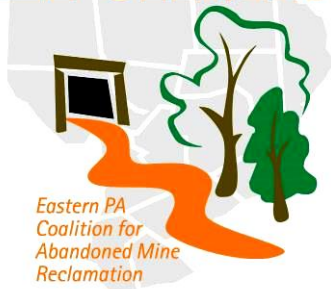


# EPCAMR



## Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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## April 2015 Progress Report

### Education & Outreach

- Requested and received a copy of the 2015 Municipal Directory from Luzerne County to assist EPCAMR Staff with contacting and following up with municipal leaders on future and current watershed projects
- *Robert Shannon*, Ph.D, Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Environmental Resource Management Program at Penn-State requested a Summer Tour for his ERM Society and ERM Alumni Affiliate Group, two organizations EPCAMR's Executive Director were heavily involved with both in college while at PSU and after college as an Alumni
- Requested by *Jen Quinn*-Communications Director with PennFuture and *Jill Witkowski*-Director, with the Choose Clean Water Coalition, to prepare a white paper on the impacts of AMD and a future management strategy to include in the Toxics Strategy document that they are going to be submitting to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation; EPCAMR Executive Director provided comments on the Toxics Strategy as it related to AMD and forwarded to both PennFuture and the Choose Clean Water Coalition to forward to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation; The Toxics Management Strategy should address AMD and the top priorities for the next 20 years to address the issue are:
  - Prioritize and fund AMD impacted watersheds in need of cumulative hydrogeologic watershed assessments to measure metal (iron, manganese, aluminum), sediment, and acidity loadings of the headwater tributaries impacted that flow to the Susquehanna River's East and West Branch's, ultimately reaching the Chesapeake Bay
  - Conduct riparian forest and streamside buffer projects along previously impacted abandoned mine lands within the Chesapeake Bay watersheds where reclamation and reforestation initiatives can be implemented under the Appalachian Region Reforestation Initiative
  - Utilize geographic information systems (GIS) maps that can be overlapped with stormwater MS4 communities in need of correcting their deficiencies to prioritize funding for BMPs and watershed restoration work
- Submitted a **US EPA Environmental Education Grant** that will focus on developing our AMD & Pottery Program in several other school districts in the Wyoming Valley, in PA and with our partner in W. Virginia (Friends of the Cheat River) that was received and assigned an Identification Number
- Requested by *Corey Richmond*, Watershed Specialist for the Sullivan County Conservation District to have EPCAMR Staff participate in an Environment Field Day with the 5<sup>th</sup> grade from Sullivan County Elementary School in Laporte, PA on June 2<sup>nd</sup> ; EPCAMR accommodated the request and scheduled an AMD Outreach Program
- Forwarded the Strategic Plan Draft for the PAEE Community of Learners to all Conference Call participants and members of the PA Leadership Team; Forwarded a draft document of a list of Traditional Environmental Education Professionals and Non-Traditional Environmental Education Professionals to the PA Leadership Team

- Forwarded several documents, reports, and presentations on Diversity and Safety in teaching Environmental Education to *Fran Bires*, McKeever Environmental Center, Sandy Lake, PA
- Signed EPCAMR on to a Letter to the US EPA Administrator *Gina McCarthy* to release the Environmental Justice screening tool for public use to identify areas for public outreach and more direct targeting of funding
- Served as the Guest Lecturer and Speaker for the Luzerne County Community College's Earth Day Program in Nanticoke, PA to discuss EPCAMR's role in the region and the role of students as volunteers in the community
- EPCAMR Staff prepared a Southern Wyoming Valley AMD Tour Route for the entire 6<sup>th</sup> grade Plains-Solomon Elementary that will be on field tours at the end of the month to see AMD, AMD Treatment, Iron Oxide resource recovery efforts led by EPCAMR, AMD art, and underground mine maps; Forwarded the agenda route to Amy Pascale, one of the teachers who is coordinating the tours with EPCAMR
- EPCAMR Staff conducted a Macro Viewing Station, Macro BINGO identification station, and Macro Kick sampling station at Frances Slocum State Park with the 6<sup>th</sup> grades from Heights Elementary and Kistler Elementary; EPCAMR Staff also worked with the students to release several hundred native brook trout that were raised by the students with the ***Trout In The Classroom Program***
- EPCAMR Executive Director made a Career Day/Environmental Program presentation on AMD and EPCAMR's work in the region to the 7<sup>TH</sup> & 8<sup>TH</sup> graders at Bear Creek Charter School, Bear Creek, PA at the request of *Paula Longo*, Environmental Education Coordinator
- Attended the MRAB Meeting to update the members on the planned July 2015 Anthracite Region AMD Tour in the Schuylkill County area and to Keystone Anthracite's Weston Tunnel Reclamation and Mining Operation

## **Technical Assistance**

- Researched a Lowe's Grant for potential grant submission with EPCAMR Staff for funding to assist with coalfield community cleanups
- Continued working with *Daniel Snowden*, PA DEP, and *Duane Feagley*, PA Anthracite Council to secure a lunch stop at Mountain Valley Golf Course, along the way for the July *Mining & Reclamation Advisory Board (MRAB)* that will be on a planned AMD/AML and active mining and reclamation tour being coordinated by EPCAMR, PAC, Schuylkill Headwaters Association, Schuylkill County Conservation District, Keystone Anthracite, and PA DEP Pottsville District Mining Office
- Benton Foundry informed EPCAMR that they have foundry sand that could be used beneficially and wondered if we knew of any reclamation projects that were interested in the material; Suggested that they set up a display at our State-wide PA AMR Conference to let groups know about the availability of the material
- Asked Cliff Denholm, SRI, if they had funding for shipment of the AMD water samples that EPCAMR Staff would be collecting as a part of the SNAPSHOT AMD Treatment Systems Monitoring collection that they have asked EPCAMR to assist with as a part of their Growing Greener Grant; He responded that they are willing to pay the shipping costs of the coolers and samples using their UPS Account; SRI will also be providing the acidification solution and sample bottles through G&C Labs
- Provided a set of underground mine maps and a Mine Map Symbology poster to *Olivia Hanson*, resident of Wilkes-Barre, PA who stopped into the Office requesting assistance with identifying what coal reserves remained under her home in the City; She informed us that her grandfather has additional mine maps that he might be willing to donate to EPCAMR
- Invited by Senator *John Yudichak's* Office to a follow up meeting that is being planned for the Summer to provide some additional technical assistance to the City on the conditions within the Solomon Creek Watershed related to flooding and environmental concerns that we've identified in our Solomon's Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan completed in 2012 as they related to upstream municipalities

- Met with *Elizabeth Hughes*, Director of Communications, Earth Conservancy to assist her with a review of her previously submitted Growing Greener Grant for the Bliss Banks Reclamation and her mini-grant application for Espy Run Signage and Educational Program Development; Provided her with some suggested partners for the application locally and introduced her to *Mike Corcoran*-Wilkes-Barre Area School District Science Coordinator and *Beth Coleman* from Greenway Pavements
- Sampled Sugar Notch Run, Hanover Twp., PA with *Jessica Johnson*, EPCAMR Watershed Outreach Specialist Intern for macro-invertebrates to allow her to obtain her AMD Monitoring Certificate from EPCAMR
- *Scott Cannon*, asked EPCAMR if we were aware of the mine fires in the Olyphant area in Lackawanna County where the proposed Jessup Gas Plant is being considered; <http://m.thetimes-tribune.com/news/olyphant-mine-fire-still-burning-after-years-1.1432287>; and <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/researchguides/geoearthsci/minesmining.html>
- The Good Hive, a company that makes honey, is interested in setting up a honey making operation on abandoned mine lands in the region and sought advice from the EPCAMR Staff and a possible location on Earth Conservancy property; Suggested a location down in Newport Twp., in Wanamie on some formerly reclaimed mine lands
- *Kevin Hansen*, Instructor, Heavy Equipment Operations at Lehigh County Technical Institute in Lehigh County requested EPCAMR's assistance in locating mine reclamation sites to take their adult students to as hours toward education in Environmental Sustainability; EPCAMR worked with partners in Schuylkill County, PA Anthracite Council, and the Pottsville District Mining Office to locate them some sites
- Reviewed the new Act 162 Technical Guidance Documents on Riparian Buffers; <http://www.elibrary.dep.state.pa.us/dsweb/Get/Document-106613/310-2135-002.pdf> and <http://www.elibrary.dep.state.pa.us/dsweb/Get/Document-106612/310-2135-003.pdf>

## **Project Coordination**

- Convened and facilitated the public meeting for the ***Laurel Run Coldwater Heritage Assessment Plan*** development on April 16<sup>th</sup> at the Bear Creek Neighborhood Facilities Building, Bear Creek, PA from 6-8PM; Provided Gabby and Liz with several media contacts from the local papers for future use on updates on the project; Reviewed the meeting notes transcribed by Gabby and Liz following the meeting and began thinking about future planning efforts and follow up communications that were noted in the takeaway and comments from the meeting from those present; Reviewed Gabby's draft list of sampling points within the watershed and provided comments
- Requested assistance from the Keystone Job Corps to help with installing a perimeter fence and possible sidewalk replacement associated with the ***Huber Breaker Miner's Memorial Park***; Forwarded information to *Ray Clarke* from McClane & Associates on pavement stabilization products for him to review for the Park; Received pictures of completed green infrastructure examples to forward to *Ray Clarke*, Chairman, Huber Breaker Preservation Society, from *Beth Coleman* of Greenway Pavements EcoRaster grids for parking lots and trails for the Huber Breaker Miners Memorial Park in Ashley, PA; She provided gravel and grass installation guides as well since this project will be placed over reclaimed mine soils
- Continued to promote the ***Waterboxx Research and Tree Planting Mini Grant Program*** to EPCAMR Partners, Schools, and Conservation Districts, and Watershed Groups in the region with Gabby and Liz; Several Wilkes-Barre Area Elementary Schools have shown an interest in participating in the research and tree planting program; Wilkes University is going to be planting Hybrid Chestnuts; Requested from ISI that the **50** Waterboxxes be shipped as soon as possible; The budget has been revised to add an additional **20** Waterboxxes over the 2 year period to be distributed and monitored and was approved by ISI

- Prepared a check for Trinity Artisans, Mountain Top, PA and provided it to Liz to give to Judy-Moore Dotzel, Artist, and partner, that allowed EPCAMR the use of their kiln space to glaze fire over **300** pieces of pottery made from clay and EPCAMR's first ever iron oxide glaze, called Cherry Blossom as a part of the **AMD & Pottery Art Environmental Education Grant** with Greater Nanticoke Area's 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes; Showcased the pottery pots at the GNA Chorus Concert
- Worked with Gabby and Liz to develop a budget for the **Patagonia Trout Fishery Grant** to secure funds to continue to assess the remainder of the Mill Creek Watershed's two other major tributaries, Coal brook Creek and Gardener Creek
- Worked with Gabby and Liz to develop a grant proposal around the priorities of the **Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund through the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)**; Narrowed it down to an area in Lackawanna County and one in Columbia County and ultimately chose the Columbia County priority area along tributaries to the Susquehanna River opposite Berwick, and near the Nescopeck Creek; Informed potential partners in Columbia and Luzerne County about the proposed assessment project including the Columbia County Conservation District, Luzerne Conservation District, and the Friends of the Nescopeck Creek; The tributaries that are within the priority area are unnamed from our cursory investigation, however, they flow into the River from Mainville northeast, near Andreas Rd., Kelchner Rd., Snyder School Rd, and Smith Hollow Rd; The Nescopeck Creek confluence is just to north of the priority area for some reason, as determined by NFWF
- Followed up with *Mike Lower*, Skelly & Loy, Inc. about a conversation with our PA DEP BAMR Growing Greener Project Officer *Gregg Davis*, for the **Hicks Creek Natural Stream Channel Design Project**; Received an updated balance on the grant and was informed that within a month EPCAMR would have to make a request for another extension of the grant for one year since we just recently received the Joint Permit Approval from the PA DEP in order to finalize the bid package, bid showing, and eventual construction of the project; Responded to some questions that Mike had regarding the development of the bid package; Reviewed an outstanding invoice and will determine if payment can be made if the reporting requirements were met by Skelly & Loy
- Travelled to Centralia, PA to place 3 "NO DUMPING SIGNS" around town in preparation for our future "**Cleanup Centralia Part II**" community effort to rid the borough of all of the illegal dumping and illegally disposed of tires and trash that has accumulated in the town over the last twenty plus years
- Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's "**25 in 25 Mini-Grant Program**" is in recognition of the organization's 25th Year Anniversary opened; Worked with Gabby and Liz to submit an application for **\$1000** supporting EPCAMR's and KPB's three focus areas of Prevent It, Clean It, or Keep It with the funds going towards our watershed cleanup efforts in the region
- Prepared a Letter of Support at the request of *Peter Williamson*, Vice President of Conservation Services for the Natural Lands Trust application to acquire over 5,500 acres of land in the Catawissa Creek Watershed from Butler Enterprises that will eventually be transferred over into the PA DCNR Weiser State Forest District which would provide easier access to several AMD tunnel discharges, including the Audenreid AMD Treatment system, Catawissa Tunnel, and the Green Mountain Tunnel
- Continued working with *Ben Lorson*, PA Fish & Boat Commission to get a clean copy of the Conceptual Plan for the **Solomon Creek Trout Stream Habitat Improvement Project** that EPCAMR will be managing as soon as the PA DOT Mitigation Plan approval is moved forward; Waiting on our formal agreement with the PA Fish & Boat Commission

- Registered the **Honey Pot Cleanup** for May 9<sup>th</sup> with the Tires4Ward Recycling Program in partnership with Bridgestone to remove illegally dumped tires along the Newport Creek and the HoneyPot AMD discharge in Nanticoke, PA with our partners, the Greater Nanticoke Area Community Garden Group, Nanticoke Conservation Club, City of Nanticoke, and the Luzerne County Community College (LCCC)

## Conference Coordination, Training, Conferences, Workshops

- Participated in the monthly conference call to coordinate the **17<sup>th</sup> Annual PA AMR Conference** with the Planning Committee; Requested submission of the Knox Mine Disaster Trailer to the documentary that is in production; Requested involvement from the PAEE Community of Learners, however, was informed that there were too many conflicts with participants schedules and vacations at that time to be able to present; Secured additional silent auction items; Secured \$600 sponsorship from the Office of Surface Mining some of which will cover the Sustainability Tour transportation costs; Finalized our Sustainability Tour Route with Cole Transportation in State College, PA
- Spoke as the Guest Speaker at the McGlynn Learning Center's Recognition Event for *Sister Miriam Stadulis's* years of service to the afterschool program at the Wilkes-Barre Boulevard Townhomes where the EPCAMR Executive Director grew up and where EPCAMR has conducted many urban outreach environmental education programs and watershed programs with the youth from the inner city low-income housing projects within the City of Wilkes-Barre

## Community Volunteer Coordination

- Communicated with *Maura Modrovsky*, Community Outreach Coordinator for King's College about utilizing students on April 24<sup>th</sup> for several cleanups planned by the EPCAMR Staff in Ashley Borough and in the Solomon Creek Watershed; Provided her with the details on the cleanups and their locations and our need for additional volunteers; Registered the 3 cleanups with *Michelle Dunn*, Program Coordinator, Keep PA Beautiful as a part of the Great PA Cleanup!; Worked with TARGET to partner with some workers who wanted to participate in the cleanups in Ashley; TARGET Manager, *Ken Wickiser*, suggested that we apply for a **\$249** Gift Card to support the cleanups, therefore the EPCAMR Executive Director prepared a letter of request and explained the details of the cleanup and the intended use of the funds; Asked if the Wyoming Seminary Lower School students who were interested in clean ups could participate, however, since it was on a Friday, they could not; Forwarded information to the LCCC Science Club at the request of their advisor *Brooke Yeager*; Conducted the cleanups at each of the locations with the EPCAMR Staff and community volunteers who showed up that day
- *Devanshi Pansala*, Plano, TX signed up as an online EPCAMR virtual volunteer with an interest in painting and sketching; Followed up with him to see how he might be able to create some art possibly with our iron oxide for future outreach and display
- Met with *Benjamin Rice*, a recent graduate of Wilkes University in May 2015 with a BS in Earth & Environmental Science with a Minor in Geology, who was looking for a part-time job and or paid internship, which EPCAMR doesn't offer at this time, however, he was interested in potentially volunteering with us throughout the Summer, should projects and activities come up where he might be able to learn some additional field skills with the EPCAMR Staff on various projects
- *Nicholas McCarrol*, Penn-State Wilkes-Barre student, Dallas, PA signed up to become a future EPCAMR Community Service Volunteer
- *Shane Nowak*, Hanover Twp., PA, *Valerie Michael*, Charlottesville, VA, and *Amaris Arias*, Wilkes-Barre, PA all signed up on our MailChimp online database to become EPCAMR Community Service Volunteers; EPCAMR Executive Director followed up with them
- *Tim Gregory*, was referred to EPCAMR to sign up through GiveGab as a volunteer since he recently graduated with an Environmental Science degree online

## EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Accounts and PA Invest Accounts; Completed bi-weekly Payroll Reporting and submitted to RJ Zagrapan and filed reports
- Conducted our monthly EPCAMR Staff Meeting to get caught up on everyone's projects and proposed grants
- Successfully raised **\$10,000** on EPCAMR's GiveGab online fundraising campaign with the support of the Staff and some the EPCAMR Board to purchase necessary equipment and supplies to further our work in the region that will continue to provide quality technical assistance to our constituents within the region; GiveGab provided some matching funds as a part of the March Madness through the end of March dollar for dollar and we received a \$2500 anonymous donation that was also matched by GiveGab; <http://gvgb.co/EPCAMR> ; Asked by *Chris Beeman*, Senior Vice President of Business Development to serve as a reference for GiveGab for a couple other local organizations who might be interested in utilizing the platform
- Requested by *John Ackerman*, with the PA Anthracite Section of the Society of Mining Engineers (SME) to become a volunteer board member due to EPCAMR's involvement and the Executive Director's nearly 25 years of experience in abandoned mine reclamation and mining engineering work throughout PA; Accepted the invitation and membership application, completed the form, and attended the Spring Meeting for Elections of Officers and to promote both the Centralia Cleanup and the PA AMR Conference in June 2015
- Reviewed *Jessica Johnson's* monthly Watershed Outreach Specialist Intern report that was submitted
- Tasked Mike with researching the DELL website for reasonably priced laptops for Gabby and Liz to perform their jobs without having to utilize their own laptops
- EPCAMR Staff hosted a meeting of a newly formed Environmental Team for Larson Design Group, led by *Britton Burnworth*, out of Williamsport, PA that were interested in coming up and meeting with EPCAMR to potentially look at future partnerships on projects
- Reviewed PAEE upcoming Board Meeting Tentative Schedule of dates, topics, and locations
- Reviewed the upcoming inaugural Aggregate Advisory Board Meeting in Harrisburg, PA that EPCAMR Executive Director was appointed to by the State Conservation Commission; Requested a map of Non-Coal or Aggregate Industries across PA be provided to members of the Board such as mineral mines, limestone quarries, bluestone mining, sand and gravel operations; "Directory of Non-Fuel Mineral Producers in Pennsylvania"; [http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/topogeo/publications/pgspub/openfile/mineral\\_resource\\_directory/index.htm](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/topogeo/publications/pgspub/openfile/mineral_resource_directory/index.htm); and "Non-Fuel Minerals Produced in PA" [http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr\\_014590.pdf](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr_014590.pdf)
- *Christine Moskell*, PhD Candidate in the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell University working with *Dr. Shorna Broussard Allred* requested EPCAMR's participation in the "Volunteers in Environmental Nonprofit Organizations" survey that is part of her PhD dissertation research; The purpose of this survey is to understand volunteer management in environmental nonprofit organizations, as well as the ways volunteers contribute to these organizations, especially during difficult times such as economic downturns or natural disasters; Completed the survey
- Worked with Mike to purchase additional server memory and hard drives along with a network system to accommodate the large number of gigabyte of storage that is required to process the MSI Mine Maps for the PA DEP
- EPCAMR signed on to 9 Letters of Recommendations that were forwarded to the Chesapeake Bay Program Management Board by the Choose Clean Water Coalition, which EPCAMR is a member of, that addressed the following areas, including the Toxics Strategy, which was partially developed by EPCAMR, in terms of addressing AMD; The areas of concern that were addressed are as follows: 2017/2025 WIP, Citizen Stewardship, Climate, Diversity, Education, Forest Buffers, Public Access, Toxics, and Tree Canopy