



## Special points of interest:

- TIPS Steering Committee met May 8 through 10, in Denver, and arrived at several key decisions that affect us all.
- The vote is in, and the TIPS moniker (or, at least, the results of the TIPS-moniker contest!) has been decided.
- OSM's Technical Library declares its services to be wide-ranging and available to all.

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September 2007

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT

# TIPS TIMES



## THE SUCCESS-STORY SERIES

...brought to you, in their own words,  
from TIPS customers nationwide...

## TIPS Saves the Day by Tim Wilson

*(Please note that Tim Wilson is a PG-III Program Services Manager in the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Surface Mining Section. —Ed.)*

I wanted to relate to you a recent situation where TIPS saved the day for the Kansas abandoned mine land (AML) program.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife Protection State Park No. 1 Reclamation Project involved a site-specific solution to abate over 9,000 feet of priority-2 dangerous highwalls within a State-owned public recreation area. The highwalls were located along a system of interior roads within the project site that led to fishing hiking, camping, and hunting areas. Our solution to the problem was to design and build a new road layout that maintained a safe distance from the highwalls, while maintaining access to the desired areas. The



*Difficult conditions at Kansas Department of Wildlife Protection State Park No. 1's Reclamation Project make conventional surveying methods virtually impossible to implement.*

site consists of numerous final-cut strip pits interspersed with heavily vegetated spoil dumps. This not only made the

site difficult for performing the reconnaissance required to ground-truth the aerial mapping during design, it also made it next to impossible to survey the site with conventional methods. The design firm

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## TIPS Saves the Day—continued

provided a table of latitude/longitude data, along with the site drawings to aid in laying out the new roadways. Our survey team loaded these data into TIPS-provided Trimble GeoExplorer XT software and, using the data as waypoints, was able to stake and flag the new road layout. At times, the construction equipment was following some distance back from the survey team and clearing vegetation from the new layout while the team was doing its staking. This work was undertaken in early December 2006, shortly after a 10-inch snowfall event. Even though leaf fall had already occurred, the number of trees on the site, the relief of the terrain, and slippery conditions made



*Clearing at the reclamation project often occurred almost immediately behind the Kansas AML program survey team.*

the going hard. Upon completion of the GPS-aided survey, the team stated that there was "no way" the road could have been staked using conventional methods without drastically disturbing more area than was required for the actual road path. As the project site also falls within critical habitat for the threatened and endangered gray bat, minimal disturbance was essential to the success of the project. We, in the Kansas AML program, appreciate the equipment, training, and support provided to us by TIPS over the past 20 years. Without the TIPS program, our tasks would certainly be more daunting, if not, as in this case, next to impossible. Thanks for allowing us to share this one, of many, success stories.

**"Without the TIPS program, our tasks would certainly be more daunting, if not, as in this case, next to impossible."**



*A backhoe rough grades the new reclamation-project road layout.*

## The Technical Library of OSM by Deborah McGinnis

OSM's Technical Library provides access to technical and legal information relating to the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA). It serves all of OSM, State surface-coal-mining regulatory authorities (SRA's), Tribes, the coal-mining industry, citizen groups, and the public in general. The OSM Technical

Librarian, Deborah McGinnis, has been with the bureau for almost 20 years and has a broad knowledge of information resources that pertain to OSM, SMCRA, and the subject of surface coal mining in general. People in the surface-mining business, as well as others seeking information

## The Technical Library of OSM—continued

on the subject, seem to continue to find such resources to be extremely valuable.

All OSM, SRA, and Tribal-authority staffs have borrowing privileges for the Technical-Library collection, and the collection is also available to anyone outside these groups by means of the interlibrary loan process. In 1990, the library catalog was first automated, and, in 2001, it was made web-accessible. Accordingly, anyone with Internet access can now easily browse the titles held in the collection (please feel free to have a look at <http://www.wrcc.osmre.gov/glas/>).

The Technical Librarian regularly uses online searches of subject-specific or bibliographic databases to provide customers reference assistance in researching technical issues. Help is also offered in researching legal databases for questions relating to SMCRA or OSM regulations and directives, and, at the (frequent) request of customers, the librarian provides copies of

older OSM documents as well. The Technical Library maintains a “journal-contents” service on the technology-

transfer web page in order to alert users to recent articles that address specific issues they might be interested in studying; copies of articles are provided as requested. On a monthly basis, the librarian updates a web-

page listing of *Federal Register* notices that are of interest to the bureau, providing easy access to amendments to State and Tribal programs or to OSM regulations.

The Technical Library strives to bring its users the information resources and help they need, whether to accomplish their jobs or merely to answer their questions. If any of you *TIPS Times* readers feels there is a way that library services can be expanded to provide more valuable or different types of assistance, please let the Technical Librarian (303-844-1400, ext. 1436; [dmcginnis@osmre.gov](mailto:dmcginnis@osmre.gov)) know.



Most days find OSM's Technical Librarian hard at work in the Technical Library, which is located in the bureau's Western Region Office [WRO].

**“The Technical Library strives to bring its users the information resources and help they need, whether to accomplish their jobs or merely to answer their questions.”**

General information regarding OSM's Technical Library is online at [www.off.wrcc.osmre.gov/Library](http://www.off.wrcc.osmre.gov/Library).

## The TIPS Hydrology Success Team by Deborah Dale

The TIPS Hydrology Success Team is a newly formed workgroup consisting of

OSM and State staff from across the nation. Team members are Deborah Dale (OSM, Mid-Continent Region Office), Mary Greene (OSM, WRO), Robert Liddle (OSM, Knoxville Field Office), Kathy Muller Ogle (Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Land Quality Division), Mike Sheehan (West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Land Reclamation, Timothy Walter (Texas Railroad Commission), and Bill Winters (OSM, Appalachian Region Office). This workgroup was established by

the Chief of WRO's TIPS and Technology Transfer Branch (TTTB) to address hydrology-related software, hardware, train-

ing, and peripheral issues associated with the TIPS training program.



*Mine seep from an abandoned-mine-land (AML) site near Beacon, Iowa), discharges into a local waterway.*

The goal of the TIPS Hydrology Success Team is to provide, by way of the Chief of TTTTB, the structure needed for, as well as solutions to, TIPS

hydrology issues and the training associated with them. Team members not only act as a voting body but represent the range of interests, thoughts, ideas, and solutions of the larger community of OSM, State, and Tribal hydrologists.

The team has been conducting meetings via teleconference, but is planning a face-to-face meeting in the near future. To date, some of the team's accomplishments include creating a team charter and work plan; organizing an informal hydrology group consisting of interested OSM, State, and Tribal hydrologists; recruiting course and software managers; reactivating the Large Watershed Team; characterizing existing hydrology software with regard to licensing, upgrades, etc.; and identifying and

prioritizing existing TIPS hydrology issues. The team also actively assesses the utility of various hydrology programs and is

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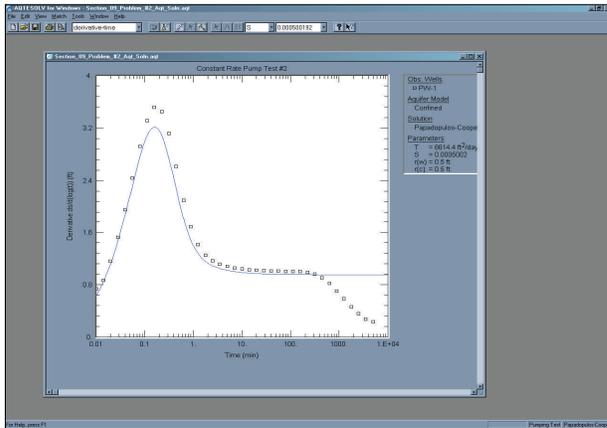
*Alkaline mine drainage is likewise a problem at this same Beacon, Iowa, AML site.*

## The TIPS Hydrology Success Team—continued

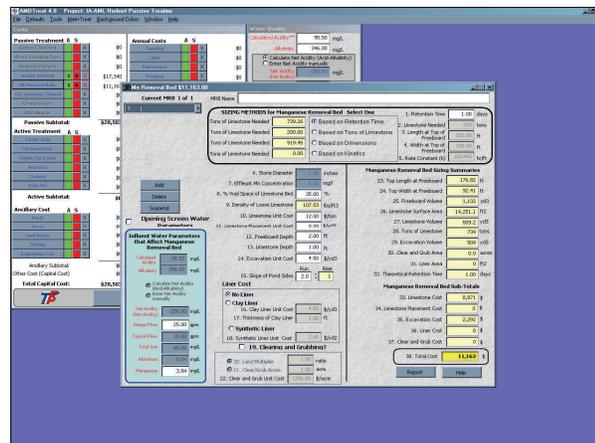
working to identify software needs in the larger hydrology community.

For more information concerning the TIPS Hydrology Success Team,

please contact Deborah Dale ([ddale@osmre.gov](mailto:ddale@osmre.gov)) at 618-463-6463, ext. 5149.



The TIPS Hydrology Success Team used Aqtesolv® to plot diagnostic drawdown data for the Beacon, Iowa, AML site.



This AMDTreat© data-input page shows data the team used to calculate the necessary components of a bed created to remove manganese from water at the Beacon, Iowa, AML site.

“For more information concerning the TIPS Hydrology Success Team, please contact Deborah Dale ([ddale@osmre.gov](mailto:ddale@osmre.gov)) at 618-463-6463, ext. 5149.”

## TIPS IT Infrastructure Recertified as Secure and Stable by Dan Rivers

Under provisions of the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), every 3 years the Department of the Interior requires all of its bureaus to conduct major recertifications of their information-technology (IT) infrastructures: the department requires interim testing of the infrastructures the 2 years in between.

Following major recertification, OSM is pleased to announce that its infrastructure—including hardware, software, security processes and policies, etc.—has proven itself once again to be secure and stable.

## TIPS Infrastructure Recertified as Secure and Stable—continued

For several years, each of OSM's regions (Appalachian, mid-continent, and western) has maintained a separate piece of the bureau's IT infrastructure; accordingly, each region has tested its part of the bureau

infrastructure individually, separate from the testing of infrastructure components in the other two regions. This year, however, OSM was able to test itself as a single entity.

Testing occurred in April in what is referred to as a "Security Test and Evaluation" (ST&E). The final ST&E report was issued April 25, 2007, for review and acceptance by the Director.

The ST&E examines approximately 170 elements of electronic and physical security as these pertain both to safeguarding information and to IT itself (see the FIMSA spreadsheet for a list of many of these elements). The ST&E report outlines weaknesses and areas that can be improved upon for better security in the future.

Each region contributed greatly to accomplishing the certification and accreditation of OSM as a single unified infrastructure, a really significant achievement attained only through the hard work of a dedicated IT

staff throughout the bureau. These folks continue to work together—diligently and behind the scenes—, both to maintain that infrastructure and the network it enables and just generally to provide

exceptional services on a continuous basis.

Our intention in IT is to carry on providing not only TIPS but all of OSM a solid infrastructure upon which we can all rely as we move into advanced services such as wireless access, data mining, knowledge and records management, and total systems integration. For more information regarding OSM's IT infrastructure as it relates to advanced services, please contact Dan Rivers ([drivers@osmre.gov](mailto:drivers@osmre.gov)), Patrick Dege ([pdege@osmre.gov](mailto:pdege@osmre.gov)), or Mike Benavides ([mbenavides@osmre.gov](mailto:mbenavides@osmre.gov)) at 303-844-1400, ext. 1504, 1445, or 1462, respectively. In the meantime, look forward to some exciting times ahead!

"For more information regarding OSM's IT infrastructure as it relates to advanced services, please contact Dan Rivers ([drivers@osmre.gov](mailto:drivers@osmre.gov)), Patrick Dege ([pdege@osmre.gov](mailto:pdege@osmre.gov)), or Mike Benavides ([mbenavides@osmre.gov](mailto:mbenavides@osmre.gov)) at 303-844-1400, ext. 1504, 1445, or 1462, respectively."

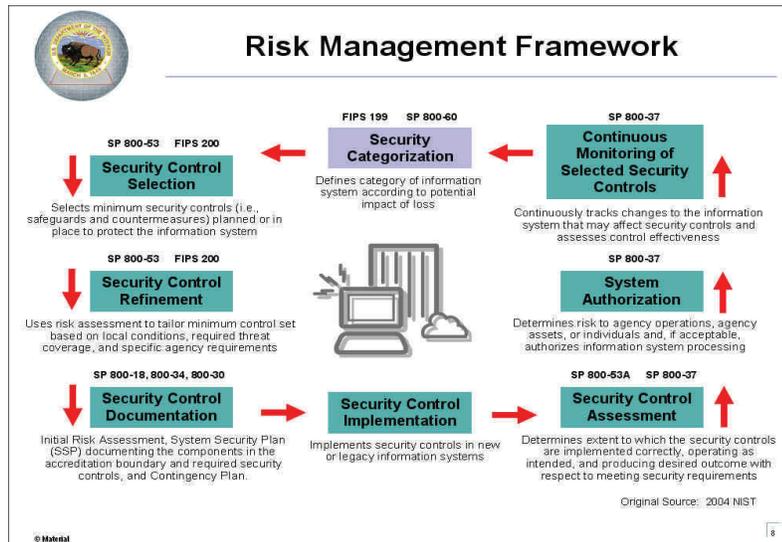


Chart giving various IT security criteria, the sequential evaluation of which provides a framework within which to manage IT security.

The general directive that governs OSM's information systems is online at <http://www.osmre.gov/directives/directive889.pdf>.

## OSM Joins in Partnership with MLRC Consortium by Diane Osborne

**The MRLC consortium.**—In fiscal-year 2006, TIPS initiated a formal OSM partnership with the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics (MRLC) consortium. The MRLC consortium is a group of Federal agencies that began working together in 1992 to meet the needs of several Federal agencies (the U.S. Geological Survey [USGS], the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the U.S. Forest Service) for Landsat 5 satellite imagery and land-cover information.

In 2001, a second-generation MRLC consortium was formed to develop an updated land-cover data set for the entire nation. The goals of MRLC 2001 were to purchase multi-temporal Landsat 7 imagery and to coordinate the production of a national land-cover database (called “NLCD 2001”) from this imagery. Recognizing the benefits—to OSM, States, and Tribes—of these multi-temporal land-cover data sets, OSM formally joined the MRLC consortium in 2006.

The MRLC consortium is specifically designed to meet the current needs of Federal agencies for nationally consistent satellite remote-sensing and land-cover data. The consortium also provides imagery and land-cover data, all of which can be accessed at no additional cost to MRLC partners through the MRLC consortium website (<http://www.mrlc.gov>).

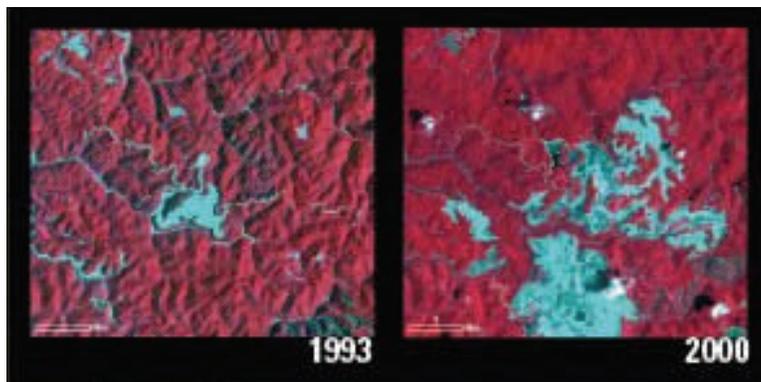
**The Land Cover Institute web portal.**—Recognizing the large and growing need for land-cover data and information, on May 29, 2006, USGS established a Land Cover Institute (LCI) and launched a new web portal (<http://landcover.usgs.gov>) to make it available online. The USGS LCI provides access to and scientific and technical support for USGS and other bureaus, agencies, and organizations involved with land-cover studies and applications. It also assists in identifying the most accurate and up-to-date land-cover data sets available to meet the continuing requirements of modern scientists, policy makers, and educators. Check out the “Get Land Cover Data” link for direct access to other land-cover websites from around the world!

**Benefits to OSM, States, and Tribes.**—The land-cover data that the MRLC consortium and LCI make available can be

used to support the long-term monitoring of such surface coal-mining activities as mountaintop mining by quantifying, on a regional

and landscape basis, successive changes in disturbed and revegetated land areas. In general, the collective set of NLCD data (consisting of both NLCD 2001 data and some data NLCD collected in 1992) can provide important information for re-

“The MRLC consortium is specifically designed to meet the current needs of Federal agencies for nationally consistent satellite remote-sensing and land-cover data.”



Graphic showing the change in land cover resulting from mountaintop mining activity dating from 1993 to 2000 in the Central Appalachian Eco-Region (graphic is courtesy of LCI).

## OSM Joins in Partnership with MLRC Consortium—continued

gional and landscape land-use, watershed, and ecosystem assessments.

As *TIPS Times* goes to press, TIPS service managers are in the process of distributing information regarding the MLRC consortium and the LCI web portal to their ser-

vice-area contacts. In the meantime, if you have questions or comments or would like additional information regarding either of these ventures, please feel free to contact me ([dosborne@osmre.gov](mailto:dosborne@osmre.gov); 303-844-1400, ext. 1417).

### TIPS Steering-Committee Meeting Held May 8 through 10 in Denver by Louis Hamm

The TIPS Steering Committee held its 2007 annual meeting May 8 through 10 at the Hyatt Regency Tech Center Hotel in Denver. This was a milestone meeting, because it was also a celebration of TIPS’

20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Steering-committee members were treated to poster displays of past TIPS highlights, and all present enjoyed the recollections of TIPS staff and other steering-

committee members from 20 years of TIPS adventures. At the dinner held after the first day of meetings, members and their spouses were richly entertained by long-time steering-committee representative from Arkansas, Greg Melton.

As the featured keynote speaker, Greg regaled all present with his humorous perspective, garnered over the course of more

than 17 years as a steering-committee member. Founders awards were presented to the two individuals who originally conceived of TIPS, Keith Kirk (*in absentia*) and Greg Morlock. Each com-

mittee member received a Lucite pyramid commemorating the anniversary, and Larry Evans was recognized as the outstanding contributor to TIPS this year.



Photograph showing several members of the TIPS Steering Committee delivering a business report to the remainder of the committee.

At the meeting, members re-

marked how pleased they were with the response TIPS had shown to the issues they had identified in last year’s meeting. They liked the idea of getting TIPS out of the hardware business—except for “seeding technology;” and they liked the emergency fund that TPS has established for equipment that breaks. As usual, they love the TIPS training program.

“At the meeting, members remarked how pleased they were with the response TIPS had shown to the issues they had identified in last year’s meeting.”

## TIPS Steering-Committee Meeting Held May 8 through 10 in Denver—continued

With respect to the policy of tracking software usage, members commented that ready information as to usage remains quite important by way of justifying the need for TIPS's existence. In particular, the steering committee wanted TIPS to be able to track the usage of all of the software it makes available, including ESRI software, even if ESRI no longer uses Flex licensing. In addition, if possible, they wanted TIPS to track usage of its laptops in the field. Members suggested that these purposes might be accomplished by using system logs, modified on the operating system, to send regular usage reports to the TIPS server. TIPS staff have already begun researching how KeyServer might be adapted to meet this identified need.

Certainly by now, everyone in OSM has become familiar with the occasional system upgrades and other maintenance-function updates that OSM Headquarters initiates from time to time and that affect the bureau's local area network (LAN). Steering-committee members expressed concern to the effect that TIPS customers should likewise be made aware of these scheduled system updates. In response to this concern, TIPS will task its service managers with putting together and then providing Headquarters a list of "network contacts" that together represent each TIPS customer site. The request accompanying this list will ask that all these contacts be added

to the LAN-update notification e-mail list at the Headquarters level.

More than one steering-committee member observed that he or she felt an increasing obligation to support TIPS more than just once a year. And members would like TIPS to step up its marketing effort, in



*Photograph showing steering-committee members pausing together for a group shot at the conclusion of the 2007 annual meeting.*

particular by making presentations at various conferences, including the upcoming AML business meeting.

In short, the TIPS

Steering Committee wants word of TIPS to reach the management level both in OSM and among our State customers. Members recognize that the TIPS story has to be told to management, so that TIPS support will grow. As one member remarked, "We, as steering-committee members, along with TIPS staff in general, need to get the word out that TIPS is cost-effective, necessary, and extremely efficient. It's the best!"

The TIPS team is currently following up on all of these suggestions and remarks at a team meeting, being held in Kansas City July 17 through 19. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss how best to address the issues identified by the steering committee.

"In short, the TIPS Steering Committee wants word of TIPS to reach the management level both in OSM and among our State customers. Members recognize that the TIPS story has to be told to management, so that TIPS support will grow."

**A complete listing of contact information for the TIPS Steering-Committee membership is available online at**  
[http://www.tips.osmre.gov/tips\\_html/SteeringCommittee.2004.asp](http://www.tips.osmre.gov/tips_html/SteeringCommittee.2004.asp)

## The Moniker Preferred

When *TIPS Times* closed down its online “What Shall Be Our Moniker?” voting box sometime toward the end of June of this year, we were unsure what might have been the extent of your participation in our little moniker competition here. Would you have been amused by the choices we had given you by way of naming us? Would you have taken the time to vote?

We are pleased to announce that you were and you did! Accordingly, now that the final tally is in, we can give you back your results, which are as follows: TIPSters

received 57 percent of the votes, with TIPSophiles and TIPSoids tied in a distant second at 7 percent; 29 percent of the votes were various write-in suggestions.

So there you go; it was “TIPSters” by a mile! Thanks to all of you who showed yourselves as willing to enter into the spirit of our little moniker competition here. And remember: whatever you have decided to call us, please do call us often. We are always glad to hear from you, and we look forward to assisting you in whatever way we can!

## Letters to the Editor

The editorial staff of *TIPS Times* has been most gratified at the response we received to the invitation our premier issue extended for questions of general interest to the readership of our publication. Out of the several letters to the editor you sent us, we have selected for response in this venue the one that follows.

**Question:** Why doesn't my Microsoft ActiveSync connect to my Windows CE or Windows mobile-computing device?

According to WRO's Robert Welsh, Mobile-Computing Team Leader with TITB, this question comes up a lot with users running Windows mobile-operating systems like Windows CE. The connection difficulty arises when such a user attempts to use Microsoft ActiveSync to transfer data or image files between his or her mobile-computing device and a PC.

Mr. Welsh gives a specific answer to the question as follows:

**Answer:** There are four possible reasons that your attempt to connect ActiveSync might fail.

The first possible reason is that the device you are using may not be connected securely to both the cradle and the data cable. If it is not, securing these connections and re-clicking the ActiveSync icon



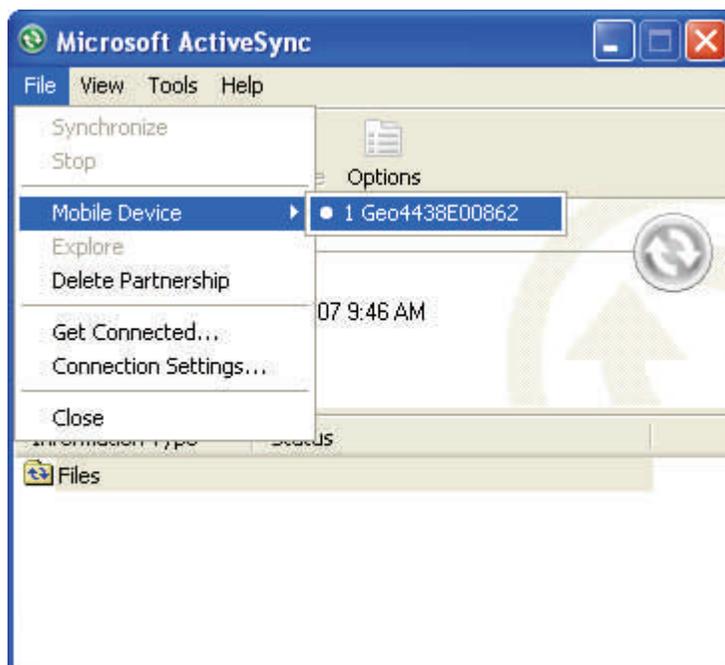
in the Windows PC taskbar should allow ActiveSync to connect.

## Letters to the Editor—continued

The second possible reason is that ActiveSync may have timed out. If it has, either lift the device out of the cradle and then replace it or unplug the data cable and then plug it in again. Again, follow up by re-clicking the ActiveSync icon in the Windows PC taskbar; ActiveSync should connect.

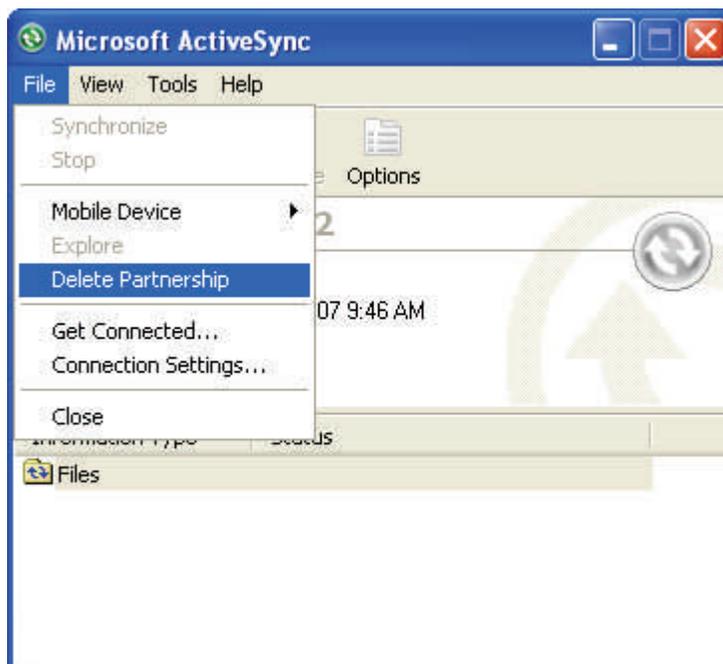
The third possible reason is that you are using a version of Active Sync that is incompatible with your device. In this case, go to <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsmobile/activesync/activesync45.msp> for a free download of the latest version of ActiveSync.

The final possible reason is that ActiveSync may be partnered with some other CE device. If it is, this partnership may be interfering with connection to the device and should be deleted. To delete a partnership, first uncradle or uncable the device and then open ActiveSync. Navigate in ActiveSync under the file menu to see the mobile-device partnership:

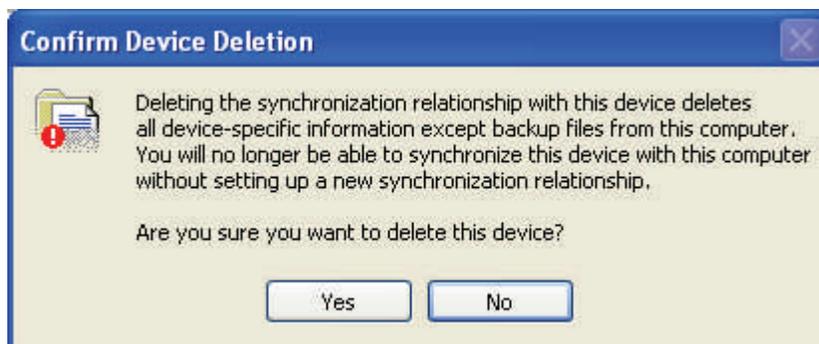


Move down the menu to select “Delete Partnership:”

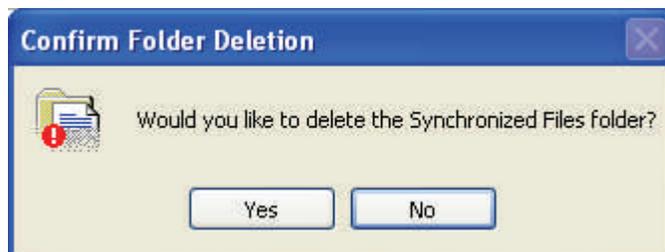
## Letters to the Editor—continued



A pop-up window will appear to confirm your choice. Click “Yes.”

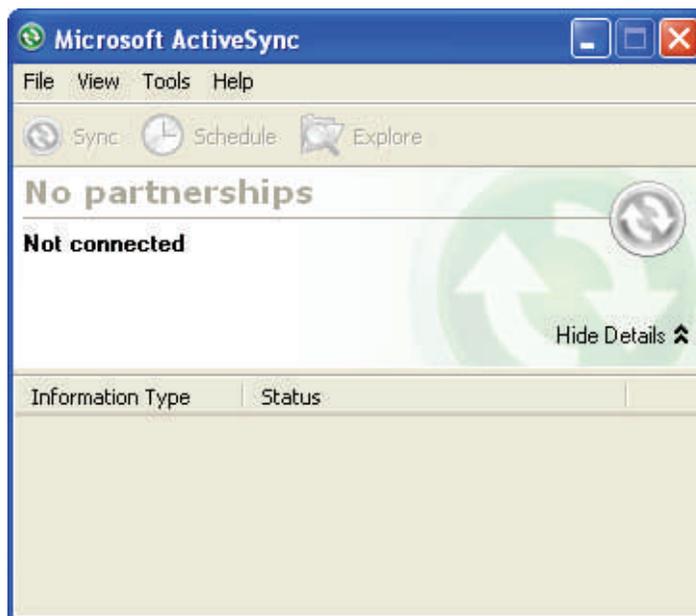


You will then be prompted to delete the “Synchronized Files folder.” Click “Yes” to do this:

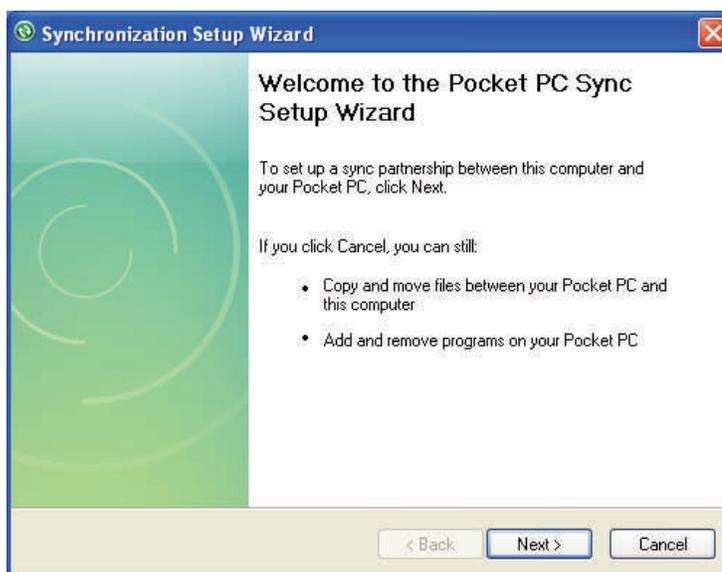


A pop-up indicating “No partnerships” will appear to confirm your deletion of the partnership:

## Letters to the Editor—continued



Once the difficulty with connecting to ActiveSync is resolved, you should be able to login to this application. Do so as a “Guest.” If prompted to create a partnership in ActiveSync, cancel the partnership dialog by clicking “Cancel.”

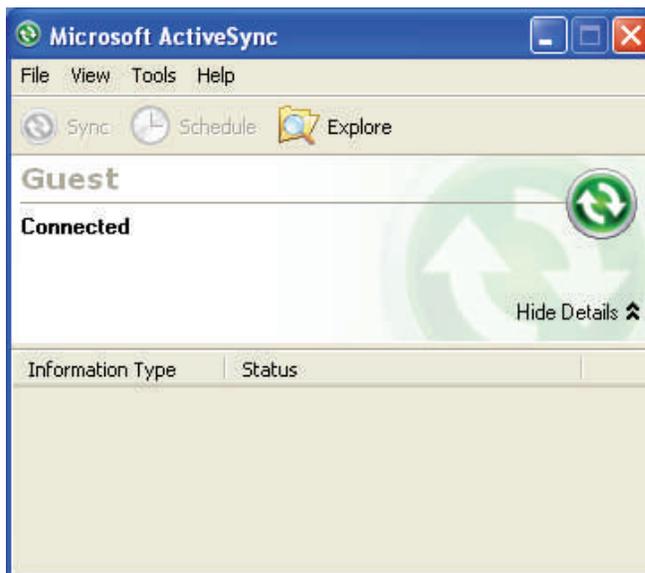


Any time you start ActiveSync after having canceled the partnership-dialog option, and also when you use ActiveSync to connect with a PC for the first time, a “New Partnership” pop-up should appear: Click “Guest partnership” and then “Next.”

## Letters to the Editor—continued



The device will then connect with the PC as a guest.



This guest relationship will allow for file transfer between the device and a PC without requiring the synchronization in MS Outlook of contacts, e-mail, and appointments (such synchronization is unnecessary for purposes of file transfer using ActiveSync).

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**Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement  
Technical Innovation and Professional Services**

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TIPS administrator's e-mail: [bclark@osmre.gov](mailto:bclark@osmre.gov)  
"Letters to the Editor," *TIPS Times*, e-mail:  
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