

2018 Committee Report & 2019 Activities

Name of Committee: Tailings Dams

Chair: Amanda Adams

Vice Chair: Bob Snow

YP Vice Chair: Ben Schmidt

2018 Activities and Accomplishments:

Committee meeting and Conference Calls:

- Held annual committee meeting in Miami, FL during the annual USSD conference (April 2018)
- Held numerous committee conference calls throughout the year to address committee activities.

Annual Conferences

Committee members were involved in the USSD annual conferences, assisting with abstract selection (2018 and 2019) and moderating technical session on Tailings Dams and CCR Impoundments (2018) as well as making presentations. Additionally, Bob Bachus of the committee participated in the 2018 Workshop – Construction Cutoff Walls for Low Embankment Dams to address application to CCR Impoundments.

Engineer of Record for Tailings Dams

A major accomplishment involved collaboration with the Geoprofessional Business Association (GBA) to review and endorse the *Proposed Best Practices for the Engineer of Record for Tailings Dams* guidance document. During the USSD January 2019 Board Meeting it was voted to endorse the document as follows: *“USSD views this Proposed Best Practices for the Engineer of Record for Tailings Dams guidance document prepared by the Geoprofessional Business Association (GBA) as a comprehensive guidance document on the subject of the Engineer of Record for tailings storage facilities for the mining industry as a whole. The opportunity for USSD to collaborate with the GBA to review and provide input to the guidance document was appreciated. USSD endorses this document as a critical reference document for the industry.”* Creating, reviewing and ultimately obtaining this endorsement took significant effort by both GBA and USSD and our Committee was proud to be involved.

2019 Activities

Looking ahead to 2019 the Committee is working on a whitepaper on the state of practice for closure of tailings dams, supporting ICOLD and national efforts for development of tailings dam safety guidelines, and excited to be collaborating with other USSD committees to plan technical workshops on Instrumentation and Monitoring and Static Liquefaction.

Our Committee is also currently preparing a Proposal to the National Dam Safety Review Board to develop Uniform Dam Safety Guidelines for Tailings Dams, in collaboration with ASDSO. The effort for this could potentially be partially funded by FEMA.

We would also like to express our sincere sympathy for the victims of the recent tailings dam failure in Brazil. Our committee is working with other organizations under ICOLD (such as CDA), as well as organizations like SME which focus on mining to develop better tools and guidance for tailings dams design, operation and construction. We seek to advance the state of practice for tailings dams, improve dam safety and prevent failures.