

Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation



Robert E. Hughes, *Executive Director*

101 South Main Street

Ashley, PA 18706

Main Line: (570) 371-3523

E-mail: rhughes@epcamr.org

Website: www.epcamr.org

August 2025 Progress Report EPCAMR Conservation District Mining East Project

Project Coordination

Conservation District Mining East 319 Program Coordination-EPCAMR

- Preparing monthly report for the program coordination for the August 2025 monthly period

Beaverbrook Hazleton Beltway Center East Reclamation Project

- Johnny Green-PA DEP BAMR informed EPCAMR that Indirect Costs are only to be 10% of Direct Costs; Direct Costs consist of Salaries/Benefits, Equipment/Supplies, and the Other category; These are direct costs to EPCAMR only; Since there is \$195,000 in Indirect Costs, a majority of those funds will need to be broken down into the Direct Costs categories (Salaries/Benefits, Equipment/Supplies, and Other); EPCAMR Salaries/Benefits will need to be broken down into estimated hours and hourly Rates; Any mileage from EPCAMR staff along with Single Audit estimates can be placed under the Other category; Equipment and Supplies must be directly for this project; Items like printer paper, ink, writing instruments, rent for the main office building, utilities for main office building and things of that nature are to be considered Indirect Costs; We have not advanced the project just yet because two of the companies that we were working with that were in the original grant did a merger and now it's a completely different company than when the project was submitted with the grant; EPCAMR can't enter into agreements with the original company; EPCAMR requested new paperwork and information from the new company, including their EIN to run through the State's Contractor database and to include in the revised Task and Deliverables for the subcontract work before we can even begin the project; The development company has been silent for months; EPCAMR will work on revising the Task and Deliverables Worksheet and Budget numbers; EPCAMR Executive Director informed our Bookkeeper since we will likely have to reallocate the budget numbers that we initially had for the project into different categories and in different amounts

US DOE Capacity Building for Repurposing Energy Assets at the Frackville Morea AML Complex for Floating Solar and Geothermal Potential

- Frank provided EPCAMR Executive Director with a Final draft 101-page report of the Phase II release of our work on the Morea Mine Pool Complex and Stakeholder Outreach and Capacity Building Effort in Northern Schuylkill County over the last year

Shickshinny Creek/Paddy/Rocky Run-PA TU Coldwater Heritage Conservation Assessment Plan

- Times-Leader did a front page [article](#) on our work on the project; Maria Gereda, our AmeriCorps Conservation Legacy Stewards Individual Placement AmeriCorps GIS Watershed Outreach Specialist volunteer created a draft Macro Site Survey Sampling [Map](#) in ArcGIS; Forwarded it to John Levitsky, Luzerne Conservation District to see if we need to get any additional points added to the watershed assessment; She is also going to create a Google Maps version of it; We wanted to send John our initial site locations that we've monitored thus far for macros and water quality, flow, and visual habitat assessment; Many of these areas are where we have also done bridge and culvert assessments; We have many more of those to do throughout the late Summer and Fall. We asked John if he can take a look at them and see if he knows of anywhere that we should monitor or think that it is worth getting some additional macros out of as we keep working on the assessment project; We asked him if we could include any projects or potential areas of concern as recommendations for the plan; In the past, he has provided us with a KMZ or KML file that we can then convert to ArcGIS and import those areas into our larger GIS database and attribute tables; EPCAMR wasn't sure if he was doing any streambank stabilization or riparian restoration efforts down in that part of the County or not in the Shickshinny Creek watershed area; We will add that the District has just received a grant to conduct some assessment work on State Game Lands 260 and that EPCAMR will be monitoring one of the Paddy Run AMD discharges monthly starting in 2026, in partnership with the District and Larson Design Group, under the direction of Josh Glace and Teah Murray; Deb Nardone from the Foundation for PA Watersheds provided EPCAMR with a [paper](#) on rebounding trout streams; Found a great [resource](#) and technical manual on culverts and bridge crossing and aquatic passage from the PSU Dirt and Gravel Roads site

Bear Creek 319 AMD Treatment Design, Survey, Design & Operation and Maintenance Plan along with the 3D Mine Pool Development Model Project

- Andrew King-SRBC asked if EPCAMR knew of any locations in the mine pool that might be dry for iron oxide sludge placement since he started looking at mine maps around the Bear Creek area; He found a lot of potential sites below the proposed treatment location as well; We can try and take a look once we get the model complete; We are still waiting for some maps that need to be SIDDED by PA DEP California Office and will need a little more time to take a look at that; Requested a copy of the Final Plans and the Boundary Survey for the Bear Creek Project; EPCAMR had a draft set Skelly & Loy when they were proposing just a wetlands system; EPCAMR has an old set of maps in our folder from a previous conceptual plan for the wetlands concept with no Maelstrom; EPCAMR had to enter a date into the State's Practice Keeper for when the design was completed and we went off the 10-31-2023 document; We didn't have any more recent documents of the design plans; We also have a draft Maelstrom O & M Document from SRBC; Jamie has a final set of plans and EPCAMR will have to pick a set up from them when we are in Harrisburg; Forwarded digital copies to Chad Crick-PA DEP 319 Project Officer; Submitted the final documentation to Chad Crick on the project as well as the last set of Application for Reimbursement documents and revised Log Report; Completed the Practice Keeper documentation and submission as well for approval; Provided Chad with a revised and updated Summary Report that was included in Practice Keeper and informed him that we had to enter the information twice because it didn't take it on the first try with some sort of error that didn't capture any of the data entered; Wendy Noe, Dan Koury's Supervisor has taken Dan's position now that he's retired; SRBC will be submitting a future grant to the PA DEP BAMR and had an initial project consultation with Jon Smoyer; EPCAMR will support the application in a future round and provide services if any are requested by SRBC

Columbia University Rare Earth Element Monitoring of AMD

- Sean Kinney installed Pressure Transducers throughout the Wyoming Valley with EPCAMR Staff on August 22

Brockton AMD Development Plan (*proposed*)

- Scheduled and held a Microsoft Teams initial project consult meeting on August 18 with Johnny Green-PA DEP BAMR before submission through the submission of an online form; Project Goals paragraph and Estimated Project Budget Cost (single amount) and which District the Project is located in (Anthracite) or Bituminous were 3 additional questions that we passed along to Alexa for when she scheduled her initial project consult meeting with PA DEP BAMR

Swoyersville Harry E. and Community Athletic Area AML Reclamation Project

- Requested that Marianne Beane, our Bookkeeper, create an invoice that we can send to the PA DEP BAMR to approve the reimbursement request for Admin and the full amount for the transfer of the property from Pagnotti Enterprises to Swoyersville Borough and send it through for payment through their Office of Management and Budget; Submitted the Keystone Reclamation Fuels Management LLC Invoice and Property Transfer Deed to our Project Officer Riyad Barkawi following receipt of it from Marianne

MSI Program Mine Mapping Grant

- The Scranton Times Tribune published a Guest Columnist [piece](#) written by the Executive Director on the Mine Subsidence Insurance Program; The Shenandoah Sentinel also published the [piece](#) with a local Schuylkill County spin

Technical Assistance

Pine Knot, Oak Hill, & Repellier Mine Pool Feasibility Study & Monitoring Project with the Schuylkill Conservation District

- EPCAMR and the Schuylkill Conservation District made a request to Bobby Burns to see if it would be alright to place a pressure transducer at the Pine Hill Shaft; It is the one up in the neighborhood above Forestville that EPCAMR and the District had visited some time ago and looked over it down from the hill, off North Maple Street; The property owner next door met us and gave us some details on the shaft that said it may been capped at one time; It has some orange snow fencing around it that can be seen from the trail; We would like to start grabbing some mine pool elevations from it; We'd be happy to provide him with the elevations that we will find out and we already have the equipment and supplies necessary to install it and drop it down securely for the measurements; Scheduled the Repellier weir and transducer installs for September 4, starting in Dark Water with our partners

Shamokin Creek Watershed Assessment Planning with Tetra Tech and SCRA

- Informed Bill Burgos, Tetra Tech, that there has not been any recent monitoring of borehole mine pool water elevations in the watershed for more than a decade and that no current data exists yet; No additional pressure transducers have been installed yet in the Western Middle Coal Fields

Clinton #2 and Tracy Overflow AMD Treatment System Design and Permit 319 Grant with the Schuylkill Conservation District

- Talked to Wayne Lehman after the Pine Knot, Oak Hill, & Repellier Mine Pool Feasibility Study & Monitoring Project monthly call to discuss our potential involvement in the Clinton #2 & Tracy Overflow discharges treatment system design and permit Section 319 Grant; They've hit a snag and would like to investigate the possibility if the discharges could be relocated to an area where a treatment system could be built; It would require looking at a number of mine maps and a number of coal veins in the surrounding vicinity; The USGS AMD GIS Layer refers to these discharges as the "Tracy Outflow, Strip pool overflow" for the Tracy Overflow and the "Middle Creek Mine, strip pool overflow" for the location of the Clinton discharge(s); EPCAMR can see updating the names in the future to alleviate some confusion; EPCAMR will take a closer look at the complexity of the nature of the mine pool (s) to see if we need to enter into a possible sub-agreement for technical services or may be able to work some of the time necessary for Mike and the Executive Director to review the maps under our current 319 funding

Pasco Schiavo Luzerne Foundation Grant for CCRA and Friends of the Nescopeck Watershed

- Gary Leander-Friends of the Nescopeck Creek provided EPCAMR with quotes for a projector screen and a Swiffer flow meter for the budget; We titled the project: Raise Our Watersheds (ROW) Together; Our letter of intent (LOI) was received and accepted should we be requested to attend the Forum to make a presentation
- John Klamut, GAI Consulting, was looking for a geophysics company recommendation so EPCAMR referred him to HDR, Inc. and Dr. Bobby Karimi at Wilkes University
- Ed Wytovich provided EPCAMR with a parcel number for a property that was up for sale near Audenried that we look investigate to see who the seller and or landowner was from the Schuylkill County Parcel locator online GIS Map
- Provided Keith George from the Luzerne Conservation District with some analysis of several mine maps in the area of New Cranberry Road in Hazleton, since he had recently attended a meeting with a landowner to discuss stormwater issues caused from upslope drainage; Hazle Township, PennDOT, and a representative from Dane Watro's office were in attendance to explore ways to resolve stormwater damages to the homes in the area; The landowner showed us them a structure that collects stormwater behind his house that he claims goes into the underground mines; No one knew of an outlet; EPCAMR Executive Director found that there are a lot of historical maps for that area and yes, there has been a considerable amount of mining in the area based on the coordinates provided; There was once a railroad that went through the area to the Cranberry #4 Coal Breaker, a baseball field, club house, and mining on a number of coal veins such as the #4 vein and the Gamma (Buck Mountain vein) from what can be interpreted on the mine maps reviewed; We didn't do a full-blown analysis of the depths of the veins that were mined, but they appear in the Mine Map Atlas when you search for the coordinates; I went through about two dozen of the maps and found 13 with mine workings in the vicinity below the point provided; I don't know where the water goes and we can't give an analysis of that without some compensation for the work for our time and effort; Mine pool work in that region has not been completed; However, I took about a half-hour to review these maps that do show that some of the veins were mined out and robbed. The point provided falls in an area where the mine workings were developed and mined

Education & Outreach

PA AMR Chronicles Podcast Series with WPCAMR

- Our first podcast aired with Deb Nardone from The Foundation for PA Watersheds and can be found on our YouTube [channel](#); There are **252** current subscribers on EPCAMR's and **50** on WPCAMR's [channel](#); Anne learned that YouTube deletes Livestreams after 30 days; A way around that is to download and re-upload as a regular video so she will do that for both of our channels for future podcasts; Jim Panaro-[Robindale Energy Services](#) is scheduled for September 5, 2025; Reviewed Anne's draft script and made comments and suggestions and sent it back to her to finalize and send to Jim; Watched a webinar on how to use podcasts to create a new sale channel and establish authority, however, found it to be for private, large scale businesses and they also had a sales pitch where they wanted \$7500 for a 1-hr consultation; Informed Anne that it was definitely not what we were looking for to help us get more followers, but still forwarded her a copy; Provided Pat Webb-PA DEP BAMR with our questions for Secretary Jessica Shirley in October to assist her with her interview with EPCAMR/WPCAMR during the podcast on October 3; Reviewed a draft script for Tom Clark's podcast and his work at Kleinfelder in November

PA DCNR Bureau of State Parks Community Connections to our Watersheds EE Program

- Worked with Tony DeSantis from Lackawanna State Park to schedule a Tour of the Lackawanna Valley at the Old Forge AMD Borehole for November 6, 2025; Worked with Megan Fedor, Nescopeck State Park to schedule an EPCAMR site visit and Wyoming Valley AMD/AML Watershed Tour on March 10, 2026

PA American Water Camp in Peckville, Valley Library

- EPCAMR Staff conducted a stream macroinvertebrate survey and AMD Tie-Dye Workshop for the youth at the annual PA American Water Camp along the Lackawanna River in Peckville

PA DEP Environmental Justice Advisory Board

- Attended the PA DEP EJAB Board meeting in Harrisburg on August 12; Provided Mariana Flecher with notes from ReadAi, a bot that was kicked out of the meeting before it started; ReadAi had forwarded EPCAMR a copy of the notes captured and it did allow for the question to be brought up by the EJAB on what is allowed during meetings when it comes to note taking and capturing possible confidential discussions; Executive Director was informed that due to the budget impasse that travel and parking to the meeting was not able to be reimbursed right away; Mariana requested that I send her down the parking receipt and mileage amount

LIU #18 AMD and Visual Art Design Environmental Education Grant

- The PA DEP EE Grant Program announced their recent round of awards through a [press release](#); Wilkes-Barre Area and Pittston Area School Districts will be participating with our resident artists, EPCAMR, and the PA DCNR Bureau of State Parks Environmental Education Specialists

Shamokin Creek Watershed Assessment Plan with Tetra Tech

- EPCAMR promoted the public meeting to review the completed Watershed Assessment Plan for the Shamokin Creek on September 17 at the Brady Fire Company Social Hall, Ranshaw to be presented by Tetra Tech with some input from EPCAMR since we performed all of the water quality and flow monitoring of the major AMD discharges in the watershed for a year; The project was funded by grants from PA Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) and the 1994 Charles B. Degenstein Foundation; Field support and technical assistance was provided by EPCAMR; The PA DEP laboratory processed all field samples and Northumberland County Conservation District (NCCD) oversaw the transporting and shipping of samples on a monthly basis

Growboxx Distribution across the EPCAMR Region

- EPCAMR had a number of remaining Groasis Growboxxes that were surplus from an earlier project that had been closed out when we received additional planter boxes that were delivered to us that could not be shipped to Ethiopia; EPCAMR continued to distribute them for free to community partners that were creating community gardens in the coal region for sustainable agriculture and food dignity development and distribution with the help of Mark Jones, our Community Development Coordinator AmeriCorps VISTA; 1. Food Dignity Movement received 20 boxes that were delivered to office of Blueprint Benefits in Forty Fort; 2. Keystone Mission & the NEPA Youth Shelter received 20 boxes total for two groups delivered to the Pittston home of Lasha Wyman-Klein; 3. The Lands at Hillside Farms received 20 boxes delivered to its administrative office in Shavertown; 4. Lehman Sanctuary received 12 boxes and two rain barrels; Chris Miller picked up items at EPCAMR's office; 5. North Branch Land Trust received one rain barrel transported to Joe Butkiewicz's home for his ultimate delivery to NBLT office; 6. Penn State Master Gardeners received 12 boxes delivered to Jill Baer at Penn State Cooperative Extension's West Pittston office; 7. Pennsylvania Environmental Council received 24 boxes delivered to Rachael Stark in Dallas; and 8. Wilkes-Barre Community Gardens received 22 boxes when Jessica Letteer picked up 12 boxes at EPCAMR's office, and the final 10 were later given to one of her helpers who stopped at EPCAMR office; 130 Growboxxes in all and 3 rain barrels were distributed to our community partners
- EPCAMR was interviewed for a [blog](#) with Coal Creative talking about abandoned mines and beer in the coal region; There are two very funny videos featuring our EPCAMR Executive Director; Mark Jones is working with Gerard Durling to obtain a quote for some marketing digital, print, and video services for an upcoming grant submission to the Scranton Area Foundation to assist the Development Committee; Mark also worked with the Executive Director to gather a list of EPCAMR Board Members and our PA BCO Certificate of Exemption, and BCO Annual Filing Form, for the Robert H. Spitz Foundation Letter of Intent; Submitted the “Dazzling donors with EPCAMR’s story – a 30th anniversary, capacity-building initiative to strengthen the organization’s financial footing” application and our LOI was accepted;
- Ron Rohall, PACD introduced EPCAMR and WPCAMR to Libby Wawro, NACD Natural Resources Policy Specialist virtually; An article in the NACD newsletter caught her attention and she now wants to learn more about AMD/AML and Conservation Districts; EPCAMR provided information on our work and some resource links to Libby and invited her to schedule some time to meet with EPCAMR in our region at her availability; We could both continue to use NACD’s support of our Coalitions efforts and PACD’s when it comes to AMD/AML in PA
- Worked with Lana Gulden-Sierra Club NC PA Chapter to be their Guest Speaker on October 28 at the Buffalo Lutheran Village Commons in Lewisburg on EPCAMR’s activities in the region
- Informed Kristen Reilly-CCWC and Keisha Sedlacek-CBF, that EPCAMR has been working with Gina Hunt and others who have facilitated 2 meetings so far with a third one planned on the AMD Target and conversations about brook trout and stream health.; We haven’t landed on an actual target just yet; There is a whole lot of discussion going on and clarification of definitions and which metrics to use; Forwarded the extended notes from Gina and the Workgroup she is working on with Maryland DNR; All of our suggestions are in the notes and haven’t been finalized yet
- App Voices published a [blog](#) on the 48th Anniversary of SMCRA and EPCAMR shared it on our social media outlets and to the PA AML Campaign

- Talked with Holly Biondo-Marketing and Communications Specialist, [WVIA](#) about an upcoming documentary that Tim Novotney is working on related to underground abandoned mines in the Hazleton area; They were looking for EPCAMR to help with pushing out some social media on the [Kickstarter](#) for the 30-minute documentary, however, we looked at the [trailer](#) and didn't want to condone encouraging others to enter into abandoned mines when we just recently put together an editorial on staying out of them; It looks like a great documentary, we just didn't want to promote or sensationalize entering abandoned mines; It received a lot of positive feedback nonetheless and we look forward to the full length documentary; We would have been happy to work with them to explain the symbology on the mine maps and our efforts to scan, catalog, digitize, georeference, and mosaic the historic mine maps for the MSI Program, if they need us in the future to be a part of the documentary
- Reached out to the Wyso Foundation through their online form to see if they were interested in having some of their coal art pieces turned into 3D printed pieces and asked them questions about copyright infringement issues or concerns
- EPCAMR Executive Director was interviewed by Chienne Herman, a reporter from the News Item and Standard Journal on abandoned mines and abandoned building foundations from legacy mining sites; She e-mailed a number of questions and they were responded to accordingly and several photo images were sent along for her to consider using for her article by Mark Jones, our AmeriCorps VISTA Community Development Coordinator
- EPCAMR signed on to a Solar for All letter of support to the PA Attorney General Sunday, prepared by Vote Solar and signed on by numerous partners
- The Times-Leader published our Op-Ed [piece](#) written by the EPCAMR Executive Director on why it's important to Stay Out! Stay Alive! of abandoned mines; The [Susquehanna County Transcript](#) did as well, however, the article is behind an paywall
- The Sentinel also published another [editorial](#) written by the Executive Director that we were able to find that was more geared towards sharing Earth Day ideals year round
- Our EPCAMR Non-Profit [page](#) is now fully loaded on Discover NEPA along with our [video](#) with Don Jacobs at the bottom of the page
- Shared a Federal legislative budget update report from Peter Marx, Contractor with the CCWC to the PA AML Campaign; Shared the new [executive order](#) - issued on Aug 7, which would seem to increase the amount of political vs. merit-based criteria into the federal grant making process to the PA AML Campaign
- Forwarded a recent AP [article](#) out of Harrisburg that outlines concerns about data centers' impact on other electric consumers and the PennFuture [link](#) to a colleague of ours Kayleigh Cornell; It was forwarded to Frank and the Executive Director by Mark Jones, EPCAMR VISTA and Community Development Coordinator
- EPCAMR requested information from Evan Endres, The Nature Conservancy-PA Chapter to see if a specific account is necessary to view the Mapbox Solar Data that he has been working on so that our co-worker Steve Cornia can access the data

- Attended a Data Center hearing in Archbald, PA in the Lackawanna Valley to hear a number of panel presentations on the pros and cons of them coming to the region; No speakers on the potential use of mine pool water except for a one liner by Senator Dave Argall from Schuylkill County whose District includes Morea; John Yudichak-President of LCCC, mentioned potential for using abandoned mine lands and the development of a workforce development consortium; Local residents were upset because of a planned Data Center in the Jermyn and Archbald area going through a Zoning Hearing Board Overlay so they can get some regulatory controls in place to protect the residential community; Data Center companies are moving quickly; Maybe too quickly and communities are without resources to make informed decisions; Provided Frank Sindaco with a copy of the notes from the hearing which was several hours long; PennFuture has created a [resource about data centers](#), consisting of five videos (and two more slated for release next month) and a model ordinance for municipalities
- Worked with Frank Sindaco as our Media and Community Systems Specialist, to develop a [News Release](#) on his promotion from Part-Time to Full-Time since we've received full funding for his position for one-year from The Foundation for PA Watersheds; Frank is also working with Mark, Maria, Dennis, and Ian to populate our network database for EPCAMR that will populate it with GIS information on our regional partners across multiple levels of partnerships and collaborations
- Cristy Sweeney, ARIPPA provided EPCAMR with a YouTube [link](#) to the Waste Culm Hearing
- Provided Mike Mehrazar-PennFuture, with EPCAMR updates for the monthly PA Choose Clean Water Coalition update conference call since we had our Board Meeting on the same day on August 19; EPCAMR signed on to a CCWC letter to urge Governor Shapiro to become the Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Commission in 2026; Discussed working on the PA Briefing Booklet update; Reviewed Kristen Reilly's final draft letter for accuracy on AMD statistics for her letter to the Chesapeake Bay Executive Council and Management Board; CCWC decided at the end of the month to move the Brook Trout Target (which we were suggesting be nested under Stream Health) back out as its own Outcome (which is how the Bay Program has it in their draft); EPCAMR also believes that having Brook Trout as its own Outcome has helped increase attention, resources, and funding; We are supportive of this being a stand-alone Outcome and continuing to bring attention to an iconic species for much of the non-tidal, freshwater areas of the watershed
- Provided Nicole Wooten-Associate Director of Land Protection with [The Nature Conservancy's](#) (TNC) PA Chapter, with contact information for Pagnotti Enterprises in order for her to follow up with James Pagnotti on some potential land conservation projects if they were interested in selling; Informed her that The coal business is not one that we usually see selling land off of their chances for remaining opportunities, however, depending on location, former reclamation, or lands that they may see as worth donating or selling through future acquisitions by other entities is something you will have to find out from them directly; Easements might be one thing, outright selling of the coal lands is another; The Kittatinny Ridge Conservation Landscape is generally of interest to TNC; Wayne Lehman-Schuylkill Conservation District provided her with contact information for Will Rich from Reading Anthracite
- Worked with Drew Robinson-CCWC and Mark Jones to develop a draft OpEd piece on the importance of having an AMD Target in the revised Chesapeake Bay Agreement
- EPCAMR sent around a USGS [publication](#) on the draft Critical Minerals List of 54 commodities to the PA AML Campaign

- Converge Strategies is doing a project for The Nature Conservancy and would like to speak with those dealing with remediation as a community benefit from large private capital investments like clean energy companies and asked to interview the EPCAMR Executive Director; Informed Evan Endres-PA Director of Government and Policy Relations for The Nature Conservancy, and colleague of EPCAMR's, that we'd welcome the interview; Scheduled a Zoom call for September 15 with Sam Horowitz, Senior Associate, who is helping TNC's [Mining the Sun](#) Initiative with an internal principles document summarizing our learnings around community engagement and benefits for solar projects on abandoned mine lands to glean lessons learned and recommendations that can complement the literature review they've conducted for TNC; Provided Sam with a link to our other [page](#), report, Solar Summit presentations, and information on our Site Suitability Solar GIS Model we developed for PA based on our abandoned mine land problem areas, features, and related infrastructure needs and lack thereof, across PA.
- Kristen Reilly-Executive Director for the [Choose Clean Water Coalition](#) (CCWC) informed EPCAMR that the Executive Director was selected and approved to be a part of the Steering Committee for the CCWC to represent PA interests in the coalfields portions of the Chesapeake Bay watershed; EPCAMR has been a long-standing member of the Coalition that continues to bring a unique and important perspective to their work; A large number of existing Steering Committee members sent encouraging messages welcoming the Executive Director aboard; Kristen started the onboarding process before the September meeting in Washington DC; Leanna Doung, Communications and Marketing Intern, with CCWC, will meet with EPCAMR Executive Director in early September to develop a blog on our work under their Member Highlights section of the website
- Ralph Sherder, Owner and Publisher of [Dark Skies Fly Fishing](#), would like to conduct an interview with the EPCAMR Executive Director, possibly over the Winter for one of issues of the Dark Skies Fishing Magazine on our work on AMD and watershed assessments and restoration around the EPCAMR Region; He saw our feature on Discover NEPA with Don Jacobs and was very interested in our work and the Executive Director's work with PA TU
- Mike Korb, Tetra Tech provided Kim Snyder-PA DEP BAMR with a number of resource links from the UK on Mine Pool geothermal work in England, Scotland, and Wales through the Coal Authority; Mike copied EPCAMR on the research papers; EPCAMR emphasized the need for regulatory control of the water quality data, permitting, and temperature changes within the mine pools and downstream impacts, should they change the temperature of the mine water; They were of the same opinion as EPCAMR when they say these types of projects seem to be untested waters when it comes to the State and or the regulatory environment when it comes to potential impacts within the pool and to the receiving streams and their current water quality designations and impairments; More geothermal research and water quality data monitoring as well as mine pool mapping needs to be funded; A recent [Joint State Government Commission Geothermal Report](#) lacks details on the finer details of the work, although it cites a lot of EPCAMR's work and didn't reach out to us directly; Exhaustive report, but well worth the read; Now, only if PA will fund more of this work and the studies and recommendations that we have made since 2014, we might advance the innovations and work in the field
- EPCAMR signed on to a sign-on letter at the request of Tom Ackerman-Vice President for Education, from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) to support two outcomes that support student experiences and school district planning in the revised Bay Agreement to include environmental literacy outcomes; The letter will go to the Management Board and the Chesapeake Executive Council

- EPCAMR communicated with Megan Finnen-PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry-Pinchot State Forest who reached out after a great colleague and friend Gary Gronkowski from the Nanticoke Conservation Club reached out to her after we had recently conducted a second cleanup of tires on SGL 224 in Glen Lyon in conjunction with the Backcountry Hunter & Anglers, EPCAMR, and the PGC; The effort took 2 separate clean ups, removing a total of **900** tires. A walk down of the area showed another tire pile on Pinchot State Forest-Mocanaqua Tract; A rough count has approximately **200** tires; The good news, (if we want to call it good news) is that they are all in one spot; We can probably get the manpower for removing these illegally dumped tires, however, funding for the removal is something the Nanticoke Conservation Club cannot afford; EPCAMR has funding to pay for the disposal of the tires, if we can be approved to coordinate the cleanup or the Nanticoke Conservation Club, since we both are approved Conservation Partners with the PA DCNR; Maria updated our EPCAMR Tire & Trash Cleanup database with these cleanups and totals on a separate project she is working on for us
- Max Harleman, from rural Carbon County, PA is currently an Assistant Professor of Public Administration, PhD MPA, at Villanova University; He is collaborating with Jeremy Weber, a colleague of his and EPCAMR's who is working on a study to understand whether cleaning up AMD can generate meaningful economic benefits for our historically coal-dependent communities; They are interested in how complementary economic investments—such as pairing waterway restoration with sustainable development in fishing, boating, and recreational tourism—might contribute to broader economic revitalization; Max is particularly focused on Tioga and Schuylkill counties; EPCAMR Executive Director provided Max with a Zoom interview; Provided him with contact information for Ed Wytovich and Tom Clark; The research is non-commercial and non-partisan; He wants to better understand how waterway restoration can benefit PA communities, economically; More on the project can be found at this [link](#)
- Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum recently issued [Secretarial Order No. 3436](#) on "Unlocking Critical and Strategic Minerals from Mine Waste, Cutting Red Tape, and Restoring American Dominance in Strategic Mineral Production."; The goal of this Order is to expedite the domestic extraction of energy and critical minerals from waste generated from mining, mineral processing, or refining; Secretary Burgum's [announcement](#) accompanying the Order emphasized that "[t]his initiative reflects [the Department of the Interior's (DOI)] unwavering commitment to achieving mineral independence and ensuring that America leads the way in advanced technologies that power our future while turning environmental challenges into opportunities for growth and innovation."; This Secretarial Order aligns with, among others, Executive Order (EO) 14156, "Declaring a National Energy Emergency," and [EO 14241](#), "Immediate Measures to Increase American Mineral Production."; Specifically, the Order recognizes the "promising domestic source of critical minerals" found in mine waste that can be "used in national defense applications, advanced manufacturing, and efforts to support energy independence, while incentivizing the reclamation of lands and waters."; The Order focuses on mine-waste recovery, turning mine waste into feedstock for mineral production as defined in EO 14241; For the purposes of this Order, mine waste includes mine waste piles, coal processing waste, coal refuse, tailings, abandoned uranium mine waste on public lands, and other discharges. The Order is intended to improve the internal management of the DOI and to ensure implementation of other EOs outlined in the Secretarial Order. The Order itself does not authorize any mining

Community Volunteers

- EPCAMR Executive Director had informed AmeriCorps VISTA and Conservation Legacy that we had selected Kayla R. Osborne as our Community Engagement and Marketing Specialist volunteer who had accepted the position following her interview; We were later informed that VISTA had put a halt on the September start date for the cohort and that it was being moved tentatively to November now; The time delay to start has given her more time to find an apartment in the area since she lives over an hour away; Completed her sponsor verification form and submitted it to Addie Gilkerson, Conservation Legacy and explained how this complicates issues when we don't have an official start date and she would have to get into an apartment before Winter and hopefully be able to enter a month to month lease and not a long-term lease agreement without knowing if the cohort will start on time

Conferences, Training, Webinars, Tours, Exhibits, & Workshops

27th PA AMR Conference Planning for 2025

- Participated in a monthly PA AMR Conference planning call with the Committee on August 27; Paid for our annual Zoom license to be able to continue with our meetings to coordinate and plan the Conference and Tour; Conference registrations continue to come in; Requested that Tracey and Laura follow up with Anne on some questions she had about logistics for the Conference; Mike provided Anne with his notes as well to cross-reference her responses so Anne can finalize the Conference Program Pamphlet and change the booking title to the PA AMR Conference for attendees when they register so that they aren't confused by the earlier title that doesn't name the Conference in it; Laura received the revised contract and tax-exempt paperwork for the Conference from EPCAMR; Requested additional scholarship approval for members of the Mountain Watershed Association (MWA) and they were granted; Followed up with Jeff Sarver-Shade Creek Watershed Association about his scholarship and arrangements with Malcolm Crittenden; Requested approval of a scholarship for Wayne Lehman-Schuylkill Conservation District Watershed Specialist, Alan Belles-Columbia County Conservation District, and Ben Wenger from Indiana County Conservation District and they were granted; Obtained a printing quote for the Program brochure from Center City Print and the Cougar Print Shop at Misericordia and went with the Cougar Print Shop after Anne had specified how many and dimensions and pages and provided EPCAMR with a final camera ready copy to print 200 copies and 200 Evaluation Forms; Executive Director wrote the Welcome for the Conference Program Booklet;

Jordi Cormas-PA DEP EJ NC Regional Coordinator was interested in submitting an abstract on EJ in the coalfields and the use of the PennEnviroScreen tool and was informed to submit it for consideration and it was approved; Mike shared the Conference Registration List access with Anne from WPCAMR and the Executive Director while he was on vacation; Coordinated with Carl Delucca about his 319 Program presentation at the Conference as a plenary speaker; Bette Conway is working on getting approvals to attend and present on rare earth elements sampling in the Shamokin Creek watershed however, some Federal agencies and some State agencies are experiencing travel bans; Melissa Meade's abstract was revised to "Clicking Through the Culm: Online Stories of Environment, Resilience, and Decline from Pennsylvania's Anthracite Coal Country" and accepted; "Scaling Up Mined Land Reforestation in Appalachia", Eric Null, Green Forests Work was submitted as an abstract; Banani Bonny's Arsenic and AMD abstract was also submitted for review and approval; Bill Burgos-Tetra Tech submitted a presentation on the Watershed Assessment Plan for the Shamokin Creek watershed

The Committee scheduled a meeting for September 3 to decide on the swag for the Conference which is leaning towards foldable backpacks and golf towels with our Conference logo on them; Mike created a [page](#) for Chuck Cravotta and Brad Schultz's PHREEQ-N-AMD Treat Workshop on the Conference website and EPCAMR pushed it out through our social media channels; Secured the additional rental of a room for the Workshop on Tuesday and had a call with Laura from Toftrees to work out some minor strategic room changes and the addition of another room for a third track of speakers and presentations; Tetra Tech attendees were going to drive their own vehicle to the tour spots and made a request to Anne to accommodate them separately from the charter bus; Provided a Master Scholarship List update to Toftrees; The Committee started placing presenters in tracks making sure that they weren't lopsided in terms of who might attend one presentation topic over another

PCPG Wyoming Valley AMD/AML Watershed Field Study and Geology Tour

- Participated in a conference call with Vincent Carbone-HDR, Inc. to discuss a planned Fall Field Study and Geology Tour in the Wyoming Valley for PCPG for professional development credits for attendees

Steamtown National Historic Site Rail Fest 2025 in Scranton

- EPCAMR confirmed attendance as an Exhibitor at Rail fest 2025 in Steamtown, Scranton, PA and tabled on August 31, 2025

Chesapeake Bay Commission AMD Tour

- EPCAMR Executive Director coordinated with Anna Killius-Executive Director of the [Chesapeake Bay Commission](#), who mailed 40 bandanas to EPCAMR that were tie-dyed with AMD in several patterns by Morgan, Maria and Dennis, our AmeriCorps VISTAs prior to the September 4 tour and provided to them as tokens of appreciation for hearing about our work across the Bay watershed; Informed Deb Nardone-Foundation for PA Watersheds of more details of the tour

Investigation, Land Reclamation, Water Treatment Techniques for Abandoned Coal Mines (Live, interactive webinar) with Half Moon Education Inc.

- Provided Lori Hilden with bullet points on the presentation for the November 6, 2025 webinar

Chesapeake Bay Funders Network AMD and IJA Watershed Tour

- Deb Nardone-Foundation for PA Watersheds invited the Executive Director to speak, along with Kelly Williams from the Clearfield County Conservation District and Anne Daymut from WPCAMR to attend the tour on October 28 to introduce many members that have not been exposed to legacy AMD issues in the Chesapeake Bay watershed

March 2026 EPA Brownfields Conference at Wind Creek in Bethlehem, PA

- Participated in a conference call with Vincent Carbone-HDR, Inc. to discuss EPCAMR and Earth Conservancy's participation on a panel on abandoned mine land reclamation at the EPA Brownfields Conference in March 2026

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Account and PA Invest Accounts in QuickBooks; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff for August 2025 with Highmark and United Concordia; Paid EC the rent monthly; Made EPCAMR deposits to FNB monthly as needed; Made reconciliations in Quickbooks with *Marianne*, our Bookkeeper-Ignite Business Services and provided her with a copy of the PA Invest Statement monthly; Completed bi-weekly payroll submissions through ADP for OneSource
- Completed an evaluation of Morgan Romanowski for Conservation Legacy and AmeriCorps following her annual completion of her term of volunteer service; Amberly Borday from Conservation Legacy wanted to offer Morgan an 11-week extension, however, Morgan was offered a full-time position with the PA DEP Clean Water Program following her AmeriCorps service with EPCAMR
- Participated in our Development Committee Meeting on August 5 and August 12; Reviewed a 10 Non-Profit Funding Models document from the Stanford Social Innovation Review magazine and was informed that Cristy Sweeney-Chair, will begin to devise a draft Development Committee Action Plan that was reviewed by the Executive Director and Mark Jones, our Community Development Coordinator AmeriCorps VISTA; Mark edited the notes from the 12th of August and we forwarded them along to the full Development Committee; Another meeting was scheduled for September 3
- Scheduled and invited EPCAMR Board Members and Affiliates to our EPCAMR Quarterly Board Meeting on August 21, 2025 following the development of the tentative agenda and reports; John Levitsky, Luzerne Conservation District Watershed Specialist informed EPCAMR that Bailey White was the new Watershed Specialist for Lackawanna County so we included her on the invite e-mail to the meeting; Mike Milosevich, became a lifetime member of EPCAMR; Convened the Quarterly EPCAMR Board Meeting; Cristy developed the draft Action Plan and it was presented at the meeting for approval and sent it along digitally to everyone following the acceptance of it by a unanimous majority of the Board; She encouraged members to think about additional folks that could be added ad hoc to the Committee to assist with the Development Plan implementation; Mike informed the Development Committee that several online donation platforms are now not supporting non-profits such as AmazonSmile and GoodSearch, so he removed them from our donations options page on our website; Mike also found an older YouTube [video](#) on "10 Sites to Find Donations and Donors"; [iGive](#) donation portal is still active but needs someone on their admin side to allow us to use our acronym in addition to the full blown spelling out of our organization in the search bar so that people can find it and select it as their charity of choice
- Completed additional vendor documentation and submission for Amazon Web Services and informed them that we were continuing to work on a DCSP Financial Report with our Bookkeeper that we will submit as soon as it's complete and her review is finished; Provided Marianne with the Excel file to complete and submit
- Forwarded over to Maria and Dennis a copy of the Volunteer Activity Description (VAD) that generally describes the work plan and goals, tasks, and outcomes for the 24-week Conservation Legacy Stewardships Individual Placement Program AmeriCorps positions they are funded under; It was originally Morgan's VAD for one-year
- Provided Ed Wytovich with a copy of our 501 (C)(3) Letter of Determination so that he can provide it to a bank he's been communicating with that would be interested in providing EPCAMR a grant

- Worked with OneSource to straighten out some administrative issues with Steve Cornia's transition from full-time to part-time in ADP; There were also issues with the Executive Director's IRA contributions that are under review; Requested access for our Bookkeeper Mariane Beane to be able to access the ADP Payroll records as an Admin User, Client Only; The General Ledger interface costs additional fees and an additional monthly charge
- EPCAMR Executive Director continues to seek a CPA firm to complete our 2023 Single Audit since Kohanski and Company could not complete it; Continued to work with Marianne Beane, our Bookkeeper to identify some firms that we can reach out to in order to help us complete the Single Audit; Provided Michael Mark with information and a trial balance for 2023 for him to make a determination if he could provide us with a quote based upon an recommendation from Marianne; EPCAMR doesn't meet the threshold for 2024 to have a Single Audit completed
- Provided Roslyn Walker-OneSource with permission to speak to Douglas James, Workman's Compensation Auditor and to access various payroll documents and reports necessary for 2025; Marianne provided additional General Ledger information for the Audit
- Worked with Cheryl Gnoinski, to get a website set up to fundraise for EPCAMR volunteer t-shirt sales and for EPCAMR Staff shirts through her local business [School Spirit Sale](#)
- Reviewed some resources provided to EPCAMR by the Non-Profit Community Assistance Center (NCAC)
- Mike ordered a Sodium Hydroxide solution for sampling replacement bottle and then decided to purchase it in a bulk quantity powder to create our own solution since it has a 5-year shelf life
- EPCAMR paid for an Adobe Reader license