



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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May 2021 Progress Report

Project Coordination

OSMRE/AmeriCorps VISTA Stewards Individual Placement Program (SIPP)

- Worked with *Kyle Argenziano* to make suggestions to the Huber Breaker Preservation Society on upcoming fundraisers for their community garden projects and others in the Miners Memorial Park in Ashley, PA on the former grounds of the Huber Breaker Colliery
- Made comments and corrections to *Kyle's* [AMD Treatment Systems](#) presentation/resource document for our website
- Conservation Legacy provided updated rules on returning to work and riding in vehicles that are now more relaxed and informed EPCAMR; Updated *JM Audenrik*, Program Coordinator, Conservation Legacy on the continued work that Kyle is doing while teleworking and that he is currently seeking full-time employment upon the completion of his 1st year volunteer commitment in the middle of July 2021
- *Kyle* created some water quality data tables for the Loyalsock Creek data that we'll submit to the Foundation for PA Watersheds at the end of his term in mid-July 2021; *Mike Hewitt* and the Executive Director reviewed the data for comments and suggestions
- Prepared a **\$7500** [Clif Bar Family Foundation Operating Support](#) grant with *Kyle* to promote the continued use and giveaway of the remaining Growboxxes to other community gardens in the EPCAMR Region in communities that are underserved; Seeds and vegetable plants can be purchased to be given away with the Growboxxes and Staff time will be available to distribute and promote the use of the biodegradable plant box
- *Kyle* worked with the Executive Director to create several Food Desert Maps for the Growboxx Food by Youth Initiative with ISI

Swoyersville Harry E. Reclamation and Community Athletic Area AMLER Project

- Clarified the payroll certifications for the project from March, April of 2020 and then in March of 2021 before submitting the request for reimbursement to the PA DEP BAMR

Southern Wyoming Valley NFWF Small Watershed Grant Program

- Reached out to *Andrew Young*, NFWF Project Officer to see if we are still waiting on a fully executed grant agreement before we can start field work and data collection for the project; EPCAMR is waiting on a notice to proceed and a final agreement

PA American Water Charitable Trust Keeping the Water Flowing

- Provided *Denise* with the Final Report to draw down on some of the remaining funds and to roll the additional funding over to 2021 for additional cleanups; PA American Water was provided with a copy already of the final report along with the Charitable Trust Foundation in 2020

Healing the Scars: Reclaiming Northeastern PA! with ISI

- Convened a conference call to kick off the ***Healing the Scars: Reclaiming Northeastern PA!*** Grant with ISI; Worked on defining the scope of work in order to re-issue the grant agreement that will be funded for 3 years in 1-year increments; Held a creative content discussion Zoom Call with ISI

Appalachian Tree Planting Initiative with ISI

- Provided some additional remaining apple trees to community members throughout the Wyoming Valley at our second Giveaway at our EPCAMR Office on May 12th; Wrapped up the final report and expenses with *Laura* to submit to *Claudia Meglin*-ISI, before moving on to the next project with ISI; Provided an exhaustive list of partners in the collaborative we put together for the Centralia Apple Tree Planting and additional earlier presentation materials and summary reports to *Claudia* for inclusion in her Appendix to the Final Report; Submitted an invoice for the remaining balance of the grant to ISI

Growboxx Food by Youth Initiative with ISI

- Reviewed EPCAMR's Food by Youth Final Report draft from FY2018-2021 before submitting to *Claudia Meglin*, ISI, who will be submitting it to the Mental Insight Foundation; Created and included the Food Desert Maps for the Wyoming Valley, including The Graham Academy, Hanover Area, Nanticoke Area, Wilkes-Barre Area, Urban Food Deserts within the Greater Wyoming Valley, and a combination of all the above area school districts in one map; Summary Statistics were also included as a separate document to analyze the GIS data

Keep PA Beautiful Camera Surveillance Loaner Program in Centralia

- Informed *Rob Dubas*, that we would be returning the two remaining cameras from Centralia at this time due to the significant decrease and drop in illegal dumping around Centralia since the Apple Tree Planting and the fact that the Graffiti Highway is now covered with dirt and the land has been put into the PA Game Commission's Game Cooperative Program

PA American Water Mill Creek Temperature Logging Monitoring Project

- Installed additional temperature loggers and grabbed data from previously placed data HOBO temperature sensors throughout the Mill Creek and Gardner Creek watersheds with several of the EPCAMR Staff

STEAM in the STREAMS Day Camp PA DEP Environmental Education Grant

- Assisted *Laura* with completing her reimbursement paperwork for the grant and provided her with the necessary bank account information, Vendor ID number, SAP number, and EIN number for the documentation she needed to submit to PA DEP EE Program

Technical Assistance

- Met with *Colin Gardner*, [S3 Stormwater Solution Source](#), LLC, to show him some AMD sites in the Wyoming Valley and to obtain a sample of metal loc to run a few samples of AMD through it to see how it performs; Provided with him some lead contacts for the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority
- Provided *Tom Clark*, SRBC AMD Basin Coordinator with a list of EPCAMR's Wish List Projects that were previously proposed to the US ACE in 2020 for consideration under several of their programs, however, we never heard back from them on whether or not there was a possibility of moving forward with any of the proposed projects
- Conference call with Craig Stevens, PG, LSRP, Principal for CSI Environmental, LLC to discuss him making a follow up call with SRBC on an earlier project EPCAMR completed at the Mocanaqua Tunnel for the Consumptive Use Feasibility Study
- Provided *Mike Hewitt*, EPCAMR Program Manager with a copy of the TU TAG Biological Assessment on the Loyalsock Creek for his review and a copy of the recently submitted NFWF Proposal by *Dr. Jonathan Niles* at Susquehanna University for a technical planning grant to study the area between Forksville and the PA US Route 220 Bridge up to Ellis Creek to identify high priority areas for in-stream enhancements and restoration projects on the Loyalsock Creek with Trout Unlimited; Connected *Tom Clark*, SRBC AMD Basin Coordinator with *Walt Nicholson*-Susquehanna County Chapter TU who is working in the Loyalsock Creek to discuss AMD Treatment enhancements options and filled him in on our recent work on Lycoming Creek in the McIntyre WILDS; Visited the Loyalsock Creek AMD Treatment Systems with Tom Clark, Walt Nicholson, and the EPCAMR Staff during our monthly sampling and split sample to obtain some additional data on the watershed
- Submitted a check to King's College, Institutional Advancement Office for **\$250** towards the Mechanical Engineering Class Project for supplies, parts, tools, and equipment needed to create a more efficient iron oxide processing machine for EPCAMR as a part of their Senior Class Project; Attended the final presentation and unveiling of the iron oxide processor at the Mechanical Engineering School in Wilkes-Barre on Campus on May 12th
- Submitted a software technical assistance grant to Ripple Effect/Aquatic Informatics to see if EPCAMR could possibly utilize a new data management system and tool to share and visualize with our stakeholders and partners water quality data from the AMD and biological and chemical monitoring we conduct throughout the region; Communicated with *Kevin Martin* on the application process; July 30th, the recipients will be picked
- Provided some ideas and technical assistance to Mike Shimko and Keith Eberts from the Wilkes-Barre Area STEM School who were looking for ideas to implement in the Fall 2021 when the students head back to the new school for Wilkes-Barre Area that has been constructed on a former abandoned mine site and previously mined area in Plains Township, Luzerne County; The new school is located in the Mill Creek watershed, so the Executive Director submitted and recommended a bunch of ideas for consideration that were place-based and could occur on school grounds or relatively close to the school grounds

- Provided *Don Kane Jr.*-Huber Breaker Preservation Society with information that he needed to complete as well as the Borough of Ashley to submit a grant through the new Green Portal for the Commonwealth for a request for additional funds for the Miner's Memorial Park enhancements; EPCAMR doesn't have access to the information that is required to be submitted by the Borough and the limited window of time to put the information in to the portal won't all the time needed to be spent on a Friday to input the data or documents when they aren't readily available
- Provided *Jen Quinn*, Legislative and Political Director for the Sierra Club Pennsylvania with a link to the report on the Community Solar Application Potential on Reclaimed Abandoned Mine Lands produced by the Reclaiming Appalachia Coalition that highlights EPCAMR's GIS Site Selection Criteria Tool that can filter suitable sites
- Prepared two letters of support to *Dr. Liz Hughes*, Director of Communications, for Earth Conservancy's Growing Greener Grants for culvert-cleaning/replacement down on LCCC's Campus along Espy Run and one for the assessment of the Askam AMD Treatment System
- Provided a letter of support to *Martin Barry*, Manager for Dallas Township, to the PA DCED Greenways and Trails Grant Program for the second phase of the Southside Nature Park in the Toby Creek Watershed; EPCAMR had this park included in the Coldwater Conservation Plan for the Upper Toby Creek Watershed that it completed in 2020
- Provided a letter of support to *Hannah Clemenson*, Program Coordinator, for [PEC's](#) NRCS US Endowment for Forestry and Communities Regional Conservation Partnership Program Alternative Funding Arrangements funds for their work with Qualified Ventures to look at aggregating smaller legacy mine land properties for work to focus on creating habitat with plantings for 5 years and then supplementing NRCS contribution with the sale of carbon credits; EPCAMR is a supportive partner in the PEC Legacy Mine Land Reforestation Program state-wide
- Forwarded a link to the EPCAMR Staff on Appalachian Voices new ArcGIS Online (AGOL) Information on Tracking and Assessing Reclamation through Reforestation in Central Appalachia on AML sites; It may have future applications for ARRI and FRA approaches to reclamation here in PA; Provided the Staff with a [report](#) from them that was recently released

ACPower Solar Power on Reclaimed AML Landowner Outreach

- Reached out to ARIPPA to see if they had any contacts for the Tarbell Company, who now owns the former NEPCO Co-Gen Plant in McAdoo; EPCAMR was making an initial outreach call to them to see if they were interested in discussing solar development on the reclaimed abandoned mine lands surrounding the former Co-Gen Plant; Received information from Cristy Sweeney, ARIPPA, and forwarded it on to *Briana McDuff*; Received information from *Briana* on life expectancy of solar panels and how to recycle them and where; [SEIA National PV Recycling Program](#); [End-of-Life Management for Solar Photovoltaics | Department of Energy ; Solar panels are starting to die. What will we do with the megatons of toxic trash? | Grist](#)

Little Leaf Mine Pool Feasibility Study in McAdoo for Geothermal Potential

- Worked with Little Leaf and Tetra Tech to submit a POWER Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant and a Reclaiming Appalachia Coalition (RAC) grant to determine the feasibility of utilizing one of several mine pools beneath McAdoo for geothermal potential in a greenhouse system; Received a letter stating that RAC didn't have enough funds to fully fund all of their submissions, including ours at this time

Education & Outreach

- Working on getting a conference call scheduled to speak with *Jamie Habberfield*, [IMG Energy Solutions](#), Pittsburgh about siting solar development projects on formerly reclaimed abandoned mine land sites
- Provided *Dustin Tingley* and *Alison Hu*, Harvard University, some links to the recent flurry of articles and the EPCAMR Executive Director's [testimony](#) on the abandoned mine land trust fund reauthorization and economic development issues brought up at the House Natural Resources Hearing in Congress
- Participated in the Earth/Space Sciences Content Area Standards Review for the PA Department of Education as a member of the larger Content Committee that is continuing to review and provide comments on the updating process of the PA Standards for Environment, Ecology, Science, and others
- Provided contact information to *Dan Taylor*, Blue Green Alliance- Appalachian Region Field Organizer, that EPCAMR has for several local union and trade organizations that may be interested in supporting reauthorization of the abandoned mine land trust fund and the economic development bills that are moving forward to create jobs in the region; Introduced *Dan* to the PA AML Campaign and provided the members with his contact
- EPCAMR informed the National RECLAIM Coalition partners that we were supportive of the [Manchin-led Bills related to AML in the US Senate](#); 3 AML bills passed out of the House Natural Resources Committee on May 26th during its markup and are now poised for action by the full House. **H.R. 1733** (RECLAIM) and **H.R. 1734** (Reauthorization) passed on voice votes and **H.R. 1146** (Community Reclamation Partnerships) passed by unanimous consent
- EPCAMR Executive Director was informed by the Editorial Review Board of the International Society of Education through Art ([INSEA](#)) that our collective work on a visual essay with *Beth Berkhauser* and *Dr. Andrea Nerozzi* will be published in **Learning through Art: International Pictures of Practice**; The publication will feature some photos and a summary on how we teach youth about AMD and incorporate art into environmental education and local outdoor meaningful watershed education experiences

- EPCAMR had its logo placed on an electronic billboard with other regional partners in the Wyoming Valley by the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority to encourage people to stop polluting our environment by disposing of masks along our roadsides, streams, and storm drains; The billboard is located on State Route 315 that parallels Interstate I-81



- Provided *Jason Peters* with some AMD photos and AML photos for a news story he's running and would provide a link to EPCAMR once it's published
- EPCAMR signed on to a letter with the [Growing Greener Coalition](#) to support the use of American Rescue Plan funds for PA's critical water needs, including AMD remediation and green infrastructure
- *Keith Salador*, Executive Director of the PA Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) informed EPCAMR that they sent letters to PA's Congressional members in support of Reauthorization of the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund; Informed the PA AML Campaign
- Worked with PennEnvironment to create an [action page](#) to tell Congress to clean up the legacy of past mining practices
- *Joe Pizarchik*, provided a link to his [Guest Essay](#) on AML published in the PA Environmental Digest; Several of the PA AML Campaign's short social media videos are linked in the essay; Participated in two PA AML Campaign conference calls to hear updates on various legislative bills in Congress and the Senate

Community Volunteer Coordination

- EPCAMR Executive Director was asked to be a Guest Speaker for Earth Day at King's College for two different time slots and groups in the morning and afternoon on Campus to talk about our work in the region and to then participate in two community cleanups along the Susquehanna River in Wilkes-Barre on both sides of the Market Street Bridge

- EPCAMR loaned out some field nets and educational resources to *Rich Troscianecki*, Coordinator for the Penn State Master Watershed Stewards Program for Luzerne/Lackawanna; *Rich* used them at an educational program at Lake-Noxen Elementary school in the Lake-Lehman School District, Luzerne County
- Participated in a conference call with PennFuture, Choose Clean Water Coalition (CCWC) representatives, Lackawanna River Conservation Association, Luzerne Conservation District, and Chesapeake Bay Foundation with the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority to discuss water quality solutions, MS4, AMD, and outreach efforts that can be undertaken jointly by partners in the CCWC
- Coordinated a roadside litter cleanup for Father's Day Weekend in June with the PA Water Environmental Association ([PWEA](#)), Friends of the Nescopeck, and PA DCNR Bureau of State Park-Nescopeck State Park along Tunnel Road on PA Game Commission public lands, in Dennison Township, Luzerne County
- Participated in a conference call with PA DEP, EPA, the faith-based community, and other partners in the Shamokin Creek watershed with the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance (SCRA) to address AMD issues in the Western Middle Anthracite Region; Provided them with links to valuable resources that might help them as they develop additional restoration plans and ideas for future implementation
- EPCAMR Staff assisted *John Levitsky*, Luzerne Conservation District Watershed Specialist, with the riparian buffer planting project of **350** native trees in the E. Fork of the Harvey's Creek watershed at the Hayfield Homeowners Association, upstream of the intersection of Deer Park Road and Hayfield Road, Lehman Township

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

- Provided an EPCAMR Webinar Presentation on our work in the region to the PA Aggregates & Concrete Association ([PACA](#))
- Provided a presentation on Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) Training for assessing culverts to recruit additional volunteers for EPCAMR from the Penn State Master Watershed Stewards Program who were interested in obtaining the Lead Observer Certification to volunteer with EPCAMR in the Luzerne/Lackawanna County watersheds
- Participated in the online CCWC Conference and came across a very important link to GIS layers from the American Community Survey that has data layers related to Environmental Justice (EJ) and Equity, very similar to EJ Screen at the US EPA; It's for the Chesapeake Bay watershed; Forwarded it to all EPCAMR Staff as it may be helpful to EPCAMR at some point for grants and demographics; [Environmental Justice and Equity CCWC Presentation EJ ArcGIS Online Map; Chesapeake Bay Diversity Dashboard](#)
- Participated in the Celebration of PA's Watersheds Webinar

- Continued planning for the 2021 Fall October 27-28th PA AMR Conference continued and a June Conference Call was scheduled

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA, Invest Accounts; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for May 2021 with Highmark; Paid Verizon and Internet monthly bills; Paid EC the rent; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register; Provided *Denise* with the May 2021 Statement for reconciliations; Made a deposit to FNB for incoming reimbursements and accounts receivables
- Sullivan County Conservation District will be seeking to fill the Watershed Specialist position since *Gloria Norcross* had announced she'll be leaving on May 5th for a new job; She informed the District Manager that the new position should definitely get in touch with EPCAMR to continue to coordinate efforts in the Loyalsock Creek watershed and with our partners in Sullivan County
- Provided feedback and a grade to *Marc Marchese*, King's College Professor, on Senior, *Shannon Drevitch's* 25 hours of volunteer work for EPCAMR to compile the notes into a PowerPoint from a previously attended Deming Institute workshop by the Executive Director
- Submitted a **\$100,000** grant to the ***Just Transition Fund*** to provide Technical Assistance and to build our organizational capacity in the region; *Rachael Young*, requested additional information and answers to some follow up questions related to the application and they were immediately responded to and submitted for her further review
- Nominated *Louise Dunlap* for a PennFuture Women in Conservation Award Lifetime Achievement, posthumously, for her work on AML reauthorization, the PA AML Campaign, SMCRA, and many other accomplishments over her career and submitted it for consideration and review
- Informed *Geoff Shaw*, Earth Conservancy, of the grant recipient's responsibilities for the previous receipt of the **\$2500** mini-grant award from ARIPPA for the data loggers placed and installed in the Nanticoke Creek watershed
- Informed *Trish Attardo*, Water Program Specialist, Watershed Support Section of the PA DEP-Chesapeake Bay Office that EPCAMR wouldn't need an extension to complete our FY 2017 Section 319 Grant that ends on June 30, 2021; EPCAMR has our new grant that starts on July 1, 2021 that we will roll right into this Summer
- EPCAMR Staff had to send out our YSI Professional Series Pro multi-parameter probe for a tune up by Fondreist and ordered an adapter that we need for our dataloggers
- Participated in the preliminary Communications Committee Meeting on May 27th; *Alana Mauger*, (Chair) will be sending out notes from the call to EPCAMR

- Conducted our 2nd Quarter EPCAMR Board Meeting virtually by ZOOM on May 20th; Welcomed *Gabby Zawacki* back as an EPCAMR At-Large Board Member from Patagonia Inc.; Coordinated with *Dr. Nerozzi*, about getting together with *Dr. Klemow* (Chair) and scheduling an Education Committee following classes and the collegiate semester in mid-June; Provided updated Strategic Planning document Action Planning Goals document from the Strategic Planning Committee to the Board
- Coordinated with all EPCAMR Staff about a slow transition and return to the Office Plan for the late Summer, early Fall 2021, since the Governor had put out a [release](#) that is looking to lift COVID mitigation orders, including restrictions on businesses, on Memorial Day, May 31st; EC provided EPCAMR with their masking policy that is still in effect, alternating schedules a few days a week, no large groups in the Office, and 25% occupancy for the conference room; Informed the EPCAMR Board of the updates; Relayed our intentions to *Terry Ostrowski*, EC, following the Board Meeting
- Completed the ***PA Department of State Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations Decennial Report of Association Continued Existence Form*** and submitted the **\$70** payment fee, change of address for submission and placed in the mail