

West Virginia **department of environmental protection**

# **WVDEP 2019 Annual I&E Training**

#### Underground Mining Basics and Mine Pools

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#### Presentation Overview

#### • **Introduction**

- Basic Hydrology and Geology
- **Underground Mining**
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	- Above and Below Drainage Mines
	- Entry Types
	- Underground Mining Methods
	- Multiple Seam Mining

#### • **Subsidence**

- **Conditions Governing Subsidence**
- Modes of Subsidence
- Kendorski Model
- Subsidence-Related Landslides
- Hydrologic Effects of Subsidence

#### • **Mine Barriers**

- **Outcrop Barriers**
- Internal Barriers
- **Barrier Design**
- **Barrier Failure**

#### • **Mine Seals**

- Dry Seals
- Wet Seals
- Borehole/Shaft Seals
- **Mine Pool Development**
	- Factors Influencing Flooding
		- Inflows
		- **Outflows**
		- Surface Infiltration
	- Hydraulic Conductivity
	- Barrier Seepage

Introduction Basic Hydrology and Geology





#### **Porosity and Permeability**

- Primary porosity & permeability
- Pores between grains

- **Secondary** porosity & permeability
- Fractures



- Porosity =  $\%$  of rock that is open space
- Permeability = rate (speed) of flow through porous rock

#### **Stress Relief Hydrology**

- Black arrows indicate compressional stress, white arrow indicates resultant stress.
- **Numerical stress distribution leads to vertical and Value** horizontal fracturing along valley walls and horizontal fractures along the valley floor. This fracturing increases secondary permeability and increases hydraulic communication with nearsurface aquifers.
- **These fracture zones contribute to increased** recharge to mine voids.

Figure 90. Topography and shallow fracture systems determine groundwater movement in the aquifers of the Appalachian Plateaus. Water infiltrates weathered bedrock and moves mostly through near-surface fractures; some water moves in a steplike fashion vertically along deeper fractures and horizontally through fractured sandstone or coal beds. Because of the absence of deep ground-water circulation and regional flow systems, saline water is at shallow depths.



Modified from Harlow, G.E., Jr., and LeCain, G.D., 1993, Hydraulic character istics of, and ground-water flow in, coal-bearing rocks of southwestern Virginia: U.S. Geological Survey Water-Supply Paper 2388, 36 p.



Generalized geologic section showing features of stress-relief fracturing [after Ferguson (1974)]

#### Rock Properties

- ▶ Sandstone can be hard and brittle
- ▶ Coal can be hard and brittle
- **Limestone can be hard and brittle**
- Shale fine grained, can be flexible or resilient
- ▶ Claystone fine grained, can be flexible or resilient

### Water-Bearing Fractures

- ▶ Most ground water is yielded by a few fractures. Most fractures do not yield or accept water. They are there, but essentially "dead" in terms of ground-water movement.
- ▶ Morin and others (1997) noted only 18% of fractures were water-bearing.
- ▶ Rasmuson and Neretnieks (1986) noted that 5 to 20% of the fractures carries more than 90% of the water.
- ▶ Based on experience, I use the 90/10 rule. About 90% of the water is moved by 10% of the fractures.

# Underground Mining

#### Above and Below Drainage Mines



#### Drift, Slope & Shaft Entries



### Underground Mining Methods

▶ Conventional

▶ Continuous Miner

**Longwall** 

#### Conventional Mining Equip.



#### Conventional Mining - Blasting



#### Continuous Mining Equipment





#### Continuous Mining Layout





### Longwall Mining





#### Longwall Mining: Roof Support and Breakage



#### Longwall Development



## Auger Mining



## Auger Machine



## Auger Holes



## Highwall Miner





## Highwall Miner



#### Multiple Seam Mining

**D** Undermining

**D** Overmining

Simultaneous Mining

Any combination of the above



#### Multiple Seam Mining

- ▶ Overmining is more difficult than undermining, because of the potential for rock damage caused by subsidence. Generally, retreat mining (pillar removal) in these situations should be avoided.
- Multiple-seam mining problems (surface subsidence issues)can be lessened by mining both seams at the same time or by vertical stacking of pillars (remaining pillars are vertically aligned in all mined seams).
- Where previous mining exists above or below a proposed operation, the site-specific mining and geologic conditions should be carefully considered.

#### Comparison of Mining Methods



# Subsidence

#### Modes of Subsidence *Surface Effects of Limited Extraction/Shallow Mining*



#### Kendorski Model *Longwall/High Extraction Mining*



#### Subsidence – Stream Damage

▶ Water Loss In Stream Channel

Loss Of Base Flow

 $\blacktriangleright$  Changes In Grade Of Stream Channel

#### Subsidence – Stream Damage



#### Subsidence – Direct Stream Loss



### Subsidence – Stream Damage



#### Subsidence – Stream Damage












#### **Stream Repair - Grouting Channel**



#### **Stream Repair - Grouting Channel**



# Spring Flow Prior to Mining



44

# Spring Flow After Mining 45



#### Landslides Resulting From Underground Mining

#### **Causes**

- New Springs Developing on Slopes
- ▶ Changing Slope of Hillside due to Mining-Related Subsidence
- ▶ Open, Subsidence-Related Cracks Causing Surface Water to Lubricate and Saturate Slope Material

# Landslides – Spring Relocation



#### Subsidence - Landslides



# Subsidence - Landslides



# Mine Barriers

#### Coal Barriers

- **There are two types of coal barriers associated with underground mines:** 
	- **Dutcrop Barriers**
	- **Internal Barriers**
- Importance of Barriers Safety and Environmental Concerns
	- Control of mine discharges.
	- Prevention of blowouts.
	- Prevention of flooding of adjacent mine works.
	- **Prevention and control of landslides.**
	- **Control of surface swamping and flooding.**

#### Hydraulic Head

Head is the amount of water above a barrier

▶ Water creates a force equal to 0.433 p.s.i. for each foot of head, therefore 100 feet of head will exert 43.3 p.s.i.

At 100 feet of head, an entry 18 feet wide and 6 feet high would have (18 \* 6\* 144 \* 43.3 / 2000) 337 tons of force against it

## **Outcrop Barriers**

- $\blacktriangleright$  Outcrop barriers are solid coal barriers between the mine workings and the coal seam outcrop in above drainage mines.
- Below drainage mines do not have outcrop barriers.
- **These barriers are designed to minimize post-mining seepage along the outcrop and** prevent rapid, large volume discharges from mine pools that may develop in abandoned underground mine workings (blowout).
- $\blacktriangleright$  Outcrop barrier design specifications must be included in each permit application that involves expansion of underground mining area (typically SCP Revisions and some IBR's). Plans for preventing the buildup of hydraulic head at, or below, an elevation that will not exceed the design limitations of down-dip outcrop barriers.
- When necessary, pumping and designed gravity dewatering of the mine workings may be required to safeguard against potential blowout.

#### Outcrop Barriers On Mine Maps

Outcrop Barrier (Lower Kittanning Seam)



## Outcrop Barrier Design

- Geologic features such as faults, existing slope failures, stress relief joints, weather, etc. can facilitate leakage across outcrop barriers.
- When these features exist, they should not be considered as part of the outcrop barrier width.
- A site-specific design incorporates a comprehensive assessment of the various influencing factors, including the geology and structure of the site, weather, faulting, erosion, slope stability and hydrogeologic factors.

#### Internal Barriers

- **Internal coal barriers are barriers between adjacent mines in the same coal** seam.
- $\blacktriangleright$  These barriers are designed to minimize mechanical effects and seepage from adjacent mine workings.
- Internal Barriers must be designed to withstand the pressures applied by the impounded pool in the adjacent mine workings in order to prevent catastrophic failure.

## Internal Barriers on Mine Maps

Internal Barrier between Crawdad Portal B and Prime No. 1 Mines (Sewickley Seam)



#### Barriers Between Mines Example Of Mining Through Required Barrier



## Guidelines for Estimating Barrier **Widths**

**Ashley Formula (Interior)**

- $W = 20 + (4 * T) + (0.1 * D)$ 
	- $\triangleright$  W = the barrier thickness that you are calculating
	- $\blacktriangleright$  T = the thickness of the coal seam
	- $\triangleright$  D = the thickness of the overburden or potential hydraulic head

#### **Rule of Thumb (Exterior)**

 $\triangleright$  Minimum Barrier Thickness = 50' plus the expected hydraulic head

#### Vertical Barrier Design *(Dames and Moore 1981)*



#### Barrier Failure *Major Causes of Blowouts*



▶ Wedge-Type Failure

Surface Landslides

#### Barrier Failure *Vertical Displacement*



#### Barrier Failure *Wedge-Type Failure*



#### Blowout From Below





#### Barrier Failure *Surface Landslides*

- Similar to Vertical Displacement Failures, slope failures that are unrelated to uplift generated by hydraulic head pressure can cause a blowout
- Surface Landslides may act alone or in conjunction with one, or a combination, of the previous failure modes

# **Flooded Mine Solid Coal Outcrop Barrier Failure** *Surface Landslide & Wedge-Type Failure*

# Outcrop Barrier Failure

*Surface Landslide & Wedge-Type Failure*

**Flooded Mine**



# Upwelling Mine Waters

Level of the Mine Pool







#### Mine Seals

**Drift Opening - Wet Seals** 

**Drift Opening - Dry Seals** 

**Shaft Seals** 

▶ Borehole Seals
## Drift Opening - Dry Seal



NOTE: SEALS TO BE CONSTRUCTED WITH NON-COMBUSTIBLE MATERIAL

## Drift Opening - Wet Seal



## Shaft and Borehole Seals



## Installation of Seals

- ▶ Seals must be certified by a Registered Professional Engineer
- $\blacktriangleright$  The certification should include pictures
- $\blacktriangleright$  It is good if the inspector can also observe and document seals
- Approval for sealing a borehole that is currently, used for monitoring pool elevation should not be given until after the PUMA evaluation revision has been approved for the permit in question. At that time, the final pool monitoring requirements will be established and all surface connections to the mine workings, that are not required for post-closure monitoring, may be sealed as outlined in the permit.

# Mine Pool Development

## Post-Closure Mine Pool Development

#### **• Hydraulic Conductivity**

- $\blacktriangleright$  Horizontal Hydraulic Conductivity K<sub>h</sub>
- $\triangleright$  Vertical Hydraulic Conductivity K<sub>v</sub>

#### ▶ Surface Infiltration

- **Potential Sources**
- ▶ Apparent Vertical Infiltration (AVI)

#### **Barrier Permeability**

- **Dutcrop Barriers**
- **Internal Barriers (Adjacent Mining)**
- ▶ Static(Equilibrium) Pool Elevation
	- $\blacktriangleright$  Inflow = Outflow

## Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Surface Infiltration*

#### **Background Why is this Important?**

- Inflow rate during mining pumping/treatment rates
- Rate of flooding after mining
- Ultimate discharge rate once equilibrium is reached (inflow = outflow)
- Impact the post-mining hydraulic head
- Strongly impact treatment plant set up and cost of treating post-mining discharges
- Other factors to be considered

## Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Surface Infiltration*

#### **Background What is the source of there recharge water?**

- **Precipitation**
- Ground water stored in aquifers
- Direct stream loss
- Seepage from adjacent flooded mines
- Interaction of overlying or underlying mines
- Wells and other manmade structures acting as conduits
- ▶ Underground injection of mine waste (refuse slurry, AMD, etc.)

## Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Surface Infiltration – Range of Reported Recharge Rates*



### Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Surface Infiltration – Range of Reported Recharge Rates*

### **Summary**

Range of reported values 0.01 to 2.92 gpm/acre  $Mean = 0.59$  gpm/acre  $Median = 0.44$  gpm

\*Rule of Thumb = 0.5 gpm/acre based on Parizek's work from the early 1970's

## Post-Closure Mine Pool Development

*Surface Infiltration*



# Post-Closure Mine Pool Development

*Surface Infiltration – Range of Reported Recharge Rates* 

### **Factors that Likely Impact Recharge Rates**

- Depth of cover (<150-200' vs. >200', etc.)
- Overburden lithology (sandstone vs. shale & claystone)
- Method'of mining (e.g., longwall vs. 1st mining vs. retreat mining)
- Laterally adjacent mining (flooded and unflooded)
- Super- and Sub-adjacent mining (flooded and unflooded)

• Lineaments, faults, fracture zones, etc. (presence or absence)

### Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Surface Infiltration – Time to Total Inundation Example (1)*

- Useful Conversion: 1 cu. ft.  $=$   $\sim$  7.48 gallons.
- Account for mining method/extraction percentage:

 $V_c = (A * (M/A))^* b$ ,

where,  $V_c$  = Mined Coal Volume, M = Mined Acreage, b = Seam Thickness, M/A = Extraction Ratio





### Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Surface Infiltration – Time to Total Inundation Example (1)*



**Mined-Out Area (sq. ft.):** 3431656.80 **Total Mine Void Volume (cu. Ft.):** 17158284.00 **Total Mine Void Volume (gallons):** 128343964.32

### Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Surface Infiltration – Time to Total Inundation Example (1)*



### Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Barrier Permeability – Hydraulic Conductivity*

- **Hydraulic Conductivity:** A measure of the permeability of a lithologic unit (rock layers, coal seams). Given as a rate (feet/day).
- $\blacktriangleright$  Horizontal Hydraulic Conductivity K<sub>h</sub>
	- **Important when considering internal** and outcrop barrier seepage rates.
	- May be higher depending on cleat orientation in relation to the coal barrier.
- $\triangleright$  Vertical Hydraulic Conductivity K<sub>v</sub>
	- **Important when considering surface** infiltration rates.
	- Generally higher in areas of greater secondary permeability – valley stress-relief fracture zones, low-cover mine voids.



TABLE 1 - Permeability Values Typical of the Appalachian Region

Source: Miller, J.T., and D.R. Thompson, 1974



### Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Barrier Permeability – Mine-Induced Fractures/Seepage over the coal barrier*

- **Presence of fractures within** mine roof (overburden)
	- Angle of advance influence-1
	- Angle of complete mining-2
	- Intersections of fractures from adjacent mines separated by coal barrier
- Stress relief and mine-induced fractures occurring in zones
	- Horizontal and vertical continuity of fractures
- ▶ Zones of intense fracturing have  $K_h$  values order of magnitude higher than adj. unfractured strata



## Darcy's Law

In modern format, using a particular sign convention, Darcy's law is usually written as:

 $Q = -KA$  dh/dl

where:

- $Q =$  rate of water flow (volume per time)
- $K =$  hydraulic conductivity
- A = column cross sectional area

dh/dl = hydraulic gradient, that is, the change in head over the length of interest.



## Darcy's Law



## Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Barrier Permeability – Outcrop Barrier Seepage Example (1)*

North Pointe Mine (U-2007-01): *Bakerstown Seam*  $A = 96.86$  ac.  $b_{\text{av}} = 5'$  $M/\tilde{A} = 0.6$  (60% Extraction)





### Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Barrier Permeability*



(2006): Note:<br>
1. Seepage Ratecalculation adapted from McCoy, Donovan, and Leavitt<br>
(2006):<br>  $Q_{total} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} Kh * b * Li * (\frac{\Delta h i}{wi})$ <br>
2. Upper Freeport K<sub>h</sub> values from Hobba (1991) and Dames and Moore<br>
(1981)

$$
Q_{\text{total}} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} Kh * b * Li * (\frac{\Delta hi}{wi})
$$

(1981)

### Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Barrier Permeability – Outcrop Barrier Seepage Example (2)*

9A Mine: *Lower Stockton Seam* A = 193.08 ac. (Injection Lobe)  $b_{\text{qvo}} = 5'$  $M/\AA$  = 0.6 (60% Extraction)

```
Barrier Segment No. 1:
     L_1 = 3467.30'w_1 = 150'
```

```
Barrier Segment No. 2:
        = 2090.4
```


### Post-Closure Mine Pool Development *Barrier Permeability*





#### Seepage Estimate for Rock Bull Mining Company Using 3.21 feet/day Permeability

69 acres

0.93 gal/min/ac

#### Permeability Estimate for Rock Bull Mining Company Using 2010 head and 0.50 gpm/acre



34 6,606 69 acres

 $\sim 10^{-11}$ 

0.50 gal/min/ac

# **Ventilation Fan**

