



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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April 2017 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- EPCAMR Monthly newsletter was distributed to our EPCAMR Board Members, Coalition partners, and our Volunteers upon completion by *Abbie Keefe*-EPCAMR OSMRE/AmeriCorps; Provided Abbie with events to list such as the ***Anthracite Heritage Conference*** on 5-13-17 at McDade Park at the Heritage Museum
- Provided a written report update on projects to the *Stanley Cooper Chapter TU* on the ***Solomon Creek Dam Removal and Trout Habitat Restoration Project, Abraham Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan***, an opportunity to apply for a ***TU Embrace-A-Stream*** grant, our ***Trout in the Classroom Project***, along with updated information on the RECLAIM Act; Gave a presentation at the SCTU monthly meeting in Kingston, PA on EPCAMR Projects to the general membership
- Travelled with *Mike Hewitt*, EPCAMR Program Manager to Washington DC to speak with PA Congressional Staff Assistants on examples of potential RECLAIM projects, and on our work in the region on AMD and land reclamation efforts as a part of the *Choose Clean Water Coalition* and the Delaware River Watershed Coalition campaigns; Incorporated EC's letter of support for HR 1731 (The RECLAIM Act) into EPCAMR's testimony that was submitted before the SubCommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources; EPCAMR Executive Director drafted a Legislative Ask letter to provide to Congressional Staffers while in DC educating them on issues around abandoned mine land reclamation, economic redevelopment, and mine water treatment back in PA; Provided a copy of our testimony to *George Ellis*-Executive Director for ARIPPA because we included their recent Economic Environmental Impact Analysis on the future of the Co-Gen plant industry in PA
- Signed EPCAMR up for a ***Give A Shot: Anthracite Region Legacy Mining Pollution Problems & Solutions Professional Photography Outreach Campaign*** where [Peak Design](#), [1% for the Planet](#), and [The Conservation Alliance](#), connect up interested photographers and videographers with non-profits to help with outreach, marketing, and social media campaigns to increase the awareness of their work; EPCAMR was approved to be a part of the Campaign following our submission of our request for assistance; *Caleb Savage* from NYU Tish School of the Arts, New York, New York, followed up with EPCAMR Executive Director and plans were made to have him visit in June 2017

- Worked with *Rachael Grube*, OSMRE/AmeriCorps volunteer to create an infographic on AMD/AML for outreach and education purposes
- Prepared and submitted a **5** page public comment document to *Carl Jones*, Executive Director of the PA Office of Environmental Justice on EPCAMR's Perspective within the Coalfields as a part of the State-wide Listening Tour to Gather Input on Environmental Justice; <http://epcamr.org/home/2017/epcamr-provides-public-comments-perspective-pa-department-environmental-justice-coalfield-issues/>
- Finalized EPCAMR's new updated brochure created by the EPCAMR Executive Director and designed by *Abbie Keefe*, our OSMRE/AmeriCorps volunteer
- Signed on to a letter of support for continued funding for the National Environmental Education Act (NEEA); NEEA—which establishes the Office of Environmental Education at EPA, supports the National Environmental Education Foundation, and provides critical national and regional grants for EE across the country
- Signed on to FY 2018 Appropriation Request Letters of Support through our partnership with the Delaware River Watershed Coalition including one for funding support within the Chesapeake Bay
- Made a presentation before *Dr. Andrea Nerozzi's* Wyoming Seminary's Upper School AP Environmental Science Class of **20** on EPCAMR's work in the region and described our Staff's jobs in terms of STEM Careers and on ways the students can become involved in volunteer opportunities
- Submitted a *Foundation for PA Watersheds Convening Grant* for **\$2000** with *Mike Hewitt* to assist with developing statistics and updated information on the state of AML and AMD in PA by County; Funds were approved and awarded to assist with travel costs of going to Washington DC to meet with our Congressional Delegation's Staffers to educate them on the issues and the number of problem areas and project possibilities within their respective Congressman's and Senator's District
- *Dr. Jen Demchak*, Mansfield University, with her colleague are being supported by the PA Academy of Science to produce a book on AMD; She requested the Executive Director's assistance in authoring a Chapter in a book on AMD related to the formation of Watershed Groups in the region
- There has been recent notifications in the region for several large pump-storage hydro-electric generating operations to make their way into the EPCAMR Region that could impact thousands of acres of headwater streams; Comments are being taken by stakeholders within the communities who are concerned with potential impacts; [Company Seeks Permits for HydroElectric Plants Along the Lackawanna River](#)
- Picked up **80** donated t-shirts from *Patty Hughes*, Special Events Coordinator for the City of Wilkes-Barre for the EPCAMR AMD Tie Dye T-shirt and EPCAMR Exhibit at the Annual Cherry Blossom Festival in Kirby Park; Exhibited at Kirby Park and made dozens of AMD Tie Dye T-shirts with youth of all ages at the Festival on 4-23-17

- Met with *Denise Allabaugh*, Lead Editor for the Citizens Voice newspaper to discuss EPCAMR Projects and our use of AMD for research on bendable concrete and as a recycled pigment for art
- Provided *Andrew Heath*-Executive Director of the Growing Greener Coalition with several EPCAMR videos on AMD for him to use and cut into a new promotional video promoting the new Growing Greener III Proposal for funding in PA; [EPCAMR Video](#)
<https://www.facebook.com/EPCAMR/videos/10152292027829095/>
<https://www.facebook.com/EPCAMR/videos/10155354351524095/>
<https://www.facebook.com/EPCAMR/videos/1381941463684/>
- Met *Clay LePard*, WNEP-Power To Save Reporter at the Solomon Creek AMD Boreholes in Hanover Township to be interviewed for a segment on our research work with the University of Michigan and the University of Hong Kong on bendable concrete; [Power To Save](#)

Technical Assistance

- Met with *Jim Gusek*, Sovereign Consulting, Inc, out of Lakewood, CO to discuss some AMD Treatment options that he's working on and seeking partnerships to advance them in Northeastern PA
- Coordinated with *Liz Rosser*, PSU Extension Master Watershed Stewardship Project Coordinator to agree to giving an educational talk and tour on AMD in the Summer 2017 to the volunteers
- Received word that the University of Michigan received the shipment of AMD water for their research into the creation of a bendable cementitious concrete that incorporates AMD into the mixture; Provided our EPCAMR logo to *Haoliang Wu*, Ph. D. candidate working on the research project; Worked with Abbie to create News release on the project for the media; [NEPA Acid Mine Drainage Aids Research into Durable Concrete](#); www.umich.edu/~acermr/ and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUxXzizan5k>
[Researchers Curious About Yellow Boy](#)
- Provided *Peter Loftus*, reporter with the Wall Street Journal, with some updated information on Centralia, the recent release of the documentary that will be released at our PA AMR Conference, and our planned Fall 2017 Cleanup along the Graffiti Highway and areas we weren't able to entirely cleanup last year
- Worked with *Anne Daymut*-WPCAMR and Mike to revise the **2017 ARIPPA EPCAMR/WPCAMR Mini-Grant Program Application**; [2017 ARIPPA AML Reclamation Awards](#)
- Followed up with *Dan Summa*, Keystone Pure Water to see whether or not he had determined the coordinates for several of the parcels near the Scranton Laceworks facility and property that his company will be looking to redevelop and utilize the underground Scranton-Metro Mine Pool water for industrial purposes and possibly geo-thermal use
- Provided Borton-Lawson Engineering with a few names of experts in the use of beneficial use of coal ash for reclamation

Project Coordination

- Jointly created a news release with *Brad Domitrovitsch*, American Energy Partners, on the ***Mocanaqua Tunnel AMD Mine Pool Consumptive Use Feasibility Study*** project we are working on with SRBC
- Sampled the ***Plainsville AMD Borehole*** with *Gavin* and *Mike* for chemistry and flow; Provided Drew McLaughlin, Staff Assistant for Senator Yudichak's Office a quote and some details on our PA DEP Environmental Education Grant that will be announced stating EPCAMR received **\$3000** to work with Plains-Solomon students at the Plainsville AMD Borehole location in Plainsville; EPCAMR is pleased to be able to get the 6th grade students outside of the classroom and keep them within the watershed of their home school district within the Wyoming Valley to have them actively take part in the water quality monitoring of the abandoned mine drainage (AMD) at the Plainsville Borehole. The site is just one of many large contributors of polluted mine water to the Susquehanna River that needs attention. We will be asking the students to think critically about water pollution and its impacts on the environment, wildlife, the fishery, and the surrounding communities. The discharge is about 2500-5000 gallons per minute that flows into a flooded 13 acre sand and gravel pit that is partly serving as a treatment pond. In a single day, the discharge pours approximately 10,000,000 gallons of AMD directly into the Susquehanna River. We will be teaching them about the importance of the floodplain and riparian area to reduce flooding impacts, and the importance of volunteering within their community on cleanups of litter and trash along stream corridors near their own homes, once they see the amount of trash and debris that floats downriver during flood flows. EPCAMR believes that this will also provide the students with an excellent example to provide professional insight into their young minds in a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) field, such as watershed restoration, where they will learn about the backgrounds of all of the technical Staff of EPCAMR and their varying backgrounds. Finally, it will allow EPCAMR to continue to be a regional advocate for environmental awareness, education, and stewardship in the local community in partnership with the Wilkes-Barre Area School District, with whom, we have had a 21 year history of working together on environmental education programs for the students
- Set aside **8** Waterboxxes for the Hazleton Civic Partnership under the ***Phase III Waterboxx Research Project***; *Susan Gallagher*-Carbon County Environmental Education Center signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer and requested a Waterboxx to monitor for the year; Nancy Turner, Kelley Campus, Gail Artley, and Luke Matthews signed up to become EPCAMR Volunteers and requested Waterboxxes as well
- Tried to initially secure the Swoyersville Borough Building for our Public Information Meeting on the ***Abrahams Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan***, however, they didn't have wifi, which we needed to access our mapping needs for the evening; Followed up with Forty-Fort Borough Manager and was able to secure their Borough Building for the meeting on April 24th from 6-8:30pm; Applied for a renewal of EPCAMR's Scientific Collector's Permit from the PA Fish & Boat Commission online; Mailed in \$30 permit renewal fee to be able to add assistants manually to the online approved permit once they process the check; Asked PA DCNR Frances Slocum State Park's *Kathy Kelchner*, EES, if EPCAMR needed any other kind of permit to be in and around the Park; Invited *Tali MacArthur*-Program Coordinator for the CHP Program up to the meeting; Created a News release for the meeting with *Abbie Keefe*, OSMRE/AmeriCorps volunteer and sent it out to our regional media outlets and surrounding municipalities and community groups within the watershed; Connected with *Jim Tomaine*-Executive Director of the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority about the upcoming field work that EPCAMR will be assessing in the watershed and discussed setting up a future stakeholder meeting with him; <http://epcamr.org/home/2017/epcamr-hold-open-public-information-meeting-abrahams-creek-watershed-issues-development-coldwater-conservation-plan/>

- River Logic Solutions provided EPCAMR with a copy of their Certificate of Liability Insurance for the **Solomon Creek Dam Removal and Trout Habitat Restoration** Project; Worked with *Ben Lorson*, Project Officer-PA F & BC to get an amendment to our grant through December 31st, 2018 because we've not received a review from the US ACE yet on their permit review as we are running up against a June 30, 2017 deadline on the grant; PA DEP Dams and Waterways has already approved their permit waiver on May 3, 2017; Amendments to be signed at the EPCAMR Board Meeting on May 18th, 2017; PPL is working on replacing the utility pole and gaining access into the site through their right of way; Provided a set of the design plans after compressing the file size, to *Chris Tomaszewski*, Assistant Liaison Engineer-PA DOT for their review
- Tried reconnecting with *Carol Magrain*, from The Graham Academy to see if we can still coordinate allowing her students to come to the EPCAMR Office to feed and learn about the **Trout in the Classroom Project** and to help us release the natives in Solomon Creek as a part of our Release Day
- Participated in a conference call webinar with *Andrew Korzon*, LandStudies, and *Joyce Morrash-Zaykoski*-City of Wilkes-Barre, PA to discuss bump out stormwater infrastructure construction project on the corners of W. Ross & W. River and the finalization of the Green Action Plan to be revealed to City Council at an upcoming meeting in May to wrap up the major deliverables for the **NFWF TAG Stormwater Management Grant**; Only 2 rainbarrel/downspout disconnect workshops that will be led by EPCAMR and the City of Wilkes-Barre will remain that will be coordinated over the Summer 2017
- Discussed with Skelly & Loy where we all were at in the Bid Process for the **Hicks Creek Natural Stream Channel Design & Construction Project**, Informed them that we are going to eventually go with a public bid process; EPCAMR is requesting an extension from the Grants Center to complete the project this Summer and wrap up the reporting by Fall of 2017; Submitted to *Gregg Davis* PA DEP Project Officer, all of the previous quarterly reports broken down by quarter, along with an extension letter and request to move funds around from one category to another
- EPCAMR Staff registered and assisted with the planting of over **7000** seedlings on the recently reclaimed **Avondale Hill Reclamation** site currently under the ownership of the PA DCNR Pinchot State Forest in partnership with PEC NE Office, ARRI, OSMRE, PA DEP BAMR, PA DEP District Mining Office, Williams Pipeline Company, local colleges and local high school student volunteers, as well as other regional community groups
- Forwarded a PA DEP news release on the **MSI Program** to the EPCAMR Staff;
<http://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/NewsRoomPublic/articleviewer.aspx?id=21173&typeid=1>

Community Volunteer Coordination

- Received and reviewed documentation from two King's College students, *Rudy Georgetti*, and *Tyler Broo*, related to social marketing for EPCAMR as a part of their class project with *Dr. Loeb*
- *Raymond McConnell*, RM Photography, is interested in meeting up with EPCAMR to tour some AMD sites to take some photos; www.rmphotography.biz; Followed up with him to see if he can make a trip to the area in late May
- *Veronica Robbins*, Kingsley, PA signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer; She's an Penn-State student in the Environmental Resource Management Program

- *Aaron Delaney*, Nanticoke, PA signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer; His skill areas are Programming, Web Development, and Social Media
- Thanked *Jessica Britten*, Wilkes-Barre, PA and King's College student, who volunteered to assist with the EPCAMR AMD Tie-Dye Workshop and EPCAMR Exhibit on Earth Day at Kirby Park for the Cherry Blossom Festival; Jessica was trained on how to Tie Dye the T-shirts by Abbie and Rachael; Jessica officially signed up to become a future EPCAMR Volunteer through our website
- Coordinated and cleaned up at the ***Illegal Dump Site on AML lands along the Industrial Park Road (IP) in Honey Pot***, near Whitney Point, Newport Township, Luzerne County, PA on 4-29-17, along the Newport Creek, with our partners from the Nanticoke Conservation Club, Newport Township CrimeWatch, Newport Township Police Department, Newport Aggregates, City of Nanticoke, Newport Township Road Department, Newport Township Community Organization, PEC, Nanticoke High School students, WEIS Markets, South Street Subs & Deli, COALS, Spooky Off-Road ATV Club, and other volunteers; **240** cubic yard dumpsters were loaded and 35 tires were collected within **4** hours by **40** volunteers; EPCAMR Executive Director prepared a letter to Newport Aggregates requesting that they install a gate at the entrance and other egresses from the property to prevent further dumping
- Followed up with *Brianna Bonshock*, Lower Paxinos, PA, who is an ERM Student at PSU that attended my presentation in State College to the ERM Society on EPCAMR Projects and Career Planning for future graduates

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- Participated in a conference call with members of the PA AMR Conference Planning Committee to continue to flush out details for the upcoming **June 2017 19TH Annual Conference** at the Best Western Plus, Genetti's Hotel, Wilkes-Barre, PA; www.treatminewater.com; Accepted a presentation by *Hank Zielinski*, Northampton Generating Company who will be talking about the Loomis Bank Operation, off the Sans Souci Highway, Hanover Twp., Luzerne County, PA, a 100 acre site that has been reclaimed and once was a site with a mine fire on it; Obtained a quote from White Transit Company in Nanticoke for a school bus to be rented for the AMD Tour; Discussed a third track at the Conference; Followed up with the [Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area](#) to see if they are interested in presenting; ARIPPA agreed to be a Silver Sponsor; Circled back to *Bill Letwinsky* with SMS, LLC became a Silver Sponsor of the Conference; PA Anthracite Section SME offered to become a Bronze Sponsor; Discussed with Josh Herzing, about Eco Solution Distributing, details about becoming a Silver Sponsor; Invited Swoyersville Borough and Olympus Power representatives to meet us at the Harry E. Culm Banks Reclamation site as a part of the AMD/AML Tour on June 21st; Followed up with *Donna Keefe* of the Luzerne County Visitors Bureau to see if any restaurants were going to participate in offering discounts to conference attendees that are in town; Asked *Tom Clark*-SRBC to see if he can get approval to make a presentation at the Conference; Synfluent Corporation is interested in exhibiting and possibly presenting; Referred the company to Anne to discuss presenting in a third track; Received a box of sprags as Silent Auction items; Received permission from Pagnotti Enterprises to access the Harry E. Banks in Swoyersville
- *John Welsh*, EPCAMR Board Member, informed us of **10** Film Festivals that his 7 minute short feature on mine fires of Northeastern PA are being considered for; EPCAMR is featured in the film

- Joe Sapienza, II Director, provided EPCAMR with a listing of the new Centralia: PA's Lost Town Screenings across PA to help promote the full length feature, which includes EPCAMR
- Awarded a **\$500** travel scholarship from the Just Transition Fund to attend the ***Just Transition Annual Meeting Convening Forum*** in Washington DC; Executive Director and *Mike Hewitt*, Program Manager attended to speak on behalf of EPCAMR and Mike's trip last year to Germany; [Just Transition](#)

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; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register; Informed RJ Zagrapan that EPCAMR will be going with OneSource for Payroll in April 2017 for Direct Deposit services following a Board decision at our February Mtg.; Met with *Leanne Niedzwiecki*, Payroll Department-OneSource and provided her with administrative information on EPCAMR and Staff for future reports, including Residency Certifications for all Staff, IRA Contributions, EFTPS, and EPCAMR's Non-Profit Letter of Determination; Received signed contract agreement from OneSource on March 9, 2017 that will take effect on April 1, 2017; Received training from OneSource on how to enter the online database to add Staff Hours on a bi-weekly basis and to produce various reports necessary for grants; Obtained EPCAMR's E-TIDES User Name and Password from RJ Zagrapan to pass along to OneSource
- Worked with Staff to come up with a new design for some EPCAMR AMD T-shirts for field work and safety reasons while working in the field
- EPCAMR is researching whether or not we would qualify to apply for Appalachian Region Commission (50/50 match grants); <https://www.arc.gov/grants>; Executive Director followed up with *Kurt Bauman* at NEPA Alliance to get more information on the pre-application process
- Completed the February 2017 and March 2017 Monthly Report and 319 Progress Report and forwarded to Mike for posting on the website and for inclusion in quarterly reimbursements to the PA DEP
- *Adrian Uzunian*, Research and Development Coordinator, Conservation Legacy- for the VISTA Program, asked if EPCAMR was interested in sponsoring a VISTA in 2017-2018; EPCAMR was informed that it costs \$7000 to administer and sponsor a VISTA, so we had to pass at this time
- Forwarded around to the EPCAMR Full-Time Staff a copy of an *Explanation of Benefits Cycle Changes Notice* from Highmark Insurance
- Interviewed and later sponsored *Spencer Zuraski*, Junior at Mansfield University, from Downingtown, PA for our Summer Internship; Will start his internship on 5-15-17