



## Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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### June 2019 Progress Report

#### **Project Coordination**

##### ***Upper Toby Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan Project***

- Tom Mayka, DAMA sent EPCAMR and Laura Perry, EPCAMR Watershed Outreach Intern, the GPS location files of all the culverts and crossings that we had assessed in the watershed and up at the Irem Temple Golf Course where the headwaters of Upper Toby Creek are located; Began mapping with the inclusion of the photos taken from our June Field Investigations on Google Earth and converting them into a KMZ file for future use; Set up an account for Tom and Tim Elston, Penn-State Wilkes-Barre Intern, from DAMA to become Lead Observers through the NAACC following their completion of the AOP Certification online

##### ***Huntsville Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan Project***

- Laura Perry, Watershed Outreach Intern began mapping with the pictures on Google Earth and converting them into a KMZ file for future use that were provided by Sean Banul, previous EPCAMR Winter Watershed Outreach Intern

##### ***Solomon Creek Dam Removal and Trout Habitat Improvement Project***

- Installed the interpretive signage for the project near the entrance to the park alongside two of the other dedication markers adjacent to the location of the former dam up along the hill; EPCAMR Volunteer Julie Adonizio, Temple University student spent a few hours cleaning up the streamside area and assisted with bringing rounded cobble and stones up to the location of where the interpretative kiosk was installed for the base to prevent weeds from growing up around the sign

##### ***PA American Water-Keep Our Communities Flowing Grant***

- EPCAMR was informed that we were 1/23 organizations to receive a **\$20,000** grant from the PA American Water Charitable Foundation to coordinate watershed cleanups and small riparian restoration projects within the PA American Water/EPCAMR Service Area over the next year through December 2020; Signed the grant agreement and sent it back to Carrie Williams, President of the PA American Water Charitable Foundation

##### ***Harry E. Breaker Swoyersville Bank Reclamation PA AML Pilot Project***

- Submitted revised EPCAMR Invoice 3 & Keystone's 4<sup>th</sup> Invoice and related documentation to Gerard Schmidt, PA DEP BAMR for review and approval for submission for reimbursement; Informed Keystone Reclamation of the submission; Worked with Denise to create our EPCAMR Swoyersville 4 Invoice and submitted it with Keystone's 5<sup>TH</sup> Invoice; Mailed Invoice 2 Check to Keystone

Reclamation; Completed the License Operator Renewal document paperwork for the PA DEP Bureau of Mining for EPCAMR and mailed the documentation; Received a copy of the PA DEP Pottsville DMO's June Inspection Report from Joe McCarthy to forward down to Gerard and keep with our files; Requested a copy of the April Inspection Report from Joe and he had mentioned that he will get it for EPCAMR; The formatting of the report has gone through some iterations since February and their reporting system was having some technical issues with formatting of the document and access

### ***Rare Earth Elements PA AML Pilot Project Proposal with Tetra-Tech (proposed)***

- Met with Tom Gray and Mike Korb, Tetra Tech, to review an agenda and outline for proposing a future PA AML Pilot Project dealing with REE in PA; Reviewed the proposed REE sampling sites that were prioritized for PA provided to EPCAMR by WPCAMR

### ***Keep PA Beautiful Camera Surveillance Loan Program***

- Travelled to Centralia to pull the SD cards and change the rechargeable batteries from the 3 surveillance cameras set up by EPCAMR and Rob Dubas- KPB to see if there has been any illegal dumping activities going on around the Borough; Reported back to Rob on information and footage that was gathered and completed a Summary Progress Report and submission for his review; Sent along image files through his Dropbox Folder

### ***Growboxx Food by Youth, Reclaiming Our Backyards in the Coalfields Project***

- Submitted our 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter & 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019 Request for Reimbursement and a Quarterly Report through March 31<sup>st</sup> to ISI; Had a conference call with Claudia to update her on the project, discuss the Appalachian MIF grant that Loren Cole had written, and to discuss continuing the project through the end of 2020 with additional funding and future budget and work plan development; Sent a draft plan to Claudia, Pam, and Laura for their review and comment and updated their deliverables draft document plan that Loren had created; Worked with Laura to create the Growboxx Distribution Letter for the parents and Mr. Grant to be distributed before the end of the school year for when the parents pick up their plants and Growboxxes; Conducted 2 lesson plans with the 4<sup>th</sup> grade class at Greater Nanticoke Area a few days before school was out in mid-June to introduce the Growboxx Project to them along with conducting a few lesson plans from the curriculum that EPCAMR has developed; Trip to Best Buy to pick up iPad Supplies and IT materials for the schools as a part of the program; Followed up with Mr. Grant to see if we could pick up any remaining Growboxxes that were not picked up on the last day of school so that we can distribute them over the Summer

## **Technical Assistance**

- Participated in a National RECLAIM Working Group Conference call and offered technical GIS assistance to other community groups in need of AMLIS Inventory Maps by Congressional District or municipal/watershed boundaries; Sent out a detailed e-mail request to those groups who might be in need of assistance with developing GIS AMLIS Inventory Maps throughout Appalachia to the National RECLAIM Working Group Listserve; Provided Dana Kuhnline with links to information on similar PA AML Pilot Projects in PA that would mirror what the successes of the RECLAIM Act would do on a National level for a Fact Sheet that is being produced for the upcoming Fly-In to Washington DC; Provided her with this [link](#)
- Picked up donated coolers for AMD water sampling from Chuck Cravotta, USGS along Big Mine Run, as he was sampling the Bast AMD discharge and Big Mine Run

### **QHUP for the Old Forge Borehole and Lower Lackawanna River**

- Discussed with Bernie and Tom Clark-SRBC about beginning to flush out a work plan for the development of a QHUP for the Old Forge Borehole and the Lower Lackawanna River in partnership with a few other regional entities; The Institute at Wilkes University will produce the economic reports based on our inputs about the plant capitalization and projected additional development such as the initial SMS scenarios of aquaculture, vertical agriculture and metals recovery; The potential for the pumped hydro project and other potential add-ons will also be part of those calculations that The Institute will do; Reilly Associates is developing plans and budgets for capture and conveyance structures to get both flows to the plant; They are anticipating that pumping will be needed to get Duryea uphill into the plant while Old Forge should be a gravity flow; Tetra-Tech is developing the plant design and capitalization needs; Our tasks will be to conduct the assessments of all that and add in the water quality and habitat improvements that we expect to be attained
- Jim Wetzel, Weatherly Borough, did some on-line digging around for information on the proposal to create a pumped storage facility in Banks Township, Carbon County, near the Quakake Tunnel; His main concern is that Weatherly, DEP-BAMR, Wildlands Conservancy and USGS have submitted a Restoration Plan for the Hazle, Quakake, Black Creek watershed that includes active treatment of the Quakake Tunnel discharge; EPCAMR asked Jim if he knew if they had completed a mine pool analysis of the entire area and he was going to seek some follow up questions and answers and keep us in the loop; Grid Balance Hydropower wants to use the AMD from the Quakake Tunnel — which has an output of 14 million gallons of AMD per day — to turn the turbines to produce electricity.
- Discussed with Eric Naguski-Dauphin Co. CD District Manager options for proceeding forward with the Bear Creek AMD discharges in partnership with the District, WCRA, SRBC, Kerry Teter (the willing landowner), and Doc Fritchey Chapter TU; A Design application is being developed by SRBC, DCCD, and EPCAMR for the PA DEP 319 grant due in August

### **Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority MS4 Efforts**

- Provided Peter Marx, Choose Clean Water Coalition with a copy of some proposed project ideas that EPCAMR has provided to the WVSA for consideration under their MS4 PRP for his appointments with Senator Casey's and Congressman Cartwright and Meuser's Office in DC
- Reviewed the flyer created by Donna Gillis-WVSA Public Relations & Regulatory Liaison, announcing the signup for future volunteers for cleanups in the Wyoming Valley and suggested that our partner logos be included and made some minor corrections to the names of the organizations that she was listing on the flyer before it was published and used at RiverFest in Wilkes-Barre
- Followed up with Karl Kerr, USACE to see if we can schedule a meeting in late June, or mid-July to further discuss some of the other Federal Program possibilities and future partnerships with EPCAMR, if they are warranted
- Attended a meeting at the WVSA to review potential cleanup sites and future project area locations proposed by EPCAMR for sediment removal and or watershed restoration projects and BMPs related to their MS4 PRP that they are anticipating from the PA DEP; PEC NE Office, PSU MWS, W-B Riverfront Parks Committee and WVSA representatives were in attendance
- WVSA has not had a response back from the document sent by EPCAMR with questions and concerns about defining some of the expectations in the MS4 Permit as well as the monitoring plan and protocols that need to be followed

### **ARIPPA Mini-Grant(s)**

- Followed up with Roseann Weinrich, Mahanoy Creek Watershed Association about a berm breach along the Keeley Run tributary to the Shenandoah Creek; Followed up with Dan Koury, PA DEP Pottsville District Mining Office about the potential restoration project to get more information and planned a field investigation with EPCAMR Intern Lauren Perry; Provided her with pictures of the site and what we had determined may have happened; It looks to me that the breach occurred through the bank that had been severely eroded over time. We don't know how long, but the banks were undercut and the roots were exposed We didn't see any large vehicle or machinery tracks anyway near the area; There were lots of rock bridges probably done by youth or visitors to the Shen-Pen. The diverted channel we saw and walked down all the way to the pit sure looks like it has been there for awhile. As to how long the stream diversion, due to Mother Nature more than likely, and heavy storm events over time, caused the aggradation of the sediments and the spreading out of Keehley Run, has been flowing into the pit, is unknown; We have not been up to where the former reservoirs are located, but it is possible that they can be replanted with a riparian restoration project with the funds that we have available in partnership with the MCWA; The funds can go for the plants or we may be able to secure them through the *Chesapeake Bay Foundation's 10,000 Trees initiative*. We can also plant a newly constructed earthen berm, should that be the solution to getting the tributary to Shenandoah Creek back in to its original channel; EPCAMR conducted a field investigation in W. Mahanoy Township outside of Shenandoah yesterday below the former Keehley Run Reservoirs that were drained years ago from what was seen in 2007 aerial imagery. Keehley Run becomes Shenandoah Creek before flowing into the Mahanoy Creek. It looks like many years of past storm events and increased velocities of the tributary has taken its toll on the diversion bank that had prevented the tributary from flowing into the famous Shen-Pen water-filled stripping out. Gravel bars and years of aggradation of sediment, cobbles, rocks, shales, and gravels have caused the channel to become very unstable and braided. Upon closer inspection of where a breach has occurred shows that stream has severely undercut the bank over time as can be seen from the root exposure of the trees along the right embankment in one of the photos. A follow up trip will be made to conduct some water testing in the stream to determine its chemistry and a quick macro kick for aquatics and to follow the stream down the original channel to see its original path to Shenandoah Creek and then on to Mahanoy Creek. The flow now meanders down along the contour of the land at the toe of the bottom rock of the massive high wall along the north side of the pit. It sure is a beautiful area down there as there were hundreds of Canada geese were wading as we came upon the confluence of the stream into the northern corner of the pit.

### **Education & Outreach**

- Participated in an AML Reauthorization Conference call with the PA AML Campaign; SMCRA Reauthorization support letters are beginning to trickle in to WPCAMR from Blacklick Creek Watershed Association and the SRBC; Dan Frankel proposed a Resolution ([HCO2262](#)) to reauthorize the Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Trust Fund and Senator Yudichak supported and passed a similar resolution ([SCO1010](#)); EPCAMR reviewed the resolution and it mirrors our PA AML Campaign talking points and we informed Carly Simpson out of Senator Yudichak's Office that EPCAMR was in full support of the resolution; Continued discussions with the PA AML Campaign on how to come to consensus on Reauthorization before the August recess and a strategy for moving forward
- Thanked Congressman Doyle for supporting and co-sponsoring the RECLAIM Act; Sent a Thank You to Claire Borzner, his Legislative Assistant

- Reached out to Chandler Mason, Legislative Assistant to Congressman Evans to provide him with information and documentation on the relationship to AMD and mining impacted regions to the north of his District in the Upper Schuylkill Watershed
- Thanked Congressman Kelly for supporting and co-sponsoring the RECLAIM Act; Sent a Thank You and some additional information on SMCRA Reauthorization down to Parker Bennett, his Legislative Assistant
- Conducted a conference call with Ezra Thrush, Director of Policy- PennFuture on SB 618 & HB1481; Provided him with a copy of EPCAMR's Letter of Support; Sent the Letter of Support to Congressman Dan Meuser's Legislative Director-Patrick Rooney, Congressman Matt Cartwright's Staff, Senator John Yudichak's Legislative Assistant-Mark Grochocki and ARIPPA
- Reviewed the IMCC/NAAMLPP response document to the NMA Letter in opposition to RECLAIM and the AML Program
- Updated the list of RECLAIM co-sponsors to our PA AML RECLAIM Listserve database with contact information on Keller's District since there was recently a special election to fill that seat; Authored a RECLAIM Act Letter to the Editor to several regional newspapers in the area in the hopes of it being published; It was picked up by the Citizens Voice and the [PA Environmental Digest](#); Forwarded the LTE to Congressman Cartwright's Office and our National RECLAIM Working Group and PA RECLAIM Listserve; Participated in a Conference call to follow up with details and a debriefing on the responses we received from Staffers in DC on the RECLAIM Fly-In
- Participated in a telepresser conference with Congressman Cartwright and Representative Angie Hatton-KY, Roger and Tina Carver from Colorado (Western Colorado Alliance), and several media stations as well as National news outlets in Washington DC during the Fly-In to discuss the RECLAIM Act, SMCRA Reauthorization, funding opportunities for AMD Treatment Trust Funds, and the Coal Refuse Energy Tax Credit with some of our PA representatives; Invited some of our regional media outlets to join on the conference call including the [Citizens Voice's](#) Bill Wellock; Met with 12 PA Legislative Staffers in Congressional and Senatorial Offices through scheduled appointments to talk about RECLAIM and SMCRA Reauthorization; Submitted a request for reimbursement of expenses to Appalachian Voices upon our return trip from Washington DC that were covered under a grant
- Dr. Cathy Donnelly, Mass Communications Professor at King's College heard back from Entercom, who said they would run the PSAs through August on all four of their stations (Froggy, KRZ, WILK and Max 102.3); The PSAs were created by her students following an EPCAMR presentation to their class in the Spring semester; 30 and 60 second clips about EPCAMR will be aired
- Planned for the Trout in the Classroom Release on Solomon Creek with the Staff and requested that the Ashley Borough Park gate be open on the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> of June to prep for the release and some educational activities that will take place with the Living Youth Ministry Group from Wilkes-Barre; Mailed our EPCAMR check in for Staff's TIC T-shirts to PA Trout



- Amanda Schraeder-Science Teacher at Greater Nanticoke Area SD is interested in participating in the Trout in the Classroom Program and wants to come by and visit EPCAMR's tank and setup over the Summer to see how to set it up; She reached out to the Stanley Cooper Chapter TU President, Scott Brady, who referred her to EPCAMR and will also help them get set up financially when they are ready; Followed up with Amanda to schedule an appointment over the Summer months to visit EPCAMR
- Requested that Senator Casey co-sponsor HR 9, The Climate Action Now Act, through Adam Tarr, his Legislative Assistant and was informed that he had become a co-sponsor several days later in the month
- Found a great [article](#) on Earth Conservancy's efforts to reclaim abandoned mine lands
- Followed up with Jette Findsen, Congressman Cartwright's Office to answer some questions about EPCAMR's knowledge of the ARIPPA Plants, coal refuse, and the Coal Refuse Energy Tax credit proposal
- Jeff Skalberg, Community Impact Team member at Spreetail, a backyard, home, and garage online shopping experience located in Omaha, Nebraska reached out to EPCAMR and wanted us to become involved with their Foundation, and support us through the Impact Program - a national program that gives 5% of each sale when a customer selects EPCAMR; They are finalizing their first 250 organizations for the launch; EPCAMR signed up the same day

[Spreetail Impact Program Flyer.pdf](#)  
[Spreetail Impact Program FAQ.pdf](#)

## **Community Volunteer Coordination**

- Pete Oswald, EPCAMR Centralia Cleanup volunteer informed us that he recently passed through town and noticed how very little trash is remaining throughout the Borough thanks to our efforts over the last 5 years
- Randy Russo signed up to become a future EPCAMR volunteer through our website; Followed up
- Worked with Conal Herron to identify and pull out the fishing poles from our Loaner Tackle Program that needed to be rethreaded with fishing line for use by future volunteers
- Worked with Jason Zubris, EPCAMR volunteer seeking some hours for an internship over the Summer while he's a local student in the Environmental Resource Management Program, from University Park, Penn-State; Worked with him to investigate several potential cleanup sites with the WVSA in Scouten Lee Park in Wilkes-Barre and Brown Creek in Plymouth; Had him work up a write up on his background for a future media post on EPCAMR; Signed him up to take the AOP Culvert Assessment Certification through NAACC
- Tom Smulowitz, YMCA Camp Kresge Teen Youth Camp Coordinator contacted EPCAMR about seeing if his small group of teens could perform any community service with EPCAMR over the Summer; Followed up with him and told him that we would let him know as opportunities became available

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

- Conference Registrations have begun to come in more frequently to the EPCAMR Online Store for the NAAMLPA/PA AMR/NASLR Conference in September; Tom Grote has found some entertainment for the Riverboat Cruise and the Mayfly Awards presentation; Conference call with Gene Trio to review Exhibit Sponsors gathered by the PA AMR Conference Committee to date and to discuss Exhibit tables; Approved several scholarship requests through e-mail with members of the PA AMR Conference Committee
- One of the participants of the AMD Golden Tour sent EPCAMR some photographs that they took for us to use at our discretion while we were at the various sites along the tour in the Wyoming Valley
- Attended the annual ARIPPA Tech Symposium and ARIPPA Awards Luncheon; Set up our EPCAMR Display and Exhibit; Guest speaker after lunch with Anne Daymut, WPCAMR, followed by a guest speaker Senator John Yudichak who spoke in support of the Co-Gen Industry and the PA Coal Refuse Energy Tax Credit bill
- Invited to be a Guest Panel Speaker on Sept 7th, at 3pm for about 15-20 minutes regarding the preservation work that EPCAMR had done at the Avondale Mine Disaster site in Plymouth Twp. over the years; This would include our work at the actual site, our work with the Wilkes-Barre Area Vo-Tech students up on Avondale Hill, the Avondale Ballad Mural and names printed in press metal on the abandoned bridge abutment that was once connected to the mule stable and our work in helping to organize the first few anniversary commemorations; It will be the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; The panel will be held at the Anthracite Heritage Museum and will be titled, "*Remembering and Preserving the Memory of the Avondale Disaster.*"
- Coordinated with the EPCAMR Staff to put on an EPCAMR AMD Training and Volunteer Opportunities Workshop for the Penn-State Master Watershed Stewardship Program while Mike and the Executive Director attended the RECLAIM Fly-In in Washington DC

## **EPCAMR Program Administration**

- Forwarded the May 2019 EPCAMR Board Report to the Executive Committee; Met with Joe Simons at Wegmans and had him sign some paperwork as he transitions into the Presidency of EPCAMR in August
- Resent PA Career Link/EDSI Conal Herron's request for reimbursement under the SLIP Grant to Anthony Melf with an additional document showing the Workman's Compensation coverage formula; Provided Conal with a SLIP Orientation PowerPoint for his review; Completed Conal's evaluation of the internship for the SLIP Program at the end of June
- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA, Invest Accounts; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for June 2019 with Highmark; Completed the Highmark Small Group form and mailed it; Paid Verizon and Internet monthly bills; Paid EC the rent; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register; Made a deposit to FNB for incoming reimbursements and accounts receivable
- Entered the EPCAMR bi-weekly payroll into ADP online to release it

- Met with EPCAMR Treasurer Cheryl Brobst, to sign some checks related to the NAAMLPL Conference and the Swoyersville PA AML Pilot project; She picked up Jerry Ziedler's slide collection that has now been completely digitized by the EPCAMR Staff and was provided to her to give to his family and for EPCAMR to use as stock imagery when needed for our work
- Applied for a Network for Good Marketing mini-grant online for **\$1000**
- Forwarded a copy of the PA Anthracite Council June 2019 Reports around to the EPCAMR Staff
- Provided BENCO Dental partner, Frank Dombroksi, and EPCAMR Volunteer with our EIN Number for him to have BENCO provide a matching funds donation for his personal donation to EPCAMR
- Worked with Basil Lynch, K & K, LLP on obtaining a letter to provide to the PA DCED for our EITC submission related to the 2017 990 and their Accountant's Financial Review or Compilation Report
- EPCAMR's previously submitted online grant to the Environmental Defense Fund's 2019 Summer of Action Act on Climate grant was not able to be funded this round
- Transferred the remaining balance from the PA Invest Hicks Creek NSCD Account into the EPCAMR Checking Account
- Reached out to Donna Wagner, PA DEP 319 Program to see if she had any guidance on EPCAMR's plan to move forward with submitting an updated work plan to the latest grant round
- This study examines state- and county-level data for the 13 Appalachian states from [The Appalachian Region: A Data Overview from the 2013-2017 American Community Survey](#) the and from U.S. Census Bureau population estimates on topics including population, age, race and ethnicity, housing occupancy and tenure, education, labor force, employment and unemployment, income and poverty, health insurance coverage, disability status, migration patterns, and veteran status. Data are provided on types of housing units, homeownership, types of living arrangements, travel time to work and location of work, and income-to-poverty ratio, information on computer device ownership, internet access, and household vehicle availability. May 2019 by Kelvin Pollard and Linda A. Jacobsen (Population Reference Bureau)