

Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation



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June 2024 Progress Report EPCAMR Conservation District Mining East Project

Project Coordination

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

- Completed Contract Operator License Renewal paperwork and obtained signatures from the EPCAMR Executive Officers and submitted to PA DEP BMR along with our current Certificate of Liability Insurance from POWR

BeaverBrook East AML Reclamation Project

- Worked on BeaverBrook East grant documentation to submit to PA DEP BAMR; Submitted the Task and Deliverables Worksheet to Riyad Barkawi-PA DEP BAMR

Capacity Building for Repurposing Energy Assets at the Frackville Morea AML Complex for Floating Solar and Geothermal Potential (proposed)

- Followed up with Penn-State Professors to inform them that our proposed project was under review; Provided the Professors with a [link](#) to the Solar Assessment Report on Previously Mined Lands that will be helpful for inclusion in this project study

NFWF Southern Wyoming Valley Small Watersheds Assessment Plan

- Provided *Mike* with the files from the Stream Continuity database on all of the culverts we've done so far in all the watersheds in the Southern Wyoming Valley; Informed him that he could filter by the watersheds that we are working on; One is a .shp file and .dbf file along with it and the other is an Excel file that is zipped as well that is detailed; The only thing that didn't come down is the pictures; Mike brought them into GIS and color-coded them based on the "Eval" attribute; Knowing that trout are migratory fish, he thinks they are going to work nicely to show that most of the road crossings are insignificant barriers, but there are some minor to severe barriers; The spreadsheet will be used to describe the barrier briefly in the report and then in the Appendix for more detail; Steve went into the field to collect data from a number of HOBO temperature sensors around the watersheds that we will include in the final report; Mike provided *John Levitsky*-Luzerne Conservation District, and the Executive Director a draft of the data section of the NFWF Report for review and comment

Loyalsock Creek AMD Sampling and Tour for Sullivan County Conservation District

- Sampled several AMD treatment systems and upstream and downstream locations within the Loyalsock Creek watershed with *Jolie Coates*, Watershed Specialist for the Sullivan County Conservation District and provide an AMD Treatment System overview to newly hired Sarah F.

EPCAMR/WPCAMR/SRI Survey of Community Watershed Organizations on AMD/AML

- Interviewed *Bernie McGurl* and *Tara Jones* from the Lackawanna River Conservation Association; Interview with *Bill Reichert* from the Schuylkill Headwaters Association; Check-in conference call with WPCAMR and SRI; Reached out to Erica Tomlinson, Tioga County Conservation District to obtain some contact information for Charlie & Joyce Andrews; Interviewed *Bill Beacom* from Babb Creek Watershed Association, *Heather Makal* from Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance and *Charlie & Joyce Andrews* from Tioga County Concerned Citizens Committee; Reviewed *Frank's* survey report and analysis; *Cliff Denholm*-SRI asked POWR/PEC for a brief extension on some of the reporting that was eventually approved since there were numerous interviews and data collected that needed to be reviewed and summarized

PA American Water Charitable Foundation Community Cleanups

- Coordinated the Preston Tire Pile Cleanup with the Luzerne Conservation District and The Tire Guys and removed over **200** tires from an illegally dumped pile from over a year ago that the Luzerne Conservation District was able to secure permission from the Luzerne County Redevelopment Authority to remove with funds from the PA DEP West Nile Virus Program

Little Shickshinny Creek/Paddy Run/Rocky Run Assessment-PA American Water Charitable Foundation

- Completed the Special Use Permit Application to PGC for Rocky Run/Paddy Run UNT Assessment on SGL 260 & 55 and electronically submitted it to the PA Game Commission NE Office for approval; Suggestion was made to send a hard copy to the Office in Dallas, PA

Technical Assistance

- Attended the Energy WG Webinar/Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations
- Worked with *John Clune*-USGS and Mike to come up with a mine pool graphic that he'd like to use in one of his reports
- Attended a Pine Knot/Oak Hill Boreholes/Replier Zoom Meeting to further discuss the proposed project by the Schuylkill Conservation District to map the mine pools of the three AMD discharges in the Upper Schuylkill Headwaters
- Created file folder for Kleinfelder-Commissioner's Lake AML & Mine Pool Study Project (proposed)
- *Steve Motyka*, Vice President-Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance informed EPCAMR that the PA DEP is changing its stormwater management guidance related to infiltration basins on mine lands because the SCRA raised the question and utilized research and information provided by EPCAMR on ensuring that consideration is taking when water is choosing to be infiltrated as opposed to released in previously mining-impacted areas that could lead to additional water migration into the underground mine pools encouraging the formation of additional AMD; Met with SCRA Executive Board and attended one of their monthly meetings at the AOAA

Education & Outreach

- Participated in 3 weekly PA AML Campaign calls
- EPCAMR Exhibited at the Western Pocono Chapter of Trout Unlimited's Annual Trout Festival at the White Haven Library along the Upper Lehigh River
- Attended the Clean Energy Campuses on Commonwealth-Owned Abandoned Mine Lands Webinar; EPCAMR provided *Tiffany Mayville* from OECD, a link to the recently published Assessment Report on Solar Development on Previously Mined Lands by the PA DEP, EPCAMR, and LaBella Associates since she wasn't aware of it, and she appreciated receiving it
- Ordered a black falcon drone for educational purposes with students at future STEM Camps or watershed education experiences and tours in the EPCAMR Region
- Participated in a call with *April Trent Badtke* about hosting and applying for an OSMRE Fellows/VISTA
- Provided an interview with *Kiley Bense*, a reporter at [Inside Climate News](#) who covers Pennsylvania, who was working on a story about abandoned mine reclamation in PA and the recent influx of federal funding for this work; She was hoping to understand more about this issue and how this money will affect the situation on the ground; EPCAMR provided her with our perspective and pulse of what's happening across PA
- Follow up call with *Gordon Tomb*, Community Foundation to provide additional contacts for ARIPPA and Swoyersville community contacts in Luzerne County to discuss the positive benefits of the Co-Gen Plants on reclamation of our abandoned mine lands across PA
- Reviewed [GAO Report](#) on OSMRE AMLER Program Recommendations; The report was very critical of the internal OSMRE handling of guidance interpretation, timelines, delays in projects getting started and missing construction windows and private funding and alternative forms of capital for projects, vetting, lack of definition on adjacency and Category A & B Projects under AMLER, lack of roles and responsibilities between headquarters and regional offices; EPCAMR was surprised that it didn't highlight the hurdles with reimbursements and the non-profit's/sub recipient's dilemma with trying to secure funding up front for the projects; It was heavily focused on what OSMRE needs to do better internally, but didn't go into great detail on the issues many of organizations in the watershed community are experiencing
- Participated on the Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB) Planning Meeting Teams call
- Attended the EPA Grants Training for EPA Pass-Through Grant Applicants, Recipients, and Subrecipients Webinar
- Interview with *Sarah Clark* from the Institute for Conservation Leadership to provide feedback to POWR and PEC on potential services they could provide to other regional non-profits and community organizations in the region as well as to municipalities and Conservation Districts
- Read an article sent to EPCAMR from Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance on a revised PA DEP Plan to douse the Conyngham Mine Fire near Wilburton, in Conyngham Township, Columbia County, following new input from local residents over concerns

- Discussed with *Owen Harrington*, a PhD candidate, in the Geography Department at Penn-State, where his advisor is Dr. Jenn Baka, a colleague of EPCAMR's; He's interested in attending the PA AMR Conference and a follow up interview on his dissertation research that is primarily focused on studying the ongoing efforts to establish a critical minerals economy in Pennsylvania with AMD and coal wastes as the primary feedstocks
- U.S. Sen. *Bob Casey* announced that PA will receive **\$28.67** million from the Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization (AMLER) Program in an article in [The Times-Leader](#)
- Provided *Carlos Jarquin*, MA with an order of iron oxide pigment that he is going to be analyzing for other market uses and a startup that he is working on
- EPCAMR signed up for the *Friends Helping Friends Fundraiser* in October at [Boscov's](#); Picked up 100 shopping passes from the 4th Floor of Boscov's that can be sold for \$5 to get 25% off on one day in October 2024
- Completed a survey for *Helene F. Nguemgaing*, Ph.D., student, Resource Management Instructor, from West Virginia University Division of Resource Economics and Management, to add to the research that is ongoing throughout Appalachia on the experience of AMD treatment and rare earth element recovery in PA; The feedback will directly contribute to improving all of our understanding of AMD treatment and may even help to shape the future of rare earth element recovery in PA; Requested that she submit a presentation abstract to speak at the 26th PA AMR Conference in October if her survey results will be compiled by then and provided her with the link to the abstract submission form
- Provided requested information to *Robert Ashbrook*, from the Ashbrook Family Foundation who was made aware of EPCAMR's work from a former intern that he knows and since he had some interactions with the PA DEP BAMR; The Foundation would like to consider providing EPCAMR with a grant of possibly \$10-20K and asked for a wish list of projects that we would support if funding became available; EPCAMR Executive Director immediately responded with a follow-up and a list of potential projects and support that could be funded
- Made an initial introduction to *Joel E. Dulin*, [Jozana Grants Services](#) about EPCAMR's work in the region

Keep PA Beautiful Open Your Eyes to Litter Educational Booklets

- Prepared the KPB Inv. June-Dec. 2023 for *Laura's* and *Denise's* time working on the project and *Brady Mock's* graphic design work on the booklets and submitted it

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

26th PA AMR Conference Planning for 2024

- Principal Deputy Director *Sharon Buccino*, OSMRE is committed to speaking at the PA AMR Conference; Discussed with the PA AMR Conference Committee that she would make a great closer on Thursday afternoon or the Welcome on Thursday morning on the 24th of October; UCC Environmental is going to exhibit; Reached out to *Chuck Cravotta* to see if he'd like to make a presentation at the PA AMR Conference on rare earth elements; He forwarded an abstract that was sent along to the PA AMR Conference Planning Committee for consideration and approval

10th Annual PA Renewable Energy Summit on June 3 & 4 in Camp Hill, PA

- Worked on developing a presentation for the Summit and submitted it to *Ron Celentano-PASSIA*; EPCAMR Executive Director attended and participated in the Summit as a panel speaker for the Summit to discuss solar development on abandoned mine lands; Sent the EPCAMR Presentation around to the EPCAMR Staff for their review; Provided *Dana Kuhnline-Reclaim Working Group*, with a copy of the presentation to send around to the listserve; Sent the presentation to the PA AML Campaign listserve; Sent the presentation to *Roger Sikes-Solar United Neighborhoods and VoteSolar*; Sent the link to *James Pagnotti*, Pagnotti Enterprises at his request; Forwarded the presentation to *Cristy Sweeney* at ARIPPA to send around to the ARIPPA Conference attendees; Forwarded the presentation to *Leigh Ann Henry* at Verdantas

Kutztown University Fall Geology Tour of the Anthracite Region

- Conference call with *Vincent Carbone-HDR Inc.* and Kutztown University Professor *T. Indall* to discuss setting up a Fall 2024 Anthracite Region Geology and AMD Tour

ARIPPA 35th Anniversary Annual Conference

- Attended the annual conference in Harrisburg, PA to make a presentation on the PA AMR Conference, the release of our work on the Assessment for Solar Development on Previously Mined Lands, and to announce the 2024 Mini-Grant Awards on behalf of EPCAMR and WPCAMR since WPCAMR was not able to attend
- Reviewed the US EPA Environmental Justice Communities Community Change Grants [Webinar](#) on Indirect Cost Rates and Applications

Sweet Springs 7th Annual Sustainability Summit

- EPCAMR was invited to speak by *Roseanna Sacco*, at the [Sweet Springs Institute](#) 7TH Annual Sustainability Summit in Gap Mills, WV hosted by the [Sweet Springs Resort Park](#), an economic development and historical restoration project underway at one of W. Virginia's most treasured pre-Civil War spas; EPCAMR requested a small convening travel grant from the Foundation for PA Watersheds to be able to attend on July 18th-20th and speak on EPCAMR's work in PA; Many of the organizations in Western West Virginia are still in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and members of the Choose Clean Water Coalition;

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA Invest Accounts in QuickBooks; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for June 2024 with Highmark and United Concordia; Paid EC the rent; Made EPCAMR deposits to FNB

- Hosted the Bi-Annual Department of Agriculture Spotted Lantern Fly Office Inspection and Meeting at the EPCAMR Office with Jennifer Schwartz and passed without any issues
- Received a resume from *Hope Mullins*, a recent Wilkes University graduate who may be interested in the part-time GIS position with EPCAMR
- Worked on compiling information with *Mike Hewitt*-EPCAMR Program Manager, for the submission of an EPCAMR Grant to the PA DEP 319 Program for FY25-28 and submitted it along with our proposed Work Plan before the mid-June 2024 deadline online; *John Levitsky*, Luzerne Conservation District provided a Letter of Support for the application; *Teah Gray-Larson* Design Group signed EPCAMR's Luzerne County CAP Chesapeake Bay Form for PA DEP 319 Grant Submission-State-wide Project; Forwarded PA DEP Quarterly Reports to *Trish Attardo* for FY23-24 from October 2023 through December 2023
- EPCAMR received our new 319 Nonpoint Source Management Grants Program - Eastern Pa Coalition For Abandoned Mine Reclamation - Contract# C990004310 (ESAID# 202206204683) - Executed Grant Agreement in the amount of **\$260,000** over 2 years; Provided Mike with a copy and we printed off a hard copy to place into a new binder; Received an email that provided notice that as of July 1, 2024, an electronic process for collecting and reporting grant project data is being implemented; The new process will drop the requirement to complete a Goals and Accomplishments Form at the completion of the grant project and replace it with the entry of accomplishments data into the PracticeKeeper geodatabase; Instructions for access to the database, as well as the entry, submission, and DEP review process, will be shared via email; A training course and Standard Operating Procedures (User Guides) have been developed
- Trip to Williamsport to go over accounts with *Marianne Beane*, our Bookkeeper
- EPCAMR Executive Director attended the [Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce](#) "Light Up the Valley" Ceremony on Public Square in Wilkes-Barre, PA to receive a 2024 Change Maker Award; One of 40 to receive the award and recognition for commitment to the work of protecting the environment and conducting education and outreach efforts throughout the Wyoming Valley
- Completed SWIF Renewal and worked with Mike to obtain signatures from the EPCAMR Executive Officers for the Exceptions and Declaration Forms for FY24-25
- Worked with OneSource to compile our EPCAMR Payroll Report Listing Gross by Employee, Quarterly State Unemployment Reports (PA UC-2 & 2A) showing Employee Gross Wages, Quarterly Federal Form 941 (Page 1 only), LIBC-14C Forms, Any 1099 Forms, 2 Payroll Summaries for Pay dates in 7-1-23 to 7-1-24 and 4-1-24 to 7-1-24 (Summarized by Employee), and all pages of the UC-2 and UC2A and First Page of 941 for 3rd and 4th Quarters 2023 and 1st Quarter 2024; These documents were provided to the Premium Auditor for SWIF for our 2024-2025 Renewal
- Completed [SAM.gov](#) renewal online for Federal grants
- Candid reminded us that we can put up our updated information on the site to renew of Seal of Transparency to show funders that our information is up to date; Mike will upload our recent 990s
- Completed the June 2024 Monthly Report for both the 319 Program and for Board Reporting and forwarded it to *Mike* to upload to the website