



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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July 2023 Progress Report

Project Coordination

Swoyersville Harry E. AML Reclamation and Community Athletic Area AMLER Project

- Conference call with partners to determine how to proceed forward with pursuit of another grant for a Phase II of the project; Provided Hank Zielinski with a [link](#) to the guidance document and grant instructions for the PA DEP AMD/AML Grant Program; Submitted a Progress Reports and an invoice for Keystone Reclamation Fuels Management for June 2023 for excavation, hauling, and transportation of waste culm to the Panther Creek Co-Gen and Northampton Generating Station

Hollywood AMD & Coal Refuse Reclamation into Rare Earth Elements (REE) with Tetra Tech

- Worked on updating the previously submitted grant application for an anticipated re-submission in late August 2023 with more detailed and new information

Just Transition Fund Rare Earth Elements Project

- Continued working on the development of a database of information on AMD discharges that will include any available historical data on previously sampled rare earth elements after reviewing several historic publications by the USGS and online resources where we could add flow data when available to create an additional column that would allow loading calculations to be determined; *Chase Leach*, a Penn-State University student and EPCAMR volunteer offered to put some time into researching and creating a literature review document of previous work, resources, and documents on rare earth elements; Frank went through the database and created a name attribute for each table to make merging future datasets easier; EPCAMR ranked 41 of the AMD sites by loadings in the Anthracite Region with current available data

ARIPPA Mini-Grant Program Award

- EPCAMR received an application from Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance (SCRA) seeking **\$4800** in funds for the acquisition of nearly 1.87 acres of wetlands in the Quaker Run watershed in Kulpmont Borough as a part of a larger stream restoration project being funded by PA DEP Growing Greener; Requested that *Steve Moytka*, SCRA resubmit an updated letter to ARIPPA to the current Executive Director, *Jaret Gibbons*, as opposed to a former Executive Director, *George Ellis*; ARIPPA is providing **\$3000** to EPCAMR and the Foundation for PA Watersheds is providing another **\$2000** to the Mini-Grant Program for 2023; Mike and the Executive Director reviewed the application and EPCAMR will recommend approval of the grant submission in August at their Quarterly Board Meeting on August 17th

Technical Assistance

- Provided *John Levitsky*, Watershed Specialist, Luzerne Conservation District with a copy of the water quality data that was collected at the Plainsville AMD Borehole on the Price Property for the ***Datashed Snapshot 2023***
- Provided *Quinn Hartung*, Watershed Specialist, Sullivan County Conservation District and partners (PA DEP Moshannon Office, White Ash Land Association, and Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association) in Sullivan County with a copy of the water quality data that was collected at the Lewis Mine AMD Treatment System in Bernice for the ***Datashed Snapshot 2023***; EPCAMR was introduced to *Scott Hammond*, PA DEP Moshannon District Mining Office since *Aaron Pontzer*, will be leaving the DEP to take a new job
- Participated in a Google Meet conference call with *Joe Sweeney and Logan Lewis*, Associate Science Officer for Research, from the [Water Science Institute](#); They made a presentation with NRCS at last year's PA AMR Conference on repurposing sediment from stream restoration projects for use on AML recovery sites; They have organized some funding from NRCS and several other sources to begin examining opportunities for this purpose; Provided Joe and Logan contacts in the region, in particular Northumberland County (NCCD, AOAA, SCRA), for a start, to see if they can identify areas for soil placement on abandoned mine land projects and a list of the PA DEP BAMR Projects that are posted to the Mining & Reclamation Advisory Board website
- Submitted research, references, and documentation to *Meg Cole*- Coordinator, Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee ([STAC](#)) at the [Chesapeake Research Consortium](#), on the potential for nutrient load reductions as a co-benefit to AMD remediation and watershed restoration efforts across the Chesapeake Bay watershed from EPCAMR's experience and perspective
- Followed up with *Brandon Manning*, Director of Operations for [The Oz Group](#), who called into the EPCAMR Office looking to haul waste culm as a subcontractor; Directed him to ARIPPA, PA DEP BAMR, District Mining Offices, PA Anthracite Council, and Keystone Reclamation Fuels Management; He was also looking into bond forfeiture sites with PA DEP and was looking for a contact so that he can talk to them; His company has heavy equipment, trucks, and dozers and are willing to put up construction and performance bonds to reclaim sites
- EPCAMR participated in a Zoom conference call with *Dan Jones* and *Charlie Alpers*, from the USGS at the request of *Chuck Cravotta*, USGS to discuss EPCAMR's [RAMLIS](#) tool and a developing USGS vision for an integrated, nationwide mapping tool for assessment of mine hazards, including physical, chemical, and ecological factors; Their focus is largely around 1) figuring out the who and what associated with activities in the region, 2) identifying data associated with mined lands including environmental impacts, remediation, and economic metrics, and 3) identifying locations to consider for upcoming field campaigns to conduct various environmental hazard and remediation/revegetation assessments; One of the primary goals of their effort is to develop a framework for evaluating hazards present at mined sites, strategizing remediation, evaluating remediation effectiveness, and potentially also speaking to waste as a resource concerns; The framework would ideally be generalized such that it could be applied to any mine type and geography, with appropriate ways to refine the framework to the specifics of any given location in question

- EPCAMR provided background information on AMD treatment to *Chadwick Ralston*, who is with a group of researchers out of [Georgia Tech](#) creating an energy-efficient solution for wastewater and drainage sites to recover some of the residual metal ions left in them; They've been focusing on brine waste from desalination plants, but believe their solution could possibly help with AMD

Education & Outreach

Askam in Wonderland 3D VR Tour EE Project

- Filed [Rare Light Media's](#) subcontract agreement for professional services completed on the stitching of the virtual reality images, assistance with development of the 3DVista VR tour online, utilization and training on the use of various tools and functions of the 3DVista software, and content and video development for the project that focused on the [Earth Conservancy's Askam AMD Maelstrom Oxidizer Treatment System](#) in the Nanticoke Creek watershed along Dundee Road; Filed Rare Light Media's Certificate of Liability Insurance; The Final report and reimbursement for the project was sent to the PA DEP EE Program in the proper format, along with pictures of students utilizing the VR Oculus headset at [Heights Elementary](#) in Wilkes-Barre; The [Askam VR Tour](#) of is available online

Luzerne Foundation Iron Oxide AMD and Mine Mapping Videos with Centone Productions

- *EPCAMR created a draft 2023 AMD & Art Calendar jointly with the CAPAA High School Art Class* from the Wilkes-Barre Area School District CAPPA Program on hexagon shaped art pieces using EPCAMR's iron oxide pigment; Requested a higher resolution logo image for CAPAA for the final calendar reproduction; A limited number of calendars will be produced under the small grant to provide one to each of the students, the teacher, EPCAMR, and the funder
- Meeting with *Tom Clark*, AMD Project Manager for Kleinfelder to discuss potential AMD and or reclamation projects in the Anthracite Region and what EPCAMR regional partners might need some technical or engineering assistance; *Mike* and the Executive Director provided some surface and underground mine map snapshot images to *Tom* for the former Stanton Colliery in Wilkes-Barre that was along the Spring Run tributary of Solomon Creek and some old photos from the Underground Miner [website](#); This area of Spring Run was recommended by EPCAMR for a watershed restoration, abandoned mine land reclamation, and floodplain restoration project in our Solomon Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan
- Completed a Teams call with *Matthew Hubbard*, who is working with a design build stream/wetland restoration firm, called [Ecotone](#) out of Maryland; EPCAMR met with other Ecotone staff last year at our annual PA AMR Conference; EPCAMR was informed that they have a nursery and are doing reforestation projects; They are looking to get more involved in water resource restoration work and reforestation with the abandoned mine reclamation work that is accelerating in PA; EPCAMR and Ecotone introduced one another during the call and learned about each other's work; Provided Ecotone with some state-wide contacts for them to follow up with and encouraged them to attend and exhibit at the PA AMR Conference in the Fall 20203
- Informed *Cody Whipple*, PA Fish & Boat Commission that EPCAMR completed the end of the year survey following our release of released our **68** rainbow trout
- Participated in the weekly PA AML Campaign conference calls
- Participated in a Zoom call with the General Accounting Office to discuss the federal AMLER Grant Program with PA sub-recipients and eligible applicants, the process of securing AMLER

grants, economic effects of AMLER projects, data collected for measuring AMLER projects' impact on economic and community development, experiences working with state and federal partners, how PA and/or OSMRE keeps you informed of the status of project applications, extent you are working with their local economic development authorities and local communities to develop AMLER project proposals, experience with 2 CFR 200, and challenges, if any, we have faced with the AMLER program

- *Mariah Davis*, [Choose Clean Water Coalition](#) introduced EPCAMR to their new Energy Policy contractor, *Rosa E. P. Hance*, who was interested in setting up a conference call to learn more about the abandoned mine land reclamation, AMD, and economic alternative energy development type projects that are possible for mine lands throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed; EPCAMR to follow up with Rosa in early August when her schedule frees up
- Participated in a Zoom call with *Natalie Roper*, Director of Special Projects for The Just Transition Fund, to discuss how EPCAMR can apply for funding to support the high demand for our Staff to ensure that we have the organizational capacity to apply for future grants and Federal funding opportunities for abandoned mine land reclamation, AMD remediation, water quality monitoring, stakeholder outreach, and project management
- EPCAMR Executive Director was informed by the [Peace and Justice Center of NEPA](#), Wilkes-Barre, that their Steering Committee that he was nominated and selected to receive the [David Frey Community Service for Peace Award](#) in recognition of his work with EPCAMR to improve the local environment, as well as for other services provided to the community on September 21st at the Annual Dinner on the International Day of Peace at Appletree Terrace, Newberry Estates, Dallas, PA
- EPCAMR relayed to *Kathy Cook*, PA League of Women Conservation Voters that the topic of utilize mine pools for geothermal energy production has been discussed over the years and is something that we've advocated for in the past; She would like to write an Op/Ed in the near future; There hasn't been enough funding put in place to prioritize the mine pools that need to be evaluated for their size, extent, and storage potential, let alone the temperature ranges that are contained within the mines that need to be looked at much closer; The United Kingdom (UK) is so much further ahead of us in this area; The [Coal Authority](#) in the UK is very innovative in this arena and it might be because the government owns a lot of abandoned mine lands as opposed to private property owners and coal operators; EPCAMR doesn't have our pulse on the geothermal aspects right now; We are still pushing solar and working on the recovery of rare earth elements sampling since we have funding to do so
- EPCAMR participated in the **2nd Annual Susquehanna River Watershed Festival** with our partners in Columbia County, led by the Conservation District, at the Briar Creek Lake Park, Berwick; EPCAMR put on an AMD Tie Dye Workshop, set up an exhibit, brought along our Trout Puppets, and 3D VR Oculus headset for the youth to become engaged and learn about AMD and EPCAMR
- *Rachel Young*, Director of Grantmaking, for The Just Transition Fund sent along two potential grant opportunities for our review; EPCAMR didn't feel that these two particular grants were in line with our current workload at this time; [Department of Energy's Renew for Nonprofits](#) (due August 3) and the [Economic Development Agency's Tech Hubs](#) (due August 15)

Community Volunteers

- *Jacob Smith*, EPCAMR volunteer stopped by the EPCAMR Office to borrow one of our telescoping stadia rod and tape measure before heading out to conduct a few Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) culvert and bridge assessments in the Solomon Creek watershed and will provide the field data sheets to EPCAMR and then upload the data collected to the NAACC database for approval; *Jake* emailed the field datasheets and uploaded the pictures for each site to the NAACC database, along with the associated data from the field sheets

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

25th Anniversary PA AMR Conference

- Participated in the PA AMR Conference Planning Committee call to continue to coordinate the conference; Participated in a separate call with coordinators for the NASLR Conference that will be happening alongside of our Conference during one of the tracks; Reached out to *Arielle Avishai*, OSMRE in Pittsburgh, PA to see if she could follow up with *Jeff Reams* about who will be presenting on AMD Treat at the Conference from OSMRE; *Laura Rinehimer*, EPCAMR EE Watershed Specialist was provided a fillable PDF document by *Anne Daymut*, WPCAMR, to complete to submit her abstract to present on the Askam 3D VR Tour EE Project; *Sami Pretzel*, [Kleinfelder](#) submitted her abstract for review to the Committee for approval; Conference Registrations are starting to come in now that registration is open and we are continuing to fill speaking slots throughout the Summer; *Jessica Arriens*, [National Wildlife Federation](#) confirmed she will be a part of a [Reimagine Appalachia](#) panel on natural infrastructure/mine reclamation/workforce development; Looked for a previously submitted presentation abstract from [Brierly Associates](#) and informed *Josh Zimmerman* that one hadn't come it as of yet and encouraged him to resubmit it for consideration; Reviewed the final BEO agreement with the Altoona Grand Hotel and signed it and submitted it with a small minor revision from NASLR to *Shaina McNally* and a question related to meal overage estimates; Reviewed changes made to the [website](#) that *Mike* had updated for the Conference

Solar on Abandoned Mine Lands Summit with PA DEP Office of Energy and Technology

- Reviewed with *Steve Cornia*-GIS Watershed Outreach Specialist for EPCAMR, the analysis of the acreage of AML and previously reclaimed mine lands calculated that could be suitable for solar development and renewable energy projects across PA by breaking down our GIS data; Logistically, the Summit was moved from the downstairs area to the main Ballroom area due to the increase in attendance and EPCAMR finalized details, exhibit spaces, and lunch with Jenn West from the Ramada Inn Conference Center in State College; Final Agenda for the day was reviewed and posted to the [website](#); The [Nature Conservancy](#), [Penn E & R](#), [Tetra Tech](#), [Wallace Montgomery](#), [Tract Engineering](#), [ARM Group](#), [Solitude Solar](#), [Kleinfelder](#), and [LaBella Associates](#) became lunch sponsors and exhibitors; **100** attendees were present at the *PA Solar Summit on Previously Mined/AML* on July 19th; Presentations were uploaded to the [website](#) by EPCAMR; Referred *James Pagnotti* and *Greg Johnson* to the website following phone calls with each of them to discuss future reclamation projects on some properties around the region that they are interested in having reclaimed and or developed
- EPCAMR hosted and provided the ***Overlook Field School of Landscape Architecture, University of Oregon***, an AMD/AML Tour with EPCAMR on July 14th when they are in the region for their week-long field studies course in PA; A special tour to the Lackawanna Coal Mine Tour was taken and coordinated with our partners at the PA Anthracite Heritage & Historical Museum Commission at McDade Park, Lackawanna County

- Completed a Zoom Conference call with *Sean Kinney*, Post Doctorate Researcher, to plan for the upcoming tour in the EPCAMR Region to scout out the AMD sampling locations for future pressure transducer installations and sampling for rare earth elements; EPCAMR hosted and provided [Columbia University](#) graduate interns from *Sean Kinney's* Class from New York on July 7th; A special tour to the Lackawanna Coal Mine Tour was taken and coordinated with our partners at the PA Anthracite Heritage & Historical Museum Commission at McDade Park, Lackawanna County
- EPCAMR Executive Director had confirmed that he would offer up a tour of the Old Forge AMD Borehole for the planned August 15th **Environmental Justice Advisory Board Meeting** in Scranton for those members that would like to meet at the location prior to the meeting; As it turned out, the meeting had to go virtual due to budget constraints, so the tour will be put off until there is another regional meeting of the EJAB in Northeastern PA
- Provided an AMD Tour and hosted [Rachel Bacon](#) and [Meredith Davenport](#) on July 5 and discussed the previously submitted grant proposal EPCAMR worked on with them earlier in the year in partnership with the [Diepenheim Drawing Centre](#) in the Netherlands who would like to utilize our iron oxide pigment in some art education programs and learn how it's processed and recycled for educational purposes
- EPCAMR Executive Director was asked to be a Guest Speaker for a **Coal to Solar Webinar** on August 23 by [Kleinfelder](#) to discuss advocating for reclamation of abandoned mine lands for alternative energy solar projects, how solar projects can be a part of AMD treatment options to reduce electrical costs, and how to site and reach out to landowners to create new partnerships and community benefit projects in the coalfield communities around the Commonwealth

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA Invest Accounts; Provided Denise with a copy of the monthly bank statement for Quickbooks; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for the July 2023 renewal with Highmark; Paid EC the rent; Made EPCAMR deposits to FNB
- Provided all financial information and documentation needed for the State Workers Insurance Fund (SWIF) Premium Audit to *Lisabeth Maletta*, Accu-Audits, Inc. for July 1, 2022 through July 1, 2023 that took place during a visit on July 5th
- Completed the July 2023 Monthly Report for both the 319 Program and for Board Reporting and forwarded it to *Mike*
- Worked with *Mike* to order a laptop battery charger for *Laura's* laptop that wasn't holding a charge any longer
- Participated in facilitating EPCAMR's Strategic Plan Committee Zoom meeting to continue to work on updating our 2020-2025 Plan
- Reviewed the Letter of Mutual Consent from the PA DEP Grants Center related to MBE/WBE procurement reporting and emailed a response to it at the email address indicated in the letter for our Section 319 CD Mining East Program and 319 Bear Creek Project