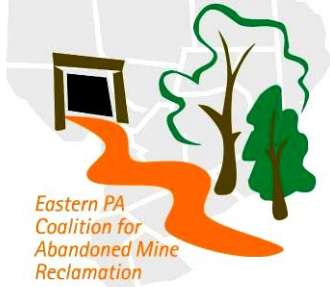


EPCAMR



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

April 2014 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- PAEE EE Capacity Conference Call with Co-Team Leaders; Coordinated putting together bios and descriptions of the Community of Learners with *Allison Petris-VISTA* for the Winnie Palmer Nature Preserve; Suggested to the new PAEE NE Regional Director Scott Cope, from the Wildlands Conservancy that we have a point of contact, e-mail, and phone #, at a minimum, as well as several categories to define the volunteer members that we'll be seeking, both from formal and non-formal EE backgrounds and that I would go through my old list from years ago when the EPCAMR Executive Director served as the volunteer NE Regional Director to look back at who was involved at that time; Suggested that we come up with a few reasons and goals why we want others interested in EE professionals to work as volunteers within the NE Region of PAEE; Communicated with Doug Orner-webmaster and Communications Coordinator for PAEE on developing future methods of communications for the PA State Consortia Community of Learners and to get him to join the FaceBook Group for the PA State Consortia Community of Learners to stay in touch with everyone
- Conducted a AMD Outreach and Education Program for **25** students from the Hazleton STEM School at the Jeddo Mine Tunnel and along the Little Nescopeck and Nescopeck Creek, outside of Drums, PA with PA DCNR Nescopeck State Park
- Provided information to Ann Jacobs from the Citizen's Voice for an article on the recently awarded PA DEP Environmental Education Grant to EPCAMR for **\$3000** to establish and AMD & Pottery Art education program and outdoor field experience to the 4th & 5th grade students at Greater Nanticoke Area Elementary Center, Nanticoke using AMD and recycled iron oxide in their art; Informed the Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Mariellen Scott about the grant award and let her know that I would be in touch with her teachers over the Summer 2014
- Meeting with *Duane Feagley*, PA Anthracite Council-Executive Director in Hazelton, PA to discuss Senate Bill 411; Provided our EPCAMR President more details on SB 411 from the PA League of Women Voters that explains an even further analysis of the bill; Interviewed for an article in the *Suburban News Magazine*, Back Mountain, PA on SB 411; Talked with Richard Fox, Senator Yudichak's Executive Staffer on SB 411 and couldn't convince him that this was a bad bill; The Suburban News does a great job of covering stories that our Valley residents want to know about; EPCAMR put our concerns on this bill for the public to decide on what they think is in their best interest; The gas industry, the coal industry, or a regional non-profit's 20 year experience in this field, working first hand with community groups who have had to deal with polluted mine drainage and abandoned mine lands, always acting in the best interest of the public that has been under-served, under-represented, and under-funded, which has always been an environmental injustice
- Promoted the *PA Anthracite Section-SME* 100th Anniversary Celebration on our website and FaceBook that will be held on 6-19-2014 at the Conyngham Country Club, near Hazleton, PA

- EPCAMR Executive Director was requested to be listed as 1/30 possible participants from across the country in a Fall 2014 Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC) Workshop Proposal entitled “*Civic Ecology Practices: What Role for Self-Organized Community Environmental Stewardship in Resilience to Multiple Stresses?*” being submitted by Marianne Krasny, Professor, at the Department of Natural Resources and Director of the Civic Ecology Lab at Cornell University, in Ithaca, NY; <http://www.sesync.org/>; The Workshop would be held at the University of Maryland in Annapolis, MD and would be entirely grant funded by the National Science Foundation and the University of Maryland, if the proposal is funded later in the Summer; EPCAMR was chosen for our work in coalfield communities with urban and rural populations and how we create partnerships, coalitions, coordinate volunteers, and educate underserved school districts throughout our region for nearly the last 20 years
- Requested to submit a brief article to the PAEE JOURNAL on EPCAMR’s recent 2014 Watershed Stewardship Conservation Organization of the Year Award presented to us at the end of March 2014 by the Luzerne Conservation District because of our commitment to environmental education of the students throughout Luzerne County, our efforts to restore and remediate streams impacted by abandoned mine drainage, our support of District Programs and Watershed Projects throughout the County, our involvement and coordination of cleanups on abandoned mine lands and along streamside areas that are littered throughout the County, and our environmental leadership within the coalfield communities that we serve throughout the Region; *Diane Peck Madl*, Environmental Education Specialist Supervisor at the PA DCNR Nescopeck State Park, who is a long-time partner in EE of EPCAMR’s, since 1996, was awarded the 2014 Environmental Educator of the Year as well; Submitted the article to *Ruth Roperti*, Past President, PAEE
- Reviewed **SB 1346** at the request of Mark Baird, NRG Director, External Affairs, Canonsburg, PA regarding a tax credit program for the waste coal industry (ARIPPA) to offset their liability or sell the credits to another organization that could use it to offset their taxes; Signed EPCAMR on after a closer reading of the Bill; <http://www.legis.state.pa.us/CFDOCS/Legis/PN/Public/btCheck.cfm?txtType=PDF&sessYr=2013&sessInd=0&billBody=S&billTyp=B&billNbr=1346&pn=1971>

Technical Assistance

- EPCAMR Staff provided the **PA Game Commission NE Regional Office**, Bat Biologist-*Lee deWolfsi*, Wildlife Diversity Biologist-*Richard Fritsky*, and a few other staff assistance with trapping, counting, and identifying various bat species at the Glen Lyon Abandoned Mine, known as the Ice Cave and the Bat Cave, which is probably the largest underground abandoned mine hibernacula in PA for several evenings during the month of April; Coordinated with *Kevin Wenner*-PGC Wildlife Management Supervisor for the NE Region; Provided maps to the PGC of the underground mines in this area of the roost and wildlife habitat within the mines
- Meeting with *Ray Clarke*, Chairman and Treasurer for the Huber Breaker Preservation Society to assist him with inputting the paver/engraved paver donations into an Excel file for the **Huber Miner’s Memorial Park Reclamation Project**; On 4-24-14, the Huber Breaker was demolished
- Provided *Pam Fendrock*, Web & Outreach Coordinator for PennFuture with information on AMD in the Mocanaqua area since a friend of hers lives there and was interested
- Reviewed a Solicitation for Projects from the SRBC for Water Sources for Consumptive Use Mitigation and called Skelly & Loy to see if they were interested in partnering on a proposal that is due June 27, 2014
- Worked with *Gabby Zawacki*, EPCAMR Literary Arts and Community Outreach Intern to prepare a draft technical proposal to the *Norcross Foundation* to seek funding for some additional AMD Field Monitoring Equipment; Gabby prepared the narrative and necessary budget items, along with the necessary paperwork for submission over the Summer 2014 for consideration

- ARIPPA Board of Directors approved a budget of **\$5000 (\$2500** to each of the Coalitions) to promote our continued and successful mini-grants program for abandoned mine reclamation to support our constituents and those that support ARIPPA; Reviewed the Application and Guidelines with WPCAMR for minor revisions and set a mid-July date for a deadline on application submissions due to the PA AMR Conference coordination in June 2014; <http://epcamr.org/home/current-initiatives/arippa-aml-reclamation-awards/>
- Assisted Aaron Stredny, Luzerne Conservation District Watershed Specialist, and the District with grading tests at the County EnviroThon held at the PPL Susquehanna Riverlands, Salem Twp., PA on 4-30-14

Project Coordination

- Provided PA DEP with color photos of the Hicks Creek Problem Area for the **Hicks Creek AML Natural Stream Channel Design Construction Project** since the black and white copies included with the Joint Permit application didn't come in too clear; Prepared an extension letter from the Growing Greener Grants Center for the project to extend it through June 30th, 2015 and forwarded it to Dennis Palladino, our Project Officer with our reasons for the extension since the PA DEP is still undergoing the Joint Permit Application Review
- Meeting with *Ben Lorson*-PA Fish & Boat Commission NE Regional Office Aquatic Resource Biologist, Ashley Borough Manager-*Dan Gulick*, John McGovern-Ashley Trout Stocking Association (ASTA), and several other members of the ASTA, and *Jeff Boyer*, RiverLogic Solutions, LLC (<http://www.riverlogicsolutions.com>) to walk through a potential dam removal and trout stream habitat and restoration project on Solomon Creek above S. Main Street along a Borough Park to come up with a game plan, cost estimates, limitations on the work, and a scope of work and estimated budget for the **Solomon Creek Dam Removal and Trout Stream Restoration Habitat Improvement Project** that is located in a previously mining impacted reach that historically loses flow to the underground mines in the area; Funds are being packaged through some mitigation funding with PA DOT to support the project; Provide *John McGovern* with resource documents and references on the **Solomon Creek Coldwater Heritage Conservation Plan** that EPCAMR developed in November 2012; Received some cost estimates from *Jeff Boyer*, Managing Partner, with RiverLogic Solutions, LLC from his company and Princeton Hydro for consideration, prior to submitting to PA DOT
- Worked on completing an MOU with Susquehanna Solution Mining, LLC on the **Old Forge AMD Remediation Project** and provided it to Charles Medico to show our support when he meets with Mike Bedrin, PA DEP NE Regional Director; Made some necessary language changes to the MOU before supporting it and signing it
- Provided Earth Conservancy with pictures of the recently discovered **Mocanaqua AMD Tunnel** in the southernmost part of the Wyoming Valley where they had requested us to take flow and chemistry data for a possible future project to monitor this several thousand gallon a minute discharge
- EPCAMR Staff met with Paselo Logistics, in Ashley, PA the company that is scrapping the Huber Breaker and provided the workers with a copy of the surface mine map and an overview and education on mine map symbology; Paselo allowed EPCAMR to get a water elevation reading from the recently discovered Huber Shaft that is open and exposed since the Hoist House where the head frame once stood is long gone; It's 98'.2" from the surface to the water in the mine pool that is connected to the South Wilkes-Barre AMD Boreholes
- Met with Joe Sapienza, II and his film crew from Drexel University in Centralia, PA to be interviewed for a short documentary called, **Centralia-America's Lost Town**, on the history of the mine fire for a Senior Film School project that Joe is directing; Toured around the town, described the underground mining that occurred and showed him mine maps of the area, and hiked to the Centralia AMD Tunnel to talk about the underground mine pool in the area; EPCAMR Executive Director is featured in the documentary due to his monitoring of the mine fire in one of the Churches nearly 20 years ago while working as an Intern with the PA DEP BAMR; <http://vimeo.com/96612018>

- Submitted a reimbursement and progress report to Growing Greener from the Fall 2013 through the Winter 2014, on the **Lewis Mine AMD Treatment System Rehabilitation Project**; Discussed with Hedin Environmental about whether or not the plans that were revised were discussed with Marc Lewis, the landowner and our Project Officer, Mario Carrello, for final approval, before the survey work, and a bid package with specifications could be put together; Suggested a Summer Field Meeting to continue working on the project
- Followed up with the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority and Hanover Township Municipal Government about a missing manhole cover along the Lee Park Tributary to Solomon Creek, Hanover Township, PA where EPCAMR will be coordinating an illegal dump site cleanup in partnership with the Hanover Township Neighborhood Crime watch Association and Hanover Township on May 3rd; Reilly Associates, the Township Engineer got right on the project and had the area temporarily seal and backfilled until a new manhole cover could be ordered; Assisted *Darlene Davis*-President of the Hanover Township Neighborhood Crime watch Association with drafting a donation letter for pizza and refreshments from Pizza Bella, Hanover Township for the volunteers that will be coming to the **Lee Park/CNJ-Buttonwood Abandoned RR Illegal Dump Cleanup Project**
- Coordinated with *Richard Simon*-Advisor and Teacher at Coughlin High School, who has nearly **30** volunteer high school students interested in helping EPCAMR with community service cleanup projects over the Summer 2014; Coughlin's *Watershed Team* and *Go Green Club* participated in the **Avondale Mine Disaster Illegal Dump Site Cleanup Project** in Plymouth Township, Luzerne County, PA below Avondale Hill on April 26th from 9-12 in partnership with EPCAMR and the Plymouth Historical Society; The security gates which were installed by UGI Utilities, have stopped new illegal dumping of household garbage, at the Avondale Mine Site Memorial Garden
- Provided Steve Konrad, Plymouth Historical Society, with a Great PA Cleanup banner, NO DUMPING signs, refreshments, garbage bags, and gloves for the historic **Avondale Mine Disaster Site Illegal Dump Site Cleanup** on 4-26-14; Some of the supplies were provided by PA DOT, State Representative Gerald Mullery's Office, and others were supplied by PEC NE Office; EPCAMR stopped into the PEC Office to pick up materials

Conference Coordination, Training, Conferences, Workshops

- Conducted two PA AMR Conference Committee Conference Calls to continue the planning of the 16th Annual PA AMR Conference; Followed up with *John Dawes* and *Branden Diehl* about the request for funding for Water Wise DVDs to be provided to all Conference Attendees in return for sponsorship of the 16th Annual PA AMR Conference; Just over **\$1000** in funding was provided by the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, for the production of **200** DVDs to be split up between EPCAMR, WPCAMR, and the Foundation for PA Watersheds following the distribution to all attendees; Obtained a bio for PA DEP Secretary *Chris Abruzzo* from his Executive Secretary, *Heather Reim*; Received a high resolution logo file from *Cristy Doyle*, ARIPPA for their 25th Anniversary cake that we're presenting their membership with at the Conference, in addition to our attendees for their work on reclaiming abandoned mine lands across PA; Bus is scheduled for the Penn's Cave tour; EPCAMR Executive Director created the **PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation Community FaceBook** social media page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1437512573158306/>) and within a few weeks **174** people had already joined from across PA and elsewhere
- EPCAMR Executive Director was requested by *Marianne Krasny*, the Director of the Civic Ecology Lab (<http://civicecology.org>) and the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell University to submit a proposal to the NAAEE National Conference in Ottawa, Canada in October 2014, under the suggestion by other national Environmental Education partners on the Leadership Team involved with the US EPA EE Capacity grant (<http://www.eecapacity.net>) that EPCAMR is involved with directly with PAEE as a Team Leader of the PA State Consortia and Community of Learners from across PA; Scholarship funding is being provided through the US EPA EE Capacity Grant for Team Leaders and some members of the PA State Consortia

Community Volunteer Coordination

- *Dana Sword*, Senior at Bloomsburg University, will be starting with EPCAMR over the Summer as a Watershed Outreach Intern once she gets her class schedule for the Summer and Fall 2014 approved by the University; Provided her with an Internship Activity Description
- Coordinated with *Caitlin Dickson*, another Senior at Bloomsburg University, who will be starting in late August through the Fall 2014 as a Watershed Outreach Intern for credit
- *Micaela Payne*, Dallas, PA is interested in becoming a Painter/Scrapper Community Service Volunteer with EPCAMR; Forwarded her the link to our Volunteer Form for completion that will allow her to become more involved with our activities throughout the year
- *Silvia Teixeira*, NY, would like to become a Rock Collector with her two children and send us different rock types from out of state for our collection
- *John Welsh*, Jenkintown, PA signed up to become an EPCAMR Community Service Volunteer who has experience in Photography, Fundraising, Videography, and Art; John is working with EPCAMR and the Huber Breaker Preservation Society on a documentary on the Huber Breaker; johnwelshphotography.com
- Informed one of our EPCAMR Community Service Volunteers, *Billy Wellock*, about an upcoming illegal dump site cleanup in the City of Nanticoke, on June 30th, since he was interested in participating and possibly covering it as a News Story for the Citizen's Voice, where he is a Staff Correspondent
- *Brad Artley*, Artley Photography, Hanover Township, PA signed up to become a EPCAMR Community Service Nature Photographer for us when we coordinate outdoor events, tours, and programs
- *Megan Mahle*, Junior at Lake Lehman Jr./Sr. High School, is interested in working with EPCAMR for her Senior Project and becoming a Community Service Volunteer
- Rebecca Battle, Scranton, PA is interested and signed up to become an EPCAMR Community Service Volunteer with an interest in Photography and shooting abandoned mine sites to promote the awareness of pollution in our area; www.battle-studios.com
- *Tatiana Markovich*, EPCAMR Graphics Art Intern, who was a Senior from Camden County Community College, Camden, NJ, worked with EPCAMR as a virtual distance learner volunteer provided EPCAMR with many different kinds of posters and collages during her internship since the Fall of 2013 through the Summer 2014 in order to obtain her credit hours to graduate
- *Brandon Trovitch*, Nanticoke, PA signed up to become an EPCAMR Community Service Volunteer; He has a very broad knowledge of local mining history, both above and below ground and is interested in conducting fishery assessments
- *Kerry Michalek*, Kingston, PA is interested in becoming an EPCAMR Community Service Volunteer to assist with AMD Tie Dye Workshops and becoming a Nature Photographer Assistant throughout the year
- *Kaitlyn White*, High School Graphic Artists Community Service Virtual Volunteer, Swoyersville, PA and student from the Commonwealth Connections Academy public online school continued to work with EPCAMR on our "Actions Speak Louder than Words" Poster Outreach/Awareness Campaign prior to graduation; <http://epcamr.org/home/2014/kaitlyn-white-swoyersville-pa-moves-from-virtual-epcamr-volunteer-creating-posters-to-staining-blue-bird-boxes-in-the-epcamr-office-with-our-manganese-oxide/>
- *Carly Cirangle*, Senior from the University of Scranton, PA and EPCAMR Human Resources Volunteer joined us for a few weeks to put together an HRM management system using OrangeHRM, (www.orangehrm.com) a free open source program to keep our Personnel Files digitally updated; EPCAMR created a News Article on her work and background; <http://epcamr.org/home/2014/carly-cirangle-university-of-scranton-human-resource-management-major-volunteering-with-epcamr-to-organize-our-file-management-and-personnel-file-system/>

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciliation of our EPCAMR and PA Invest Accounts; Meeting with President-Bernie McGurl to sign checks
- Conducted *Bridgette Robinson's* and *Kelsey Biondo's* 90 day staff evaluation and provided them with a written evaluation of their work that was extremely positive
- Completed and submitted the March 2014 PA DEP 319 Progress and monthly EPCAMR Board Report and March 2014 Reimbursement
- Listened to a webinar via a conference call with a representative from www.idonate.org
- Completed our application for the renewal of our General Liability Insurance for 2014-2015 with PEC through POWR and submitted it to *Janet Sweeney*, PEC NE Office
- Submitted my revised EE Ecology Map with connections, feedback, and reflections and submitted them to *Alex Kudryavstev*, Leader of the online EE Research Course through Cornell University's Department of Natural Resources; Received a professional development Certificate of Completion from Cornell University for completing the course
- Forwarded the new *Blue Cross of Northeastern PA Benefits Bulletin* to Mike Hewitt to see if he was getting a copy electronically from BC/BS
- Forwarded off EPCAMR's Job Description for the Part-Time GIS Technician Position to work on the **MSI Grant Project** to Penn State University's Academic Advisor, *Tammy M. Bennett*, at University Park to forward to students in the Environmental Resource Management Program; <http://epcamr.org/home/2014/epcamr-looking-to-fill-part-time-gis-specialist-position-to-work-on-our-anthracite-mine-mapping-project-immediately/>
- *Media Discovery*, a UK Marketing Firm is interested in publishing a new blog post on EPCAMR's website that has a topic related to the type of work that we do in our region; EPCAMR would receive an annual payment of \$100; EPCAMR is looking into it further to see if additional funding is available due to our statistical reach of people through our website
- Completed a 5 year Request for Partnership form with *Bloomsburg University* through their Alumni and Professional Engagement Office to create an internship partnership between BU and EPCAMR; This will allow *Dana Sword* and *Caitlin Dickson*, Seniors at BU, to complete their internships in the late Summer & Fall 2014
- Completed *Holly Halecki's* Final Internship Assessment and submitted it to Advisor, Kelly Lettieri, King's College
- Signed up for *CSRwire*, a site that allows EPCAMR to reach a broader audience of professionally skilled volunteers, increases our visibility through search engine results, and allows us to be featured on their forums and blog; <http://www.csrwire.com/services/>



Robert E. Hughes, (EPCAMR) and Diane Madl (PA DCNR) accepting two awards at the Luzerne Conservation District's 50th Anniversary Dinner & Awards Ceremony