



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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July 2021 Progress Report

Highlights:

- EPCAMR staff scanned, georeferenced, mosaicked & digitized mine maps for the **PA DEP MSI MMG** program. QA/QC checked work.
- EPCAMR staff participated in a weekly **PA AML Campaign** call, a call with **AC Power & Pagnotti Enterprises**, a call with **Sen. Casey's Office** staff, an AML/AMD Tour of **Northumberland & Schuylkill Cos.** with **PA DEP BAMR** for **U.S. DOI Sec. & W. H. Climate Advisor**, attended **DARPA EMBERS** virtual conf. & visited "Seeing Coal" exhibit at **LCOP**.
- Sampled AMD Treatment System on **Nanticoke Cr.** for **EC**, & 3 on **Loyalsock Cr.** for **LCWA**. Held a training for and Evaluated 6 Black Duck Habitat sites in **S. Wyoming Valley**.
- Updated www.treatminewater.com and www.epcamr.org; administered the EPCAMR Facebook and G Suite for Nonprofit accounts; maintained GobbaDaPile in-house domain server and workstation.

Education, Outreach and Admin.:

- Took a day off, but took a trip to Philadelphia and visited the "Seeing Coal" exhibit at Library Company of Philadelphia (LCOP).
- EPCAMR management staff participated in weekly PA AML Campaign Calls in which we learned there was a lot of movement on Infrastructure Bill. Title VII of this bill included AML Reauthorization and provisions for \$11 billion treasury proposed to supplement the waning coal industry fees per ton of coal mined to the AML Trust Fund. Looked at draft language. Update mining bills rubric spreadsheet.
- Picked up 319 reimbursement paperwork from Denise, completed a reimbursement for January to March 2021 and sent to 319 program.
- Coordinated with Ann Devine, PA DEP Grants Center, for EPCAMR and WPCAMR to participate in a virtual watershed tour for Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 319 Non-point Source Pollution (NPS) staff in September.
- Prepared the EPCAMR Program Manager progress report for May 2021 and posted to the EPCAMR website.
- Conference call with AC Power and Pagnotti Enterprises to discuss sites they suggested for Solar on AML projects. Quickly looked up information on each of the six sites that Pagnotti suggested using information from RAMLIS. More research to be done with the Solar on AML GIS tool.
- EPCAMR staff participated in an AML/AMD Tour of Northumberland and Schuylkill Counties hosted by PA DEP BAMR for U.S. Department of Interior Secretary, Deb Halland and White House National Climate Advisor, Gina McCarthy. Visited several sites in the Shamokin Creek Watershed including the Anthracite Outdoor Adventure

Area (AOAA) on former AML, an active reclamation project near the Whaleback and a pavilion in downtown Shamokin to see the large orange stream that runs through the city. The last site was a stream floodplain restoration project near Donaldson to remove waste coal and fill pits. Several colleagues and project partners were in attendance. The tour was quickly pulled together to limit interaction and we were socially distanced, but had the ability to briefly speak to the secretary who thanked us for being involved in the cleanup as a non-profit.

- EPCAMR staff hosted a virtual strategic planning session to sort out remaining action plan goals. Pulled together these worksheets and added them to the 2020-2025 strategic plan which is almost final.
- Listened in on Senate Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) committee via YouTube as they discussed and decided to pass the Infrastructure Bill out of committee. Title VII was of special concern since this was related to AML Reauthorization. Unfortunately, the language passed only reauthorized the AML Fee collection for 7 years at a 40% reduction as suggested by Senator Barrasso of Wyoming, the minority leader on the committee.
- Called Fondriest Environmental about Nitrate probe that is acting up on our newly purchased YSI Pro Quatro meter. Found out that we need two solutions to calibrate with: 1 mg/l and 100 mg/l. The probe might be malfunctioning, but we have till November to decide to send it in while it is still under warranty.
- Provided comments to Gary Merritt, former ARIPPA President and chair of the Subcommittee for Legacy Issues for the State Water Plan. He asked specifically about the "Good Samaritan Group" in reference to nonprofit effort to passively treat AMD with 300+ systems statewide and the issues associated with funding AMD treatment. He wants to add this topic to the State Water Plan.
- Prepared the EPCAMR Program Manager progress report for June 2021 and posted to the EPCAMR website.
- There was a lot of action surrounding the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill. Tracked lots of proposed language amendments flying around to include AMD treatment for Title VII AML Provisions section from members of the PA AML Campaign to legislators. Also tracked negotiations to increase reauthorized the AML Fee collection for 13 years at a 20% reduction in fees as a compromise. Both are promising for coal communities.
- Finished shampooing carpets in the office. The ceiling leaked on to the carpets and there was still a moldy smell, so we decided to deep clean all the carpets in the office.
- Attended the Environmental Microbes as a BioEngineering Resource (EMBER) program Proposers Day for the potential proposer community in support of a planned Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) hosted by the Biological Technologies Office (BTO) of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). Unfortunately, none of this money can be spent on coal or coal byproducts. AMD from coal mines is not eligible, but AMD from hardrock mines would qualify.
- Worked on 319 Scope of Work deliverables spreadsheet and maps for the final report.
- Updated our www.epcamr.org website and added several annual reports to the project history pages.
- Completed and sent the April - June 2021 MSI MMG Reimbursement.
- Participated in a conference call with Joycelyn Pickens and others on the PA AML Campaign to discuss AMD language we would like to see in the Infrastructure Bill. She mentioned that it might be too late for amendments but could be added during budget reconciliation.
- Updated www.treatminewater.com and Whova Virtual Conference platform. Processed 20+ PA AMR Conference registrations to get people networking early on the app.

Technical Assistance:

- Looked into historic railroad corridors near in Hanover Township and Nanticoke for the Earth Conservancy. Unfortunately, the Luzerne County Rail Authority (LCRA) data did not show good railroad coverage for this area. Updated the active and abandoned railroad shapefiles from PASDA following apparent rail trails on aerial photography.
- Added Askam Treatment Sampling results to the EPCAMR sampling database and sent the updates to Earth Conservancy. [EC]
- Received two travel drives in the mail from PA DEP California District Mining office and uploaded the files to the network drives (X & M) at office. [MSI]
- Sampled Loyalsock Upstream, Downstream and in/out of 3 treatment systems (Connell B Vein, Connell C Vein and Gutten Drift). Recorded data in a database for reporting to the Sullivan Conservation District (SCD) and Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association. [LCWA]
- Received Datashed snapshot lab data from July 2020 and May 2021 from Stream Restoration Inc. (SRI). Added to our EPCAMR water sampling database and then to Datashed. Added Loyalsock Creek as a stream monitoring project and uploaded upstream and downstream data. Also added Connell B, Connell C, Lewis, Aylesworth, Lausanne Treatment System data to Datashed.
- Held a Black Duck habitat primer and field training for EPCAMR staff with John Levitsky, Luzerne Conservation District (LCD) Watershed Specialist, and staff from PA Fish and Boat Commission (PAF&BC) and Game Commission (PGC) that band Black Ducks and work to improve their habitat. [NFWF]
- Ordered Tableau and sent other Techsoup Boost offers to Robert for consideration. Hoping this program will be helpful in displaying water quality data in tables and graphs.
- Sent back the wrong reagents ordered from eBay and finally received a refund.
- Created a cheat sheet for sampling wetlands related to the Black Duck habitat. The recommendations are from the recent training to make sure we record the most important habitat notes. Planned out wetlands to evaluate in the Newport Creek Watershed for later in the week. [NFWF]
- EPCAMR staff conducted a Black Duck Habitat Assessment of sites near Red Lake in the Newport Creek Watershed. A set of 3 ponds were evaluated. We discovered from an adjacent landowner these were part of an old water treatment system when the mines were being pumped. Pond A was still discharging AMD from boreholes, but Pond B and C had better water quality but no discernable outflow. Though there was a greater macroinvertebrate diversity in the AMD impaired pond outflow. We may have to reevaluate how we are sampling ponds with no discernable outflow. We flushed out a duck, likely a mallard based on the flight wing markings. [NFWF]
- EPCAMR conducted a second, Black Duck Habitat Assessment of sites near Earth Conservancy's Compost Facility in the Newport Creek Watershed. Upon direction from EC staff, we hiked back along a rail trail to evaluate 2 ponds in the woods with no discernable outflow. They look to occasionally overflow over a trail. The pond near the road was evaluated which looked to discharge to a wetland across the road. Upon inspection this wetland was dry, however. Will need to look at mine pool elevations in the area to see if these are surface manifestations of the mine pool. We scouted out several more ponds north of this area to visit at a later time preferably with the ATV. [NFWF]
- Sampled Askam Boreholes, Treatment System, upstream and downstream on Nanticoke Creek and 2 flow sites in the Nanticoke Creek Watershed. Recorded data into sampling spreadsheet and delivered to Earth Conservancy. [EC]

[] - Denotes funding source where applicable.