



## Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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### October 2023 Progress Report

#### Highlights:

- EPCAMR staff scanned, georeferenced, mosaicked & digitized mine maps for the **DEP MSI** MMG program. Downloaded the Southern Anthracite Mosaic to begin QA/QC of **HU** work.
- EPCAMR and WPCAMR staff hosted the **25<sup>th</sup> Annual AMR Conference**; Participated in weekly **PA AML Campaign** calls, several **PA AMR Conference Committee** calls, a Solar on AML call with **LaBella**, and the **PEC NEO** Dinner; Continued to manage registration and contact venues for the **PA AMR Conference**.
- Sampled 3 AMD TS, upstream, downstream and several headwater sites in **Loyalsock Creek Watershed** for **LCWA & SCD**; sampled 27 discharge and instream sites in **Shamokin Cr.** for **SCRA**.
- Updated [www.PaSolarMinedLands.org](http://www.PaSolarMinedLands.org), [www.TreatMineWater.com](http://www.TreatMineWater.com) and [www.EPCAMR.org](http://www.EPCAMR.org); administered GobbaDaPile local domain, G Suite for Nonprofits, and social media sites.

#### Education, Outreach and Admin.:

- Needed a day to recover from a COVID booster I got the day before. Got the shot at 3PM Sunday, started feeling effects 12 hours later (3AM Monday) and they lasted 12 hours (till 3PM Monday). Wanted to make sure I was up on this vaccine since we would be hosting the AMR conference at the end of the month. The venue will be maxed out and there is a potential for COVID spread.
- Participated in a call with Steve Cornia at EPCAMR and staff from LaBella Associates regarding additional data the desired to complete the Solar on AML report. The data for the report was given to Robert Young at DEP who synthesized it into a summary and some tables/graphs, but LaBella felt that more detail and possibly the datatables in an appendix would aide the readers of the report. We explained that some data was not well organized for individual site identification but was manipulated to weed out duplicates and create statewide statistics. [SOLAR]
- EPCAMR Management staff participated in an AMR Conference Call which are now coming at weekly intervals as it is the month of the conference and several loose ends need to be addressed.
- Participated in an hour-long interview by Julian Hosty, a student from Wilkes University in Dr. Julie McMonagle's class. This has become a biannual thing for all EPCAMR staff. It's not a problem however, we are glad to help students understand what lead us to choose an environmental career as they are contemplating a career path of their own.
- EPCAMR Management Staff participated in an AMR Conference Call to make sure we had all our final preparations started. Went to Enterprise Rent-A-Car with Bobby to make sure all details were squared away for the 15-Passenger Van Rental. Printed "drink tickets" and a letter sized sign for the bar at the conference dinner to explain that ARM Group was buying the first drink in celebration of the AMR Conference 25th anniversary. Unfortunately, they did not make it in time for a booth or a sponsorship.

- EPCAMR Management Staff participated in weekly AML Campaign calls.
- Participated in a National Association of State Land Reclamationists (NASLR) & AMR Conference Call to coordinate tour details with NASLR. Sorted out a misunderstanding that NASLR dinners were being sold by AMR Conference registration and needed to be added to the NASLR counts.
- Shifted into full-blown conference preparation mode the week before the conference. Many other workloads were set aside to resume in mid-November.
- Received word from NASLR in the early morning that all 15-passenger vans were being recalled for an upgrade to the backup camera. Called the Kingston Branch of Enterprise Rent-A-Car to confirm, but had to leave a message. Heard no response by noon and went to the Kingston Branch for answers. Turns out that only certain VIN numbers were recalled and they confirmed later that there were several 15-passenger vans in the NEPA fleet that weren't being recalled. We were reassured we had a van for Monday, but NASLR and WPCAMR's vans were not. Anne and I made a last minute decision to get a passenger bus for Tuesday.
- Missed an AMR Conference call dealing with some printing and transportation nightmares, but caught up by replying to the notes that Anne Daymut from WPCAMR sent after the call. We asked some committee members that were close by to drive the tour route and look out for things that would prohibit a tour bus from traveling the route. They confirmed later that they thought the route on the agenda was the best route for the bus.
- Attended the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) Northeast Office dinner, as Bobby was traveling back from DC, to congratulate Earth Conservancy on winning a partnership award and John Levitsky of the Luzerne Conservation District for the Shelburne Award. Caught up with many colleagues.
- EPCAMR Management Staff attended a tour of AMD/AML sites on Earth Conservancy Property with several USGS scientists. USGS was touring sites to see what they could do to help EC gather data for their stream restoration and land reclamation work.
- Travel to Altoona with several EPCAMR staff to begin setup of the AMR Conference at the Altoona Grand Hotel.
- EPCAMR and WPCAMR staff hosted AMR Conference Tour for about 40 individuals loaded up on a tour bus. Due to last minute requisitioning of our tour leader at DEP by the Department of the Interior Office of Inspector General (DOI OIG), Anne and I did our best to lead the tour. We traveled to Mine Site 33 about 15 minutes after the NASLR bus (which had left early). PA DEP Title V staff explained the site. Left ½ hour late from the site to several sites along the Blacklick Creek including an active treatment system being constructed, the 3 Sisters AMD discharge and a former refuse pile all along the Ghost Town Trail. Small snafu with pulling into the wrong treatment plant and the bus driver was able to skillfully get us out of a small driveway (again we had poor directions to the place and no tour leader). Used the NASLR handout to talk about the last 2 on the bus as we slowly drove past them to catch up on time. Arrived ½ hour late to tour the Colver Cogen Plant for a tour, but the NASLR group was not done. Waited an additional ½ hour for the NASLR folks to complete the tour. Colver plant staff graciously allowed us to only complete the walking tour and skip the presentation to regain some time. Crisy Sweeney from ARIPPA sent a thank you to the plant manager. A boxed lunch was eaten on the way to the next site instead of a pavilion at Horseshoe Curve because the bus driver was cautioned that his bus would not fit thru the tunnel. Bus could not make the sharp turn to get in the Glenwhite Run treatment sites, so we had to proceed very cautiously thru the very middle of the tunnel anyway to turn around at Horseshoe Curve. Initially this tour was planned with 15-passenger vans which were recalled only 5 days before. We picked up Jon Smoyer from DEP on the way to the next site (Cresson Active Treatment Plant) and then headed back to the hotel by 3:30PM for folks to make the 4:30 bus to the NASLR dinner. Also, the bus had several mechanical things wrong: the speedometer was stuck at 80 MPH, the windshield wipers would go off at random intervals, and the scariest malfunction was that the bus driver's seat was stuck in the up position. He had to constantly move it down to hit the brake. We have not read the comments yet, but from a passenger perspective other EPCAMR staff thought it was a nice tour. They noticed we had to skip a few sites, but the fall foliage was amazing. From a

management perspective it was one blunder after another caused by many last-minute circumstances that were out of our control.

- EPCAMR and WPCAMR staff hosted 2-days of AMR Conference presentations and networking. Anne, Steve, and I recorded 25 presentations to share later via YouTube while NASLR livestreamed another 10 presentations. Lunch of the first day and the cash bar were late due to hotel staff miscommunication, and we had to push the afternoon schedule back an hour. The following dinner and lunch on the second day were much better other than another misunderstanding with guests receiving the diet restricted meals. There was a list sent to the venue more than a week prior to the event. We wrapped up and got on the road shortly after 5PM to travel back to the EPCAMR office and unload. We haven't read the reviews yet, but we were congratulated on a successful conference several times by attendees both in person and via email.
- Went on a much needed vacation the last week of the month.

### **Technical Assistance:**

- Sampled Loyalsock Upstream, Downstream, & in/out of 3 treatment systems (Connell B Vein, Connell C Vein and Gutten Drift). Recorded data in a database for reporting to the SCD & Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association. [LCWA]
- Caught up on copying sampling results from Askam and Shamokin Watersheds into the EPCAMR Sampling Data Field Book Google sheet. [EC & SCRA]
- Tested different camera and audio setups for AMR Conference. If we use the Canon Rebel T8i or GoPro stand alone and download videos from the SD card to our computers, the audio from the camera seems to be sufficient. Canon cameras have a max 30 minutes per video, GoPro is unlimited. If we use them as webcams and record directly to our computers (OSB studio) or livestream to Zoom or YouTube, this removes the 30 minute restriction but we would need a separate microphone to plug into our computer to pick up sound from the speaker. Last conference Steve's Computer was connected to Bobby's camera this way (without the microphone) in the Director's room and people complained they could barely hear the speaker. In the ballroom however we had a separate microphone on the podium hooked up to the computer and the audio was fine (at times too loud).
- Day 2 Shamokin sampling with Frank and Brenna Schneider: Big Mountain discharge to Cameron discharges (Bobby and Steve did day 1 the previous day). [SCRA]
- Continued to download the Anthracite\_Southern field mosaic and images in the mosaic from Harrisburg University (HU) and posted to the MMG SharePoint by PA DEP MSI staff. Had to download each of the 51 folders separately and only 1 at a time or it would fail to download. Some folders took more than an hour to download. Also, the main folder in Sharepoint needed to be refreshed periodically or the folder would fail to download. It was a slow meticulous process that couldn't be easily done alongside other tasks because it required constant attention. [MSI]
- Finished printing 2 sponsor posters and 3 double sided agenda posters. Had some trouble with the HP Designjet T790 and "out of ink" notices. The actual issue was that the print cartridges were expired. Researched noted that we could use expired ink cartridges that were given to us, but had to go through a process using the plotter menu to unseat/reseat each and acknowledge the cartridges were expired. Trial and error on getting the posters to print and waste the least amount of paper. Printed to a 36" roll, glued to foam boards and trimmed paper with an Exacto knife. The edges weren't perfect but passable.
- Shawnese completed the georeferencing and mosaicking of paper property maps for Earth Conservancy. Checked it over and handed it over to Jason. [EC]
- Printed nametags, but with the Word template would skip every 7th name. Had to go back thru the list and manually write the missing names and print them separately. Had to print each page of name tags separately because if you batch printed them quickly the toner would smear on the card stock paper.
- Printed AMR tour handouts supplied by DEP staff from the NASLR conference committee at the end of the week before the conference. Were notified that we would not have a tour leader from

DEP on the bus in the morning so Anne and I scrambled to put together a tour agenda with directions we could give to the

- Completed downloading the last 7 folders for the Southern Anthracite field mosaic from MMG SharePoint. [MSI]

[ ] - Denotes funding source where applicable.