



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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October 2020 Progress Report

Project Coordination

Huntsville Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan Project

- Received an extensive [literature search](#) on the effects of introduced species on native brook trout from *Rachel Kester*, PA Trout Unlimited

Mine Mapping Grant Project with the Mine Subsidence Insurance Program

- Received our ESRI Maintenance Quote to pay for ArcGIS Licenses in 2021

ISI Food by Youth Project Appalachian Collaborative with Groasis

- Referred by ISI, Inc. to sign up and become a registered volunteer organizational member of [Global Regeneration CoLab](#); Suggested that *Laura Rinehimer* sign up
- Invoiced and received payment for the 2nd Quarter and 3rd Quarter of 2020; A reminder had been sent about not receiving payment for the 2nd Quarter and an oversight was made by ISI, Inc. and they agreed to send both payments at once

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

- Communicated with *Keith George*-Solar Analyst, [Community Energy](#) about our project and his company's interest in continuing to have discussions with EPCAMR going forward on potential sites in the Anthracite Region; He mentioned keeping an eye on [SB 705](#)-known as the *Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act*, further providing for definitions and for interconnection standards for customer-generator facilities; providing for unsubscribed energy, for community solar facilities, electric distribution companies and subscriber administrators, for customer participation in community solar programs, for location of multiple community solar facilities and for ecology and stewardship; and making editorial changes
- Community solar allows anyone who pays an electric bill to participate in the benefits of solar energy without needing to install their own onsite system. Individual households, businesses, farmers, and non-profits would be able to purchase or subscribe to solar panels that make up a larger solar project and then receive a credit on their utility bill for the electricity generated by those panels; A bipartisan community solar bill in Harrisburg, House Bill 531, could kick-start renewable energy projects that would save consumers money on energy bills, create local jobs, pay farmers for allowing solar projects to be sited on their land, and generate tax revenue; There are over **200** shovel-

ready community solar projects in over **40** counties that are ready to go once this legislation passes, and those don't even include the sites EPCAMR is locating on reclaimed abandoned mine lands; EPCAMR sent a support letter to Senator *John Yudichak* and Representative *Eddie Day Pashinski*

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

- Sent a copy of the Extension Request Letter to *Gerard Schmidt*-Project Developer, PA DEP BAMR
- Swoyersville Borough Council met to discuss the extension and request for approval related to the title transfer of some of the property on October 5th
- Received a letter from *Gerard Schmidt* to sign and date and send back to him on the approval

OSMRE/AmeriCorps VISTA Stewards Individual Placement Program (SIPP)

- *Kyle Argenziano* worked with the Executive Director to submit a **\$5000** [Mountain Dew Outdoors Grant](#)
- Worked with *Kyle* to complete two educational flyers for EPCAMR on Streambank Erosion and Culvert Assessments for Aquatic Passage
- Discussed with *Kyle* about developing a Green Infrastructure Equity Index for the EPCAMR Region and provided him with a [presentation](#) from the CCWC to review for ideas and sample data that we can pull together for our area
- Received very positive feedback from the submitted Quarterly Report from *JM Aurednik*, Stewards Program Manager who was genuinely impressed with *Kyle's* and EPCAMR's work

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

- *Rob Frank*-Watershed Specialist, Dauphin County Conservation District reached out to thank EPCAMR for our efforts to secure Section 319 Funding from Growing Greener for the project

Technical Assistance

- Provided *Tom Clark*-SRBC AMD Coordinator and *Eric Oliver*-PA DEP Moshannon District Mining Office with some potential site locations for reforestation in the EPCAMR Region and contact information to follow up with including the Earth Conservancy, Lackawanna River Conservation Association, DeNaples, Pagnotti, and Susquehanna Coal Company; He reported it the suggestions to the 10K Mineland WorkGroup; The sites could be eligible for the NFWF Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund grant round in April 2021; Discussed getting on a follow up call with *Eric Oliver*, *Katie Ombalksi*, and *Liz Feinberg* after the New Year; The Centralia Old Route 61 Highway might be a site in contention but not for at least a year out
- Attended a conference call with Schuylkill County partners on a proposed Silver Creek Storage project and their interest in reaching out to the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC); Several partners met at the Schuylkill Conservation District

- Made a suggestion to *Greg Griffin*, a volunteer member of the Wilkes-Barre City Blight Committee to ask the Mayor's Office and City Council to consider talking with the Earth Conservancy about setting up a recycling center for recycled products on their lands or reclaimed abandoned mine lands to store and generate larger quantities of recyclables that would be worth more on the market in bulk; This may help to curb the illegal dumping that we are experiencing throughout the City and the Valley locally on abandoned mines and along our stream corridors
- Reached out to *Steven Reidell* and *Tracy Kessner*, [Avivid Water](#) and suggested that they may want to exhibit at the PA AMR Virtual Conference; Their company is looking to sample AMD water for rare earth elements and have a TurboCoag electrocoagulation technology for treating AMD; EPCAMR may be able to assist them in the future with some professional services
- Provided the Huber Breaker Preservation Society Board Member, *Pat Kennedy*, with a copy of the template for the HBPS Letterhead
- Sent a few additional paver addresses down to Old Mille Impressions for the Huber Breaker Miner's Memorial Park that came in a little later than expected
- Offered to scan and create digital images from *Ed Wytovich's* Kodak Slides to create an image inventory from around the coal region collected by Ed for archival and educational purposes; *Katie Van Orden*, EPCAMR's intern was tasked with scanning and inventorying all of the slides, which she completed in October
- Discussed with *Bill Reichert*-Schuylkill Headwaters Association about having a follow up call with the DRBC on possible future water storage projects and mine pool project studies completed in the Upper Schuylkill River with American Energy Partners, Inc., EPCAMR, SHA, Schuylkill Conservation District, and *Paul Drenzo*

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

Education & Outreach

- Prepared a Letter of Support for the Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee that will cease to exist on July 1, 2021, after 53 years of service to the public if the Pennsylvania General Assembly abolishes its only in-house source of environmental-policy analysis; The Joint Legislative Conservation Committee provides the General Assembly with objective and authoritative analysis of a broad range of economic, environmental, and social factors that all play a critical role in the way resources are used and reused; Submitted the letter to *Tony Guerrieri*, Executive Director on behalf of EPCAMR
- Updated *Bridget Dowd*-Youth Advisory Committee Director for The Luzerne Foundation on EPCAMR's progress with the drone, creating our banner, building our educational activities around it, and our Staff's focus on studying for the FAA license to fly the drone; Informed her of future cleanups in the area and down in Centralia, PA
- Participated in the Choose Clean Water Coalition Education Meetings through Zoom with legislators and their Staff from around the Commonwealth of PA to discuss environmental issues, projects, priorities, and examples of AMD/AML reclamation and remediation projects; Spoke to Speaker *Bryan Cutler* about EPCAMR's work and downstream positive impacts in his District and *Nick Troutman* from Senator Yaw's Office on work we are doing in the Loyalsock Creek; Spoke to Staff at Representative *Mario Scavello*'s Office about our work
- Requested that the EPCAMR Staff promote the Friends Helping Friends Fundraiser for EPCAMR on October 14th & 15th
- Worked with WPCAMR to decide on some options for a logo for the PA AML Campaign; EPCAMR and WPCAMR continued editing videos related to Reauthorization; Discussed software to use for editing; Uploaded videos to our YOUTube channels and utilized them during the PA AMR Virtual 2020 Conference
- *Ashley Krauss*, who is an archaeologist at the PA DOT and a student in the Master of Science in Applied Geoscience Program at UPenn who is developing her thesis, where she is concentrating in Environmental Geology; She is interested in mapping the subsurface and geology of abandoned anthracite mines through consideration of historic and colliery maps as well as the stratigraphy, and hydrogeology of the Valley and Ridge Physiographic province to predict the potential for collapse, mine pooling, and mine subsidence; She was very impressed by our work as well as the GIS products and mine subsidence insurance tool on the EPCAMR website; Conducted an interview with her and filled her in on our work in the region and offered her suggestions on her thesis by provided her with links to information she might be able to cite for her work; *Ashley* put EPCAMR in touch with *Karl Russek*-Director of the Programs and Applied Research, of [The Water Center](#), University of Pennsylvania
- Interviewed by *Arianna Skibell*, E & E News Reporter about EPCAMR's work in the region and our thoughts on a just transition away from fossils for an article in E & E News magazine

- Promoted [Amazon Prime Day](#) on EPCAMR's social media on October 13th-14th as a small fundraiser for EPCAMR
- Lackawanna College students in *Gene Schultz's* class promoted EPCAMR's small fundraiser for Charger, our ATV that is need of parts and equipment for the Spring 2021 anticipated cleanups; Many donations came in during the month of October
- Worked with *Jared Stonesifer* and *Renee Reber*-Campaign Manager, Water Advocacy, PennFuture and [Reimagine Appalachia](#) to send out a Letter to the Editor for several local papers on the new framework and blueprint for a new Appalachian economy, sustainable jobs, and redevelopment of abandoned mine lands
- Interviewed by several small groups of Wilkes University students for an Environmental Science Class being led by *Julie McMonagle*-Lecturer for the Department of Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences
- Shared the PA Fish & Boat Commission's [Education Portal](#) with the EPCAMR Staff It's a very good website link not only for Trout in the Classroom (TIC), but for other links to aquatic resources and various PDFs and references to fish, wildlife, habitat, water quality, macros, etc.; It will come in handy as we start developing our virtual Environmental Education ideas
- Shared EPCAMR's recent YOUTube Environmental Education video on [Macroinvertebrates](#) to the Foundation for PA Watersheds who enjoyed it
- Requested that *Frank Sindaco*, GIS Watershed Outreach Specialist put together a summary presentation on the ARIES Framework for the Staff
- EPCAMR signed on to a sign-on letter in opposition to HB 1808 that is being promoted by the American Chemistry Council in State legislatures across the nation to advocate for a "plastics-to-fuel" process under the guise of recycling; It would reduce regulatory requirements and expand the term "recycling" to include environmentally harmful practices that would increase air and climate pollution; The bill has passed the House and is awaiting a vote in the Senate; You can also read more about the negative issues associated with "advanced" or "chemical" recycling in [the report from the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives](#)
- Worked with *Dana Kuhnline*, Appalachian Voices to provide her with brief synopses of sites in PA that have the potential for economic development on abandoned mine lands for a short story series on Facebook
- The EPCAMR Executive Director's [Letter to the Editor](#) was published in The Scranton Times-Tribune on October 18th related to [Reimagine Appalachia](#) and supporting Reauthorization and RECLAIM; Let *Annie Regan* know from Reimagine Appalachia about the LTE
- Signed on to a PennFuture sign-on letter in opposition to SB 619, which is a dangerous bill that seeks to gut Pennsylvania's Clean Streams Law by fundamentally changing the Clean Streams Law - enacted in 1937 to protect

Pennsylvania's abundant water resources - to exclude from its definition of "pollution" any "accidental discharge, spill or release that does not cause a violation of" a limited list of 15 water quality criteria, such as temperature, color, and bacteria; Senate Bill 619 also jettisons spill reporting requirements to the Pa Fish and Boat Commission and the PA Department of Environmental Protection leaving our waters unprotected from serious pollution events

- Sent *Bert Myers*, PA DEP EPCAMR photos of AMD and Centralia after a request came in from PACD and a few Conservation Districts; Informed *Bert* that the PA DEP can use any EPCAMR photos and just provide us with a photo credit
- Provided Representative *Jerry Mullery* with EPCAMR's position on the RGGI and our desire to see the Governor's veto upheld on HB 2025, a bill to take away the power of the PA DEP to enact a carbon reduction program, an update on our NFWF grant, and our support of waste coal to power legislation that would help keep the ARIPPA Co-Gen plants reclaiming abandoned mine lands
- *Anne Daymut*, WPCAMR and the Executive Director had an idea of coming up with a podcast on AML issues in PA and were going to think about it further over the Winter 2020; She was going to participate in an online webinar in November and get back to EPCAMR
- Discussed EPCAMR's work with *Neesha Mirchandani*-Founder & CEO, of [Impact Stars](#), who put EPCAMR in touch with [Dr. Crystal Cook Marshall](#) to talk about our work and hers in West Virginia
- Applied for a **\$250** grant from the [Clean Trail Initiative Program](#) sponsored by Extreme Terrain; Leah Leich, PR Assistant contacted EPCAMR and suggested that we apply
- Interviewed by *Paul Golias*, Citizens Voice for an [article](#) on the Free Little Library constructed by the EPCAMR Executive Director and his youngest son, Ethan, that painted it with recycled iron oxide and placed it in the City of Nanticoke for children to obtain free donated books by the Hughes Family and generous donors of books from around the region;
- Reviewed minutes and draft AMD Work Plan for the [Schuylkill Action Network](#)
- Participated in a 6-week online Appalachian Environmental Education (EE) in partnership with Virginia Polytech Institute and State University, Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation being facilitated by *Emily Thorpe*-Graduate Research Assistant, MS student; The Appalachian EE collaborative learning community took place on Padlet, a free online resource that allows users to share text, images, videos, music, web content, and more; By responding to weekly Padlet prompts, the EPCAMR Executive Director shared ideas, practices, hopes, barriers, and challenges with other practitioners from various states across the region; This became a creative learning space where existing knowledge and big dreams were discussed about the future of EE in the region

- Made final edits to the PA 2021 Legislative Briefing Book with *Mariah Davis*, Choose Clean Water Coalition on the AMD section before it went to final print production
- Researched and sent around to the EPCAMR Staff several articles on innovative ways to reuse mine pool water; EPCAMR will continue to work in this direction to come up with similar innovative solutions for how to use our mine pools more effectively in Eastern PA; A couple articles listed below discuss a study released this week looking at data center potential in Southwest Virginia, including an examination of the technical feasibility and economics of utilizing mine pool water as a cooling source for data centers, a preliminary design for a mine pool water-supplied HVAC cooling system, and an evaluation of suitable sites for data centers including sites with access to mine water and those without
- Here's the link to the full study: [Project Oasis Final Report](#)
 - [Study Shows Region Could Hold Multiple Data Centers](#)
 - [Invest SWVA Unveils List of Potential Data Center Sites](#)

Community Volunteer Coordination

- Coordinated with *Marie Johns*-Team Leader of the PA DCNR Outdoors Crew to make sure they double check the UMass Amherst website to be able to access the NAACC Non-Tidal Aquatic Organism Passage Training site to complete the online portion of the culvert assessments
- *Sarah Randle*, a teacher at Crestwood High School, that has participated in the PA DCNR Watershed Community Connections Forum made a request of EPCAMR to see if there were any upcoming volunteer opportunities for her students who would like to form an Environmental Club
- *Rachael Cooper* signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer and will be attending the Centralia Cleanup on the 17th of October
- *Arwaa Mehran* from Mountain Top, *Jeremy Kuhns*, from Scranton, and *Ryan Covelens*, from White Haven, signed up to become EPCAMR Volunteers
- *Nicole Elwell*, Ashley, signed up through VolunteerMatch to become an EPCAMR volunteer to help with cleanups locally in the Ashley area and will be joining us in Centralia on the 17th of October

PA American Water Charitable Trust Foundation Community Cleanup Coordination

- Coordinated the 7th Annual Centralia Cleanup on October 17th; One of the surveillance cameras was damaged by a vandal in Centralia; EPCAMR returned the camera for repairs to *Rob Dubas*, Keep PA Beautiful; However, the SD card was retrieved from it and images were reviewed and uploaded to see if any evidence could be provided of who may have done the vandalism to Keep PA Beautiful; *Todd Moore*, EPCAMR volunteer, had his company, [All American Poly](#) donated **1000** contractor bags for the cleanup; **50** volunteers and in **2.5** hrs we picked up **3T** in trash, **42** tires, and **2** televisions; [Event Page](#)

Conferences, Training, Tours, Exhibits, & Workshops

- PA AMR Virtual Conference registrations continue to roll in; Paid for Zoom service add-ons for the PA AMR Conference; Held a PA AMR Conference call to review our tasks and moderator/facilitator duties leading up to the Conference in a few weeks; Reviewed the virtual Networking Coffee Breaks agenda; Found out that *Lanny Erdos*, US DOI Director of OSMRE couldn't attend and *Tom Shope*-Regional Director, would be speaking on his behalf as a Keynote Speaker; Coordinated and facilitated a very successful first-ever online virtual PA AMR Conference on the WHOVA App platform on October 27th and 28th; www.treatminewater.com; The PA AMR Conference Committee did a quick follow up recap evaluation following the Conference and felt it was very successful with a **183** attendees and **16** exhibitors; We received lots of positive feedback and compliments from attendees; Convened a more thorough wrap-up meeting and evaluation of the Conference on October 29th and began planning for 2021; Followed up with attendees looking for professional development hours
- Provided *Rachel Kester*, PA Trout Unlimited information on the WHOVA App that EPCAMR and the PA AMR Conference will be using again for our 2nd virtual conference; The *Trout in the Classroom 2021 Summit* is looking to a virtual platform
- Registered for Cornell University's [E-STEM](#) Online 5-week course
- Participated on a conference call Civilian Conservation Corps Roundtable with Reimagine Appalachian with Senator *Robert P. Casey Jr.* to discuss the framework and Blueprint that EPCAMR endorsed and to talk about jobs and environmental reclamation and restoration projects in the region
- Completed the PAEA Presentation with *Dr. Andrea Nerozzi*, who will make the presentation on behalf of EPCAMR and Wyoming Seminary while we are coordinating the Centralia Cleanup on October 17th; Received a copy of the PAEA presentation and will be downloading it to share on EPCAMR's social media and website
- EPCAMR Executive Director made a live presentation on Microsoft Teams entitled, "*EPCAMR's Community Volunteerism throughout Appalachia and How You Can Become Active Stewards of Your Local Environment*" to a Rotary Club in Woodstock, Georgia in the southern Appalachians; Spoke about small environmental actions, projects, and programs that could lead to big impacts in their local communities and watersheds that will improve their environment and the quality of life in their neighborhoods; Provided examples of the type of community volunteer efforts that EPCAMR has been coordinating in the underserved Northern Appalachian Coalfield Communities for the last 25 years that has made a tremendous impact and difference in the region; Provided ideas, innovative suggestions, and ways to incorporate art into their local projects and discussed AML impacts in Georgia

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA, Invest Accounts; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for October 2020 with Highmark; Paid Verizon and Internet monthly bills; Paid EC the rent; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register; Provided *Denise* with the September 2020 Statement for reconciliations Made a deposit to FNB for incoming *reimbursements* and accounts receivables
- Updated all of EPCAMR's domain accounts with *Mike* in GoDaddy
- Continued to obtain the necessary paperwork to apply for the PPP Loan Forgiveness through First National Bank after hearing from *Mary Newsome* that documentation will be available shortly on their website
- EPCAMR President *Joe Simons* reviewed and signed EPCAMR's completed 990 for 2019; Provided the original to Kohanski, PC
- Signed off on *Kelsey Smith's* Public Loan Forgiveness Program Employment Certification
- OneSource informed EPCAMR that our service fees for payroll will be going up \$36 for the year; Received a credit on our 940 Return and provided a copy to OneSource
- Completed the October 2020 Board Report