Item 17*) Additional TIPS involvement can be anticipated.

The Navajo Title V inspection staff has four GPS units and could use one more unit. (*Action Item 18*) They are also interesting in mobile computing as it becomes available. The Title IV staff is currently projecting to bring a full data base of all Navajo AML sites to light. The Title IV group appreciates the TIPS support it has received in ArcInfo, ArcView, Pathfinder, AutoCAD, SurvCADD, etc. They request on-site training in ArcInfo software (*Action Item 4*), a large format plotter (*Action Item 19*), and a Geoexplorer 3. (*Action Item 20*)

The Hopi have had a hard time with online training due to a poor connection. They request on-site training in GPS and software programs for developing maps. Please contact Ralph Empson. (*Action Item 5*)

#### **Rick Koehler (NM)-**

Rick represents New Mexico and Utah.

Both states have found training availability great, have been using the virtual campus, and have new staff members trained in TIPS equipment. They like e-training, but it's hard to get staff to complete classes. There are hardware issues with using non state purchased tools on the state network (including plotters). The refresh rate for hardware is around 4-6 years to save money. AutoCAD and GIS were used everyday, so they bought their own copies. No license problems so far, more problems with IT issues than with TIPS software. They find a need to balance innovation and service with policy and procedure. They would like to make Mobile Computing more seamless for staff in field. If TIPS evaluates ArcIMS to add to the TIPS suite they ask that we do not limit the search to ESRI products and suggest MapGuide, Map Server, and other open source applications.

#### **Greg Melton (AR)-**

Greg represents Alabama, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and IMCC.

Alabama Title IV employee Mike Vincent says the in-house AML group is pleased with TIPS training, but may need some on-site Aquachem training. They also request a large format scanner, blue line, or large format photo copy equipment. Does anyone have a source of cheap plotter paper?

Alabama Title V thought TIPS training was good. They also have purchased a new server.

Oklahoma Title V has been pleased with training and software updates. They look forward to mobile computing advances. They request a large format scanner if possible. They also remind TIPS to not overlook the smaller state programs.

The Arkansas AML group uses SurvCADD, SedCAD and the GeoExplorer XM's extensively. They would like to use the RTK survey unit, have more hydrology software training, and surface deformation software training.

#### **Fred Klimas (OSM-ARCC)-**

Fred reports for the Appalachian Region field offices.

The Inspectors in this area use GPS to varying degrees. However, it has been very helpful overall. In this region they have used TIPS recourses to help local watershed groups and

states monitor before and after scenarios of mitigation, to help other states with mapping, etc. and to help solicitors identify hydrological impacts. They enjoy their large format scanner and are experimenting with a mobile computing unit. They also supply a large number of instructors to TIPS. It was noted that more time is being expended on TIPS related activities than is really reported. Some data input is charged towards the office that could also be considered TIPS work. ([Action Item 22](#))

**Dave Berry (CO)-**

Dave represents the western states.

Dave feels that the TIPS Steering Committee shows what is right with OSM and the relationship between OSM and the States. Technical transfer (NTTT, TIPS, NTTP) have done much for this relationship, and we need to continue in this direction. TIPS makes states better at what they do, thus making OSM's job easier. We continue to learn from each other. OSM sees what all states are doing and help them communicate and learn. He likes where Billie Clark has taken things. He thinks it is very beneficial for TIPS and NTTP to cooperate and overlap. He has had difficulties with IT consolidation issues. It seems a large portion of time and money are spent on IT issues when it could be spent elsewhere.

**Peter Mahrt (MT)-**

Peter reports for the western states, WIEB, Montana, Alaska, and Wyoming.

The Wyoming staff is satisfied with their training. They are considering on-site training in ArcGIS for the future.

Alaska and Montana will receive in state ArcGIS training. Alaska thought the on-site GPS training was great. They would like a new scanner and new ArcGIS updates. They suggest that people who write scripts may want Microsoft training if funding is available. ([Action Item 6](#))

There have been some problems with the expenditure of federal money for technological supplies in states where IT officials have not yet approved the expenditure.

**John Riley (CO)-**

John represents Colorado and North Dakota.

North Dakota has an on-site ArcGIS course later this month. They may request more in the future. They are interested in TIPS providing GIS data (climate, environmental) for states to use. They need data storage space, either as primary or backup storage. They would like to see TIPS provide more developmental skills and application development skills for data management by programs or applications. They also would prefer faster deployment of updates, not necessarily bulk shipments.

Colorado sends their kudos. The Key server and FlexLM upgrade have been successful. They thank TIPS for their Tough book and the appropriate software. They also would like to see TIPS and NTTP share training duties but not be redundant.

**Pete Rutledge (OSM)-**

Pete represents WRCC.

The western staff (permit and inspectors) has increased their TIPS software usage greatly, thanks to Billie. They especially like Satellite Imaging, the thermal camera, and Earthvision, although one possible replacement for Earthvision may be Vulcan.

**Erv Barchenger (OSM)-**

Erv represents MCRCC.

The field units are not heavy on TIPS yet. They are being introduced to GPS/GIS. In Alton, TIPS usage is very high. They have about 2 FTE's in MCRCC right now. Main focus is on AutoCAD and mobile computing, using both AutoCAD and GIS. MCRCC has taken over the Missouri permitting program and are using TIPS software greatly in this arena. MCRCC has work planning in place. They hope to have 2 positions open soon, converting both to ½ time TIPS. Finally, they have recently upgraded the training room.

**Mike Sharp (OK-AML)-**

Mike reports for NAAMLPLP.

NAAMLPLP encourages TIPS and NTTP to work together to integrate technology into NTTP courses as they are revised and upgraded. NAAMLPLP recognizes the need for basic courses in the use of TIPS tools, but requests the development of advanced courses on the use of these tools. TIPS is to be commended on the training facilities they provide. Additionally, they would like to recognize that the software provided by TIPS saves the States and Tribes a significant

amount of money which allows them to devote more of their funding to on-the-ground reclamation. Finally, NAAMLPL encourages TIPS to continue to expand the mobile computing effort.

Although this may not be a TIPS related issue, the NAAMLPL strongly encourages OSM to integrate the Performance Measure System (Bruce Fye) and AMLIS (Tom Browne) so that data common to each system need only be entered once.

Also note that NTTTP found they had about 4 FTE from the states that goes towards training.

**Vann Weaver/Bob McKenzie (OSM)-**

Vann and Bob represent ARCC.

ARCC represents users, trainers, service managers, and course managers. There has been an increase in classes taught in Pittsburgh. Any new hires for ARCC have TIPS written into their job definition. Users in ARCC are concerned about the balance of IT security and innovation. ARCC added a new branch (Technology Service Branch), made up of the IT services and hydrologists. It will be headed by Bob McKenzie who is now ARCC's representative in the Steering Committee. The Ecological Services and Technology Transfer Branch is made up of the engineers and ecologists and will be headed by Vann.

Bob is very proud of the AMDTreat efforts and looks forward to the development of a book to go along with AMDTreat, which will be titled "AMDTreat for Dummies."

**Tim Wilson (KS)-**

Tim represents Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri.

This past year Missouri lost most of their program, but a few engineers are left in bond forfeiture department. They depend highly on TIPS software.

Iowa would like a workshop in mobile computing. (*Action Item 7*) They have been using the e-courses as well. They believe that TIPS and NTTTP have great basic courses for new hires and would like to see some classes advanced to the next level.

Kansas would like OSM or TIPS to provide aerial photography again. They need data storage space. Also, they would like a RTK or total station unit (*Action Item 21*). They give kudos to Sarah's ITC.

**Scott Roberts (PA, KY)-**

Scott reports for Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, and IMCC.

The IMCC finds OSM to be the best vehicle for mine mapping because of the technology offered by TIPS.

Illinois is satisfied with the help they have received this past year.

There was no response from Indiana, but they have continued work with mobile computing and mine mapping.

This past year has brought a lot of new hires to Kentucky. They now have a large need for basic training classes.

Pennsylvania is thankful for the use of thermal camera. AMDTreat has become very popular among watershed groups. Currently they are working with Carnegie Mellon University developing new down-hole cameras, specifically looking at the sonar capability of such cameras. Two proposals to work with Wilkes University have been accepted. The proposals are for Title IV and V and focus on the use of GIS-GPS-Mobile Computing-Remote sensing technologies. Pennsylvania is a heavy TIPS user and uses training classes extensively.

**Summary of SC Comments- Billie Clark:**

- Training- advanced courses, e-learning, on-site
- Software- how software gets nominated or demoted, software priorities
- Geospatial/GIS
- IT Security Concerns
- Mobile Computing

**NTTP Update and Briefing- Sarah Donnelly:**

NTTP has developed action plans looking at the typical trainee's career path or career series. Each course has been organized into 4 career series. A series of questions are looked at including: how do they fit; are there gaps; will people get certification from these courses? NTTTP plans to have a strategic plan completed by December 2004. An instructor advisory council is

being developed to get instructors from different disciplines to share ideas. They are also looking at ways to provide instructor incentives. They hope to have an inspection workbook online, it is written, but needs exercises for the students. NTTTP has grown from 11 courses in 1989 to 43 courses in 2004. None have been excised to date. Some new classes that are being considered for development are AML workshops, Hydrology workshops, an IT class, a SMCRA 21 class for managers, communication training, and an AML manager course if reauthorization occurs.

**TIPS Budget and Capital Planning- Lou Hamm:**

Lou Hamm could not attend the meeting. Please direct any questions/ concerns to Billie Clark or Lou Hamm.

**RTK/GPS Topographic Mapping- Harry Ranney:**

This presentation showcased the use of RTK Survey Grade GPS and Carlson Tsunami to Map the South Canyon No. 1 Fire in Glennwood Springs, CO.

**TIPS Recognition Award- Billie Clark:**

Harry Ranney received the 2004 TIPS Recognition Award.

**Training Program:**

**Review of FY 04 Training Program, Proposed FY 05 Schedule, Approving General Schedule Priorities, Course Development and Redevelopment, and Status of ESRI on-line Training - Bob Welsh:**

- Is the minimum student requirement of 8 appropriate? Should this number be flexible? Should courses be offered no matter annually or biannually?
- 13 customer site classes occurred this year (7 added after mid-year). How should TIPS address its class addition policy?
- A proposed Underground Mine Mapping/GIS week long class has been discussed. Should the TIPS training program take on such a class? There are some concerns such as what software package should be used, GIS or AutoCAD Raster Design? Do we need standards on UG mine mapping before we develop a class? Is TIPS ready for this undertaking? Decision- Vann will bring up the topic on the next NTTT meeting. The committee is in favor of the course development. ([Action Item 8](#))
- There is some concern in the low completion rate of e-courses. Possible solutions include the availability of on-line instructors, use of BLOG or chat rooms, better needs surveys, etc. ([Action Item 9](#))

**Software:**

**Software Management and Usage, License Availability, Key server Availability, TIPS License Management- Mary Greene:**

Mary provided data showing software usage by program, section, and OSM/State/Tribe Office. She also explained how TIPS collects information from Key server and Flex LM to count the number of hits and denials for each licensed program. An action item from the 2003 Steering Committee meeting regarding Key Checkout for the Mobile Computing Initiative was addressed. A pilot study using ArcView license checkout in the state of Kentucky has been recommended.

There is some concern on the lack of information being collected on non-licensed programs. This information would be useful for training purposes. Soft-key through Key server is one possibility. Versions of freeware deployed to OSM/State/Tribe offices could also be keyed. AMDTreat needs special consideration, since it is deployed to private offices and watershed groups.

**Long-Term Software Strategy- Mary Greene:**

Active Management

Flex Net Upgrade- provides more data

Mobile Computing in Kentucky- results will be shown within the next year ([Action Item 14](#))

**Hydrology Overview:****Hydrology Program- Mary Greene:**

Overall, the hydrology program offers many high-end software packages. Vendor training is needed for the trainers in order to develop better classes.

**Integrated Surface/Ground Water Modeling- MIKE SHE/11- Bob Prucha:**

Bob Prucha gave a presentation on the importance of integrated surface and ground water modeling, how it is used, what it provides the user, and what training needs the user may need to use such software. MIKE SHE provides the opportunity to input a large amount of data involving surface features, vegetation, groundwater features, etc. An interface with ArcView and ArcGIS is being developed.

**Hydrologic Capabilities Using Mobile Computing- Paul Behum/Bill Winters:**

There are a number of benefits to doing hydrologic analysis in the field. It saves time, money, and manpower. It improves field decisions in the field and mapping processes in the field. The technology to employ this effort is available currently, but at a cost.

**Geochemist's Workbench- Bill Winters:**

This program automatically balances chemical reactions, calculates and plots stability diagrams, calculates and plots temperature-activity diagrams, and traces and plots reaction paths of fluids, minerals, and gases. The program is very complex, and may warrant professional vendor training. A training class needs to be developed using the software to solve mining issues.

**Large Watershed Modeling Software (WCMS & WMS) - Steve Parsons/Jerry Fletcher:**

Watershed Characterization Modeling System (WCMS) is a GIS modeling system for watershed modeling and analysis. It produces spatially explicit landscape models, and has a number of hydrological capabilities. A number of groups are working together to develop appropriate models of flow for streams in the West Virginia mining region in WCMS.

An overview of the large watershed analysis software search was presented. A number of software packages have been tested by the team looking at the capabilities of each. The team has had the most success with Watershed Modeling System (WMS) however WMS did not meet all the criteria the team wanted. At this point the team is not satisfied with the results of the search and would like to continue their work.

Watershed Modeling System (WMS) provides a graphical user interface for various hydrologic models, interfaces well with other TIPS products, supports a wide range of image formats, allows the use and conversion between different coordinate systems, allows automatic watershed delineation, automates the calculation of basin information needed to run a variety of hydrologic models, and allows flood plain modeling and mapping.

**Hydrology Summary- Mary Greene:**

These programs are very complex, and require appropriate training to be used properly. Some version changes require extra training as well. Most instructors do get vendor training when available. TIPS will make sure proper notation is taken to show that instructors do get the required vendor (or other) training. It is felt that TIPS can continue to explore MIKE SHE and other high-end software, but not to the point where they risk losing basic hydrologic analysis capability. Radar precipitation data is vital, Steve Parsons endorses it.

Decision Points:

1. WMS: Software and Training- large watershed, continue training, travel funds, 1 extra evaluation copy
2. GWB training- provide vendor training ([Action Item 10](#))
3. GMS training- provide vendor training ([Action Item 11](#))

All decision points were approved.

**Mobile Computing/GPS:**

**Mobile Computing- Kevin Garnett:**

TIPS is very active in mobile computing, testing new equipment and participating in technical transfer activities.

**GIS/Remote Sensing:****Release of ArcGIS 9.0- Al Wilhelm:**

TIPS has scheduled the deployment of ArcGIS 9.0 in August-September 2004 timeframe. A number of extensions will be provided including 3D Analyst, Spatial Analyst, Geo-statistical Analyst, Survey Analyst, ArcScan, and ArcPress. The ESRI conference is in August, which will provide the opportunity to learn about up and coming ESRI products and extensions.

**Thermal Imaging Camera- Mychal Yellowman:**

This presentation showed the thermal imaging camera being used to contain a spoil fire. The camera is best used for small scale projects. It is well designed for outdoor use and user-friendly. It is less accurate in windy or sunny conditions.

**WY GIS Pilot Project- Rick Chancellor:**

The purpose of this project was to establish a method for tracking future bond release areas to aid in expediting the bond release process, to become knowledgeable of GIS and GPS technology, and to evaluate GIS' usefulness for future projects. Terra Sync software was used on the Geo XT.

**Upcoming Events:****DOI and OSM Geographic Information Management Initiatives (EGIM) - Al Wilhelm:**

The purpose of the EGIM Team is to provide leadership for Enterprise GIS implementation and GIS utilization in the Department of Interior. The team promotes communication, strategic planning, education and training, integration, data management, and GIS technical support among the department as a whole. TIPS has formed a GIS team to address the issues EGIM is bringing forward, such as the geospatial one-stop and the software restrictions DOI may place on OSM.

**Geospatial Conference Update- Bill Winters:**

The Geospatial Conference is scheduled for December 7-9, 2004 at the Renaissance Waverly Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. Draft papers are due September 17, 2004. Space is filling up quickly, so register early.

**NTTT Coordination:****National Technical Transfer Team Overview- Vann Weaver:**

The NTTT team is lead by Vann Weaver and is made up of several representatives from each region. NTTT is the "Clearinghouse" of information for OSM, States, and Tribes.

The Appalachia region has 2 fulltime specialists and 1 part time graphics specialist. ARCC has had a number of workshops on valley fills, mine pools, flooding, hydrologic issues. Events that are coming up include a passive treatment techniques forum, manganese standards workshops, and reforestation initiative. An applied science projects has been accepted in which TIPS and PADEP along with Wilkes University will look at (GIS thing). Other proposals may be addressed. (Vann Weaver)

The Mid-continent region is composed of 4 groups; mine mapping; AMD; Hydrology; and Mobile Computing, GIS, and Electronic permitting. The groups have participated in 10 event proceedings, 10 forums, and contributed to the Boy Scout Handbook. Exhibits have included a CCB event, mining and reclamation symposium, and state reclamation symposium. The mid-continent technical transfer team remains involved with the CCB, bat conservation, the reforestation initiative, and the prime farmland forum. Future events include the Indiana bat

forum, regional AMD workshop, and ACAA/UK World of Coal Ash Mine Placement Forum. (Kimery Voires).

The Western region is made up of 7 people. The website for the Office of Technology Transfer is <http://www.ott.wrcc.osmre.gov/index.htm>. The website displays the OTT staff and function, the Western Regional Technical Team (WRTT), New Technologies and Innovations, Proactive Technical Assistance and Advanced Education Opportunities (PTAAEO), Links to Mining and Reclamation Related Sites (MRS), the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA), Guidelines, Handbooks, Manuals, and Public Domain Software, Publications, Proceedings, e-Learning Initiative, Education Outreach, Recent Acquisitions, the Federal Register Notice, and the Library Catalog. The website is updated frequently. Any concerns with the e-learning initiative can be emailed to [Elearning@osmre.gov](mailto:Elearning@osmre.gov). (Delva Martinez for Linda Wagner)

**Future TIPS Steering Committee meeting dates:**

May 2-6, 2005- Mid-Continent Region

May 8-12, 2006- Appalachian Region

May 7-11, 2007- Western Region

**Reminder-**

The TIPS Strategic Planning Committee still needs a Steering Committee Representative.