



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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July 2021 Progress Report

Project Coordination

Swoyersville Harry E. Reclamation and Community Athletic Area AMLER Project

- Mailed the EPCAMR's Mine Operator's License Renewal for 2021-2022 to the PA DEP; Mailed a check to Keystone Reclamation Fuels Management for Invoice 14; Panther Creek had limited activity since their winter run back in February 2021st; An employee has recently been assigned to restart production; They will be resuming screening operations as the 190 is scheduled to return; Partners are extremely busy getting the Panther Creek Facility ready to return to full operations by the end of October; The plan is to bring that plant back on line full time; They have identified a market outlet for the energy produced; Once the Panther Facility is back on line, the Harry E project will become very active; They are in the process of hiring and training staff for our fuel production team; By August 2nd, they will have added back 5 equipment operators to the Northampton Fuel Supply Co, roster; Panther Creek has about 20 employees they need to hire full time prior to their return to the 24/7 grid; A big portion of them have started work this month

PA DEP Mine Subsidence Insurance Program Mine Map Grant

- Posted the part-time GIS Watershed Outreach position on Indeed; Sent out a request to all Staff working on the MSI Program to send their copies of their time allocations for the project to *Mike* for the reimbursement request to close out the 2018-2021 grant; EPCAMR Management will be reviewing resumes that have come in for the part-time GIS Watershed Outreach Specialist position and conducting interviews with screened candidates

Southern Wyoming Valley NFWF Small Watershed Grant Program

- Received the American Black Duck and Wild Brook Trout KMZ file from *John Levitsky*, Luzerne Conservation District and discussed the areas that will be surveyed this year; Conducted field training with *John* out in the field with the EPCAMR Staff on how to identify viable habitat areas for the American Black Duck and utilize the Wetlands Classification flow charts in the field to categorize the wetland and habitat area types; Contacted by our new Grant Administrator, *Brit Abrams* from the NFWF and informed

her that we were just getting out to start some of our field assessment work now that we had the green light and the fully executed grant agreement; Sent Brit along some photos of our field work and meeting with the PA Game Commission, PA Fish & Boat Commission, and the Luzerne Conservation District partners to kick off the project; Sent around a copy the [US DOI US Fish & Wildlife Service document](#) that serves as the prime reference material for identifying and classifying the wetland habitat areas for the American Black Duck; Located contact information for Eastern Fuel Oil who owned a number of acres in Newport Township and the City of Nanticoke that EPCAMR wanted to explore with the landowner's permission; Followed up and received permission to hike several properties from the landowner; Conducted a field investigation with several of the EPCAMR Staff in the lower Wyoming Valley in Newport Township of several habitat areas and ponds; On the flowing stream wetland systems, we may have to revise the wetland type to Riverine system and fill in the habitat criterion due to the moving hydrology, since Palustrine wetlands are stationary waters; Communicated with *Cheryl Hennessy*, NFWF on making some revisions to our QAPP after their review and comments; EPCAMR will review their comments and provide them with further information to improve the QAPP

Mill Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan

- Reviewed *Kyle's* draft Powerpoint research on the history and background information resources within the Mill Creek Watershed

Bear Creek AMD Treatment Survey/Design, O & M Plan and Permitting Package

- Received the landowner access and monitoring agreement documentation from Mr. *Kerry Teter*; Will be forwarding it to PA DEP once a progress report is completed at the end of August 2021; Spoke with *Mr. Teter* on the phone and he extended an invitation to the property anytime over the late Summer, early Fall to hike around and grab some samples and just asked that we call ahead

ARIPPA AMD/AML Mini-Grant Awards

- Discussed with *Anne Daymut* from WPCAMR about another push through social media to encourage additional applications for the mini-grant program through July 31st; EPCAMR sent out a post to our social media accounts to interested groups in our region to consider applying

STEAM in the STREAM EE Day Camp

- Hosted a one-day camp for youth in the Wyoming Valley funded by EPCAMR, ISI Inc., the Luzerne Foundation, and the PA DEP Environmental Education Grant Program; See the [highlight reel](#)

PA American Water Mill Creek Temperature Logging Monitoring Project

- EPCAMR Staff ordered additional HOBO temperature sensors to be placed throughout the Mill Creek Watershed

Healing the Scars: Reclaiming Northeastern PA! with ISI

- Provided Denise with a copy of the fully executed grant agreement from ISI, Inc. for **\$23,150**; Provided *Claudia* with a description and map of the filming areas in the Solomon Creek watershed and at Askam in advance of *Joe's* trip up to take a look at the sites for placement of cameras and the video shoot after driving to both locations and taking a few photos to send along; Scheduled a field meeting with *Joe Sapienza* for

August 2nd to review the field locations for the filming; Worked with *Denise* and submitted an Invoice to ISI, Inc. for **\$11,575** for the last quarter of work; Discussed some grant opportunities to apply for the next film; PA Trout Unlimited has a [Forever WILD](#) grant that could be applied for if we get sponsorship and support of a local TU Chapter ; EPCAMR followed up with *Rachel Kester*, PA Trout Unlimited Program Manager and she gave us some ideas on how to approach the grant application; Puppeteers of America didn't have any available grants for our film; Received some photos of the completed two trout puppets before they shipped to EPCAMR

Huber Breaker Preservation Society Strategic Planning Assistance

- Forwarded the set of comments that the Executive Director provided to the President of the Huber Breaker Preservation Society, *George Lehman*, to our OSMRE AmeriCorps VISTA Conservation Legacy volunteer, *Kyle Argenziano*, who has been assisting them with community garden development within the Huber Miner's Memorial Park

Technical Assistance

- Connected up *Amanda Schrader*, Science Teacher at Greater Nanticoke Area High School with *Cody Whipple* from the Trout In the Classroom Program so that she can sign up two additional teachers (*Anthony Fleury* and *Kirk Jones*) for the Teacher Training Program to become eligible to participate in the 2021-2022 program
- Provided *Joe Mills*, Skelly & Loy Inc., with informational resources and maps to the mine pools for the areas that include the Packer No. 5 AMD discharge in the Mahanoy Creek watershed; Directed him to the www.minemaps.psu.edu site for additional mine maps of the area that EPCAMR may have already scanned, digitized, geo-referenced, and mosaicked, if they were completed for that region of the Western Middle Field
- Provided *Guy Sheets*, BSTI, with information on recommendations for various coldwater conservation plans that are eligible to move towards design, construction, and implementation, should they be considered by firms interested in partnering with us to move forward on any of them or our municipal and community partners; BSTI is looking for partnerships on MS4 project implementation; Met with Guy and Jon Kasitz, Client Solutions Manager, from [RES](#) on the 22nd of July at the EPCAMR Office to discuss projects; Reviewed some projects and portfolio information as well as drone footage of projects undertaken by RES
- Provided *Clive Winbow*, France with links to our project success with the Waterboxx and Growboxx Groasis technology; He was curious as to how our efforts went and he had previously worked with the late *Pieter Hoff*, in Oman years ago
- Provided *Scott Spinucci* with a high level outline of the [Community Navigator](#) Pilot Grant Program that he was interested in taking a look at with the City of Wilkes-Barre to determine if they were interested in applying for funding

- EPCAMR Staff provided technical comments to the draft Legacy Issues Subcommittee section of the State Water Plan that *Gary Merritt*, with ARIPPA is chairing, on AMD, mine pools, treatment scenarios, and recommendations for alternative energy and economic development of our mine lands in PA and the reuse of our mine water
- Provided *Alexis Rourk*, [US EPA Region 3-Office of Community Revitalization](#), with GIS layers and watershed layers for the Shamokin Creek watershed and additional resources that EPCAMR had to assist them in gathering information to try and pull together a plan for the watershed to support the community revitalization efforts that are underway
- Provided former *Congressman Paul Kanjorski* a [link](#) to the DARPA EMBERS Program on Rare Earth Elements
- Met with *Eric Bella*, Reading Anthracite, that requested EPCAMR's assistance in scanning some mine maps and evaluating some areas for mine pool elevations
- Convened a meeting with *Jay Janson*, Global Business Development, [KMX Technologies](#) to show him some AMD discharges and abandoned mine lands around the Anthracite Region and virtually introduced him to *Terry Ostrowski*, Earth Conservancy, and *Andy McAllister*, WPCAMR, who he was also interested in meeting up with over the Summer to talk about their services
- Provided *Curt Hopkins*, The Bicentennialist, KY with information on how to economically reclaim a former coal refuse site and directed him to partners and resources that EPCAMR is aware of in the State of KY
- EPCAMR provided comment on the Coal Energy Refuse and Reclamation Tax Credit to the Independent Fiscal Office on the benefits of the ARIPPA Co-Gen Plants and our partnership with them across PA
- Provided *Clint LeRoy*, [MARG Energy](#), with a link to WPCAMR's [Project Gob Pile](#); Participated in a conference call with *Clint* to discuss AMD treatment funding;

Luzerne/Lackawanna/Susquehanna County County Action Plan (CAP) with [LDG](#)

- Scheduled a Watershed Health Focus Group virtual stakeholders call for late August and provided availability to *Josh Glace*, LDG

ACPower Solar Power on Reclaimed AML Landowner Outreach

- Pagnotti Enterprises provided a map of community scale solar locations that might be worth to consideration to *Briana McDuff*, AC Power; Mike and the Executive Director reviewed all of the sites for consideration and made some notes for a follow up phone call with Pagnotti Enterprises on July 8th; Participated in a conference call with Pagnotti Enterprises and AC Power to review sites; Submitted an Invoice and Progress Summary Report to AC Power for services and work completed under Task 1A & 1B

Datashed 4 with Stream Restoration Inc.

- EPCAMR was informed that SRI was awarded another Growing Greener grant that we supported and were included in it for monitoring, data entry, technical support, data verification, and technical assistance with workshops in the amount of **\$6250**

Education & Outreach

- Followed back up with *Dustin Tingley* and *Alison Hu*, Harvard University to see if they had a chance to talk with ARIPPA and WPCAMR on the topic of energy production from the waste culm Co-Gen plants as a part of their [Roosevelt Project](#)
- Participated in the weekly PA AML Campaign conference calls with partners to hear updates and give updates on legislation and the Infrastructure bill's recent passage in the Senate; Reviewed a second round of logo ideas for the PA AML Campaign and made additional suggestions; Sent the PA AML Campaign a link from Downstream Strategies on their recent [Executive Summary](#) of a report on AML in the years to come
- Participated on a Zoom call with *Jocelyn Pickens*, Senator Casey's Legislative Aide, on Environmental Issues, to discuss the importance of including Northeastern PA in the discussions about where the EDA Federal funds might be prioritized for abandoned mine land reclamation and AMD remediation efforts, as opposed to just southwestern PA; The call was hosted by the PA Interfaith Power & Light; Environmental Justice, SMCRA Reauthorization, RECLAIM Act, Justice 40 Initiative, Infrastructure bill, Civilian Conservation Corps, climate change and climate mitigation topics were also discussed
- Forwarded around to the PA AML Campaign and National RECLAIM Working Group, new guidance information from the White House on the Justice40 Initiative *Allison Acevedo* from the PA DEP Office of Environmental Justice; It's outlined in Executive Order 14008 that required development of guidance to ensure Federal investments are made with a goal of 40% of overall benefits flowing to disadvantaged communities; The [Interim Implementation Guidance](#) for the Justice40 Initiative includes an interim definition of disadvantaged communities and outlines examples of federal programs subject to the Justice40 Initiative; AML, communities that have gone through energy transitions, orphaned wells, and AMLER are all mentioned.
- Connected up *Natalia Rudiak*, [Relmagine Appalachia](#)- Local Government Outreach Coordinator, with *Mayor George Brown*, Wilkes-Barre, to see if they would be interested in signing on to the Relmagine Appalachia [Climate Infrastructure Plan Endorsement Sign On Letter for Mayors](#)
- Talked with *Ed Wytovich*, CCRA about nominating the Catawissa Creek for the River of the Year; EPCAMR would surely support the nomination
- Coordinated with *John Zaktansky*, Middle Susquehanna RiverKeeper, about being a guest speaker at their Board Retreat in September 2021 in Laporte, PA to discuss EPCAMR's work in the region and to form a stronger collaboration with the Middle Susquehanna RiverKeeper; Interviewed by John for a blog entitled, "[The many faces of AMD: Abandoned Mine Drainage scars thousands of miles of waterways through region](#)"

- Provided *Aimee Erickson*, Citizens Coal Council, with contact information for *Allison Acevedo*, PA DEP Environmental Justice Office
- DEP is in the process of adopting and implementing its Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) program which is focused on reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality and public health, and advancing climate resiliency throughout the State; To help inform the program's prospective policies, investment plan, and ongoing engagement strategies, PA DEP has engaged [Delta Institute](#) to connect with stakeholders to share information on the planned program, gather input on its anticipated benefits and impacts and hear regional priorities around how the program's revenues should be invested; EPCAMR Executive Director was interviewed by *Jack Eskin*, Senior Specialist of Programs at Delta Institute, to provide EPCAMR's thoughts on RGGI and its programmatic investments and our interest and capacity to co-host virtual discussions to further engage stakeholders in our region
- Provided *Dr. Andrea Nerozzi*, Wyoming Seminary, with two former graduates contact information since they were interns for EPCAMR that she would like to invite to the 25th Anniversary Science Research Group for the school
- *Erik Ortiz*, Writer for [NBC News](#) called EPCAMR to inquire as to whether our organization or other environmental groups had ever discussed the idea that companies/people should be held criminally responsible for the pollution and if there were ecocide-type laws in effect, what kind of impact that could have in cleaning up these waterways; Explained to him the SMCRA Law and why abandoned mine lands and AMD sites don't fall in to this category and what we're doing to reduce liability concerns so that we could treat more water and reclaim more acreage of land
- State Senator *John Yudichak* introduced [S.R. 154](#) to support the Reauthorization of the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund
- Hedin Environmental asked EPCAMR to see if we could post a job for an engineer (P.E. or E.I.T) to work on system design (AutoCAD), permitting, and to assist with field work; Posted the job description on the PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation Community Group page on social media
- EPCAMR Staff conducted an AMD Tie Dye Workshop and Educational Program for the Wilkes-Barre Area Summer Camp at Plains-Solomon Elementary School for around **150** students

Community Volunteer Coordination

- Informed *Melissa Wilkinson*, Scranton, who signed up to become an EPCAMR Cleanup volunteer that we would let her know of future events and suggested she reach out to the Lackawanna River Conservation Association for other local events and volunteer opportunities

- Followed up with *Jeff Suponcic*, Wilkes-Barre, about becoming an EPCAMR volunteer since he was interested in community cleanups
- *Gary Leander*, Friends of the Nescopeck, informed EPCAMR that the large illegal dumping trash pile that we cleaned up on Father's Day Weekend with the PWEA had been removed as well as the refrigerator that was pulled down from the SGL road along Tunnel Road; A smaller pile in the parking lot area off SR 437 remained that a follow up call will be made to the SGL for pickup
- Signed *Ian Hughes*, Wilkes-Barre, EPCAMR volunteer, and *Ryan Sherlinks*, Warrior Run, up to become an NAACC Lead Observer so that he can take the Aquatic Organism Passage online training

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

- EPCAMR received **\$1000** for the sponsorship of the 2021 PA AMR Conference from the *Dave Hess*, PA Environmental Digest; Participated in the PA AMR Conference Planning call; Considering the Maelstrom Oxidizer AMD Treatment system for a virtual tour presentation by Somerset Environmental Services; Reached out to Todd Wood-PA DEP BAMR to see if he had any Anthracite AMD sites or reclamation projects in mind that could be included in the virtual tour and he suggested the Gladden discharge and Hydrogen Peroxide Treatment Plant in western PA as well as the Porter or Donaldson Coal Refuse Pile Removal and Floodplain Restoration; *Anne* reached out to *Pat Webb*-PA DEP BAMR to see if they had a speaker to talk about development landowner agreements for projects; Reached out to *Omar Beckford*-OSMRE to see if someone would like to present on the updated AMDTreat Software; The entire Committee voted for this year's Mayfly Award Winner(s); *Anthony Piana*, introduced himself as our [WHOVA Inc.](#), Event Consultant in case we needed any assistance going forward with the mobile application and desktop environment
- Presented at the 2021 virtual Professional Recyclers of PA ([PROP](#)) Conference on "**Co-Gens, Coalitions, and Reclamation**"; Followed up with *Joanne Shafer*, Center County Solid Waste Department who had a question about the I-99 Corridor Acid Rock Drainage encapsulation project; Provided *Dan Snowden*, PA DEP with a link to our upcoming PA AMR Conference at his request so he can forward it to PROP attendees
- Scheduled a half-day AMD Tour for September 25th, with the Penn-State Master Watershed Stewardship Program for Luzerne/Lackawanna Counties and *Rich Troscianecki*-MWS Coordinator; Finalized the tour route
- EPCAMR Staff participated in a regional AMD/AML and Economic Development Tour with US DOI Secretary *Deb Haaland* and *Gina McCarthy* in the Western Middle and Southern Coalfields, hosted by the PA DEP Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (BAMR) and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation & Enforcement (OSMRE); EPCAMR had an opportunity to speak with her on the tour
- Participated in an EDA 101 and American Rescue Plan Overview webinar online to see what types of programs and projects are being geared towards coalfield communities

- Scheduled an AMD Tour in western PA for early August 2021, hosted by the OSMRE Pittsburgh Office and PA DEP BAMR, and Tetra-Tech, to visit the first as-built AMD Hydrogen Peroxide Treatment Plant on Miller's Run and the Gladden discharge in the Ohio River Watershed
- Promoted two webinars being hosted by Appalachian Voices on AML Reauthorization; The webinars featured the launch of their new video on the abandoned mine land fund, have a brief presentation with time to answer questions people may have about the current proposals that Congress is considering, and offer ways to take action; EPCAMR provided footage and information for the [video](#)
- Participated in a webinar hosted by Appalachian Voices that served as an organizing and information session of national community groups working in coal communities; The current Administration's [Coal Communities Working Group](#) are tasked with receiving public comments through Town Halls and other methods and shaping government policy to help communities recover economically from the decline of the coal industry
- Presented to the [Wildlife Leadership Academy's](#) Brookie Field School on EPCAMR's work in PA and submitted a number of resources to the students who participated virtually through Zoom
- Provided a suggested topic to the 2022 Keystone Coldwater Conference Committee from PA Trout Unlimited related to AMD treatment and economic development to improve fisheries and the need for additional support from our PA Chapters
- Received a copy of a presentation by *Ben Lorson*, PA Fish & Boat Commission on economic value of various fishery types, including AMD impacted waters, that have been recently adjusted for inflation; The presentation was made before the State Water Plan Water Resources Committee

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA, Invest Accounts; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for July 2021 with Highmark; Paid Verizon and Internet monthly bills; Paid EC the rent; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register; Provided *Denise* with the June and July 2021 Statement for reconciliations; Made deposits to FNB for incoming reimbursements and accounts receivables
- Completed the May and June 2021 Monthly Reports for both the 319 Program and for the Board Reporting and forwarded them to *Mike*; Completed the 319 Program Reimbursements with Mike for the last two quarters (Jan-March and April-June) and Final Progress Report to close out the FY18-20 grant (through June 30th, 2021)
- Worked with *Geoff Shaw*, Earth Conservancy who inquired about obtaining a new logo file for a new sign for the front of the building since both signs have deteriorated to the point of rusting and are becoming illegible to read; Provided *Liz Hughes* with the new logo file

- Worked with *Ann Devine* and *Trish Attardo*, PA DEP 319 Program to schedule a virtual tour presentation for the US EPA Region III's *Steve Hohman* and *Mike Hoffman*, on September 7th to highlight some of EPCAMR's work in the region
- Submitted a letter to Acting OSMRE Director, *Glenda Owens*, to see if she can assist with a resolution to the 2 CFR 200 language and interpretation of who is eligible and who is not to receive funding for future Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization (AMLER) funding; Legal interpretation over sub-contractors and sub-recipients at the State and Federal level have seemingly led to a reduced ability of non-profits to be able to apply for these types of grants in the later rounds of funding
- Received a **\$2000** Operational Budget grant from the PPL Corporation
- Convened a Zoom call with members of the EPCAMR Strategic Planning Committee to continue working on developing goals and objectives for the 5-year Plan; Followed up with *Dr. Ken Klemow* and *Dr. Andrea Nerozzi* to inquire if they needed any help with developing the Education & Science Committee outline component for the Strategic Plan
- Approved *Kyle Argenziano's* last remaining hours in Civic Core for the completion of his OSMRE AmeriCorps VISTA Conservation Legacy volunteer year of service with EPCAMR; Completed *Kyle's* final evaluation and provided it to *JM Aurednik*, Stewards Individual Placement Program Manager
- *Mike* sent along links to TechSoup BOOST discount packages for review and consideration after picking up [Tableau](#)