



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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August 2020 Progress Report

Project Coordination

Huntsville Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan Project

- Provided *Rachel Kester-PA* TU with an update on the development of the CHP and requested a 3-month extension through December 31st, 2020 to finalize the plan due to the pandemic on August 6th and it was approved on the 14th

Mill Creek/Gardner Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan Project

- EPCAMR Staff and Interns conducted culvert assessments and looked for watershed issues in the Mill Creek/Gardner Creek watershed on the 5th and the 19th

Mine Subsidence Insurance Program Mine Mapping Grant

- Provided some assistance to *Lori Greenwood-Henehan-Lackawanna County Recorder of Deeds* and *Bode Morin-PA Historic Museum Commission* with determining underground mining extents on an area in Scranton; Referred her to the [PSU Mine Map Atlas](#)

ISI Food by Youth and Appalachian Apple Tree Planting Project in Centralia

- Provided *Claudia* and *Pam* from ISI project updates as they prepare a brief report to MIF and a budget revision
- We followed up with the grower from Heller's Orchard where we get the trees and he will not be able to get them in October as we had tentatively planned for the 17th, so we will likely still go with the cleanup on that date and push the tree planting back; He informed us that he won't be able to get them until they are pulled in early Fall possibly, so the tree planting will be pushed back a bit and a much smaller group of people will be involved in the planting due to COVID-19; We don't know what the Fall will bring yet and what our situation will be, but we can't have 200 people planting trees in close proximity to one another either from all over the place; We are considering not allowing children to participate that are under 18 and we are encouraging those individuals that are in high-risk groups and populations to consider not attending as well; We are going to purchasing masks with the logo for the tree planting, renting several wash stations, and port-a-johns for health and safety reasons as we go forward
- We are anticipating still giving away 150 apple trees to residents in the Wyoming Valley

- Discussed with *Ed Wytovich* and *Ken Klemow*, EPCAMR Board Members the topic of the potential to plant trees on back-end dumped soil in Centralia along the Old 61 Highway, should Pagnotti take it under consideration in the future; Soil samples would need to be taken and an average depth of the piles measured in the future; Ed is willing to park at the lower end and work uphill, digging every 100 yds or so and taking soil samples from each hole, then doing the same for the southbound lanes, measuring depth using a straightedge and a ruler, logging data, and carrying soil samples

Reclaiming Appalachian Coalition Innovative Mine Land Reclamation and Economic Development Projects Mini-Grant Program

- Reviewed Downstream Strategies Utility Scale Solar [Report](#) on Degraded Lands in West Virginia and held a Zoom meeting with Joey James, Downstream Strategies on the project kickoff
- Forwarded around [Press Release](#) on the mini-grant award winners, including EPCAMR; [PA Environmental Digest](#) picked it up immediately
- Updated EPCAMR Board Member, *Dr. Ken Klemow*, PhD, from Wilkes University, on the project since he has great familiarity with community solar and research on the topic
- Reviewed a feasibility study from *Cassie Papp* and *Kaitlyn Sitch* for the Avondale Mine Site that has been reclaimed in Plymouth Township, Luzerne County provided by *Dr. Klemow*, who was a Mentor to the students
- Followed up with *Ed Wytovich*, EPCAMR Board Member on the project who provided Mike and I with some background and advice as we continue to develop the model initially and our approach to reaching out to landowners strategically
- Interesting organization that might prove helpful as a partner down the road on our project is the [PA Solar Center](#); They have a map of completed solar installations across PA already, not on AML, yet
- Asked *Frank Sindaco*, EPCAMR GIS Watershed Outreach Specialist and *Denise Hernandez*, EPCAMR Urban Outreach Coordinator to participate in a webinar on [ARIES](#), a visionary energy research platform, while the Executive Director attended another event
- Conducted an interview with *Paul Golias*-Correspondent, Citizens Voice, on the solar GIS Site Selection Criteria Tool

Swoyersville/Harry E. Reclamation and Community Athletic Area PA AML Pilot Project

- Reviewed the June, July, and August 2020 PA DEP Pottsville District Mining Office Inspection Reports for the project area and filed them in our Project File
- Had the EPCAMR Executive Board Members sign the Contractor License notarized signature page to *Donna Ulrich*, Administrative Assistant for the PA DEP Mining Programs

Luzerne Foundation Youth Advisory Committee Drone Grant

- Placed an order with VISTA Print for the Drone educational banner for EPCAMR designed by *Shawnese Taylor*-GIS Watershed Outreach Specialist, and the Executive Director, that highlights the various applications that EPCAMR will be able to use the drone for to assist EPCAMR with our education, outreach, and technical assistance services

OSMRE/AmeriCorps VISTA Stewards Individual Placement Program (SIPP)

- Stewards VISTA COVID 19 Policy Refresher was provided to EPCAMR to provide to *Kyle Argenziano*, EPCAMR's Stewards OSMRE VISTA volunteer; Checked in with *JM Aurednik*, Program Coordinator on our activities in the last quarter
- Reviewed a quarterly newsletter with potential grant opportunities and provided it to *Kyle*
- Submitted a quarterly payment to the Conservation Legacy Stewards Program once the Invoice was received from *Judy England*-Administrative Assistant

Loyalsock Creek Watershed Monitoring/Sullivan County Conservation District/Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association/White Ash Land Association

- EPCAMR Staff sampled several AMD treatment systems in the Loyalsock Creek and other monitoring locations throughout the watershed; Provided an update to *Ted Lowden*-President of the White Ash Land Association
- Participated in a Zoom call with FABCO to discuss a proposed FABCO design idea for a cartridge that could assist with filtering out sediments in one of the AMD Treatment Systems that is apparently plugging up; The idea was forwarded to PA DEP BAMR who ultimately would make the decision on any repairs or rehabilitation to the system

Southern Wyoming Valley NFWF Small Watershed Planning & Technical Assistance Project

- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has approved **\$50,000** for the EPCAMR Wyoming Valley Chesapeake Bay Tributary Small Watershed Planning and Technical Assistance project, pending successful completion of our fiscal review process; This award is provided on the condition that these funds will be matched by **\$18,000** in matching contributions raised by EPCAMR; Registered for a Grantee webinar on September 19th
- Worked with *Steve* to create a GIS poster map of the project area for the grant for an upcoming Press Release with Congressman Cartwright in the Scranton Area
- Completed some revisions to the narrative and budget for the project

Technical Assistance

- Worked with *Steve Cornia*, EPCAMR GIS Watershed Outreach Specialist, on reviewing the MayFly DIY monitoring device for the Upper Lackawanna River with the Lackawanna County Conservation District and the Lackawanna Valley Chapter of TU
- *Ed Wytovich*-EPCAMR Board Member provided some technical assistance and advice on the future modified limestone diversion well construction on High Tower Run in the Bowman Creek Watershed that is acidified that EPCAMR is assisting *Joe Simons, III*, the Stanley Cooper Chapter TU installing with help from the Luzerne Conservation District Watershed Specialist, *John Levitsky*, and the PA Game Commission
- Communicated with *Dr. Shawn Rummel*, PhD from TU, about coordinating the monitoring effort on August 26th and the upcoming Fall Tour on September 2nd on the Loyalsock Creek with EPCAMR, Susquehanna Chapter TU, Sullivan County Conservation District, White Ash Land Association, and the Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association; Provided available historical water quality data to *Allison Lutz*-Field Technician from TU for the [Loyalsock Creek Watershed](#) and from [Datashed](#)

- *Glenn Eby*, PE JHA Companies, inquired about a restored strip mine located near the “Hell’s Kitchen” ravine in Drums, PA on the Green Mountain; EPCAMR did some research to see if we had any drawings or documents relative to the site and or any environmental reports and provided him with reports related to Oley Creek, Nescopeck Creek, and to reach out to the PA DEP BAMR
- Provided some [information](#) on a grant that might be suitable for the ARIPPA Co-Gen Plants to consider in PA provided to EPCAMR by *Ed Wytovich*, one of our EPCAMR Board Members; Discussed with *Cristy Sweeney*, ARIPPA and suggested that she get back to EPCAMR if any member plants were interested in applying
- Provided information to PA DEP BAMR on a suspected borehole along Breezewood Drive in Jenkins Township that a consultant for the Penn-East Pipeline is investigating
- Held a conference call with *John Pippy-AES* and *Josh Hickman-Hickman Geological* to discuss future partnership projects; Provided them with a list of proposed projects that we are would like to see funded in the EPCAMR Region if the right funding opportunities came along

Tetra Tech AMD Monitoring at the Old Forge AMD Borehole

- Began discussions with Tetra Tech to develop a professional service monitoring agreement for the Old Forge AMD Borehole for several months in 2020

Education & Outreach

- The House passed the Water Resources Development Act of 2020; EPCAMR will likely follow up with the US ACE to see what projects may have been included in the Act; An [article](#) researched lays out some of the needs of WRDA
- Senator *Bob Casey, Jr.* co-sponsored Senator Manchin’s [S. 1193](#)
- Reviewed the PA AML Campaign’s updated Fact Sheets on SMCRA and Title IV edited by *Anne Daymut*, WPCAMR that were placed on the PA AML Campaign [website](#); Participated on a PA AML Campaign conference call to get updates on legislation
- Reviewed an [article](#) from Penn-State on new AMD Treatment System technology to turn AMD into valuable critical rare earth minerals
- Forwarded information on permaculture and education from *Matt Powers* to *Laura* related to our Groasis Growboxxes and Waterboxxes
- *Rebecca Shelton*, Appalachian Citizens’ Law Center, asked EPCAMR if we could bring the black lung excise tax issues to a few of the Staffers of a few PA legislators that we are familiar with to build up some momentum
- Signed up for [updates](#) on the PA DEP Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan for PA

- Provided EPCAMR's opinion to *Steve Kerlin*, PhD, Director of Education-Stroud Water Research Center who is leading some of the work on the PA Department of Education Content Standards that it might be a good idea to create new/additional Performance Expectations to address the NAAEE gaps in the updated PA [NGSS](#)
- Spoke to *Jacob Smith*, Member of the [Native Fish Coalition](#), PA Chapter, from New Tripoli, who was interested in EPCAMR's work on culvert assessments in our AMD impacted watersheds; Signed him up for the NAACC Aquatic Organism Passage online certification; He knows the Little Schuylkill River well and has connected up with the Schuylkill Headwaters Association; He offered the NFC's help in future projects
- Proved *Ann Foster-Brodhead* Chapter TU, Brodhead Watershed Association with an update on where the RECLAIM Act stands in the legislature; It is also in [HR 2 The Moving Forward Act](#) that was passed and needs to move through the Senate now; Here is a website on [RECLAIM](#)
- *Liz Rosser Banos*-Educator, PSU Extension Master Watershed Stewardship Program informed EPCAMR that she was moving West with her husband and that our partnership would continue with *Erica Frederick*
- Passed along Holgrem's Landscaping logo to Olde Mill Works for the next shipment of pavers for the Huber Miner's Memorial Park in Ashley, Luzerne County, that was formerly a reclaimed abandoned mine site; Added additional pavers to the order list with *Ray Clarke*-Huber Breaker Preservation Society
- Participated in an Environmental Justice/Environmental Health Skype Call with the PA DEP EJ Staff to discuss EJ Screen and a state-wide mapping effort of data layers that are important to EJ communities
- Hosted a hike with a dozen youth under the leadership of *Harlan Tabron*, Living Waters Youth Ministry, from the City of Wilkes-Barre to the Penobscot Mountain Trail on a recently reclaimed abandoned mine site owned by the Earth Conservancy

Community Volunteer Coordination

- Filed *Marissa Loftus*, EPCAMR volunteer seasonal Summer Watershed Outreach Intern's Aquatic Organism Passage Certification; Marissa was looking for some volunteer hours and experience with EPCAMR and has been spending time on a few smaller projects since May and recently was registered by the EPCAMR Executive Director to sign up for the culvert assessment training offered by NAACC
- *Zach Dooner*, Pleasant Valley High School PA Wildlife Leadership Academy student, who participated in the Zoom call last month with EPCAMR, informed EPCAMR that he was interested in our Appalachian Apple Tree Planting in Centralia, PA tentatively in the Fall of 2020 that may be postponed until the Spring of 2021; EPCAMR welcomed his

enthusiasm and told him to sign up to become an EPCAMR volunteer through the website

- Submitted *Kyle Argenziano's* and *Levi Sunday-Leftkowitz's* timesheets and request for reimbursement for the month of July 2020 to the SLIP Program through EDSI; *Levi* was selected as 1 of 3 Interns out of 100, following EPCAMR's nomination to the Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce's Young Professional Awards for 2020
- *Rob Dubas-Keep PA Beautiful* sent EPCAMR a spare set of keys for a trail camera that was lost in the high grass of Centralia during a monitoring and battery replacement trip
- Talked with *Maura Modrovsky-King's* College-SERVE and CBWF Coordinator about interviewing a potential candidate for a Fall Internship named Katie Van Orden; Requested that she submit her resume and cover letter; Set up a Zoom call with her after receiving her resume
- Signed up *Joey Jaikes*, Wilkes-Barre to become an EPCAMR Volunteer to take the NAACC Aquatic Organism Passage Non-Tidal Streams Protocol culvert assessment certification for aquatic passage

PA American Water Charitable Trust Cleanup Program

- Coordinated a large community cleanup on "The Sandy", along Solomon Creek in Hanover Township with over **75** that were able to be rounded up by EPCAMR within 3 days notice to deal with some serious illegal dumping during the pandemic on PA State Game Lands; [Event Page](#); [WNEP-16 News coverage](#); [Citizens Voice news article](#)
- Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority (WVSA) reached out to EPCAMR to offer to sponsor some future cleanups led by EPCAMR
- Scheduled a cleanup [event](#) along Sugar Notch Run in Hanover Township, along S. Main Street, in Ashley for September 11th as a Day of Service Project
- Provided *Megan Boone Volkenburg*-Civic Engagement Coordinator, Wilkes University information for college students on upcoming volunteer EPCAMR cleanup opportunities

Conferences, Training, Tours, Exhibits, & Workshops

- Participated in two PA AMR Conference Planning Committee calls; Decided to go with the WHOVA App and reached out to *Paolo Cruz* to get the package agreement for the 2020 Virtual PA AMR Conference
- Slideshare has merged with [Scribd](#); This is the platform that we put all of our presentations on for our PA AMR Annual Conferences

- EPCAMR Executive Director presented as a part of a panel discussion to the Environmental Justice Advisory Board on Environmental Justice and Mining Communities on August 11th via Skype; Provided presentation materials to *Justin Dula*, PA DEP EJ Regional Coordinator
- EPCAMR coordinated a Loyalsock Creek AMD Tour with partners for September 2nd
- Confirmed doing a “Live” Facebook presentation for the Cumberland Valley Chapter of TU on EPCAMR’s work in the region by *John Leonard* on September 16th

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR’s Checking Account and PA, Invest Accounts; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for August 2020 with Highmark; Paid Verizon and Internet monthly bills; Paid EC the rent; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register; Made a deposit to FNB for incoming reimbursements and accounts receivables; Provided Denise with the July 2020 Statement for reconciliations
- Informed by *Mary Newsome*-AVP Branch Manager, First National Bank that the Bank will be soon accepting the PPP Loan Forgiveness Applications; Requested any information from OneSource related to the PPP Loan Forgiveness Application; Received two documents from First National Bank to begin filling out when the time is appropriate; EPCAMR will likely follow up with our CPA to complete the documentation
- Earth Conservancy set up a virtual calendar to utilize the Board Room; Informed Staff
- Provided *Kyle Argenziano*-OSMRE VISTA Steward, with contact information for the embroidery department of [Cabela’s](#) as EPCAMR considers some clothing and jacket options for the Staff; Asked Staff for sizes
- Communicated with the EPCAMR Executive Board and decided to purchase a full version of Zoom platform to hold our quarterly Board Meetings and other business for EPCAMR, including the August 20th Board Meeting; Provided the draft Treasurer’s Report, Balance Sheet, and Jobs & Grants List to *Cristy Sweeney*, EPCAMR Treasurer for her review; Sent around the meeting notice, agenda, and worked on the Quarterly Staff Updates PowerPoint Presentation; Made the presentation during the meeting
- Requested that OneSource remove *Levi Sunday-Leftkowitz*, EPCAMR Intern from the payroll at the end of July 2020 once his SLIP 8 week program was completed
- Reviewed the NCAC Fundamentals newsletter for grant opportunities
- Submitted our Accountant’s Copy of our 2019 Balance Sheet and Payroll to complete our 2019 990 Non-Profit Tax Returns
- Worked with *Mike* to pick up a NVMe solid state drive to store EPCAMR Office Data from the Executive Director’s computer since it was filling up with data
- Completed the August 2020 Board Report