



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 2019 Progress Report

Project Coordination

Upper Toby Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan Project

- Continued to work on outlining and drafting up the final Coldwater Conservation Plan document and figures, maps, and tables to be included

MSI Mine Mapping Project

- *Ed Wytovich*, Ashland, has numerous maps from the Western Middle Fields in a trunk that are from his family's private collection that we're going to incorporate into the MSI Mine Mapping Project

Huntsville Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan Project

- EPCAMR has an inventory of culverts to assess in the watershed in the Spring 2020 along with some water quality and macro biological monitoring; We have already partnered with Penn-State Wilkes-Barre where EPCAMR Watershed Intern, *Sean Banul* was supervised who to help with the assessment process before he graduated over the Summer; *Lauren Perry* and *Jessica Britten*, Watershed Outreach Interns for EPCAMR also helped; EPCAMR has the locations mapped out that we will be monitoring; We visited the Huntsville Golf Course which has excellent riparian corridors throughout the course along the waterways; We've partnered with the Luzerne Conservation District and The Lands at Hillside Farms to access their property to conduct our electroshocking survey that was approved by Trout Unlimited on 11-12-19; EPCAMR found wild brook trout below the lower Mill Dam and a diverse number of other species below the larger Huntsville Dam; Brown Creek, a tributary to Huntsville Creek, was also electroshocked, however, no trout were found; *Kathleen Lavelle*, Trout Unlimited will provide EPCAMR with a Fishery Report of her findings in the Spring of 2020

Loyalsock Creek Watershed AMD Treatment System Monitoring Project

- Discussed with *Corey Richmond*, Sullivan County Conservation District (SCCD) Watershed Specialist the continued need for EPCAMR's professional services to monitor and report on several of the AMD Treatment systems in 2020 for the year; EPCAMR will once again partner with the SCCD and the Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association ([LCWA](http://www.lcwa.org))

Harry E. Breaker Swoyersville Bank Reclamation PA AML Pilot Project

- Submitted EPCAMR's Invoice 9 for the month of September 2019 and Invoice 10 for October 2019 to *Gerard Schmidt*-Project Officer, PA DEP BAMR; Made some minor changes to Invoice 9 at the request of *Gerard*; Received an update from *Hank Zielinski*-Fuels Manager for the site that was submitted to PA DEP; The Harry E. Refuse Removal and Reclamation Project is going well in terms of material, operations, and community relations; So far there were only minor noise complaints, no injuries, no major surprises except that Keystone Reclamation Fuels Management discovered that the 7 acre parcel holds more material than was reported in historical engineering reports; Although the site has been extensively excavated and reshaped the site, it will be a challenge to get the remaining material, covered by the grant, out in time to meet the October 2020 deadline; The primary reason is the inability to consume the material in the depressed energy market; The secondary reasons are the timing of the funds and initial access to the site that was delayed due to PA DOT obligations and weather; Consequently, we are going to explore any opportunity to extend the term of the project to October of 2021.
- At the end of October 2019, we have shipped **25,762.52** tons from the site; This material has already been invoiced to EPCAMR; Additionally, they have prepared another **25,000** tons for shipment that will support a Winter run; We anticipate that the pace will pick up for the Winter and that the production and shipping rates will remain robust for 2020. However, we will be challenged to get the remaining material, covered by the grant, out in time to meet the October 2020 deadline; By the end of October, 2020 we anticipate to ship a total of **164K** tons from the targeted areas on the site; Our goal, and grant allowance was **239K** tons
- The remaining material needs to be directly exported from the 7 acre turnover parcel prior to reclamation to avoid second handling charges that would make our efforts uneconomical; There is more material anticipated as well since there is a depression in this area (clay is now exposed in areas and some is under the Church Street grade); We intend to utilize the entire grant amount that has been allocated; We simply were unable to ship enough material off site due to the poor condition of the energy market and the fact that we could not activate the site prior to the Winter of 2018 to fall in line with the fiscal budgets that were established at the time of our discussions. We remain in a position to complete the project in a three year window considering that the operational aspect of the project commenced later than projected

Growboxx Food by Youth, Reclaiming Our Backyards in the Coalfields Project

- *Claudia Meglin*, ISI, Inc. informed EPCAMR that she had a conference call with *Pieter Hoff*, CEO of Groasis who is excited about the Apple Tree Planting project expansion to Centralia; Coordinated a follow up phone call with ISI, Inc. and *Pieter* for later in December 2019; Convened a conference call with *Claudia* to update her on the project; Informed *Tim Altares*, PA DEP of our intention to plant apple tree seedlings in Centralia in the Spring 2020; Talked with *Laura* to see if EPCAMR could follow up with *Greg Heller* to see about the proper spacing of planting apple trees; Reached out to Pagnotti Enterprises to see if there were additional parcels that we can plant on in Centralia that they have no intentions of mining on

Mocanaqua AMD Tunnel Consumptive Use Feasibility Report Project

- Worked with *Mike Hewitt*-EPCAMR Program Manager on creating an elevation profile for the AMD Treatment Alternative Consumptive Use Pipeline Pump Project and potential stream relocation; Entered borehole water quality data from Borehole 1 into Master Water Quality datasheet; Received two quotes for two alternative AMD Treatment systems that were quoted for AES from Koch Separated Solutions and Veolia Mobile Water Services to incorporate in to the Report; Worked with *Mike* on writing the final draft document and incorporating the necessary tables, figures, and maps into the document; Forwarded *Mike* some photos of the West End Colliery and information on the Tide Mine AMD Treatment process

PA AML Pilot Rare Earth Elements & Critical Minerals Development Monitoring Project (proposed)

- Worked with *Tom Gray*, Tetra Tech, to continue to develop the PA AML Pilot proposal to sample and monitor AMD precipitates and underclays for Rare Earth Elements (REEs) across PA in partnership, and to install a mobile removal system at the Hollywood Treatment Plant in Clearfield County; Sought input of other potential Anthracite discharges from the EPCAMR Board on 11-21-19 and comments and a budget from WPCAMR for sampling in Western PA

Technical Assistance

- *Laura Campbell*, Regulatory Analyst-Independent Regulatory Review Commission ([IRCC](#)) forwarded EPCAMR information on the *Environmental Quality Board #7-454: Water Supply Replacement for Coal Surface Mining* rulemaking; EPCAMR is aware of this rulemaking, and informed Laura that EPCAMR has a seat on the Regulatory, Legislative, & Technical Committee of the PA DEP Mining & Reclamation Advisory Board through the State Conservation Commission where those discussions occur and comments are offered on Active Mining issues; EPCAMR, however, focuses on abandoned mine reclamation issues and AMD under Title IV where our mission directs our attention to abandoned mine lands under SMCRA and not Title V, Active coal mining regulatory issues
- AMO Environmental Decisions considered placing a bid to the State PA DCED for development of a Playbook (marketing and planning document) to reposition the former US Steel Robena Coal Refuse Pile in Green County, PA; They completed the second playbook for the Cromby generation station near Phoenixville Pa; EPCAMR recommended that *Guy Sheets*, contact WPCAMR to see if they are interested in being a partner and or can provide them with contact information for local engineering firms and provided them with *Andy McAllister's* and *Anne Daymut's* contacts; Provided Guy a contact with [LandStudies](#) who have taken out mill dams in the past since he was also looking for central PA firms to remove dams
- Worked with the EPCAMR Staff to submit a **\$5000** grant to the Luzerne Foundation's Youth Allocation Committee and was accepted as **1/20** submitted applicants for consideration

- Provided some cursory technical mine mapping assistance to *Mike Weikel*-P.G., Senior Hydrogeologist for [EarthRes](#) working on the Donaldson Mine Pool with SRBC and requested that Mike sit down with us at a future date should EarthRes want EPCAMR to provide some additional technical services to them
- Reviewed some information in our RAMLIS Tool for *Hank Zielinski* on some Problem Areas and abandoned mine land refuse piles in Sullivan County in Lopez, PA, known as the “*Murray Southwest PA 7001*” indicated as a low priority
- Provided a letter of support to the Earth Conservancy for their *Espy Run Stream Restoration Project* in the Nanticoke Creek Watershed for their PA DEP Growing Greener grant submission
- Provided *Robert Sax*, Local Government Liaison for the PA DEP NE Region, with background information that EPCAMR had on the Sulphur Run Project in the Solomon Creek Watershed in Ashley, Borough; Information had been requested by State Representative *Eddie Day Pashinski*'s Office on the project; EPCAMR had previously submitted the grant under a Growing Greener grant in 2015 that wasn't funded at the time; Ashley Borough is working on obtaining easements for the project through their Borough Manager *Greg Gulick*
- Attended the Earth Conservancy (EC) Environmental Workforce Training (EWT) Information Session, at PA CareerLink, Wilkes-Barre, PA with *Liz Hughes* from EC to speak to potential candidates for the program that EPCAMR is a partner in over the course of the year and conducts a classroom training as well as an AMD Watershed Tour in the Wyoming Valley
- Talked with *Paul Poljak*-VP and General Manager, [Somerset Environmental Services](#), Sewickley, PA about his company's interest in working in AMD Remediation; They utilize and improved Maelstrom Oxidizer system that is installed at the Askam AMD Treatment site on Nanticoke Creek, owned and operated by Earth Conservancy; Suggested that he attend our 2020 PA AMR Conference in June 2020 and either exhibit or become a sponsor to get the word out on his firm to our PA AMR Community
- *Kyle Ziegler*, President of the [Mehoopany Creek Watershed Association](#) asked when the next round of ARIPPA grants were going to be coming out; EPCAMR followed up and also informed him that we'd support their recent proposal to the PA DEP Growing Greener grant program when they have an executive summary together for us to build our letter from
- Provided *Aaron Clauser*, Clauser Environmental some GIS information on Good Spring Creek (near Tremont, PA) and Buck Run and Quaker Run (Shamokin Creek Watershed) for two watershed assessment grants that is being worked on that EPCAMR has supported

Education & Outreach

- EPCAMR Executive Director researched, prepared, and wrote a full [testimony](#) and 5 minute oral testimony for the AML Reauthorization Hearing for the House Natural Resources Committee; Provided the Truth in Testimony Disclosure Form and Curriculum Vitae to *Sarina Weiss-Clerk* Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources; Input was provided from *Amy Wolfe-TU*, *Anne Daymut-WPCAMR*, *Mike Hewitt-EPCAMR*, *Louise Dunlap*, *Dana Kuhnline-Appalachian Voices*, and *Joe Pizarchik* for the testimony; Mike helped prepare some slides for the hearing; EPCAMR Executive Director testified on AML Reauthorization (HR 4248) at the Legislative Hearing on 11-14-19 in Washington DC; Dave Hess summarized a great [write up](#) on the Hearing in the *PA Environmental Digest*; *Molly Moore*-Editor for the [Appalachian Voices](#) helped to create some pull quote graphics from the testimony for EPCAMR
- Sent along a dozen or so articles to the Stormwater Working Group of the Choose Clean Water Coalition through *Peter Marx* on recent articles related to the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority's implementation of the stormwater fee throughout 32 municipalities in the region
- EPCAMR Executive Director's Letter to the Editor, "[Urge US Reps to Co-Sponsor Coal Bill](#)" was published in *The Citizens Voice* and *The Scranton Times Tribune*
- *Emily Hornback*-Director and *Steve Allerton*-President, of the [Western Colorado Alliance for Community Action](#) informed EPCAMR that they would like to support AML Reauthorization on a National level; Informed the PA AML Campaign and requested that they send us a formal letter of support or a resolution from their organization on letterhead; Requested that the Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards in Virginia ([SAMS](#)) do the same and put their support officially on letterhead; All West Virginia Trout Unlimited Chapters signed on to support Reauthorization as did National Trout Unlimited; *Erin Wilson*-Legislative Director informed the PA AML Campaign that Representative Fred Keller (PA-12) has signed on in support of Reauthorization; EPCAMR met with his Staff in DC following the House Natural Resource Hearing; *Eric Hansen*, NE Region Representative and Policy Specialist-National Association of Conservation Districts ([NACD](#)) introduced himself to EPCAMR at the Hearing; The National RECLAIM Working Group also submitted a sign-on letter with a number of organizations that support Reauthorization to the House Natural Resources Committee; Provided the PA AML Campaign with some maps and notes on how to begin to consider prioritizing projects in the future based on overlapping priorities of other State programs that are currently not being taking into consideration when funding projects
- Met with ARIPPA Executive Director-*Jaret Gibbons*, *Cristy Sweeney*-Director of Finance & Public Affairs, and *Greg Malaska*-PA TU President to discuss a future partnership between PA TU and ARIPPA and to gain support for the Federal Energy Tax Credit Program (*The Mine Affected Community Energy and Environment Act*) the Co-Gen Plants are seeking to have passed in Congress supported and sponsored by *Congressman Dan Meuser* and *Congressman Matt Cartwright*; Provided *Matt Cochran*-Olympus Power with contact

information for the Luzerne County Council since he was interested in seeing if they would support the Federal Tax Credit Program (HR 4735); EPCAMR spread the word at our 4th Quarter Board Meeting to gain additional letters of support and provided ARIPPA with our letter of support; Provided *Jarett Gibbons*, Executive Director of ARIPPA phone number to *Steve Moyer* from Trout Unlimited to follow up with him on questions that he has on the bill language; Provided *John Walliser*-Senior Vice President, Legal & Government Affairs-PEC, with EPCAMR's letter of support for HR 4735

- Created a social media amplification [Call for Action](#) through Patagonia Action Works on Reauthorization and informed the members of the PA AML Campaign and the National RECLAIM Working Group
- The National RECLAIM Working Group has created a similar [page](#) for the RECLAIM Act; Participated in a National RECLAIM Working Group conference call
- Presented to Lackawanna College Environmental Science Class at their Environmental Education Center, Covington Township, Lackawanna County
- Presented an EPCAMR Environmental Education STEM Program for the Dan Flood Elementary Center in Wilkes-Barre with *Laura* and *Denise* from the EPCAMR Staff; Signed families up who were interested in receiving apple trees and Growboxxes in the Spring 2020
- Forwarded the Lost Recreational Value of AMD Impaired Streams document from the PA Fish & Boat Commission to *Ed Wytovich* upon his request; The Oneida #1 AMD Treatment system needs to be rebuilt due to roots invading and blocking the limestone drains; Todd Wood- PA DEP BAMR said that the Catawissa Creek Restoration Association (CCRA) needs to show demonstrable economic benefits and the document may help make the case
- *Paul Golias*, correspondent for the Citizens Voice, prepared a cover [story](#) on the EPCAMR Executive Director, and the work of EPCAMR and his beginnings as a native of the Wyoming Valley
- EPCAMR Executive Director received a Professional Development Certificate (24 hours) for voluntarily taking an online course in the evenings at home on Climate Change Education, Science, and Action from Cornell University (September through October 2019)
- Participated on 4 PA AML Campaign conference calls during the month on weekly basis

Community Volunteer Coordination

- Completed the **Spring Run AML Cleanup** in Wilkes-Barre with WVSA, PEC NE Office, New Roots Recovery Support Center, and EPCAMR Staff and volunteers; Provided Matt with the [form](#) to fill out to have Bridgestone Tires4ward pick up the tires that we collected during the cleanup; **20** volunteers attended; The Times-Leader newspaper covered the event with an [article](#)
- Shared the Front Street and Leuder's Creek Cleanup Facebook [Event](#) Page with New Roots Resource Recovery Center's *Jeff Suponcic* to help spread the word; Completed the **Front Street and Leuder's Creek Cleanup** in Hanover Township with the PEC NE Office, Nanticoke Conservation Club, Warrior Run Borough, and New Roots Resource Recovery Support Center; Completed the cleanup on 11-9-19 from 9-1
- Helped to promote the Lackawanna River Conservation Association ([LRCA](#)) **Old Forge Cleanup** in partnership with the Office of Representative *Bridget M. Kosierowski*, the Borough of Old Forge, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority ([LVHA](#)); Participated in the cleanup on 11-16-19 from 9-12 near Bridge and Howard Street, along the Lackawanna River, and the Misty Ridge area
- *Matt Williams*, Eagle Scout candidate, who worked on his volunteer project to place a public information wooden kiosk in the Ashley Borough Park, mentioned that he still needed to stop by and obtain a sign-off signature for the completion of his project that was over the Summer
- Toured the **Arch & Andover Street Cleanup** area with *Greg Griffin*, Volunteer Cleanup Coordinator-New Roots Recovery Resource Center; Requested a Patagonia Action Works social media amplification of the cleanup; Helped to promote the Arch & Andover Street Cleanup along Solomon Creek in Wilkes-Barre in partnership with Wilkes-Barre City, the Rolling Mill Hill Residents Association, The Greater Wilkes-Barre Taxpayers Coalition, PA American Water, and PEC NE Office; Created an EPCAMR Facebook [Event](#) Page and put out a call for EPCAMR Volunteers; EPCAMR participated in the cleanup on 11-30-19
- Spoke to *Kayla Pilecki*, Beaver Meadows, who is interested in obtaining a Spring 2020 Internships to assist her in completing her Masters Program at Grand Canyon University in Public Health
- Received a resume from *John Smith*, Wilkes-Barre, PA, who is interested in any future positions that EPCAMR might be posting in the future

Conferences, Training, Tours, Exhibits, & Workshops

- Picked up our EPCAMR display from the KCC Art Gallery in Kingston following the month long Art Show in partnership with the Maslow STEM School students that were a part of *Dr. Nerozzi's* Advanced Placement Environmental Science class; A great Times-Leader [article](#) was written on the show and the work by the students in partnership with EPCAMR
- Participated in a monthly 2020 PA AMR Conference Planning Committee conference call; Invited *Janie French*-Headwaters Charitable Trust to once again rejoin the Committee for the 2020 Conference; *Anne Daymut*-WPCAMR completed an RFP for the Conference that all members of the Committee can use to solicit presentations
- Participated in a Webinar on Macroinvertebrates; Macroinvertebrates.org

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA, Invest Accounts; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for November 2019 with Highmark; Paid Verizon and Internet monthly bills; Paid EC the rent; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register; Made a deposit to FNB for incoming reimbursements and accounts receivable
- Entered the EPCAMR bi-weekly payroll into ADP online to release it and provide Denise with a link to obtain the health care expenses to be reimbursed through our PA DEP 319 Grant
- Provided OneSource with information from the SSA for a former employee so that they can file an amended return
- *Rachel Kester*-PA Trout Unlimited requested a digital copy of EPCAMR's completed Abraham Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan since it may have been misplaced during the transition from the previous Program Manager's file folders
- Mailed out several Centralia Cleanup T-shirts to *Judy Brown*, Ashland, PA who ordered them
- Followed up with *Basil Lynch*-MBA Senior Accountant with Kovalchik & Kollar & Co., LLP on our 2018 990s and resent the link to the Accountant's Copy since it expired and he wasn't able to access it; Requested that OneSource send EPCAMR our 2018 4th Quarter Payroll Reports for completion of the 990s; Picked up our filed 990s in Kingston, PA
- Sent out a MailChimp blast to the EPCAMR Board and Affiliate Members with our tentative agenda for the 4th Quarter Meeting on 11-21-19; Discussed with *Leigh Ann Henry*, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, planning ideas for the 2020 Strategic Plan Update; Confirmed the use of the Musto Environmental Education Center in Nescopeck State Park on 2-20-20 for a self-facilitated Strategic Planning Session with *Diane Madl*; Sent around the EPCAMR Draft 2020 Budget for review completed by Mike and Executive Director in QuickBooks for consideration for approval at the upcoming Board Meeting; Met with Joe Simons, III, incoming President for EPCAMR at Wegman's prior to the Board Meeting earlier in the week

- OneSource informed EPCAMR of a small increase in the Payroll Fee cycle for 2020 that was worked into the 2020 EPCAMR Budget
- Convened our 4th Quarter EPCAMR Board Meeting; Nominated and approved to the Board *Dr. Andrea Nerozzi*, Wyoming Seminary Upper School
- Patagonia Action Works put in place a matching donations program from 11-29-19 through 12-31-19 to help support their grantees when the donations are made to EPCAMR through the Patagonia Action Works link created by EPCAMR
- Renewed EPCAMR's Forest Level Membership with PAEE for 2020 that included memberships for 6 Staff with the help of Stacy Widenhofer, *Administrative Coordinator-PAEE*, and connected with the new PAEE NE Regional Director, *Jolie Chylak*, a position that the EPCAMR Executive Director had held for many years
- Communicated with *Josh Jones*, VISTA Development Coordinator for [Conservation Legacy](#), to determine if EPCAMR can seek funds to support an AmeriCorps/VISTA once again for another year; EPCAMR Executive Director is going to provide a Letter of Intent to the Foundation for PA Watersheds to see if they might consider funding a portion of the position through a grant; Received application materials from Josh for further review of the revamped program; Began preparing a **\$10,000** proposal to the Foundation for PA Watersheds
- Completed the November 2019 Board Report