



## Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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## August 2022 Progress Report

### Project Coordination

#### **Swoyersville Harry E. Reclamation and Community Athletic Area AMLER Project**

- Requested updated copy of Certificate of Liability Insurance from Keystone Reclamation Fuels Management for our project file for FY21 and FY22 covering the policy coverage periods; Filed the certificates along with several payroll certification reports from Keystone Reclamation Fuels Management, LLC; Worked on a Progress Report for July 2022 through August 2022 and completed and submitted a reimbursement request for July 2022 for work completed by Keystone Reclamation Fuels Management at the site; Talked with *TJ Matinas*-PA DEP BAMR about coordinating with Keystone Reclamation Fuels Management on putting together an official extension letter for the project before then end of October 2022; Completed a Progress Report for August and Reimbursement request for Invoice 25 and submitted it to the PA DEP BAMR for review and approval

#### **ARIPPA EPCAMR Mini-Grant Program**

- Deposited the ARIPPA donation towards the mini-grant that will be awarded to the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance; Confirmed attending the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance (SCRA) Watershed monthly meeting in Kulpmont, PA on 8-9-22 to get an update on their projects in the watershed and to provide them with an ARIPPA Mini-Grant check for **\$4300** to support the construction of a new jumping weir on Site #48 in the watershed to prevent further sedimentation from stormwater events from entering the AMD treatment system; Attended the SCRA Meeting and presented the check and provided a quote for some local press coverage for the Daily News Item [article](#)

#### **Bear Creek Mine Pool Study and Conceptual Design Project**

- Worked with *Mike* to review cross sections of Coal Investigation Series Maps for the Southern Coal Fields that we'll be including in the mine pool portion of the study and began looking at which mine maps and colliery boundaries will be included from Big Lick Colliery to the southern tip of southern coalfields; Coordinated with *Tom Clark*-SRBC to get an update on the boundary survey of the property and to discuss future AMD monitoring and aeration tests on the discharges that will take place either on the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> of August; *Tom* coordinated access with *Kerry Teter*; Submitted the April/May Progress Report and Reimbursement Request and the June/July 2022 Progress Report to *Trish Attardo*, Project Officer and *Dan Koury*, PA DEP Pottsville District Mining Office; Reviewed *Tom Clark's* results from the field testing on 8-17-22 of the aeration tests and AMD sampling in the Bear Creek watershed; The pH of the

Williamstown Drift can be pushed up by blowing of CO<sub>2</sub>; pH oxidizes quickly to hydroxide with aeration; Peroxide treatment might still be an option; The Lykens Tunnel Drift AMD will take more time to increase the pH, but it is still achievable and the footprint of a future treatment plant could be reduced in size; The water will be warmed up as a result and that will remain a future challenge, however, the size of the treatment area can be significantly reduced if a polymer is added; The flow was high out of the Williamstown Tunnel, a little over 3 CFS; Lykens Tunnel was nearly .5 CFS; 99% of the flow of Bear Creek was from those 2 AMD discharges and the Wiconisco Creek downstream continues to be greatly impacted; Upstream on Bear Creek has natural acidic bog type water chemistry, but was not flowing much; Chemical or Mechanical treatment options are being considered by SRBC; It's been briefly discussed for the State to consider to produce electricity on site through micro hydro turbines or solar potential and or floating solar; Forwarded water quality data results to *Eric Naguski*-Dauphin County Conservation District for him to review

### **NFWF Southern Wyoming Valley Watershed Assessment of American Black Duck Habitat and Trout Stream Habitat for Aquatic Passage**

- Met with *Ellen Ferretti*, Executive Director of the North Branch Land Trust and *Karley Stasko*, Marketing and Development Director, along with *John Levitsky*, Luzerne Conservation District to review the Hanover Marsh wetlands area that was assessment by EPCAMR Staff for American Black Duck habitat in July and to review the history of the site; Discussed ideas for recommendations that we will include in the plan for the site that might lead to future grant funding opportunities for improvements to the wetlands and wildlife area; Provided *Ellen* from North Branch Land Trust with *Ted Stark's* contact information for the County Engineering Office who has been working on a solution to keep the beavers from flooding the roadway on Spencer Lane and blocking the drop culvert inlet; Conducted some additional wetlands assessments around the Southern Wyoming Valley with *Steve Cornia* to test water, collect macros, and identify wetland areas for possible American Black Duck habitat and downloaded the forms to be uploaded to the shared drive for the project; Worked with *Mike* to identify remaining sites for American Black Duck assessments throughout the watersheds and determined accessibility using our GIS overlay; Worked with *Arjeta Bajramaj*, Project Officer to update reimbursement requests and project status through the EasyGrants online portal for approvals; EPCAMR put in an amendment request to extend the project until June 30, 2023 since we have drought conditions and there is very little stream flow for us to do sampling at various locations chosen for the water quality testing that we had anticipated performing in the Summer and in to the early Fall 2022 and because we are still awaiting our final QAPP approval document from the US EPA that had been approved and forwarded on to them from the NFWF

### **PA American Water Mill Creek/Gardner Creek Watershed Cleanups/Packer AMD Air Shaft Discharge Monitoring**

- Worked with *Tom Clark* and *Andrew King*-SRBC to evaluate some water monitoring data from the Packer AMD Air Shaft discharge in the Gardner Creek watershed and to discuss whether or not a weir or a pressure transducer should be installed at the discharge; The flows fluctuate and it has gone dry during this drought period in 2022; SRBC is suggesting a weir installation and EPCAMR will utilize some of the funding for the construction, supplies, and materials for the weir; SRBC will do an aeration test of the discharge in the Spring of 2023

## **AC Power AML on Solar Project Phase 2**

- Worked with *Denise* and submitted the final invoice to *Corey Hindin*, Senior Director of Business Development- AC Power for Phase 2 following completing the earlier research on the sites they were interested in having further conversations with landowners about the possibility of solar development on their abandoned mine lands

## **Jeddo Mine Tunnel Preliminary Planning for the Potential for AMD Treatment with the Friends of the Nescopeck Watershed Association (*proposed*)**

- Friends of the Nescopeck Creek would like to partner with EPCAMR to propose a future grant application to begin to look at some options for the potential to treat the Jeddo Mine Tunnel; EPCAMR will work with Tetra Tech on developing a proposal in the Fall 2022

## **Rare Earth Elements Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization Project with TetraTech (*proposed*)**

- The EPCAMR Board would like the EPCAMR Staff to move forward with Tetra Tech on working on the revised Rare Earth Elements AMLER Project; EPCAMR will continue to work with staff from Tetra Tech to fully develop the proposal for the next round of AMLER funding within PA

## **PA DEP Energy Office Solar on AML Stakeholder Outreach Assessment Project (*proposed*)**

- Worked with *Mike* to develop a draft proposal and budget to the PA DEP Energy Office to assist them with the development of a Solar on AML Stakeholder Outreach Assessment Project to facilitate 3 focus group sessions, the development of a website and survey to stakeholders across the Commonwealth, and a 1 day Solar on AML Summit to present the summary findings of information gathered across the State and from the compiled survey results on impediments, hurdles, opportunities, and incentives that could lead to additional solar development from either a grid scale or community solar perspective in the legacy mining impacted regions of PA; Followed up with *John Quigley*, Director at the Harrisburg University of Science & Technology about facility usage/rental and he informed EPCAMR that as a community partner, we could utilize the facility at no-cost; Called the Best Western Plus in Wilkes-Barre and Ramada Wyndham Hotel in State College to obtain quotes for the proposal; Reached out to *Jennifer West* from the Ramada Conference Center Hotel in State College for dates and a quote; Received several potential location references from *Branden Diehl* for Western PA to follow up with including the Blair County Convention Center, US Hotel, Juniata College, and Raystown Lake Visitor Center; Convened a call with *Robert Young*-PA DEP Energy Office to obtain follow-up information to our questions on the proposal

## **Just Transition Fund Cycle 2 Planning Grant for Capacity Building Expansion of EPCAMR Solar Project Development**

- *Conference call with Corey Hindin*-AC Power, to discuss putting together a joint letter to address the Department of Energy's [request](#) for information on current and former mining sites; Prepared a several page comment document to submit to the DOE; Talked with *Tim Williams*-ARM Group about the potential funding sources that are coming out for solar development as an economic development nexus on abandoned mine lands; Talked with *Scott Layne*-Pro Tech Energy Solutions about EPCAMR's work in the region and technical assistance that we might be able to provide to them to interpret surface and underground mine maps on some sites in Central and Eastern PA that they are considering for solar development with landowners on AML sites as well as any future funding sources that might be available to the landowners; Talked with *Derek C. Brown*, Vice President Solar Market Leader for Kleinfelder about the

potential for solar development on abandoned mine lands in PA; Submitted a Request for Information 13 page document on behalf of EPCAMR to the DOE to their Clean Energy Demonstration Program; Reached out to *Rachel Young* at The Just Transition Fund to discuss future open rounds of potential funding that will be open into the Fall 2022; Registered *Steve Cornia* and the Executive Director for the upcoming September Convening Summit that will be held in Washington DC on September 20-22; EPCAMR Staff both were awarded travel scholarships to attend the event; Sent out an invitation for collaborative stakeholders to Higher Education, Colleges and Universities on Solar Development on Abandoned Mine Lands across PA that our previous intern, *Levi Sunday-Lefkowitz* developed into a database of those that had a similar program related to clean energy, alternative energy, or sustainability programs; EPCAMR is seeking new partnerships to expand our reach and the outreach and awareness of the topic and potential for solar development across PA and is interested in seeing what higher education institutions might be interested in becoming involved; Wilkes University responded almost immediately; Talked with *Sharon Foxworthy*, a solar developer for Alder Energy Systems, out of South Carolina that is interested in hosting community solar farms on abandoned mine lands once the State gets a working program in place; Sharon was referred to EPCAMR by *Sharon Pillar*, a colleague from the PA Solar Center in Pittsburgh

### **Healing the Scars with ISI: Year 2 Iron Oxide Short Educational Outreach Video Production**

- *David Clouser-Kleinfelder* Engineering informed EPCAMR that they would be a sponsor for our video production and provide **\$5000** to EPCAMR towards its production and development; Talked with *Laura*, *Steve*, and *Denise*, about the draft script for the video; Made some comments on the script draft and submitted them to Laura and the Staff

### **American Water Charitable Trust Iron Oxide Short Educational Outreach Video Production and Creation of an AMD Art Calendar for 2023**

- EPCAMR received a **\$10,000** grant to work on two short video productions on iron oxide recycled by EPCAMR for art programs and projects and to create a calendar with the assistance of local students and youth artists; One of the videos is in partnership with ISI and *Annie Reiger* Productions and the other will be with *Joe Sapienza* and Centone Productions

### **Technical Assistance**

- Provided *Heather Makal* and *Steve Motyka*- Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance with information on monitoring borehole locations within the Shamokin Creek Watershed and a copy of our Plates that are on our website for the entire Western Middle Anthracite Region broken up into two different plates that show regional mine pool data as well as the borehole locations and accessibility; They are providing the information to their intern from Bucknell University for work he is conducting within the watershed
- Provided Dr. *Melanie Sheperd*, Misericordia University, who is going to be co-teaching a course this Fall with Dr. *Cosima Wiese*, entitled, *Issues in Sustainability* with a colleague in Chemistry; They are structuring the course with the units Energy, Food, and Water; They hope to offer students off-campus activities within the Toby Creek Watershed in the Back Mountain related to course themes; Provided them with ideas based on our Coldwater Conservation Plan that were previously recommended for the Upper Toby Creek watershed related to monitoring tributaries around the campus and identifying and measuring areas with dense invasive species of Japanese Knotweed within the watershed and to come up with a possibly plan for removal, eradication, and or planting of native species to replace any knotweed that can be removed along the waterways

- Planned an office meeting through *Marilyn Zenko*, Senior Associate, with Terracon Consultants, Inc., for 9-12-22 to sit down with a few of their Staff to review the Bipartisan Infrastructure bill funding options for AML work and AMD work in PA and to provide them with ideas for future funding projects and technical assistance they might be able to provide to state-wide non-profits, Conservation Districts, and watershed groups working on abandoned mine land reclamation and AMD remediation efforts; Suggested that they may want to become a Sponsor of the 2023 PA AMR Conference to meet with other partners across the Commonwealth

### **Loyalsock Creek Watershed AMD Treatment System Monitoring**

- Reviewed lab water quality data collected by Lycoming College student interns and compared them to EPCAMR field water quality data for aluminum and nitrogen parameters organized by *Mike*; *Mike* submitted comments to *Mel Zimmerman*, Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association (LCWA) President regarding the analysis of the data; The interns were out sampling alongside of EPCAMR Staff in early August; Worked with *Mike* and *Tom Clark*-SRBC to review the water quality data collected throughout the year to date to see if we can summarize it for the 9-14-22 meeting with the LCWA and Susquehanna Chapter of TU at their annual meeting at the Loyalsock Field Station in Montoursville; Reviewed a draft report that *Mike* is preparing as he compiled all previous water quality data from the last 10 months of sampling; 2 additional months will be sampled before completing the report
- *Joe Mills*, Senior Scientist, with Skelly & Loy, requested that EPCAMR take a look at the Packer 5 AMD Treatment design in a few weeks, in the Mahanoy Creek watershed where they are also looking at an area for future solar panel installation; The Mahanoy Creek Watershed Association is on-board with the idea of solar to off-set the cost of running the aeration devices that are required to achieve a clean discharge from the system; Provided him with information from the ARM Group that could help to generally spec the panels down the road for a future bid
- The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#), P.L. 117-58 contains a provision (Section 40802) calling for a study and report on the feasibility of revegetating reclaimed mine sites; OSMRE has a great deal of information and expertise on biology, ecology, revegetation, reforestation, restoration, and reclamation that can support this effort; The states and tribes have a well-established history of successful reclamation of both Abandoned Mine Land sites and permitted sites; In addition, the states have significant experience with challenges and issues in each of its respective state; Congress has directed OSMRE to include in the study:
  - Recommendations for how a program could be implemented through OSMRE to revegetate reclaimed mined sites
  - Identification of reclaimed mine sites that would be suitable for inclusion in such a program, including sites on land that are subject to title IV of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1231 et seq.) and other lands
  - A description of any barriers to implementation of such a program
  - A description of the potential for job creation and workforce needs if such a program was implemented
  - They have sought comments from stakeholders across the country through an [open comment request](#)
- Provided *Thomas J. Krall*, Senior Soil Scientist-Material Matters, Inc., a consulting firm that provides assistance with beneficial reuse of residual waste with information on who to contact about the land application of beneficial use of residual waste on abandoned mine lands and with active mining operators in PA; They have an industrial client with a wastewater treatment

plant that treats wastewater from their manufacturing process; The wastewater treatment process produces a quantity of excess biomass that is wasted from the process and dewatered; They add lime to the dewatered material to improve its handling characteristics; The treatment process does not treat any sanitary waste, the dewatered material is all biomass from the biological treatment of the wastewater; A General Permit has been issued for beneficial use and includes use in mine reclamation as a source of nitrogen and organic matter; The added lime provides some soil pH adjustment; It has an agricultural approval so in addition to mine reclamation it could potentially have a use for maintaining reclaimed sites; The plant generates about 250 tons a month

## **Education & Outreach**

- Pulled together supplies and equipment for PA American Water Camp with LRCA in Peckville; Conducted a macro-study for **21** youth in the Lackawanna River with *Bernie McGurl* and Steve Cornia; Conducted an AMD Tie-Dye Workshop with the youth with EPCAMR's recycled iron oxide and taught them about how we work to clean up polluted streams from AMD; A great [new article](#) was printed in the Scranton-Times Tribune the following day with photos
- Participated in the weekly PA AML Campaign call to get an update on the STREAM Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure funding that US DOI has informed states that they can now apply for funding for AML reclamation and AMD work
- Provided answers to interview questions from *Marcus Griswold*, PhD, CoActive and Eco Coach Principal, [Calm Waters Group](#) who is assisting in reaching out to community groups working in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed to hear about some of the challenges and opportunities they face when it comes to funding, funders, matching funds, outreach, and organizational capacity; Sent him a copy of EPCAMR's comments that were submitted to the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Committee and to the US EPA EJ Screening Tool Committee
- Signed on to the National RECLAIM Coalition's Interagency Working Group (IWG) letter to provide comments and suggestions as to how each of the 14 federal agencies can support coalfield community groups across the country and streamline some grant processes, communications, outreach, matching fund waivers, funding priorities, and technical assistance
- Provided information on the STREAM Act bills in the House and Senate to *Amanda Pitzer*, Friends of the Cheat, WV to pass along to *Mariah Davis*, Choose Clean Water Coalition, who is pulling together a sign-on letter to send to legislators in support of the bills and their impact on the Chesapeake Bay watershed
- EPCAMR has a few donated bags of AgLime (calcium carbonate) from Knouse Foods and will be asking any watershed groups in our region at the upcoming Board Meeting if they would like a bag to test their usage for treating any small AMD seeps in their watersheds
- EPCAMR Executive Director was recently selected as a Community Hero by the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Railriders to recognize EPCAMR for our efforts in the region to clean up our abandoned mine lands, educational programs, and polluted waterways; EPCAMR Executive Director threw out the first pitch on 8-12-22 at a Friday Night game and the outreach and awareness of our work was amplified by the local radio station and the Railriders organization to the entire audience at the baseball game that evening

- Reviewed the RENEW Act ([H.R. 7937](#)), sponsored by Representative *Connor Lamb*, to see if there had been any movement on it in the Legislature; The House Subcommittee Hearings were held on June 9th, 2022
- Provided *Paul MacGillis-Falcon*, writer for the Environmental Integrity Project, with some general information and links to resources on the Nacero Corporation's intention to propose to build a blue and green gasoline manufacturing plant and facilities in Newport Township, Luzerne County; He's writing an article for [Oil & Gas Watch News](#)
- Reached out to *Kevin Welsh*-Senior student at Keystone College who is interested in studying the Lackawanna River and impacts of the Old Forge AMD Borehole on the aquatic community and fishery in the watershed as a part of his Senior project this coming semester

### **Keep PA Beautiful Anti-Litter Campaign Update on Materials and Curriculum**

- Reached out to *Laura Rinehimer*, EPCAMR Watershed Outreach Education Specialist, to request a summary report and her hours to send down along with the Invoice to KPB for our quarterly request for payment under the agreement; Reviewed comments from KPB on the first book and their suggestions as well as provided positive feedback on the graphics and layout thus far in the pages that are completed; Provided her with a link to the draft comments made for OYEL Book 2 and sent it around to all the EPCAMR Staff for comments and suggestions; *Denise* submitted a reimbursement request for funds along with a report from *Laura* from KPB

### **Conferences, Training, Webinars, Tours, Exhibits, & Workshops**

- EPCAMR Executive Director was requested to be a part of a panel discussion the PA Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) with partners of Conservation Districts at the Wyndham Garden, in State College on 9-14-22 to have a discussion on examine the barriers, filters or disconnect which may be hindering collaboration and effective communication between Districts and their Partners; EPCAMR will share ideas and ways to cultivate and improve these relationships and communication; The workshop will include facilitation of roundtable exercises to identify or clarify the issues managers face in communicating with partners followed by moderating brief panelist introductions and an interactive Q&A session between the managers and the panelists to discuss ways to address communication issues and improve collaboration
- Provided *David Clouser-Kleinfelder* with a tour of AMD discharges in the Wyoming Valley, stream restoration projects, an AMD treatment system operated and maintained by Earth Conservancy and EPCAMR, and a drive through areas of economic development on former mine lands in the Southern Wyoming Valley; Kleinfelder is interested in partnering with EPCAMR on future projects and providing professional services for future grant opportunities
- Passed along a link to an August 23rd webinar from Reclaiming Appalachia to ARIPPA on *Waste Coal: Turning Liability into Opportunity*; Appalachia has thousands of coal waste sites, including coal ash from power plants, AMD from abandoned coal mines, and more; Given the expansion of funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the increased global interest in Rare Earth Elements for technologies such as building electric vehicles, it's an important time to explore opportunities and key considerations for Appalachian communities
- Passed along a Thank You card image and note from *Donna Wagner* to the entire PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference Committee thanking everyone for selecting her for the 2022 Mayfly Award at this past Annual Conference in June

- Communicated with *Nick Lylo*-PA DCNR District Forester for the Pinchot State Forest Mocanaqua Tract about setting up a Fall field meeting down in the Black Creek watershed in Mocanaqua to review findings from the State Forest Research Agreement and Consumptive Use Feasibility Study completed by EPCAMR for SRBC
- Provided information to the PA AML Campaign on a [Clean Energy on Mine Land Workshops | Department of Energy](#) that is being held at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Knoxville, TN on September 20-21<sup>st</sup> from the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations from the US DOE
- Coordinated with ARIPPA and Earth Conservancy about securing the Conference Room for a Roundtable Discussion/Tour with the House Democratic Policy Committee on 9-26-22 on Bitcoin mining and abandoned mine reclamation on lands being reclaimed by the Co-Gen plants across PA
- *Jessica Arriens* and *Lindsay Kuczera*, Program Managers-Climate and Energy Policy, with the National Wildlife Federation requested assistance from EPCAMR in providing a tour in the Wyoming Valley of reclaimed abandoned mine lands, AMD, and degraded unreclaimed abandoned mine lands for a report about the climate benefits of degraded lands reclamation and restoration, focusing on AMLs, orphaned oil and gas wells, Superfund sites, and brownfields; EPCAMR encouraged her to reach out to the Earth Conservancy since several sites that were suggested, the Espy Run Stream Channel Restoration site, and the Askam AMD Treatment System, are on their property; EPCAMR is willing to play a role in hosting the tour as well; They are talking with PennFuture and the Blue Green Alliance of other aspects of the tour

### **EPCAMR Program Administration**

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA Invest Accounts; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for July 2022 with Highmark; Paid Verizon and Internet monthly bills; Paid EC the rent; Made deposits to FNB for incoming reimbursements, checks, and accounts receivables; Submitted payments of quarterly IRA Contributions for EPCAMR Staff to FNB; Provided *Denise* with a copy of the July 2022 FNB Statement
- Requested that OneSource remove *Levi-Sunday Lefkowitz* from the payroll and make him inactive as an intern since his 10-week internship was completed
- Completed the July 2022 Monthly Report for both the 319 Program and for the Board Reporting and forwarded it to *Mike*
- Informed Staff that we would have to work from home the second week of August due to the closure of the Earth Conservancy parking lot entrance since a streetscape project by Ashley Borough was being completed by Pioneer Construction of the entire sidewalk along S. Main Street and all entrances to businesses
- Provided all necessary documentation for *Doug James*, Auditor for our State Workers Compensation Insurance Fund (SWIF) policy and payroll records for FY2021-2022
- Looked into the FUTA (Federal Unemployment Tax) Form with OneSource to request a refund of a portion of the Federal taxes that the IRS has determined that EPCAMR did not have to pay over the last 3 years; Received a refund for 2022 from ADP



- Prepared draft agenda and notice for August 18<sup>th</sup> EPCAMR Board Meeting and sent out to partners to hold the date; Compiled a list of grants written, proposed, awarded, and denied for the upcoming Board Meeting and provided it to *Mike* and *Denise*; Convened the EPCAMR Board Meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> in-person with a hybrid option to attend that was very well attended; Annual Elections were held
- Met with *Janice Perry*, First National Bank to discuss options for EPCAMR in the future to move our Simple IRA's to a 401(k) that will allow for the potential for additional deposits to be made beyond the maximum amount allowable currently
- PayPal informed EPCAMR that they will allow for grants by certain funders to be made via transactions through PayPal; Worked to confirm our EPCAMR Account information with PayPal
- EPCAMR reached out to Patagonia Action Works to see if we can apply for future grants since our profile is currently paused since there is no funding rounds open