



## Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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## March 2021 Progress Report

### Project Coordination

#### **Healing the Scars - The Mining Legacy in Northern Appalachia Film Project with ISI**

- Outlined a draft concept for our first EPCAMR Video with ISI and Centone Productions; It will center on how EPCAMR assesses the health of a mining impacted watershed; Followed up with Claudia and Joe on the anticipated delivery of the apple trees for the tree plantings in Centralia and the tree giveaway throughout the Wyoming Valley; Participated in a Zoom call with Claudia, Joe, and Laura to talk about the films; Received the tree sapling quote from Wafler's Nursery in New York for the **350** trees in **16** different species we will be receiving and discussed shipment costs; ISI Inc. is going to donate **107** aluminum water bottles to the project and ship them before the event with the Appalachian Tree Planting Logo on them; Pagnotti Enterprises donated **\$250** towards the Appalachian Tree Planting Project in Centralia; Looking into the development of trout puppets for use in future videos; Provided *Laura* and *Mike* with a copy of the Waiver of Liability/Photo Release form for the Appalachian Tree Planting Event in Centralia; Obtained additionally insured riders for Pagnotti Enterprises and the PA DEP and sent them along; Sent a message out to all Staff to check their availability to help during the Centralia Event and a few days leading up to it, if at all possible, if there are no scheduling conflicts
- Scheduled the Growboxx Instructional Videos with *Joe Sapienza* and *Laura* for March 26<sup>th</sup> and prepped two holes for the Growboxxes; Provided *Claudia* and *Laura* an interesting [report](#) on nation-wide food insecurity from Feeding America; Shot the films and awaited final approval from ISI Inc.; Provided *Laura* with our BCO Exemption letter in case she needed it for donations

#### **OSMRE/AmeriCorps VISTA Stewards Individual Placement Program (SIPP)**

- Helped *Kyle* define the various types of AMD Treatment Systems for an educational guidebook he's creating for the public and provided him with some pictures of wetland treatment systems
- Worked with *Kyle* to submit a PPL Foundation grant to support a *Remote Virtual Learning Environmental Education Program and General Operating Support* for EPCAMR in the amount of **\$16,901**; Our desired result is to create videos and environmental education reference materials which are equivalent to in person teaching methods; The creation of virtual tours which are equivalent to in person field trips is also

highly desired; EPCAMR hopes that these educational videos and virtual field trips will foster environmental stewardship among community youth, inspiring future community leaders who will put the environment first; Our lessons fit perfectly into the S.T.E.A.M. curriculum of schools in our service region, which will help foster creative solutions for future environmental issues; Easily accessible content for students and their families will increase our capacity and volunteer base further than previously, along with effectively informing viewers to become stewards for environmental conservation; We also hope that our virtual field trips will inspire the local youth to explore the natural world which surrounds their very neighborhoods; Lastly, we want to further our partnerships beyond schools to after school programs and community learning centers; Unlike our service region, the internet is boundless, which will allow our content to reach much farther than the Greater Wyoming Valley Area; Provided *Kyle* with a 2019 Profit/Loss Statement and a completed W-9 from EPCAMR, and an EFT Form for the grant application submission

- Convened a conference call with *JM Aurednik*, Program Coordinator for the Stewards Individual Placement at Conservation Legacy to provide him with an updated on the OSMRE/VISTA position and our work over the last quarter of 2020 and first quarter of 2021
- *Josh Jones*, VISTA Development Coordinator for Stewards Individual Placements informed EPCAMR that should we have the ability to sponsor a second year OSMRE/VISTA the costs will increase to \$7000 for the year
- Continued to approve *Kyle's* volunteer hours on a bi-weekly basis through Civic Core
- *Kyle* found another donation source from Giant Food Stores and will be researching the application process for EPCAMR
- *Kyle* created some Environmental Education materials that need review; EPCAMR Executive Director will make some time to comment on the material
- Reviewed and commented on *Kyle's* 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2021 Reporting Summary Document for OSMRE/VISTA and Conservation Legacy; Submitted his sponsorship check for Invoice #16258 for January 1, 2021 through February 28, 2021 after receiving the Invoice in the mail
- Provided *Kyle* with a copy of the Stormwater Education Manual that discussed not encouraging infiltration of areas impacted by past mining because of the increase in probability that the water will become part of the mine pool and eventually form AMD

### **Swoyersville Harry E. Reclamation and Community Athletic Area AMLER Project**

- The movement of waste culm material began this month by Keystone Reclamation Fuels Management and was excavated and transported to Panther Creek Partners in Nesquehoning

### **Mine Subsidence Insurance Mapping Program**

- Worked with *Mike* to review and draft our budget amendment and 2-year extension on the mine mapping project with the PA DEP MSI Program for FY2021-23; Returned all the appropriate documentation to *James Charowsky*, Environmental Group Manager for PA DEP Bureau of Mining Operations; EPCAMR accepts the use of electronic signatures

## **Luzerne/Lackawanna/Susquehanna County Action Plan (CAP)**

- EPCAMR was informed that Larson Design Group (LDG) was awarded the CAP grant that we were a partner in the original proposal; Set up a meeting with *Josh Glace* to determine the scope of work for the AMD monitoring they are requesting to have done in two of the three counties; Sent *Mike* notes from a meeting held with *Josh* and LDG to review some of the tasks that LDG would like EPCAMR to perform as a part of the CAP; Added LDG as an additionally insured to our General Liability Insurance Policy and send *Josh Glace* a copy; Prepared a draft scope of work with tasks for *Josh* and *Ken Stockert* to review and provide comment before submitting the final scope of work signed for LDG; We'll only be focusing on the Susquehanna River watershed drainage at this time

## **Southern Wyoming Valley NFWF Small Watershed Grant Program**

- Worked with *Andrew Young*, NFWF Program Manager to finalize details and uploaded final documentation necessary before being able to receive our grant award to start work and collecting data on the project; EPCAMR submitted our Applicant Controls Questionnaire (ACQ), QAPP, Letter of Determination Non-Profit Status as a 501(c)(3), 2019 Income Statement, DUNS #, and EIN # to NFWF for approval; Completed a Vendor Setup Form for the NFWF; Signed the NFWF Agreement and submitted it to *Andrew*

## **Technical Assistance**

- Provided *Branden Diehl*, Earthwise Consulting, Inc. with a screenshot and location of the Jeddo Mine Tunnel, Luzerne County
- Worked with *Trish Attardo*, Watershed Program Specialist-PA DEP, Watershed Support section to develop enhancements to the PracticeKeeper geospatial database so that 319 and Growing Greener project data may be extracted from a single source; *Mike* and the Executive Director assisted with identifying other project components of AMD treatment systems; EPCAMR assisted the PA DEP to discuss the findings and shared our thoughts to ensure that all necessary components are captured; Brought in the expertise of *Cliff Denholm*, Stream Restoration Inc. who administers Datashed for knowledge and expertise and continued to work through how best to identify and categorize the various components of both active and passive treatment system types
- Provided some technical grant writing assistance to Ashley Borough on creating an account with the new Keystone Community Grant portal
- Worked on an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant Proposal in the amount of **\$16,134** with Little Leaf Farms and Tetra Tech to assess the feasibility of geothermal/heating/cooling opportunities around the McAdoo Industrial Park in the underground mine pools in the area for a proposed greenhouse; Submitted our Letter of Intent and received an application number from ARC; Continued to work on the budget and narrative for the grant as well as obtaining letters of support from partners; Requested and received two letters of support from *Congressman Cartwright* and *Congressman Meuser* and the CAN-DO Corporation

- EPCAMR posed a question to our PA AML Campaign on why we can call sewer upgrades and sewage treatment plants “infrastructure” improvements for the benefit of reducing pollutants from phosphorus, algal production and sewage discharges but we can’t call an active AMD treatment plants “infrastructure” that operates the same way and removes different water quality parameters for the betterment of our watersheds; These types of capital improvement projects most certainly would generate jobs in areas that are in need of water quality improvements; Why can’t they become public works projects? The [Federal State Revolving Clean Water Fund](#) for infrastructure improvements related to water and wastewater treatment and it might now be time to start taking AMD treatment systems out of the SMCRA box solely, if we are going to need funding from other pots, should the well run dry; AMD Treatment plants create long term jobs that are retainable; BAMR, the Governor’s Office, and the legislature consider AMD treatment plants to be capital improvement projects; A significant portion of the funds to build AMD treatment plants comes through the capital budget process; It will take all of us to educate others that AMD treatment systems are indeed capital improvement projects that would generate construction jobs and permanent operation and maintenance jobs. It is also important to educate people on the negative economic impacts suffered by communities that have AMD dead streams/rivers. It is equally important to educate folks of the positive economic impacts of clean waterways
- Attended the Susquehanna County Chapter TU online Zoom meeting to discuss the Upper Loyalsock Creek AMD Treatment Study that EPCAMR was a partner in with the Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association, Lycoming College, Clean Water Institute, Susquehanna University Freshwater Research Institute, Sullivan County Conservation District, Trout Unlimited, Hedin Environmental, and the White Ash Land Association; Provided the EPCAMR Staff with a copy of the minutes and presentation from the meeting
- Provided *Joe Pizarchik* with several examples of economic development projects in the EPCAMR Region that have potential for reusing AMD, mine pool water for geothermal heating and cooling, reclaimed abandoned mine sites for small community or large solar farms, regional warehouse distribution centers, recreational parks, trails, geothermal production use of mine fires and methane gas reduction and capture, and electrical generation from the use of mine pool water in pump storage hydro facilities; EPCAMR is hoping that AMD Treatment systems will be seen as public infrastructure in the future
- Provided *Angie Rosser*, Executive Director of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition our PA AML Campaign [SMCRA Title IV Fact Sheet](#)
- Provided technical comments to the Chesapeake WILD Framework document on behalf of EPCAMR as a stakeholder in the [Chesapeake WILD](#) to *Sara Ramotnik* and *Dan Murph*-Chesapeake Conservancy

- Suggested to *Greg Griffin*, volunteer with the Wilkes-Barre City Citizens Blight Committee that a map of the Districts where the individual block captains are going to cover is provided to the volunteers so that there is no overlapping streets in the neighborhoods to avoid confusion; **\$38 Million** in Federal COVID funds will be coming into the City for community projects; Made additional suggestions on how to utilize the funds for the community's benefit related to illegal dump site cleanups
- Talked to *Jarett Gibbons* and *Cristy Sweeney* about looking into some solar grants for the reclaimed abandoned mine lands that ARIPPA has already completed
- Provided *Frank Howard III*, [Howard Concrete Pumping](#), a copy of the EPCAMR Testimony format so that he can submit a letter for the record before the House Natural Resources Committee
- Corresponded with *Jamie Habberfield*, Manager-Business Development for [IMG Energy Solutions](#), a power generation solutions company in Pittsburgh to talk about solar on reclaimed abandoned mine lands
- Returned all of the **165** maps for Lehigh Engineering that were cleaned, prepped, taped, and scanned, in addition to the creation of a database of all the maps and setting up the categories and detailed descriptions on each map as requested; Each roll had to be gone through to determine if there were any duplicate or sets of copies; The maps were scanned and catalogued, placed on a thumb drive, and an invoice created for when *Eric Bella* picks them up
- Convened a conference call with ACPower, NY to determine a scope of work for some technical assistance we can provide them in reaching out to landowners to put them in contact with to discuss future solar development opportunities on formerly reclaimed abandoned mine sites
- *Rachael Stark*, Senior District Executive for the NEPA Council of the [Boy Scouts of America](#) in Moosic, PA reached out to EPCAMR to see if we can partner on a Rotary Grant year; She provided EPCAMR with the application process to review and we agreed to circle back to one another over the Summer; She is President of the Pittston Rotary; She has worked with *Charlie Jones*, First National Bank, who worked with EPCAMR on his son's Eagle Scout project many years ago at the Huber Miner's Memorial Park
- Convened a Zoom call with *Ryan Cherwinski* and *Greg Barchey* from [Denali Water](#) and provided them with contacts in the Philadelphia Area that deals with biosolids, including MABA and Garvey Resources

- Provided *Joey James*, Principal with Downstream Strategies, with some information on examples of [AMLER projects](#) related to rail trail/water trail projects in previous grant rounds in PA
- Recommended *Eric Oliver*, PA DEP Moshannon District Mining Office, for an Appalachian State Title IV Program Representative for the TIPS Technical Advisory Group in OSMRE after being asked by *Sarah R. Kreitzer*, Acting Branch Chief, OSMRE Technical Support Division, Water Geological and Geospatial Branch

## **Education & Outreach**

- Participated in the Choose Clean Water Coalition Conference call with *Senator Toomey* and *Congressman Keller's* Office to discuss AMD/AML projects and potential for future projects in the watersheds that are located in their Congressional Districts that are in the portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed; Followed up with *Hal Duncan*, in Senator Toomey's Office and provided him with more information on EPCAMR and AML Reauthorization and RECLAIM Act
- Connected with *Ad Crable*, Staff Writer for the Chesapeake Bay Journal, Lancaster, PA and conducted a phone interview on EPCAMR's work in the Chesapeake Bay watershed related to AMD/AML reclamation
- Provided *Dana Kuhnline*, RECLAIM Campaign Coordinator with a quote for their upcoming press release on RECLAIM following the upcoming Hearing with the House Natural Resources Committee; Congressman Cartwright tweeted an [article](#) related to RECLAIM; *Trey Pollard*, Pollard Communications, LLC also helped to amplify some messages and quotes during and following the hearing by reaching out to various social media outlets and newspapers
- Reached out to the United Steelworker's, Labor Council, and Carpenter's Union, to see if they would consider supporting the Reauthorization of the AML Trust Fund and the RECLAIM Act to create jobs regionally; Sent a draft template letter to each representative from the various groups
- Worked with *Laura Rinehimer*, EPCAMR Environmental Education Watershed Outreach Specialist on her idea for a submission to The Luzerne Foundation for a **\$5000** grant that we will be submitting virtually; Participated in a brief video introduction of the kind of work that we want to do with youth in the region directed by *Laura*
- EPCAMR signed on to a PennEnvironment letter supporting energy efficiency legislation in PA; [Fact Sheet](#) was available from PennEnvironment

- Connected with *Renee Reber* from the Choose Clean Water Coalition to discuss making an outreach call to the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority on ways to assist them with public relations related to their Pollution Reduction Plan and MS4 Outreach related to the AMD impacted portions of the municipalities they serve; Provided *Renee* with additional contacts in Luzerne and Lackawanna County for her to reach out to for further discussions; Introduced *Renee* to *Jim Tomaine*-Executive Director of the WVSA via e-mail; Convened a call with *Jeff Collela* and *Jim Tomaine* from the WVSA on March 29<sup>th</sup> to offer our support
- *Dr. Nerozzi* sent EPCAMR the Accelerated Program Environmental Science [Class Video](#) on the work they did with EPCAMR collectively in the Solomon Creek watershed;
- Shared with *Donna Gillis*-Public Relations for WVSA that EPCAMR is seeing a huge increase in disposable masks littered around the region and in our waterways; WVSA is creating posters and looking for partners to place their logos on it in support of clean water and proper disposal of masks and trash; They aren't even cut where the bands are around the ears that could lead to fish, wildlife, and other mammals getting caught in them and suffocating or causing damage to their bodies; [Improper Mask Disposal Has Consequences](#) and [Coronavirus Face Masks an Environmental Disaster that Might Last Generations](#)
- Provided *Molly Moore*, Editor for [The Appalachian Voice](#) in Boone, NC images and some video of our Swoyersville Refuse Pile and Community Athletic Area AMLER Reclamation Project; Molly is working on a AML Campaign video for public education and outreach
- EPCAMR Staff have created several videos on our YOUTube channel related to AML Reauthorization based on interviews that were directed by the Executive Director and Laura Rinehimer, Environmental Education Watershed Outreach Specialist over the last several months; [EPCAMR AML Reauthorization YOUTube Videos](#) and a call to action [Video](#)
- EPCAMR signed on to a Choose Clean Water Coalition sign on letter opposing two anti-Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative bills (HB637 & SB 119)
- *Sara Melick*, MS-Marywood University requested a presentation from EPCAMR on our work in the Lackawanna River watershed and on AMD, in general; Worked to set up a time to make a presentation to her Science of the Lackawanna River class
- EPCAMR Executive Director applied for a **\$2000** Brook Trout Conservation and Waterfowl Outreach/Education grant through the PA American Water Grant Program

- Requested a copy of the W. Branch Watershed in Recovery Full Report, which was provided by *Amy Wolfe* at Trout Unlimited to include as a resource and reference in my Testimony before the House Natural Resources Committee on March 18<sup>th</sup>
- Talked with *Mike Corcoran*, Wilkes-Barre Area School District about the progress being made on the Environment & Ecology as well as the Science Standards that are being updated through the PA Department of Education; EPCAMR Executive Director remains a representative on the State-wide Standards Content Committee for the PA Department of Education
- Attended a virtual press conference on March 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss the importance of these bills for their work in Northeastern Pennsylvania on the RECLAIM Act and Reauthorization with *Jason Walsh*, Executive Director, from Blue Green Alliance to bring a regional perspective and highlight labor support for reclamation work and *Congressman Matt Cartwright* and *Congressman GT Thompson*, to formally announce the introduction of the two House bills; [Facebook Live Media Event on Reauthorization of AML and the RECLAIM Act](#) and the [Press Release](#)
- *Joe Silla* from the Sullivan County Library made a request to EPCAMR to see if we could ask *Joe Sapienza* if it was ok to show his Centralia: PA's Lost Town documentary to the public in either April or May; He'd like for one or both of us to come up and speak following the documentary; EPCAMR put him in touch with *John*
- [The True Cost of Cleaning Up Historic Damage from the Coal Industry](#) details Eric Dixon's exhaustive research from the Ohio River Valley Institute; Passed it along to the PA AML Campaign
- Continued working on developing and researching information for EPCAMR's Testimony before the House Natural Resources Committee Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee legislative hearing titled, "*Restoring Abandoned Mine Lands, Local Economies, and the Environment*" as a witness on AML Reauthorization and the RECLAIM Act; Completed the Truth in Disclosure Statement and submitted it to *Sarina Weiss*, Policy Aide-Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, along with my resume; Submitted the complete testimony for the record; Provided my testimony to members of the PA AML Campaign and National RECLAIM Working Group; Presented a 5 minute oral testimony summary during the virtual hearing on March 18<sup>th</sup> via Cisco WebEx; Link to [YouTube Hearing](#) and [Hearing webpage](#); Responded to additional questions that were asked following the Hearing and submitted them for the formal record; Following the Hearing, EPCAMR received many words of praise for the testimony and numerous responses to the questions that were asked and countered with innovative ideas and poignant take home points for members of the full Committee



- There was a lot of press coverage from across the region on AML Reauthorization and the RECLAIM Act;

#### [Cartwright pushes for reclaiming abandoned mine lands \(WNEP\)](#)

**Congressman Matt Cartwright** announced that he hopes to keep federal funding for abandoned mines available. The Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund was established in 1977, and money from it is responsible for the reclamation of many mine lands right here in our area. The fund is set to expire in September, but **Cartwright** is proposing new legislation to help maintain the trust for future projects. "Here in Northeastern Pennsylvania, think of the Arena Hub Plaza, the distribution centers in Hazleton, and the site of the new high school in Wilkes-Barre," The Democrat said. "These are all former abandoned mine land sites that are now or are soon to be places that will drive growth in economic activity."

#### [Republican and Democrat congressmen call for extending mine reclamation program \(Citizens' Voice\)](#)

**U.S. Reps. Matt Cartwright** and Glenn Thompson, a Republican from Bellefonte, have called for renewal of a program that reclaims mine lands. "We're on a deadline," **Cartwright, D-8, Moosic**, said Wednesday of the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund, which expires in September. The trust fund, established in 1977, is financed by a tax on each ton of coal mined. **Cartwright** said the fund paid to restore thousands of open mine portals, 1,000 miles of dangerous highwalls and restored water polluted by mine drainage.

#### [PA. Congressmen push to keep reclaiming mine land \(Standard-Speaker\) Hazleton](#)

Two congressmen from different parties and different sides of Pennsylvania called for renewing a fund to reclaim coal land. **Rep. Matt Cartwright, D-8, Moosic**, said businesses open on land reclaimed through the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Trust Fund, which started in 1977 but expires in September. "Think of the Arena Hub Plaza, distribution centers in Hazleton and the site for the new high school in Wilkes-Barre. These are former abandoned sites that are now or are soon to be places that will drive growth and economic activity," **Cartwright** said Wednesday during a video news conference with Rep. Glenn Thompson, R-15, Bellefonte.

#### [Abandoned mine reclamation extension introduced \(Pittsburgh Post-Gazette\)](#)

**U.S. Rep. Matt Cartwright, D-Lackawanna**, said Wednesday he is introducing federal, bipartisan legislation to extend the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund, which provides money to clean up and reclaim abandoned mine land and toxic, mine-tainted water throughout Appalachia and Western mining states. He also is sponsoring the RECLAIM Act of 2021, which would accelerate the release of \$1 billion from the existing trust fund to assist the revitalization of coal communities impacted by abandoned mine lands and the recent decline in coal mining.

#### [Editorial Board: Pass bills, ensure mine reclamation \(Times-Tribune\)](#)

Seven decades after industrial-scale coal mining petered out in Northeast Pennsylvania, much environmental damage remains unresolved. Serious land and water pollution caused by mining continues to affect more than 300 specific sites in Luzerne and Lackawanna counties. According to U.S. **Rep. Matt Cartwright**, a Lackawanna County Democrat, the price for reclaiming mine-damaged land and water nationwide is at least \$10 billion. He and Republican Rep. Glenn Thompson, whose district in West-Central

Pennsylvania contains more mine-damaged sites than any other in the nation, have introduced two bills to help speed mine reclamation projects.

[Republican and Democratic congressmen call for extending mine reclamation program \(Republican Herald\)](#)

[Pa. congressmen lead effort to fund mine reclamation efforts \(Farm and Dairy\)](#)

Pennsylvania congressmen are leading the charge to reauthorize federal funding to reclaim abandoned mine lands across the country. **U.S. Reps. Matt Cartwright, D-Moosic**, and Glenn Thompson, R-Howard, introduced bipartisan legislation March 10 to extend support for the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund. The bill would continue collecting a fee on all coal produced in the U.S. to be used to reclaim abandoned coal mines. The fee is set to expire in September unless Congress votes to renew it.

[Congressmen Introduce Bills to Extend Mine Land Reclamation Program \(Our Daily Planet\)](#)

Yesterday, **U.S. Rep. Matt Cartwright (D-PA)** introduced two bills that would reauthorize, expand, and accelerate funding for the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund (AML), which grants money to states and tribes to reclaim former mining lands and use them for job creation and economic growth. The first bill, the Abandoned Mine Land Reauthorization Act, will extend the collection and disbursement of fees from mining operations to former coal communities for another 15 years.

[Cartwright Asks to Save Mine Reclamation Program \(Citizens' Voice\)](#)

[Appalachian lawmakers step up fight for mine reclamation \(E&E News\)](#)

Appalachian lawmakers are ramping up their efforts to renew the soon-to-expire funding for the Interior Department's abandoned coal mine reclamation program.

More than \$10 billion of work remains to reclaim dangerous coal mines abandoned in the decades before Congress passed the 1977 strip-mining law.

Mine operators pay a fee for each ton of coal produced into the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund to help cover the cost, but that fee expires on Sept. 30.

"That's 204 days to make sure we can continue critical work in our states to clean up the pollution and hazards caused by abandoned coal mines and turn them into opportunities for economic development and job creation," said Rep. *Matt Cartwright* (D-Pa.) at a news conference yesterday.

Cartwright's "AML Reauthorization Act," introduced with fellow Pennsylvanian Rep. *Glenn Thompson* (R), would extend the fees at their current rates for 15 years.

Cartwright also introduced the "Revitalizing the Economy of Coal Communities by Leveraging Local Activities and Investing More (RECLAIM) Act," co-sponsored by Rep. *Hal Rogers* (R-Ky.). That [bill](#) would speed up spending \$1 billion in the AML fund for projects that link economic development to mine reclamation.

Such projects could include turning former mine sites into hiking trails or recycling collection centers, as highlighted in a report by nonprofits in the Reclaiming Appalachia Coalition.

President Biden has made economic transition in communities that are reliant on fossil fuels a cornerstone of his approach to shifting to renewable power generation ([Greenwire](#), Jan. 28).

These bills would go a long way toward ensuring that coal-mining areas aren't left out of that shift, said *Jason Walsh*, executive director of the BlueGreen Alliance, a coalition of labor unions and environmental groups.

"There's no such thing as a silver bullet, but the bills being introduced today — the 'RECLAIM Act' and reauthorization of the AML fee — do represent silver buckshot," said Walsh, who worked on similar issues in the Obama White House.

[PA Members of Congress Introduce AML legislation](#)

[Scranton Times Tribute Opinion-Pass Bills to Ensure Mine Reclamation](#) (pay site)

[PA Environmental Digest Article on AML and RECLAIM](#)

[PA Environmental Digest-US House Hearing on Reauthorization](#)

- EPCAMR signed on to a Choose Clean Water Coalition sign-on letter opposing two anti-Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) bills, HB 637 / SB 119 that are attempting to jettison DEP's authority to cut carbon emissions and block Pennsylvania from joining the RGGI
- EPCAMR Executive Director was featured on the Penn-State Environmental Resource Management Alumni Facebook Page as a Spotlight to showcase some of his background for other students to take a look at and to show the success he has had since graduating from Penn-State
- Conducted a phone interview with *Kent Jackson*, Hazleton Standard Speaker on Reauthorization of the AML Trust Fund and the RECLAIM Act and provided him with a link to our [Swoyersville Reclamation AMLER Project](#)
- *Mike Smoyer*, [PA Fly Fishing Museum Association](#) (PFFMA) Board Member, reached out to EPCAMR to introduce himself and to see if we can help promote the Association as well as reach out to PA TU to do the same
- Added *Chad Tokowicz*, Inland Fisheries Policy Manager- American Sportfishing Association; *David Lind*, Government Affairs Coordinator-Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and *Mike Nerozzi*, Director of Policy and Planning-Executive Office Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission to the PA AML Campaign list serve
- Spoke to *Dustin Tingley*, Professor of Government- Deputy Vice Provost for Advances in Learning at Harvard University; They reached out to EPCAMR as a part of the [Roosevelt Project](#), a collaborative study between MIT and Harvard University, led by former

Secretary of Energy Ernie Moniz; The aim of this project is to understand the energy transition that is occurring and will continue to occur in the United States over the coming decades, and to identify ways to make that transition more efficient and equitable; They are examining four regions of the country, the coal and gas producing area of Pennsylvania, the Gulf Coast, New Mexico, and the Industrial Heartland; Set up an interview with them to be a part of the study; They hope to learn about our experiences in the region, our observations of what is happening, our vision of the future and what must be done to achieve it, and our insights into untapped opportunities for the region

### **Community Volunteer Coordination**

- *Sidney Bailet*, offered to make a donation to EPCAMR to support our cause; EPCAMR provided her with a brochure on our work and thanked her for her consideration
- Continued working with the King's College Mechanical Engineering Senior students Design Project on a new and improved design for a tabletop iron oxide pigment processor and drying device; EPCAMR will contribute **\$250** towards the costs of the supplies and materials and King's will also be providing an additional **\$250** towards the total project costs
- Continued working with *Shannon Drevitch*, King's College to condense the Deming Institute hand-written notes for the PowerPoint presentation as a part of her Senior Class Project for EPCAMR; Provided her with scanned notes for inclusion in the PowerPoint
- *Robert Kenney*, a Geography and Planning student from Bloomsburg University inquired about a Spring Internship; EPCAMR couldn't offer one at this time due to the remote work we're doing and inability to be in the office too much at this point due to pandemic
- Assisted Newport Township with the removal of **300** illegally dumped tires near the R-Bar along a trail on the Earth Conservancy property; Covered the costs through our PA American Water Charitable Trust grant; The illegal dumper was apprehended by the Newport Township Police Department; A local resident has installed a surveillance camera on his house near the trail entrance for future monitoring; The effort was led by *Keith Bartle*, South Street Subs, Nanticoke and partner of EPCAMR's who supplies EPCAMR with lunches for many of our cleanup events

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

- Coordinated co-hosting a RECLAIM Town Hall with Appalachian Voices and other Appalachian partners to put on a Facebook Live event to discuss AML Reauthorization and RECLAIM; Invited *Congressman Matt Cartwright* and other officials and community groups to speak; Worked with *Austin Counts* and *Chelsea Barnes*, Appalachian Voices to plan the Town Hall; Provided *Austin* with EPCAMR's logo as a co-host
- Referred *Ana C. Singh*, PhD Candidate, School of Civil, Environmental and Mining Engineering-The University of Western Australia, Perth WA Australia to our [www.treatminewater.com](http://www.treatminewater.com) website for presentations that were on the WHOVA platform from last year's PA AMR Virtual Conference
- Attended the PA TU Regional Virtual Training on the Benefits of Woody Materials for instream habitat by *Luke Bodnar* & Biodegradable Erosion Controls for watershed restoration projects by *Joe Greco*
- Shared POWR's upcoming [Wild & Scenic Film Festival](#) for *Tali MacArthur*, Program Manager for Watershed Outreach for PEC; Watch the 2021 [Film Festival Trailer](#)
- EPCAMR Executive Director made a presentation on March 16<sup>th</sup> to the [PA Citizens Advisory Council](#) at the request of *Keith Salador*, Executive Director, on our work, AML Reauthorization, RECLAIM, and opportunities for partnerships with the PA CAC; Requested that they consider writing a letter of support for Reauthorization of the AML Trust Fund; Forwarded 3 presentations to the PA CAC for all of the members to have copies; Received a note following the presentation from a colleague, *Josie Gaskey*, PACA thanking the Executive Director for an outstanding presentation, our efficiency, and innovation
- Received the PA AMR Conference RFP from *Anne Daymut*, WPCAMR for distribution; *Mike* and the Executive Director began looking at the themes for the 2021 Virtual Conference in WordPress; Sent around several options for the PA AMR Conference Committee to take a look at and give us their opinions
- EPCAMR will be making a presentation at the [2021 Professional Recyclers of PA \(PROP\) Conference](#) virtually scheduled for July 13-15<sup>th</sup>, 2021; EPCAMR will talk about how the waste culm from the Swoyersville Culm Bank Removal AMLER Project is utilized for electrical generation in two co-generation facilities in the combustable fluidized bed boiler (CFB) process that is mixed with limestone to create a beneficial use by-product that is used as a co-product in the reclamation of abandoned mine lands
- Registered for the PA DEP NPS/319 QAPP Training on April 13<sup>th</sup>
- Participated in the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Overview of Federal Grant Regulations for PA POWER Applications

- [U.S. Global Leadership Coalition](#) invited the EPCAMR Executive Director to attend their regional virtual Executive Roundtable for state and local leaders in Hazleton and Eastern PA to discuss region environmental issues, strategic investments in international development and diplomacy, and economic development opportunities and drivers for PA
- Registered to attend the virtual Environmental Justice in PA [Conference Event](#)
- Provided an EPCAMR Overview Presentation and Mine Pool Mapping Presentation for *Dr. Brian Whitman* and *Dr. Bobby Karimi's* Wilkes University Class; Provided a walking tour for a few of the students in their class to the Nanticoke Creek headwaters and then down to the Askam AMD Borehole along Dundee Road; The students would like to come out for a second field tour to investigate other portions of the Nanticoke Creek watershed; The students are looking to monitor and potentially map surface waters entering the subsurface and mine pool in a small area; Nanticoke Creek headwaters was chosen because there are a number of fractures and faults in the stream bottom that allow for subsurface flow or losing reaches of stream to occur frequently; Provided the Professors with lots of background information on the Nanticoke Creek watershed for themselves and the students
- EPCAMR Executive Director was requested to be a Webinar guest speaker virtually at the PACA meeting by *Josie Gaskey*, Executive Director on May 13<sup>th</sup> at 2pm to talk about or work in the region
- Attended the PAEE 2021 "Opportunities for Action" Virtual Conference on March 22-23<sup>rd</sup>

### **EPCAMR Program Administration**

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA, Invest Accounts; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for March 2021 with Highmark; Paid Verizon and Internet monthly bills; Paid EC the rent; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register; Provided *Denise* with the March 2021 Statement for reconciliations; Made a deposit to FNB for incoming reimbursements and accounts receivables
- Sent a reminder out to all Staff to ensure that they have all of their timesheets caught up and printed for signatures to be filed at the EPCAMR Office
- EPCAMR temporarily suspended one of our miFi Verizon accounts for three months until we are in the field more to utilize the service
- Provided *Denise* with payroll details reports for 319 Reimbursements for October-December 2020

- Took down the two surveillance cameras for updating and recharging back at the EPCAMR Office for the Spring under the Keep PA Beautiful Camera Loaner Surveillance Program a week before the Centralia Apple Tree Planting
- Coordinated and convened a Zoom call to continue working on the EPCAMR Strategic Plan Update for 2020-2025 with our Strategic Planning Committee
- Talked with *Mary Newsome*, AVP Branch Manager from First National Bank, who informed EPCAMR that we could apply for a second round of PPP funds through the Small Business Administration; She provided EPCAMR with the online portal to complete and submit the application; EPCAMR Executive Director applied once all of the previous information was uploaded and approved for the loan forgiveness under the Short Form 3508S in the first round; Worked with OneSource to acquire additional reports and documentation that needed to be submitted related to payroll services and prepared a letter to provide our formula for determining the loan amount for the 2<sup>nd</sup> draw of PPP
- Reviewed the [HR 1146 Community Reclamation Partnerships Act](#) provided by *Greg Conrad* sponsored by *Rep. Lahood* from Illinois that is identical to last year's HR 315 to include in the Testimony before the House Natural Resources Committee that EPCAMR is supportive of the bill
- Delivered our POWR 2021-2022 General Liability Insurance Renewal paperwork to the PEC Office in Luzerne
- Prepared a letter of support on behalf of EPCAMR for the Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee to keep it funded and operational; Submitted the letter to *Tony Guerrieri*, Executive Director; On June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, after 53 years of service, the PA General Assembly will be abolishing its only nonpartisan source of environmental policy analysis in the Commonwealth; The Joint Legislative Conservation Committee provides the General Assembly with objective and authoritative analysis of a broad range of economic, environmental, and social factors that all play a critical role in the way natural resources are used and reused
- Touched base with all EPCAMR Staff individually, looking ahead into mid-to late March, April, May, June 2021 to talk about activities, projects, monitoring, scheduling work, and catching up on projects that are underway
- Received our quote from Fondreist Environmental for a new YSI ProQuatro Meter; They are also repairing our current YSI ProPlus meter; We will now be able to measure temperature, conductivity, pH, dissolved oxygen, and nitrates simultaneously with this meter and save a lot of time in the field