



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

Robert E. Hughes, *Executive Director*

101 South Main Street

Ashley, PA 18706

Phone: (570) 371-3523

E-mail: rhughes@epcamr.org

Website: www.epcamr.org

November 2015 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- Attended the *PA Aggregates and Concrete Association (PACA)* Board Meeting, Hershey, PA upon the invitation of *Peter Vlahos*, President of the Board to make a presentation on EPCAMR, our projects, the dependency on the aggregate industry for many of our construction projects, and our outreach support in the region where we would welcome additional partnerships with regional industries and quarries; Forwarded PACA a copy of EPCAMR's Clean Power Plan comments; www.pacaweb.org
- Met with *Paul Golias*, Staff Correspondent for the Citizen's Voice newspaper to be interviewed for an update on EPCAMR's mine pool mapping and 3D modeling efforts in the region; <http://citizensvoice.com/news/water-under-wyoming-valley-is-a-blessing-and-a-curse-1.1974624>
- Provided *David Brocca*, Director for the ***Knox Mine Disaster*** documentary, several pictures of a recent AMD discharge that EPCAMR had found along the toe of the streambank along the eastern shore of the Susquehanna River near the location of the original Knox Mine Disaster; www.knoxminedisaster.com
- Corresponded with *Liz Hermsen*, Senator Casey's Office, to ask her to send a message to Senator Casey to remain strong in support of his for clean water protections by voting against SB 1140
- Provided Representative *Aaron Kaufer* and his Staff with a presentation on the PennEast proposed Pipeline Project and EPCAMR's initial assessment of the impacts on the underground abandoned mines in the area of the crossing and our organization's 3D mine underground mine pool mapping, and the impacts of a recent legislative bill that passed in the General Assembly that affects mine water pollution that can now be used for fracking oil & gas wells in the Marcellus Shale region of PA
- Signed up to become a partner in the ***Delaware River Watershed Coalition (DRWC)*** upon the request and referral of *Kate Gibbons*, PennFuture NE Office, who is on a steering committee to facilitate input, information, and funding opportunity sharing up and down the watershed, with the many different issues/concerns; Received a response from Madeline Emde, Assistant Coordinator for the DRWC
- EPCAMR signed on to a "Thank You" note through the ***Choose Clean Water Coalition*** that went to 9/12 Senators in the Chesapeake Bay watershed (excluding Toomey, Manchin and Capito) who voted against the two bills which would have stopped the Clean Water Rule

- Received and reviewed *Vince Brosini's*, Director of Environmental Affairs for Olympus Power, LLC comments on the Clean Power Plan and HB1370 and forwarded him EPCAMR's comments on the Clean Power Plan that were submitted to the PA DEP, EPA, and ARIPPA
- The Wolf Administration plans to propose a major new state investment in conservation and environmental protection-a "**Growing Greener 3**"-in 2016; To this end, it's seeking ideas and feedback from interested organizations and EPCAMR has forwarded the survey to our constituents so that they can provide input and shape of the Administration's proposal by answering all or some of the survey questions at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GrowingGreener>

Technical Assistance

- Met with *Dr. Lowell Sieck*, Ph. D. and *Craig Stevens*, CSI Environmental, LLC to discuss a new water filtration AMD treatment technology that they have patented and are looking to pilot in the Anthracite Region; Provided them with an AMD Tour of the Southern Wyoming Valley to several discharge locations to grab mine water samples and provided them with water quality and quantity information that EPCAMR had in our database and corrected some information they provided to us in their summary notes from the tour of the southern Wyoming Valley AMD discharges; Updated *Tom Clark*-SRBC AMD Coordinator about our meeting; Provided a link to *Derrick Thorn*, intern for CSI to the www.minemaps.psu.edu website where all of the EPCAMR maps have been uploaded for cloud storage on the Penn-State server; *Kevin Costello*, CSI Environmental, LLC has been supporting their efforts regarding AMD treatment and has been coordinating with personnel at Willowstick Technologies (WT); WT has offered to coordinate a Webinar in December 2015 to explain their Willowstick investigative tool and answer questions which seemed of interest to some EPCAMR partners in the region, including SRBC and the LRCA
- Drafted an Internship document Activity Description for a potential Community Development Specialist position for the Huber Breaker Preservation Society and forwarded it to *Pat Kennedy*, from their Board for review and use
- Reviewed OSM TIPS Service Management Plan update from *Tom Koptchak*; Provided *Arielle Avishai*, OSM, with some information on EPCAMR's use of GIS symbology for our RAMLIS Community Tool for her and other committee members to look from the GeoSpatial Data Standards Team
- Provided *Elizabeth Hughes*, EC, with a list of local community groups and partners at her request for an EPA Brownfields proposal that EPCAMR is supporting for the continued remediation and reclamation in the Espy Run watershed of the Nanticoke Creek, Luzerne County; Prepared a Letter of Commitment for the EC Brownfields Grant application and provided it to *Elizabeth*
- Reached out to *Nate Zalik*, PA Game Commission Wildlife Biologist, to inquire as to whether or not a freshwater mussel survey on the populations and the impacts from the many contributing AMD tributaries has occurred on the N. Branch of the Susquehanna River (from Harding, PA south to the Lackawanna River confluence near W. Pittston, PA from the Lackawanna Valley, to the southern terminus of the Wyoming Valley, near Shickshinny and Mocanaqua, PA); EPCAMR was a member of the Habitat Advisory Committee that helped to develop the PGC Wildlife Habitat Plan and the previous update and worked with *Catherine Haffner*; EPCAMR is interested in pursuing the development of a partnership in our area to potentially submit a grant to perform such work with one or more of our local colleges and our County Conservation District Watershed Specialist in Luzerne County (John Levitsky) in the area (Wilkes University or King's College);

EPCAMR would ultimately like to make a case to other funders in the lower portion of the Chesapeake Bay (tide water areas) that water quality improvements in the upper reaches of the Bay (and funding that may come from the lower reaches potentially) can have a huge impact on increasing and improving the freshwater mussel populations and diversity of species along the entire drainage area to the Bay, if it is warranted; EPCAMR is very interested in pursuing such a study, research effort, and field investigation, if there is some funding available. We have kayaks, staff who are trained in water quality monitoring and conducting watershed assessments, macro-invertebrate assessments and identification, and work on many other environmental education and community outreach projects and programs throughout the AMD impacted regions of the Northern Anthracite Coalfields; We believe that there might be an indication of deleterious impacts to the populations and diversity of species based on taking a closer look at the shells of the freshwater mussels and the calcium deficiency or ability to filter iron oxide sediments through their bodies. What we don't know is if there is an overall cumulative effect on the populations above and below the AMD impacted areas, so we'd like to investigate and test our hypothesis further; EPCAMR was referred to Diana Day, PA Fish & Boat Commission; She forwarded EPCAMR two recent studies and looked forward to our partnership in the future should some funding become available; The Middle Susquehanna was surveyed in 2009, but not in great detail in the area EPCAMR had inquired about where the AMD impacts were most prevalent

- *Jim Gusek*, Sovereign Consulting, CO, provided EPCAMR with three published papers that may have some relevance to suppressing ARD/AMD in the Susquehanna River Basin, especially in the “beach zone” of coal slurry deposits that may have been backfilled into underground mines or coarse coal refuse piles; Of particular interest is the potential beneficial use of waste milk in suppression of AMD in pyritic coal waste; Sovereign participated in a follow-up, better-controlled experiment at a coal mine site in eastern Tennessee and the preliminary results were promising; It appears that waste milk (or fresh milk for that matter) has a “heat seeking missile” characteristic: when the casein protein in milk encounters a pH below 4.6, it degrades into your standard curds and whey, effectively coating pyrite surfaces with an organic biofilm where beneficial microbes out-compete *Acidithiobacillus ferrooxidans*, basically shutting down the AMD production process; The “milk process” is patented but the patent holders (Western Research Institute in Laramie, WY) and they aren't greedy and Sovereign is poised to obtain a license to use the technology; Under the right design conditions, the benefits of milk application might be sustainable or semi-permanent; Jim would like to get together with EPCAMR, EC, and EPCAMR would like to bring in the SRBC to discuss any potential sites in the future; EPCAMR followed up and will follow up again after the New Year

Community Volunteer Service Coordination

- *Kristin Zupko*, Nanticoke, PA signed up through MailChimp to become a future community service volunteer with EPCAMR
- Continued working with *Daniel Pomlett*, volunteer, to break down our PA AML Campaign document into an easier to read infographic
- Provided Jennifer *Kozlansky*, volunteer, with EPCAMR photos for her to work on a video for EPCAMR to highlight some of our work
- *Ivy Priest*, Hunlocks Creek, PA and *Adam Rogers*, Kingston, PA signed up to become a future EPCAMR community service volunteers

Project Coordination

- Participated in a Leadership Team conference call for **EECapacity**; Denise created an updated agenda and a reminder was sent out to all for the 12-7-15 Community of Learners conference call; Signed the **NAAEE EE Capacity** contract along with *Ed McCrea*, President-PAEE for EPCAMR to serve as grant administrator and fiscal sponsor on behalf of PAEE and forwarded it back to *Lori Mann-NAAEE* President; Encouraged Ed and PAEE to participate in the upcoming survey that is a part of the grant that can incorporate any questions brought forth by the PAEE Board, in addition to the PA EE Capacity Leadership Team and the Community of Learners; The survey will be prepared by Wil Taylor, from the PA DCNR Jennings Environmental Education Center
- Informed *Rusty Bennett*-Mehoopany Creek Watershed Association that EPCAMR had put their \$800 check in the mail for their limestone sand supply for the Spring of 2016 that was funded under our ARIPPA AMD/AML Mini-Grant program
- Communicated with *Loren Cole*, ISI, LLC to receive an updated on when our Waterboxx parts will be shipped under our **Groassis Waterboxx Phase III Research Project** that we'll be trying to get off the ground once all of the parts come in through US Customs from Holland; Discussed project with EPCAMR Staff
- Dropped off mine map sets of the OSM Folios for Plains Township and Edwardsville Borough under **the PennEast Pipeline Community Connector Mine Map Grant**; Directed *Gabby* or *Liz* to update our municipal official's database with *Dave Saraka's* name, who is the Code Enforcement Officer for Edwardsville Borough; Provided Plains Township Planning Commissioner *Karen Rubasky* with a copy of the grid system for the OSM Folios
- **Lewis Mine AMD Rehabilitation Project**; Reviewed PA DEP Moshannon District Mining Office Surface Mine Inspector-*Aaron Pontzer's* Inspection Report of the progress being made on the construction project; Submitted a 5th invoice and progress report on 11-3-15 to confirm completion of the construction project; Included Rexer's LLC Invoices and Reports; On 11-5-15, *Aaron Pontzer*-PA DEP Moshannon Office visited the site with *Chris Hartman*, the PA DEP Operation & Maintenance contractor to show him the site before Winter set in; On 11-24-15, EPCAMR visited the site to inspect the final construction rehabilitation elements of the AMD Treatment system with all partners, including PA DEP Moshannon DMO, *Corey Richmond*-Watershed Specialist-Sullivan County Conservation District, *Marc Lewis* (landowner), and Rexers LLC (the contractor); Provided *Corey* with a few photos for inclusion in a report that he was giving to the Sullivan County Conservation District Board and had *Gabby* post some pictures on our EPCAMR social media site; Updated Reimbursement 4th Invoice for *Eric Rosengrant*, PA DEP Moshannon DMO and Invoice #5 that had a few minor errors; *Marc* was very pleased with the final rehabilitation and construction of the project and informed us that there was no need to keep the access road open to the lower wetland pond and is fine with blocking it off according to PA DOT specifications
- Reviewed *Patrick Jaquay's* comments on EPCAMR's submissions of mine map work from September and October 2015 and the minor corrections that needed to be updated and resubmitted under the **MSI Mine Map Project**; Forwarded to *Kelsey* for review
- **Hicks Creek Natural Stream Channel Design Project**; Mike took some time to geo-reference the mine maps and the cross-section map from the OSM Folio Series in the area of our project and we provided them to Skelly & Loy, for point of reference; We think that pulling the stream back a little further away from the road on the first turn might keep more of the baseflow on the surface; We don't believe it needs a change in the design, we just think we should talk about it when we eventually get to the site showing; The flow seems to be pulled right into an old slope that is backfilled in that area; It

would be important to note this location on the first turn due to the use of heavy equipment in that area; Mike tied them in to the surface maps and the underground mine maps in that area

- Received notice and funds from **NOAA/Chesapeake Bay Trust Mini-EE** grant for **\$3549** To develop AMD Models with STEM students from Wilkes-Barre Area School District's EL Meyers HS following an AMD Tour involving several investigative experiences; Forwarded a letter of support from the Wilkes-Barre Area School District through *Mike Corcoran*
- NFWF grant funded our joint technical assistance proposal entitled, ***Retaining Stormwater: Green Infrastructure Practices for the City of Wilkes-Barre, PA*** under the Chesapeake Bay Technical Capacity grant program, with LandStudies for the City of Wilkes-Barre in the amount of **\$33,300**; Provided *Dan Przywara*, LandStudies, with some details on the Hollenback Park and Golf Course that they needed for the revision necessary in the grant before it was finalized
- Provided Gabby and Liz *Tony Brook's* contact information in case they needed to contact him about the history of the City of Wilkes-Barre related to the Solomon Creek Canal basin along Martin Luther King Boulevard, any collieries in that area, the railroad, and the Ellis Roberts E. South Street Bridge; His knowledge could prove valuable in our next foundation grant proposal to the ***Moses Taylor Foundation***
- Provided *Mike* and *Dave* with a link to an updated PEC Trails website that they could reference while completing the Luzerne County ATV/Potential Right-of-Ways/Trails Map that EPCAMR is in the process of creating for the ***POLARIS TRAILS Grant Program***; *Mike* was going to follow up with Davitt Woodwell, PEC President, who he met at the PEC NE Dinner; Prepared the Final Results Report and submitted it to POLARIS along with the map; <http://www.nepa.2015update.gototrails.com/>

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- Participated in a PA AMR Conference Planning Committee conference call on 11-16-15 for the continued planning of the ***2016 PA AMR Conference***; Informed the Committee that EPCAMR Staff visited Bucknell U. on 11-23-15 to walk through the campus with *Gina Stockdale*, Conference Planner, to see if it suited our needs for 2016; Reported back to the full committee of our assessment of the location as a potential candidate location for the 2016 Conference before deciding on having it at this location or IUP
- Provided ***PAEE 2016 Conference*** Program Committee with an updated Silent Auction List of contributors developed by EPCAMR that were also solicited by the Executive Director

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Accounts and PA Invest Accounts; Completed bi-weekly Payroll Reporting and submitted to RJ Zagrapan and filed reports
- Completed the September and October 2015 monthly PA DEP 319 and EPCAMR Board Report; Worked on PA DEP 319 August and September 2015 Progress Report and Reimbursement with *Mike*; Informed by *Donna Carnahan*, Project Officer from the PA DEP 319 Program that since the State Budget has not been passed yet, our reimbursements for 2015 are being frozen until it is passed

- Prepared the draft agenda for the 11-9-15 Staff Meeting and forwarded it to everyone; Held our monthly EPCAMR Staff Meeting on 11-9-15 to review projects, progress, updates, grant ideas, and meeting schedules; Met with Watershed Outreach Specialists to review status reports on projects on 11-18-15; Discussed with Staff further development and updating of our EPCAMR Strategic Plan in 2016 and ways in which all Staff need to assist in further developing grant opportunities and funding avenues; Provided Staff with a copy of the 319 NPS Update Management Plan for them to review as we collectively begin to update our own Strategic Plan after the Holidays in December 2015
- Watched a PA Commonwealth Budget Webinar provided to EPCAMR by the Governor's Office
- Attended, as a Board Member, the monthly meeting of the PA Anthracite Section SME Meeting in Hazleton, PA to discuss project updates and events; Reviewed the minutes from the 11-10-15 meeting
- Provided an updated November 2015 Memo to the EPCAMR Executive Committee on project updates and grant proposal considerations that the Staff are working on developing and submitting
- EPCAMR Staff picked up 5.5' x 10' trailer from Tractor Supply and our Polaris ETX side-by-side from Blue Ridge Polaris, Wapwallopen; Registered the trailer and side-by-side and obtained the proper registrations and insurance through Leonard's Auto Tags and State Farm Insurance
- Coordinated and ran the quarterly EPCAMR Board of Directors Meeting on 11-19-15; Reviewed and completed Mike's and the Executive Director's Self-evaluations and forwarded them to the Personnel Committee for consideration; Reviewed EPCAMR's new workplace safety policy draft prior to presenting it to the EPCAMR Board for consideration and approval; Mike took the lead on developing it and Staff provided input and edits to the overall document and it was eventually approved Appointed to the EPCAMR Board was *Jeff Gittleman*, from Hawk Mountain Labs, as an Industry member; Forwarded his resume around to the entire Board at the meeting; *Leigh Ann Henry*, EPCAMR Board Member provided Staff with a link to a potential funding source that was forwarded around to everyone to come up with a project proposal; <http://www.nfwf.org/fivestar/Pages/home.aspx>; Talked with *John Welsh*, John Welsh Photography, *Ken Klemow*, Wilkes University, and *Kate Totino*, Misericordia University, who are all interested in becoming Board Members in 2016
- Provided *Ed McCrea*, PAEE President, information on updates for the draft PAEE 2015 Updates document being given to all PAEE Board Members; Reviewed and commented on the resolution created by *Ed* outlining the duties of the Immediate Past President and a Diversity Coordinator; Participated in a quarterly PAEE Board of Directors conference call; Reviewed several sections of the Standard Operating Procedures for PAEE and provided comments back to Ed, including a copy of EPCAMR's Conflict of Interest Policy and By-Laws, in case the Board wanted to review them; Provided comments on the use of www.slideshare.net for the new PAEE website; www.paee.net
- Followed up with *Hank Zielinski*, Fuels Manager for NAES Corporation-Northampton Generating Company, to see if he wanted to schedule a follow up visit before the Thanksgiving Holidays or wait until Spring 2016 to discuss future project ideas; www.naes.com
- EPCAMR was informed from *Ron Hunter*, that our Patagonia Environmental Programs World Trout Initiative Grants Council grant from April 2015 wasn't funded in this round due to the large number of proposals submitted and their desire to fund hands-on native fish habitat restoration and protection projects and dam removals as opposed to trout stream watershed assessments
- EPCAMR was informed that our Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline Mine Mapping Proposal was also denied funding this round

- Provided *Basil Lynch*, CPA for Kovalchik & Kollar, LLP a summary review of EPCAMR's 2014 Year in Review Accomplishments, an updated Executive Board List, and highlights for inclusion with our 990 submission
- Sought a quote for Commercial Liability Insurance from Yeager Insurance on behalf of EPCAMR
- Updated EPCAMR's password on www.grants.gov
- Provided the EPCAMR Watershed Outreach Staff with the EPA Pre-Application Assistance Call Schedule (Sec. IV. D) and provided in the latest (RFP) for the [Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving \(EJ CPS\) Cooperative Agreement program](#) (EPA-OECA-OEJ-16-01) posted to www.grants.gov in case they wanted to get on one of the calls over the next few months
- Followed up with Tioga County Conservation District's District Manager-*Erica Tomlinson* to see if she wanted additional representatives appointed to the EPCAMR Board or not along with their membership
- Participated in a call with PA DCNR Secretary *Cindy Dunn* to discuss EPCAMR's ideas on the utilization of GIS layers to better develop selection criteria and priorities for funding for a future Growing Greener like funding source (Growing Greener III); Stayed in contact with *Sam Robinson*, Senior Policy Analyst for the Governor's Office and provided him and *Andrew Heath*, Renew Growing Greener Coalition with additional EPCAMR ideas and recommendations; Secretary *John Hanger* provided EPCAMR with a timeline for discussions and small and large group meetings over the next few months