



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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November 2020 Progress Report

Project Coordination

Huntsville Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan Project

- Working on drafting up the Final Draft Report of the CCP to submit to the municipalities for review and CHP before finalizing it at the end of December 2020

Mine Mapping Grant Project with the Mine Subsidence Insurance Program

- Discussed with Staff the plan for scanning, mosaicking, digitizing and geo-referencing mine maps as we work remotely going into the Holiday

Reclaiming Appalachian Coalition Innovative Mine Land Reclamation and Economic Development Projects Mini-Grant Program

- Convened a Zoom call with *Joey James*, Downstream Strategies to show him a virtual demonstration of the GIS Site Selection Criteria Tool and some of the sites that we filtered out through the entire Anthracite Coal Region; Worked with Steve to prepare a Final Report to submit during the month of December for their Annual Report because the Reclaiming Appalachia Coalition would like to feature EPCAMR's Project

Small Watershed Grant-National Fish & Wildlife Foundation for the Southern Flank of the Wyoming Valley

- Working on edits to the budget's indirect cost rate and received information on the need from NFWF to develop a Quality Assurance Protection Plan (QAPP) of how EPCAMR Staff will collect the data and the methodologies that will be used before we can begin collecting field data; Communicating with Andrew Young to finalize the grant agreement which we hope to begin in the Spring 2021

Swoyersville/Harry E. Reclamation and Community Athletic Area PA AML Pilot Project

- Reviewed and filed the November 2020 Inspection Report from the Pottsville District Mining Office sent by *Joe McCarthy*
- Provided *Gerald Schmidt*, Project Manager with a Letter of Extension for the Swoyersville Land Transfer to October 31, 2021 and received a Letter of Approval on November 25th from the PA DEP

OSMRE/AmeriCorps VISTA Stewards Individual Placement Program (SIPP)

- *Kyle Argenziano* provided EPCAMR Executive Director with a list of recent grants that we had applied for to support EPCAMR's mission and goals and program areas for the upcoming 4th Quarter Board Meeting

Bear Creek Lykens Tunnels AMD Mine Pool Mapping & Conceptual Design for AMD Treatment

- Continued to work to secure *Kerry Teter's* signature through HelloFax, on the landowner access agreement form for the PA DEP in order to continue ahead with the grant agreement process to finalize the 319 Grant; Updated some documentation from the Growing Greener Grant Department

Technical Assistance

- Provided a link to the [Keep PA Beautiful Camera Loaner Surveillance Program](#) to Ashley Borough Councilman, *Gerry Maldonado* at his request
- EPCAMR was contacted by *Andrea Krupp*, Library Company of Philadelphia, where she is Conservator of books and is an artist; She has been looking at the materials in their historic rare books and graphics collections having to do with PA anthracite - materials that will form the core of her planned Exhibition The spatial complexity of the anthracite mines is something she has been trying to get her head around as she studies maps, diagrams, columnar sections, and graphs, to try to build mental image of the mine; She is very interested in EPCAMR's 3D modeling capabilities and how we separate out the color layers of the coal seam and our method of visualizing the underground workings in the Anthracite Region as we map the mine voids; EPCAMR Staff reached out to her to find out more about her Exhibition and interest in including some of EPCAMR's work
- Provided Geo-Explorers some general information on mine pools in the Scranton Area as they are looking at 4 bridge replacement projects for PA DOT and the City of Scranton; They wanted to know about any mine pools under elevated head pressure in the region and how this mine water moves, accumulates and drains; They also wanted to get info if there is any possibility of artesian condition during drilling; That level of work and time would need professional services to be provided by EPCAMR since it would require more detailed analysis of the regional mine pools on a more localized level within the vicinity of the projects
- *Frank Sindaco*, EPCAMR GIS Watershed Outreach Technician created a region-wide Tract Level Indicators GIS Layer for EPCAMR counties; He's got them in a draft form and will be cleaning up the data that will include indicators that will be very useful to our future grant opportunities such as economic, poverty, unemployment, per capita income) and at risk (minority, limited English) and rankings for each, plus an overall "stability" ranking; Upon review, Wayne County data needs to be added on the fringe of the EPCAMR Region in the Poconos and Upper Lackawanna Watershed

- Received word from Old Mill Impressions that the pavers for the reclaimed Huber Miner's Memorial Park in Ashley were being shipped; Informed *Ray Clarke*-Huber Breaker Preservation Society and *George Lehman*-President that they were en route
- Participated in a K10 MineLand Working Group Conference call

Old Forge Borehole Monitoring for Tetra Tech

- Sampled the Old Forge Borehole on November 3rd with Staff and performed maintenance on the stilling well and pressure transducer on November 5th
- Received the October 26th monthly sampling results from Hawk Mountain Labs that were received and forwarded them to Tetra Tech

Loyalsock Creek AMD Treatment System Monitoring

- EPCAMR reached out to White Ash Land Association and the Sullivan County Conservation District to inform them that *Neil Wolfe* from Hedin Environmental would like to visit the AMD Treatment Sites for some additional sampling to take a closer look at the system operations and maintenance to determine where additional short-circuiting is occurring in the system; It was later determined later in the month that he was not able to make the trip and would be writing up a recommendation report without the visit for PA DEP BAMR
- Sampled the Loyalsock Creek AMD Treatment Systems and upstream and downstream monitoring sites

Tetra Tech OSM Applied Science Rare Earth Element Project (Proposed)

- EPCAMR received word from *Tom Gray*, Tetra Tech that our joint proposal to monitor AMD discharges across PA for Rare Earth Elements under the OSM Applied Science Solicitation was not funded according to *Michael Richmond*; **42** applications were submitted and under review for consideration in 2020

DRBC Mine Pool Feasibility Considerations in the Southern Anthracite Fields with Schuylkill Headwaters Association (SHA) and other Partners (proposed discussion)

- Provided *Bill Reichert*, Schuylkill Conservation District with permission to utilize our Executive Summary on EPCAMR's regional mine pool study from 2012 in discussions with the DRBC for future water resource management within the Basin; There may be a great potential for water storage in the Silver Creek watershed

Education & Outreach

- Reviewed notes from the November 13th conference call with the PA AML Campaign; Informed them that EPCAMR was called by a reporter from the *Daily News Item* on following the Reimagine Appalachia Webinar and Roundtable with Senator Casey; The [article](#) couldn't be accessed because it's a pay site to determine what she had quoted me on in support of the Reimagine Appalachia framework and EPCAMR's desire to have *Senator Casey* support the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and other elements of the plan; The reporter said that she would love to continue to follow up with EPCAMR and other stories for the Northumberland County area in the future on AMD and AML; She was on the webinar it seems and picked up on some of EPCAMR's comments; *John Dawes*, Foundation for PA Watersheds, and EPCAMR mentioned Reauthorization and the RECLAIM Act on the call as well as renewal energy project ideas on abandoned mine lands
- EPCAMR is looking into contacts from various unions LEUNA, HGH, Journeymen, and Pipefitters Union, Steelworkers, and Operating Engineers to see if they would be interested in supporting Reauthorization and the RECLAIM Act
- Made a presentation to *Dr. Ken Klemow's* Energy Class of **45** college students at Wilkes University on November 16th on campus at his request on EPCAMR's work in the region, our alternative energy solar GIS Site Selection Criteria Tool development, internship opportunities, volunteer opportunities, water quality and culvert training certifications, and career advice
- *Beth Berkhauser*, M. Ed., The Interdependence Hexagon Project informed *Dr. Andrea Nerozzi*, Wyoming Seminary and EPCAMR Board Member that EPCAMR's partnership STEM Project, "*Changing the Perspective of Local Waterways*" polluted by AMD was approved for inclusion in a publication in the *International Society for Education through Art* (InSEA) following her submission of a written abstract; EPCAMR Executive Director and *Dr. Nerozzi* assisted *Beth* with drafting an illustrated article that describes the Hexagon Project uses our project as excellent "Pictures of Practice!"; EPCAMR became a member of [InSEA](#) and updated the user profile
- Provided AMD images for the Choose Clean Water Coalition Legislative Briefing Booklet for 2021 at the request of *Kristen Reilly*, Director
- EPCAMR provided comments to *Jason E. Oyler*, Esq., General Counsel, SRBC on Incentivizing the Use of Impaired Waters on their *Lesser Water Quality Policy*

- Continued to work on final edits to AML/AMD videos directed by EPCAMR Executive Director and *Laura Rinehimer*, Education Coordinator; Worked with WPCAMR and EPCAMR Staff to create our [YOUTube](#) channel for EPCAMR to upload video interviews related to AMD, Reauthorization, Reclamation, and Economic Development on abandoned mine lands across PA; WPCAMR also uploaded their videos to their WPCAMR [YOUTube](#) channel; Informed the PA AML Campaign on the November 20th conference call of the progress made; Several other videos are in progress
- Provided *Laura* with some guidance from *Emily Stransky*, Program Officer for the Chesapeake Bay Trust MWEЕ Mini-Grant that was funded by our partner, NOAA B-WET (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Bay Watershed Education and Training fund); The funding through NOAA was supposed to come to an end in September 2020, which meant that the grants they awarded also had to come to an end no later than September 2020; They requested and received an extension from NOAA until September 2021 with the intent of allowing flexibility for our current grantees to complete their projects and were awarded the extension; Provided *Laura* with the instructions that were given to request additional time and changes or revisions to the budget for the project EPCAMR was funded
- Met with Mayor *George Brown*, City of Wilkes-Barre, on November 17th to provide him with information on the Keep PA Beautiful Camera Surveillance Loaner Program to discuss how to curb illegal dumping around the City in streams, neighborhoods, and historic dumps on abandoned mine lands; EPCAMR has been a long-time partner of the City of Wilkes-Barre through many Administrations on projects that are beneficial to the mining impacted watersheds throughout the municipal boundaries within the Wyoming Valley
- Provided *Sue Hand* from *Sue Hand’s Imagery* a receipt and Thank You Letter for her recent donation of several artwork pieces created with AMD for EPCAMR and documentation of the history of coal breakers throughout the Anthracite Region, to use as educational pieces and showcases in our Office when we have students, visitors, or companies that visit us to learn about our work; Sue Hand has been a long-time partner and artist friend of EPCAMR’s for nearly 25 years
- Followed up with *Justin Dula*, NE Regional Coordinator for the PA DEP Environmental Justice Office on the outcomes and notes of the October 6th, Virtual Roundtable that centered on the Scranton Area and surrounding communities in the Northeast

- EPCAMR created Facebook social media [Giving Tuesday Fundraiser](#) for December 1st, which is a one-day push for donations towards the end of the year by many non-profits; Facebook was matching funds up to \$7M; EPCAMR set a goal of **\$500** and raised **\$370**
- EPCAMR Executive Director was interviewed via Zoom by senior student *Leah Moore*, Temple University, who is in a Community Development major and interested in EPCAMR's work since she is from the Wyoming Valley originally residing in Wyoming, PA; She was interested in how non-profits play a role in educating through the public school system and a previous EPCAMR Intern, Lauren Perry recommended that she get in touch with EPCAMR to find out more about our environmental education programs that teach kids about wildlife, watersheds, pollution problems and solutions related to AMD, and natural ecosystems

Community Volunteer Coordination

- *Olivia Lubinski*, Mt. Carmel, PA, a senior at Penn State University studying Environmental Systems Engineering contacted EPCAMR to inquire about remote internships in the Spring 2021; She had read an article touting the idea of a Civilian Conservation Corp program was in the Daily News Item; She chose to become an Environmental Systems Engineer because she has a passion for the sustainable development of our planet; EPCAMR encouraged her to submit her resume and cover letter for consideration, however, due to the pandemic and working remotely, we may find it difficult to fill the position come Spring 2021; Offered her advice as a fellow ERM graduate from Penn-State
- Discussed with *Greg Griffin*, Coordinator and Volunteer for the Wilkes-Barre City Blight Committee getting in contact with *Mr. Harry Haas*, Chair of the Luzerne County Blight Committee to coordinate with them on cleanups and find out what their strategic plan is for the County since there has been little activity on the County level due to the pandemic and the lack of quorums to hold Committee meetings
- Met with *David Booth*, EPCAMR Volunteer in Larksville Borough to investigate an illegal dump site on some mine lands within the Borough for a potential Spring 2021 Cleanup

PA American Water Charitable Trust Foundation Community Cleanup Coordination

- Coordinated with Bridgestone's Tires4Ward Recycling Program to pick up tires that were collected in Centralia in October to let them know that they had already been disposed of and recycled; Bridgestone had gotten back to us too late to coordinate the pickup and EPCAMR didn't want to let them sit in the town too long following the cleanup
- Received photos from EPCAMR Volunteer, *Mike Eckrote*-Nanticoke, following his cleanup efforts at Concrete City, Hanover Township, Luzerne County
- Conducted the second Lower Broadway [Cleanup](#) with the Nanticoke Conservation Club and the City of Nanticoke and other partners on November 1st; Volunteers returned on November 8th cleanup [event](#) to pick up two additional dumpsters full of trash and illegal dumping along the historic slackwater canal section that runs along the AMD-impacted Newport Creek along Access Road and the floodplain area of the Susquehanna River

Conferences, Training, Tours, Exhibits, & Workshops

- Reviewed the virtual conference feedback comments provided to the PA AMR Conference Committee by *Andy McAllister*-WPCAMR; Participated in a Zoom Conference Post Evaluation Meeting on November 5th
- The PA AMR Conference Planning Committee decided to have our 2nd Virtual PA AMR Conference in June of 2021 using the WHOVA App and booked the Ramada Inn Hotel & Conference Center for 2022 and moved forward our \$1000 deposit with the Hotel
- Attended and Registered for the *Getting Up to Speed to Lead: Green Amendment Training Program!* Online Meeting with *Maya Van Rossum* and *Colleen Burns*-[Green Amendments for the Generations](#)
- Provided a field tour of AMD, AML, trout stream restoration projects, and watershed restoration efforts completed or being monitored by EPCAMR to the Freshwater Ecosystems Class for *Gene Schultz's* Class of **12** college students from Lackawanna College on November 12th; Students assisted EPCAMR with promoting our online fundraiser to raise funds to purchase needed parts and accessories for our Polaris ATV that we use consistently for our cleanups and AMD monitoring; Other Staff met with the students at the Old Forge AMD Borehole as a part of the tour in the Lackawanna Valley on another day with *Bernie McGurl*-Lackawanna River Conservation Association
- Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition and Westminster College (organized by *Dr. Helen Boylan*) hosted their 24 year Symposium that has evolved into a 2 day event with a separate Student Symposium who took it to a whole other level with the *Student Symposium for the Environment*; A virtual symposium was organized and 25 student

- video submissions were chosen; The video submissions will be available for viewing next week, starting on Monday at the Student Symposium [YouTube](#) channel; EPCAMR Executive Director was asked to be a judge and to review and comment on the video presentations utilizing a rubric provided by *Dr. Boylan*; EPCAMR Executive Director reviewed all the videos and provided comments, questions, and feedback

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA, Invest Accounts; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for November 2020 with Highmark; Paid Verizon and Internet monthly bills; Paid EC the rent; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register; Provided *Denise* with the October 2020 Statement for reconciliations Made a deposit to FNB for incoming *reimbursements* and accounts receivables
- Worked on proposed recommended salary/hourly increases for 2021 for the EPCAMR Staff with Mike to provide to the Personnel Committee for their consideration
- Convened EPCAMR's 4th Quarter Quarterly Meeting virtually via Zoom on November 19th and provided a [report](#) on progress made since the last quarter 2020
- Received a request from the Schuylkill Riverkeepers to review the [Draft Technical Guidance: Engineering Manual for Surface Mining Operations \(563-0300-101\)](#) to provide comments before January 28, 2021; EPCAMR will consider taking a look at the document if it pertains to abandoned mine reclamation best management practices and remaining engineering principles
- Worked with *Mike* to create a link to our [Update to EPCAMR's Strategic Plan for 2020-2025](#); Reached out to the developing Strategic Planning Committee to set up a 2021 1st Quarter Zoom call with members to discuss further development of the actions, activities, objectives, and goals
- Provided a letter of support to *Dr. Elizabeth Hughes*, EC, for their PA DCED application for a Lower South Valley Council of Governments new screener for the regional compost facility in Newport Township, PA
- Provided a letter of support to *Dr. Bobak Karimi* and *Julie McMonagle*, Lecturer/Lab Manager for the proposal to develop a Wilkes University's GIS Certificate Program following the review of their curriculum they have put together
- Accepted a donation of water sampling supplies from the Earth Conservancy leftover from a water quality monitoring training completed by *Brian Oram* under the EPA Workforce Development Training Program
- Submitted new hire paperwork to OneSource for our part-time seasonal Watershed Outreach Intern, *Katie Van Orden*, King's College senior

- Provided *Anne Devine*, PA DEP 319 Program, and *Rebecca Brown*, PA DEP Growing Greener Grants Center, with the revised Conservation District East 319 Growing Greener Grant Budget Worksheet for **\$390,000** and the Federal Funding Accountability & Transparency Act (FFATA) Form
- Completed a W-9 Form for Lackawanna College who would like to make a **\$200** donation to EPCAMR towards our small fundraiser for the Polaris ATV equipment and supplies and submitted it to *Sharon Yanik*, Director along with an Donation Invoice for their Business Department
- Completed a Post-Evaluation Survey for the SLIP Program through PA CareerLink that sponsored several interns for EPCAMR over the last few years; Directed *Kyle Argenziano* and *Levi Sunday-Leftkowitz*, to complete the survey who were our most recent interns under the Program in the Summer 2020
- EPCAMR received an updated COVID-19 Protocol from the Earth Conservancy, who we lease our building space from as a tenant and provided the updates to all EPCAMR Staff on November 18th and set a plan in place for remote work going forward heading into the Thanksgiving Holiday and upcoming Christmas Holiday at the end of 2020; Reviewed the newest Order from the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health for Mitigation and Enforcement
- Informed by *JM Aurednik*, that EPCAMR was mistakenly added to a VPRS ListServe and was not required to submit through the eGrants site a report that was already being provided by our OSMRE AmeriCorps VISTA *Kyle Argenziano*
- Provided Staff with a Group Memo of Expectations and Direction going into the Thanksgiving Holidays for all of our Program Areas and grants that we are working on as we go to remote work for the time being until further notice
- Completed the November 2020 Board Report