



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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March 2018 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- Communicated with *Mariah Davis*, Field Manager, Choose Clean Water Coalition on coordinating meetings with legislators in their DC Offices on March 20th and 21st, 2018, to talk about AMD efforts in PA and Choose Clean Water priorities for the upcoming Federal fiscal budget process; Applied for a **\$750** Convening Grant from the Foundation for PA Watersheds to assist with the travel costs and was approved; Attended meetings in Washington DC to meet with area legislators, Congressmen and Senators; PA Anthracite Section of the Society of Mining Engineers prepared a Letter of Support for RECLAIM; PA Federation of Sportsmans Clubs prepared a Letter of Support for the RECLAIM Act; ARIPPA provided EPCAMR with a copy of the Summary of their Coal Refuse Report for us to include when meeting with PA legislators in Washington DC; EPCAMR also shared information on the Coal Refuse Tax Credit Act supported by Congressman Lou Barletta; Sadly, the RECLAIM Act didn't make it into the House Omnibus Bill; There were a few key victories in the FY18 Omnibus Bill with respect to POWER funding, in particular:
 - Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) – total ARC budget was increased by \$9M to \$155M and POWER funding preserved at \$50M
 - Economic Development Administration (EDA) – total EDA budget was preserved and POWER funding preserved at \$30M
 - AML Pilot Program increased by \$10M to \$115M total; \$25M each for KY, WV, PA
- EPCAMR added our name to the Choose Clean Water's Annual Congressional Appropriation Request Letters, which are mostly requesting level funding for conservation programs that have been successful in the Chesapeake Bay watershed; The Interior Appropriations letter is requesting that Congress retain the \$73 million funding level for the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program as well as the funding level for the Chesapeake Stewardship Grants (NFWF grant programs), the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, National Park Service and U.S. Geological Survey programs in the Bay watershed, as well as some key land acquisitions under the Land and Water Conservation Fund; The Agriculture Appropriations letter asks for full funding for Farm Bill conservation programs, and calls out the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program as two key conservation programs for our region; The Commerce, Justice, Science letter focuses on restoring funding for specific programs run by NOAA in the Chesapeake Bay region; The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office has seen its funding eroded rapidly over the years and we are seeking to restore the traditional funding and work they do on oyster restoration, the B-WET environmental education program, and fisheries science and management in the Bay.

- EPCAMR provided some example letters that we are providing to our Congressional District Offices and County Governments related to AMD/AML Statistics within their legislative jurisdictions and on the RECLAIM Act; EPCAMR had our Op-Ed published on the RECLAIM Act; <http://m.thetimes-tribune.com/opinion/tap-fund-for-coal-country-land-water-restoration-1.2309234> and <https://paenvironmentdaily.blogspot.com/2018/03/op-ed-tap-federal-aml-fund-for-coal.html> and <http://republicanherald.com/opinion/letters/opportunity-hope-in-coal-country-1.2308396> and <http://citizensvoice.com/opinion/opportunity-and-hope-in-coal-country-1.2312012>; Downloaded a copy of the Resolution passed by Luzerne County and provided it to members of the PA AML Campaign; Received a copy of ARIPPA's supportive RECLAIM Act Resolution
- *Parikha Mehta*, a part-time photographer and full-time engineer, allowed EPCAMR to access her gallery photos that she shot in 2017 with EPCAMR around the Southern Wyoming Valley at AMD sites under the *Give A Shot Campaign*; She offered to do a human interest story for EPCAMR and was being interviewed by the Sierra Club on her exposure to EPCAMR's work; EPCAMR Executive Director provided her with more insight and detailed answers to some of her questions and those that were being asked of her by the Sierra Club
- *Dr. Andrea Nerozzi*, Wyoming Seminary Upper School, informed EPCAMR that she had made contact with *Dr. Fortunato*, a new microbiologist at Wilkes U., who had an interest in defining microbial communities in extreme environments; She had partnered with Dr. Nerozzi on a previous algal project; She would like to make a trip to the Solomon Creek AMD outfall at some point in the Summer 2018
- Provided a written Letter of Support to *Maureen Devine*, 3rd Grade Teacher, at Lake-Noxen Elementary School, Lake Lehman School District, as a conservation partner with their Trout in the Classroom Program, that is in its inaugural year of implementation; EPCAMR provided technical assistance with the start-up of the school's tank
- On March 12th EPCAMR was notified that we were not selected in the latest round of proposals for funding for our ***Plainsville AMD and Invasives Field Experiences with the Greater Nanticoke Area School District*** under the ***Chesapeake Bay Trust Meaningful Watershed Environmental Education Mini-Grant Program*** (Grant #15670)
- EPCAMR submitted a 2018-2019 PA Council of Trout Unlimited Trout in the Classroom Existing Program Grant for **\$500** to support our TIC Program at EPCAMR for supplies and testing kit replenishment
- EPCAMR held its first small group Paint Night Fundraiser with Iron Oxide with Artist/Instructor *Amanda Coleman*; It was a success with 10 attendees
- EPCAMR was invited to participate in an Environmental Strategy Session with Senator *Robert P. Casey* in Washington DC, on April 18th, however, with limited travel funds available, we had to respectfully decline the invitation and asked that any information could be forwarded to us for comments
- Committed EPCAMR to attending the EC Career Fair with EC for the Workforce Development Program that we were a partner on with PSU Wilkes-Barre and EC, as well as CareerLink and a few other partners, including the EPA Brownfields Program on April 16th-PSU Wilkes-Barre, Lehman, PA

Technical Assistance

- Forwarded presentation materials created by EPCAMR and LandStudies, Inc. for last year's National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Technical Assistance Stormwater Watershed Action Plan Grant created for the City of Wilkes-Barre to *Jim Tomaine*-WVSA and *Mark Spatz*-HRG, Inc. to assist them with ideas for the MS4 Project with the WVSA; EPCAMR is willing to provide GIS professional services to the WVSA to assist in mapping any of the AMD outfalls that enter their sewer infrastructure system throughout the 32 municipalities in the Wyoming Valley; EPCAMR will be reviewing the Plan and the MS4 Permit information provided by the WVSA and get back to *Jim*, *Jeff*, and *Mark*; EPCAMR updated the partners on a recent NFWF Grant with Clauser Environmental, LLC in the City of Wilkes-Barre that basically will be funding additional design best management practices (BMPs) for green infrastructure projects, outreach and education to residents, and some stormwater management recommendations at 10 City Parks throughout Wilkes-Barre
- *Julie Vastine*, Director of the Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring (ALLARM) at Dickinson College forwarded EPCAMR the C-SAW website for technical assistance (<https://c-saw.info/>); Forwarded the information along to PA Trout Unlimited to pass along to their Chapters across PA; Provided her with information on our **EPCAMR 20th Anniversary Conference** to see if she was interested in setting up an exhibit on C-SAW in June 2018
- Provided *Nathan Reagle*, Wildlife and Fisheries Biologist for PA DCNR, Bureau of Forestry, with comments on his draft *Aquatic Resource Management Plan* that he is developing for the State; EPCAMR Executive Director took several hours to make additional comments and suggestions to the draft plan as it related to AMD & AML on State Forest Lands and Tracts and forwarded them on to him
- Met with *Keith Brandt*, Hunting Lease Consultant, for Brandt Land Management, LLC, Millersburg, PA to discuss reaching out to coal lands for hunting and making contacts with coal company operators to get their foot in the door to speak to them about the services they can provide (www.brandtland.com); Provided Keith with contact information for the PA Anthracite Council to reach out to *Duane Feagley*, Executive Director to see if he can lead him to some contacts; Provided Keith information on exhibiting at our 20th Anniversary PA AMR Conference in June 2018
- Provided EPCAMR Staff with a link to the Economic Innovation Group's website that provides a distressed community index for all US Zip Codes (<http://eig.org/2017-dci-map-national-zip-code-map>)
- Provided *Abbie* with several sources of information on Statistics related to AMD and the Economy; http://www.srbc.net/pubinfotechdocs/publication_254/techreport254.pdf; http://www.downstreamstrategies.com/documents/reports_publication/AMD_remediation_%20West_Branch_Susquehanna_Jul2008.pdf; https://3lbfea33km482lswmk36ltep-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Economic_Benefits.pdf; <https://www.fws.gov/refuges/news/pdfs/TheEconomicValueofOutdoorRecreation%5B1%5D.pdf>; <http://conservationtools.org/conservation-benefits/129-Economic-Benefits-of-Outdoor-Recreation-And-Tourism>; <https://www.slideshare.net/MichaelHewitt4/len-lichvar-somerset-conservation-district-economics-of-conservation-recreation>; and http://www.pennlive.com/pa-sportsman/2017/03/how_much_do_anglers_in_your_ar.html
- Worked with Rachael to create a draft GIS Map for Russ Collins-President of the Doc Fritchey Chapter of PA TU of watersheds and sub-watersheds on a poster-size map for their use in prioritizing projects; Several of the watersheds are AMD impacted
- Provided *Erick Lewis* with information on the Catawissa Creek Restoration Association, contact information for *Ed Wytovich*-President of CCRA and *Wayne Lehman*-Schuylkill Conservation District, and AMD related work that EPCAMR has been involved with historically in the watershed with our many partners

Project Coordination

- *Tom Clark*, SRBC, informed EPCAMR that he has the needed transducers that will be placed in the next month down at the selected locations for monitoring within the Pinchot State Forest Tract for the ***Mocanaqua Mine Tunnel AMD Feasibility Study for Consumptive Use Mitigation Project***; Prepared a Letter of Extension to SRBC on the project with timeframes for deliverables and tasks to be completed and submitted it to *Pierre MaCoy*, PG, Hydrogeologist for SRBC
- *John Gibbons*, Ashley Borough Council President offered to open the gates to the Ashley Borough Park so that River Logic Solutions can gain access to make minor repairs to the cross vanes on March 5th; Rock and machinery will be present to take care of the construction work; *John* asked for a little deeper scour pool above the lowest cross-vane to hold fish for the upcoming Trout Derby put on by the Ashley Trout Stocking Association and the request was relayed to the PA Fish & Boat Commission, who approved the deeper hole that was constructed on March 5th by River Logic Solutions under the ***Solomon Creek Dam Removal/Trout Stream Wildlife Habitat Improvement Project***; EPCAMR requested that Ashley Borough not lock the gate to the park until the CAT dealership picks up the excavator and they agreed to lock it once the equipment was removed from the Park; *Jeff Boyer* sent EPCAMR the As-Builts with photo log that was submitted to PA DEP Dam Safety, the PA DEP Completion Certificate that was accepted by *Jack Kraeuter*, and the RLS logo
- Reviewed and signed the sub-consultant agreement for the ***NFWF Green Infrastructure Planning and Concept Plans for Public Spaces in the City of Wilkes-Barre, PA Project*** with Clauser Environmental, LLC to provide services to the City of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, PA under the grant for **\$5000** and to accompany *Dr. Clauser* in the field to jointly develop conceptual BMP ideas, review all project deliverables, and participate in education and outreach activities; Provided EPCAMR Certificate of Liability Insurance to Clauser Environmental, LLC; Requested Clauser Environmental, LLC's high resolution logo for a draft press release; EPCAMR is going to coordinate a meeting with the City of Wilkes-Barre, PA before releasing the details of the project and requested that *Dr. Clauser* make a slight change to the timeline for completion in the agreement
- Communicated with PA DEP BAMR on the upcoming release of the 2017 PA AML Pilot Projects News Release and asked about any local PR with the legislators and Swoyersville Borough; The Communications Office out of Harrisburg is developing a list of sites for candidates for media events sometime this Spring/Summer/Fall; EPCAMR would like to work to coordinate an event at the Harry E. Banks in Swoyersville Borough, Luzerne County, PA after talking with *Kim Snyder*-PA DEP BAMR and the local officials once the announcement is made and we would have to base it around the PA DEP Secretary's schedule typically; EPCAMR will follow up over the late Spring into early Summer 2018; <http://www.pahomepage.com/news/calming-coal-bank-removal-concerns/1088174078>

Community Volunteer Coordination

- *Robert Finn*, signed up to become an EPCAMR volunteer; Robert is an EC Workforce Development Training student at PSU Wilkes-Barre
- *Dwight Kopp*, Dwight Kopp & Company, LLC, Maytown, PA, outside of Lancaster, signed up as a volunteer with skills in communication and education
- *Kaite Gallow*, Keystone College, LaPlume, PA signed up to become a volunteer with EPCAMR and submitted her resume for future consideration as a possible intern
- *Stevie Gustafson*, Ridgway, PA signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer and is interested in the Centralia Cleanup later in 2018

- Followed up with *Shauna Fultz*, Artist from Chinchilla, PA that worked with EPCAMR several years ago to begin painting and creating backdrops for our The AMD Avengers vs The Pollution Posse Activity Book; EPCAMR hadn't followed up with her for a long time and wanted to see if she was continuing to work on the project
- *Amelia Bender*, EPCAMR volunteer artist, provided EPCAMR with a completed graphic design poster that she created as a part of her community service for the Meridian Housing Authority in Mississippi

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- *Tom Clark*, SRBC, submitted an abstract for the 20th Anniversary PA AMR Conference on the new features of the updated Mine Drainage Portal; Sent SRBC a Sponsorship Form Letter for the Conference
- Informed AIPG that EPCAMR may have to adjust our ***AIPG Symposium AMD/AML Tour*** on March 3rd since the weather was calling for 5-7"; One of the sites ("Newport Lake") would not be accessible due to the poor road conditions and access to the area, therefore, EPCAMR replaced that location with the Harry E. Bank Reclamation PA AML Pilot Project site in Swoyersville Borough, Luzerne Co.; Passed along the flyer to interested consultant firms and local college and university professors; Conducted the Symposium with presentations by the hosts, Earth Conservancy (EC) & EPCAMR and led a day long tour to various AMD & AML sites in Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties being reclaimed or remediated by EPCAMR and or EC; Forwarded presentations to *Kevin Kelly*-Langan Engineering, AIPG, to provide to all who attended the Symposium; Received Certificates worth 7 Professional Development Hours or .7 Continuing Education Unites for all those who attended
- Forwarded *Daniel Bochicchio*, Skybernetics, information on the 20th Anniversary PA AMR Conference and followed up with him on information that EPCAMR had previously supplied to him to help his company seek a path forward with their drone capabilities and still continue to find ways to partner or work with EPCAMR; Scheduled a field drone flight in Centralia for March 30th
- Informed PAEE what equipment and supplies that EPCAMR will be donating for use at the upcoming ***2018 PAEE Annual Conference*** in State College, PA at Toftrees Resort to assist them with not having to pay for additional rental costs of AV equipment
- Registered for the ***ArcGIS Pro TIPS Training*** in Pittsburgh, PA with Kamillah Pendleton, OSMRE, on September 11-13th; At this point, Gavin, Rachael, and Robert will be attending
- Reviewed *Beth Berkhauser's* and *Melissa Cruise's* "The Interdependence Hexagon Project" proposal prior to it being submitted to Anne and the PA AMR Conference Committee for consideration as a presentation involving resist art with earth elements (iron oxide) from AMD; It was approved to be a workshop at the Conference
- Provided EPCAMR Executive Director's biography to Cornell University for the upcoming two days of presentations about EPCAMR on Campus in Ithaca, NY on April 26th and 27th hosted by *Dr. Marianne Krasny*

- EPCAMR put the word out about an upcoming Fly Fishing Instructors Program being conducted by the PA Fish & Boat Commission, EPCAMR, and PA TU at Frances Slocum State Park on April 10th 2018
- Requested a quote from Cole Transportation to charter a bus for the PA AMR Conference in June 2018; PA DEP Gold Sponsorship of **\$5000** was processed; Updated the website for the Conference (<http://2018.treatminewater.com>); *Anne* received a quote from a local screen printer for the AMD Tie-Dye T-shirts; PA Anthracite Section of SME became a Bronze Sponsor; Invited former Regional Coordinators, *Bruce Golden*, *Mark Killar*, and *Jeff Fliss* to the Conference
- Encouraged EPCAMR Staff to apply for scholarships to attend the **Choose Clean Water Conference** in Lancaster, PA before the March 30th deadline
- Informed EPCAMR Staff about PA Trout Unlimited's Diversity Committee "Sharing Ties" PA Women's Initiative Leadership Retreat; *Rachael Grube*, GIS Technician, showed interest in attending and registered, which was free to attend at GodSpeed Hostel, Port Matilda from April 20th thru the 22nd
- Attended a planning meeting for the 2019 NAAMLPA Conference in Harrisburg, PA and discussed EPCAMR's role in assisting with hosting and setting up the website, along with registration for the Conference in Pittsburgh, PA

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Accounts and PA Invest Accounts; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register
- *Dave Hess*, forwarded contact information for *Tim Collins*, Executive Director-Senate Environmental Resources & Energy Committee, who was recently named to the position by Senator *John Yudichak*
- Received a Thank You Letter from Senator *Robert P. Casey* on my letter to him regarding EPCAMR's support for the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), since we house AmeriCorps volunteers; He continues to support CNCS to continue the critical work in PA and across the country
- Attended the Schuylkill County Chapter Trout Unlimited Meeting in Pottsville, PA
- Completed January and February 2018 EPCAMR Board and 319 Reports and submitted to Mike for inclusion with our anticipated reimbursements
- Prepared a Letter of Recommendation for *Llywellyn Westrick*, former EPCAMR Summer Watershed Outreach Intern, from King's College, Wilkes-Barre, PA who is interested in attending Townson State's Graduate School for Watershed Management and submitted it online
- Met with *Britton Burnworth*, Environmental Program Manager for Atwell LLC to review his firm's services that they might be able to provide to EPCAMR in the future on AMD and other projects

- *Ann Devine*, PA DEP informed EPCAMR that she was being promoted to the Water Resources Planning Division working on Growing Greener and 319 grants and no longer will be with the PA DEP EE Program; All reimbursement requests, reports, and invoicing now need to be forwarded to *Bert Myers* (gimyers@pa.gov)
- Reached out to *Yvonne Besvold*, Vice President of Finance-Patagonia Works, to see if they needed any assistance when her team arrives in NE PA to begin opening up shop at their distribution center in Hanover Township and extended an invitation to make AMD Tie-Dye T's for all the team members if they had t-shirts they'd like to provide to EPCAMR
- EPCAMR signed on to a Letter joining over 100 groups that are urging Congress to fully fund the POWER Initiative Programs that provide critical investments in the communities and working families most affected by America's declining demand for coal; The Letter was being submitted by *Jessica Eckdish* with the BlueGreen Alliance (www.bluegreenalliance.org)
- EPCAMR received a denial letter for our COALS Cleanup Program through Community Aid, Inc. and was informed that we can re-apply in July 2018
- EPCAMR was informed that *George Ellis* retired from ARIPPA and that *Jaret Gibbons* will become the new Executive Director
- Completed *Abbie Keefe's* final Program Evaluation and submitted it to *Kaitlin Foley*, Program Coordinator for Stewards Environmental Placement Program
- Met with *Andy Friefeld*, about his Master's Thesis Paper on the "Black Desert" Abandoned Mine Land site in Exeter Borough
- Met with the PA TU Executive Committee on projects and to announce the PA AMR Conference in Williamsport, PA at Lycoming College
- Met with *Joe Sapienza* in Allentown, PA to go over AMD Avengers Pilot Series discussion and grant opportunities and proposals