Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation



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November 2024 Progress Report EPCAMR Conservation District Mining East Project

Project Coordination

Swoyersville Harry E. AML Reclamation and Community Athletic Area AMLER Project

 Attended a Site meeting with PA DEP BAMR, Pottsville DMO, OSMRE, and Hank Zielinksi to discuss the final grade work being done on the site and a review of the AML and GFCC work now that the 7.5 acres have been transferred and straw has been placed on the site to get grass and vegetative cover on the reclaimed area; Provided Gerard Schmidt-Project Officer a sheet on the overages hauled out from the site for the meeting

ARIPPA EPCAMR/WPCAMR AML Mini-Grant Program

• Cristy Sweeney, ARIPPA, informed both Coalitions, that the ARIPPA Board of Directors approved their 2025 budget that included the continuation of the ARIPPA AMD/AML grant program at the **\$6,000** level; EPCAMR and WPCAMR will therefore each receive **\$3,000** from ARIPPA

Shickshinny Creek/Paddy/Rocky Run Assessment-PA American Water Charitable Foundation

• Provided Susan Turcmanovich, External Affairs Manager for PA American Water, with a copy of the project update that was submitted to the PA American Water Charitable Foundation on the assessment work and the purchase of some of our new field equipment for monitoring; Purchased a used Aqua Calc flow meter and a new HACH Photometer 9800 field testing kit

Shickshinny Creek/Paddy/Rocky Run Assessment-PA TU Coldwater Conservation Plan (proposed)

• EPCAMR pulled down the application from the PA TU website with *Morgan Romanowski*, AmeriCorps volunteer, to begin the process of applying for a **\$10,000** planning grant; EPCAMR Executive Director will be teaching Morgan the process of applying for this type of planning grant and the budget development process as well as the outreach component on the front end of the application that is needed to gain additional local community support and support of local governments, non-profits, and conservation organizations in the Shickshinny area

EPCAMR/WPCAMR/SRI Survey of Community Watershed Organizations on AMD/AML

• Reviewed SRI's final reporting to POWR on the project before Cliff submitted it

Rare Earth Element (REE) Sampling of AMD in the Wyoming Valley with Columbia University

• *Mike Hewitt*- EPCAMR Program Manager, provided information on Ladwig's research on mine pool stratification in and around the Wyoming Valley to Professor Sean Kinney; Forwarded the information to Morgan Romanowski, AmeriCorps volunteer who may end up obtaining guarterly borehole monitoring readings once again if we can access them after many years of no funding to be able to get to them and maintain them from being sealed shut; Suggested that we hold off on the depth sampling until Spring 2025 because there is going to need to be maintenance done on existing boreholes just to open them up and free them from dirt and grit from over 12 years of being closed since our last major borehole monitoring project; It takes time to do that; EPCAMR is reaching out to municipalities and Road Departments so that they do not pave over them through our Borehole Awareness Campaign; We have a template letter to go to municipalities that we may need to send again as a reminder to see if they would be willing to help us open some up that need to be daylighted; Forwarded Sean and his colleagues a 2024 West Virginia Mine Drainage Task Force Symposium & 15th International Mine Water Association Congress in Morgantown, WV. article, authored by Elke Mugova, a colleague of our Executive Director; There are so many other reactions just for iron that take place in the different chemical environments within the mine (oxygen-rich vs. anoxic): We can only imagine there's a multitude of reactions with the critical minerals and rare earth elements; In the Northern Coal Field, there are limestone veins interspersed with the upper coal veins; The Mill Creek Marine Limestone and the smaller Connell Freshwater Limestone Beds are just above the Snake Island Coal bed; There's another freshwater Limestone Bed between the Snake Island and the Abbott veins and lastly the Hillman freshwater Limestone Bed between Kidney and Hillman Coal veins; It's interesting to think that NEPA was often covered by inland seas and even the ocean at different times throughout geologic time; Researched online a monitoring device to collect AMD in the mine pools called a Bacon bomb sampler and provided the quote to Sean, along with a GIS Map of the boreholes we've previously monitored years ago

US DOE Capacity Building for Repurposing Energy Assets at the Frackville Morea AML Complex for Floating Solar and Geothermal Potential

 Frank Sindaco, -EPCAMR GIS Watershed Outreach Specialist, made good progress on demographic and land data types along with a social vulnerability analysis for the Morea Mine Complex and surrounding area and continued to work on other infrastructure and transportation systems data; Uploaded Milestone 2 update, PowerPoint update, and Exemplar completion report after working with *Frank*, to the Cohort 2 shared OneDrive and the EnergyWerx portal after having some technical difficulties; Circled back to *Alex Brush*, -Operations Plant Manager for the Gilberton Power Co. to schedule a tour of the Co-Gen Plant across the road from the former Frackville-Morea Co-Gen that is no longer standing and has been dismantled, leaving only the power grid transmission lines and both reclaimed and unreclaimed areas on the land

Rare Earth Elements Collaboration with the University of Penn (proposed)

John Quigley, -Senior Fellow for the Kleinmann Center for Energy Policy, requested EPCAMR's participation in a collaborative proposal with <u>Prof. Jen Wilcox</u>, who recently returned to Penn after serving 3 years as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management at US DOE; U. Penn is really interested in EPCAMR's help in obtaining representative samples of AMD (especially) and coal waste for testing; In addition, they would welcome our input on the economic revitalization and workforce aspects of the project; *Dr. Wilcox* is developing a proposal to that office in response to a recently released funding opportunity: <u>Advancing Technology Development for Securing a Domestic Supply of Critical Minerals and Materials</u> – Area of Interest 2: Recovery of Heavy Rare Earth Elements (HREE) from Secondary and Unconventional Resources; EPCAMR Executive Director reviewed the proposal and prepared a Letter of Support for their application following a Zoom call with John on November 15th

Sugar Notch Run Trail AML Tire and Watershed Cleanup

Continued to remove tires with Staff from the steep hillsides and the areas near the waterfalls along Sugar Notch Run and the abandoned mine openings for safety reasons to get them all to a central location on the upper Sugar Notch Run ridgetop trail and in the drainage swale for easier relocation to the road where they would be picked up and placed into the trucks for proper recycling and disposal; Created a link on our social media to recruit additional volunteers; Pizza Bella provided us with discounted pizza pies for lunch sponsored by the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority (WVSA); 1910 tires (38,325 pounds) were removed and recycled from the watershed in under 8 hrs by 35 volunteers who participated on November 17th; Sent a copy of the sign-in sheets that were filled out by the volunteers to *Megan Finnen*, PA DCNR for the Conservation Volunteer Activity Report and to include them in future invites to cleanups and volunteer activities on State Forest Lands with EPCAMR and PA DCNR

Technical Assistance

- Provided *Keith George*, Luzerne Conservation District with a link to ESRI to see if the District can qualify for discounted ArcGIS Pro licenses for \$100/year/license
- Provided *Bill Eck*-Kingston Township Code and Zoning Enforcement Officer, *Robert Young's* contact information for the PA DEP Office of Energy for him to obtain more information on model solar ordinances for the Township Planning Commission to review
- EPCAMR assisted *Heather Makal*, -Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance (SCRA) with putting together an interactive Google map for the Shamokin Creek watershed that pins each of the AMD discharges, treatment sites, and borehole locations; *Mike* provided her with a comprehensive list of coordinates of the AMD discharges and of the locations of the 9 AMD discharges that we had sampled over the last year; She is trying to embed the Google map into their website once finished
- Scheduled a meeting with Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance's Executive Director, *Phil Dunn*, and *Tom Clark*-Kleinfelder to discuss a path forward on some priority areas that SCRA is looking at in the watershed and what type of monitoring or assessment work will need to be proposed for a future grant; SCRA shared a file folder of SCRA Map files created by *Lucas Hower*, student from Penn-State, who completed an AMD Watershed Map for the Shamokin Creek as a part of his class project after having incorporated all the suggestions provide by SRCA and EPCAMR; *Mike* provided *Tom* from Kleinfelder and *Chuck Cravotta*, some georeferenced maps for the Richard's Shaft and Sioux #1 Collieries along Shamokin Creek for review
- *Grace Edinger*, -Procurement Policy Strategy Lead for the Environmental Policy Innovation Center (EPIC) requested on their Draft Findings & Recommendations for PA's AML Program; Provided her with a copy of our presentation from the PA AMR Conference before it was uploaded to the website; Reviewed comments already provided by *Deb Nardone* from the Foundation for PA Watersheds; *Grace* was looking for some sources of information in her draft findings and asked if EPCAMR could provide it or know where to find it
- Provided *Elphas Adam*, a student whom the Executive Director met at the Horizon Conference in Virginia, with several electronic copies of resources to assist him with studying for his drone Part 107 Remote UAS Pilot Certification and suggested that he sign up for the <u>Pilot Institute Training</u>;

Provided all the same materials to *Morgan Romanowski*, AmeriCorps volunteer who is also interesting in obtaining her Part 107 UAS Pilot Certification

- Louie Krak, Infrastructure Coordinator, Office of the Governor-Critical Investments, reached out to the Executive Director to thank him for providing comprehensive input on the RISE PA Community Benefits Bonus Guidance; He informed EPCAMR that he has incorporated our feedback and truly appreciated us taking the time to provide thoughtful and constructive comments; EPCAMR has a strong sense of commitment to seeing that we all look at Community Benefit Plans that are holistic, inclusive, innovative, and sustainable that can support the needs of our communities; We work on a watershed level to avoid the political divide of local governments and encourage intergovernmental cooperation and agreements between local governments and community groups to improve the quality of life for all of our citizens in PA
- *Ivie Foster*, <u>Center County Conservation District</u> Watershed Specialist & Education Coordinator sent the EPCAMR Executive Director a thoughtful response to his mentorship and passion for the work groups like EPCAMR and WPCAMR do with a passion, but also because they are willing to help and guide others, especially those who are early in their careers, who greatly benefit from the training, technical assistance, and networks that EPCAMR provides and helps to coordinate to help her and so many others to learn and grow; She appreciated his positivity and empathy and reminded her that there is always hope for a better and more sustainable future
- Provided *Nick Zmijewksi*, Archivist- Industrial Archives & Library with a database in Excel for all of the completed scanned and cataloged Lattimer Mines Mine Map Collection worked on by *Morgan Romanowski*, AmeriCorps volunteer; Nick mentioned that the National Canal Museum has a bunch of mine maps (Lehigh Coal & Navigation) that were taken from the headquarters office in Lansford shortly before the historic fire

Luzerne Conservation District AML Grant on State Game Lands 260, Shickshinny (proposed)

Derek Herb, Lab Technician, and Sampler, for Hawk Mountain Labs, provided EPCAMR with a
quote for AMD Water Quality Samples, Pickup, and bottles for the expected AMD seep we may
sample if the Luzerne Conservation District's proposed project is funded to support sampling and
reclamation on State Game Lands 260; Provided *Teah Gray* and *Josh Glace*, -LDG, with a budget
for the proposed sampling of the one AMD Seep and other optional budget estimates based on
whether or not PA DEP BAMR would conduct the lab sampling and absorb those costs versus
having them sampled at Hawk Mountain and collected by EPCAMR for 15 events over the course of
a year and doing the appropriate upstream and downstream analysis and sampling to determine
load reductions

Education & Outreach

- Participated in the weekly PA AML Campaign calls
- Worked with *Morgan Romanowski*, AmeriCorps volunteer, to develop and update a new EPCAMR tri-fold brochure to be printed for tabling events; Received a quote from Center City Print (CCP) for 100 copies and had them printed; The initial batch of brochures came out fuzzy and pixelated so CCP ran a second batch of printed copies to be picked up in December
- Provided image files of the C-SAW Application for funding and brochure to the full Board of the Pocono NE RC & DC that the Executive Director created to make it easier for partners to post them on social media sites as image files and to websites of the Technical Assistance Service Providers

- Flora Cardoni, -Deputy Director for <u>PennEnvironment</u> requested that I bring up some of her concerns at the Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB) and Joint Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) meeting to underscore the importance of and broad support for a strong state plan for the EPA methane rule that is as ambitious as possible; EPCAMR Executive Director asked the EJAB & CAC several questions related to community health and monitoring; Lisa DePaoli, Center for Coalfield Justice asked a similar line of questions at the meeting
- EPCAMR pushed out the Datashed Virtual Training dates for Stream Restoration Inc. in November on our social media to support their outreach efforts as a partner across the Commonwealth
- *Dr. Andrea Nerozzi*, EPCAMR Board Member and Education Committee Co-Chair provided EPCAMR with a potential new partnership idea with Upward Bound, a 6-week Summer Program at Wilkes University; She will be setting up a conference call or meeting over the Winter with the Director of the Program and EPCAMR to see if there is a collaboration that could be developed to host a Summer field trip for the students; The students also perform community service work
- Assisted the Lackawanna River Conservation Association (LRCA) by clearing last year's seasonal growth of the invasive Japanese knotweed from along the culvert that carries the AMD from the Old Forge Borehole and removed some large woody debris from previous floodwater events; EPCAMR Executive Director, and LRCA's *Tara Jones* and *Bernie McGurl* led a watershed tour with students from the PA DCNR Lackawanna State Park's Community Connections to Our Watershed Program on November 8th with *Tony DeSantis,* -Environmental Education Specialist, where they sampled the AMD from the borehole and upstream on the Lackawanna River that was in the lowest flow condition we've seen it in decades; *Tony* sent back a thank you following the educational tour and said that the information that we share is immeasurable
- Completed the Sponsor Verification Report Form for *Mark E. Jones,* Kingston, PA for the AmeriCorps VISTA Community Development Coordinator volunteer position and submitted it to *Shelby Street*-Program Manager for the Stewards Individual Placement Program (SIPP); Informed *Shelby* that EPCAMR will start working on the general Year 2 and Year 3 Volunteer Activity Description Plan and resubmit it to him; EPCAMR signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Energy Communities VISTA Partnership to allow *Mark E. Jones* to start with us following his orientation in early December in Washington DC, with his start date of December 9th; Forwarded the MOA to *Hannah Stone*, VISTA Program Director
- Assisted the Earth Conservancy by conducting a few educational programs at the Wyoming Valley West State Street Elementary School on their award-winning We RECLAIM! Environmental Education curriculum and lesson plans on abandoned mine land reclamation and AMD
- EPCAMR Executive Director was featured on a "People of Penn State Podcast" presented by the Penn-State Alumni Association; It was a 60-minute conversational interview with *Paul Clifford*, CEO, of the Penn-State Alumni Association with about a dozen or so questions about his Penn State experience and career/relevant post-Penn State accomplishments; Filled out the Speaker sheet and submitted it ahead of the interview to *Abrielle Clark*, Event Coordinator; Our Executive Director was highly recommended by fellow staff and they all thought he would be a fantastic candidate to share his story and his work with EPCAMR to be a future guest on the series
- EPCAMR signed on to a Letter supporting the continued authorization of the <u>DOE Clean Energy on</u> <u>Mine Land Program</u>, *Rep. McGarvey* (KY) is introducing a bill to extend authorization of the program from 2026 to 2030

• Reached out to *James Pagnotti*, Pagnotti Enterprises, to see if EPCAMR can schedule a meeting with him and *Tom Clark*-Kleinfelder to discuss a novel approach to AMD abatement and treatment of the Old Forge Borehole; *James* would like to set something up after the New Year once he has had a chance to review Tom's presentation from the PA AMR Conference; Provided *James* with a copy of *Tom's* revised presentation that was posted to the PA AMR Conference website

Keep PA Beautiful Open Your Eyes to Litter (OYEL) Booklet Revisions

• EPCAMR and KPB reviewed the remainder of the agreement and felt mutually that it needed to be revised; KPB proposed to remove the Spanish translations and Spanish teachers' guide work from us because they have a firm that is doing that for them now and the Project Trash and Science Curriculum; EPCAMR Executive Director let *Laura Rinehimer*-EPCAMR Watershed Outreach Education Specialist know of the revision and provided her with a copy of the revised agreement and remaining tasks to be completed on a few of the other booklets and graphics design to be completed by *Brady Mock*

LIU, NEPA Arts, and PA DCNR AMD & Art Environmental Education Grant (proposed)

• EPCAMR prepared a Letter of Commitment to the project for the grant submission by the LIU that was submitted by *Rich Mackrell,* -Assistant Director of STEM and Innovative Practices

Mine Mapping Outreach Video

• Provided *Joe Sapienza*, Centone Picture Productions with a high-resolution logo for the Earth Conservancy for the credits in the video documentary; *Mike* and the Executive Director need some time to work on the placement of the mine maps into the video

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

26th PA AMR Conference Planning for 2024

 Provided Anne Daymut-WPCAMR with a list of attendees who were on the AMD Tour at the Conference so that they can obtain additional Professional Development Hours (PDHs); Anne e-mailed out the PDH Certificates to everyone who attended; Shared the Pottsville Republican news clip on Bill Reichert's Mayfly Award presentation from the PA AMR Conference Planning Committee and Dave Hess's article in the <u>PA Environmental Digest</u>, to the entire Committee; Worked out a payment method for Briggs White from the IWG with Cheryl Cook, Acquisition and Assistance at the US Department of Energy-National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL)

Wyoming Valley AMD/AML Anthracite Geology Tour with Kutztown University & PA Council of Professional Geologists (PCPG)

 Conducted the Wyoming Valley AMD/AML Anthracite Geology Tour on November 16th with <u>Dr.</u> <u>Sarah E. Tindall</u>- Professor of Geology and her students since the 9th the EPCAMR Executive Director would be presenting at the Bucknell U. 19th Annual Susquehanna River Symposium; Ordered lunch from Vino's Deli before the students arrived and picked them up on our way out for the tour; *Chelsea Tarbell*, PG for HDR, Inc. who attended the tour mentioned afterward in an email that EPCAMR had done a great job with the presentations, tour, and career advice for the students and appreciated taking the time on a weekend to conduct and host the tour

Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (<u>POWR</u>) Networking and Strategic Planning Workshop for Technical & Organizational Service Providers in PA's Watersheds

• EPCAMR participated in the Workshop on November 15th at Susquehanna University Freshwater Research Institute, Selinsgrove as a Technical Service Provider to Conservation Districts in attendance

19th Annual Susquehanna River Symposium at Bucknell U. Center for Sustainability & the Environment

 19th annual Susquehanna River Symposium; Exhibited and participated as a Guest Panel Speaker at the Symposium on November 8th & 9th sponsored by the Susquehanna River Heartland Coalition for Environmental Studies, and the Pennsylvania Water Resources Research Center; The title of the EPCAMR Executive Director's Plenary Presentation for the panel with *Brian Cooper* from Trout Unlimited was "*Building Coalitions and Connections to an Abundance of Resources for Watersheds Impacted by Legacy Anthracite Mining-Turning Over Every Rock Even if it's Orange to Benefit Your Community by Getting Your Hands Dirty and Digging In!"*; Provided a copy of the presentation to *Dr. Ben Hayes*, Conference Organizer for distribution to all conference attendees; *Mike Hewitt*- EPCAMR participated in the Shamokin Creek AMD Tour with *Chuck Cravotta*, the USGS, and members of the Chesapeake Bay Scientific Technical Advisory Committee (STAC); Participated in the USGS Annual Northcentral/Northeast PA Cooperator Gathering at Bucknell U. thanks to the invitation from *John Clune*

Horizon Conference in Harrisonburg, VA at James Madison University

 Participated and presented at the Horizon Conference on November 2nd the presentation, titled, "Environmental Restoration and Abandoned Mine Reclamation in Northern Appalachia: Exploring the watershed work in environmental justice communities of the Anthracite and Northern Bituminous Coal Region in Pennsylvania"; PA's critical minerals are known as conflict minerals in South Africa and several organizations wanted to know how we are working with community groups to monitor and advocate for cleanup work in the US; EPCAMR Executive Director provided the presentation for distribution to Horizon Conference attendees via e-mail after sending a copy to *Rod Makelele* and *Dr. Kristin Wylie*; *Rod* thanked the EPCAMR Executive Director for his impactful contribution to the Conference for his insights and expertise that made a profound difference, inspired participants, and sparked important conversations on global issues; The Conference received enthusiastic feedback from attendees and it was said that our Executive Director's contribution and leadership added significant value to the experience

Virtual Datashed Training by Stream Restoration Incorporated (SRI)

• Attended the virtual sessions over 3 weeks in November 2024 to learn about Datashed capabilities, but also learn how to get an account, create projects, and upload data and documents

AMD Art Work on Anthracite Mining Using EPCAMR's Iron Oxide Pigment HUB Robeson Gallery in November 2025

• Artists, *Meredith Davenport* informed EPCAMR that she is working on the planning of an exhibition of The Drawing Centre's work on anthracite mining that will be held at Penn State in the HUB Robeson gallery next November; They don't have a final date just yet; EPCAMR offered to connect her up with some of our partnering PSU Professors and programs at University Park since the Executive Director is an alumni of the Environmental Resource Management Program; Her partnering artist Rachel has to come from overseas and they are seeking funding to assist with covering her trip for the exhibition; *Meredith* has been making photographs with the AMD pigment provided by EPCAMR; She sent EPCAMR a print of a picture she made of some fossils near Pottsville; She was interested in putting together an art fundraiser for EPCAMR and we informed her that if artists who would work with us would like to donate a portion of their proceeds from the sale of some of their art where the iron oxide pigment was used, we would be very interested in promoting that possibility; EPCAMR shipped her a pound each of Silverbrook Purple and Anthracite Red iron oxide pigment

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA Invest Accounts in QuickBooks; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for November 2024 with Highmark and United Concordia; Paid EC the rent; Made EPCAMR deposits to FNB; Made reconciliations with *Marianne*, our Bookkeeper-Ignite Business Services; *Marianne* produced for WPCAMR, an invoice for the reimbursable expenses from the NTTP AMD Passive Treatment Training since we had rented the 15-passenger van and paid for gas and some refreshments; *Marianne* helped to clear up an invoicing issue with one of our PA AMR Conference attendees and our bank; EPCAMR received a donation from *Bette Conway* who thanked EPCAMR for all of our work that we do
- Andy McAllister-WPCAMR Regional Coordinator and EPCAMR Executive Director finalized the agenda and requested Deb Nardone's- Foundation for PA Watersheds, assistance in facilitating the Visioning Session along with the two Directors; The agenda was sent out to both Boards: Sent Deb a copy of EPCAMR's Strategic Plan update; Finalized the guest list with the Penn-Stater; EPCAMR/WPCAMR Board Members convened the Joint Visioning Session on November 20 & 21st; EPCAMR 4th Quarter Board Meeting was held in a modified format the morning of the 21st and Marianne produced our Statement of Financial Position for the Treasurer's Report; EPCAMR President Joe Simons, shared an inspiring YouTube video to all Board members from EPCAMR/WPCAMR on the resiliency of our native brook trout and why the work that we are all doing for clean water is so important; The video is from the Bowman Creek watershed in Wyoming and Luzerne Counties that we have worked on for decades to restore; Morgan Romanowski, AmeriCorps volunteer for EPCAMR, transcribed all of the notepad notes into a single document from the Visioning Session Breakout Sessions and Mike combined it with other information that he had from the meeting before it was forwarded to EPCAMR/WPCAMR and PA Foundation for Watersheds for comments and additions or corrections before being distributed to all EPCAMR/WPCAMR Board members in attendance and the full Board membership, respectively who were not able to attend
- Renewed our Bitdefender Antivirus software license to Avangate, Inc.
- Provided Audrey Josephson-Day, Manager of the Federal Access Center-The Just Transition Fund some details on a few of the recent PA DEP grants that we were awarded in 2024, for their reporting
- Provided *Kelly Bennett*, Fiscal Management Specialist, PA DEP with an update on the Single Audit for FY 2023 ending December 31, 2023, that is being worked on by Kohanski & Co., our CPA
- Filled out an AmeriCorps Professional Development Request Form that needed to be submitted to Conservation Legacy for *Morgan Romanowski*, AmeriCorps volunteer with EPCAMR