



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

Robert E. Hughes, *Executive Director*

101 South Main Street

Ashley, PA 18706

Phone: (570) 371-3523

E-mail: rhughes@epcamr.org

Website: www.epcamr.org

December 2016 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- Attended a second private screening of *Joe Sapienza's "Centralia: PA's Lost Town"* documentary at the Centralia Legion, Aristes with former and current residents of Centralia, PA; Took some time to evaluate the screening and provided additional comments to Joe directly; He anticipates a January release date of the trailer and a Spring 2017 release of the documentary
- Sent out a request for Nominations for the Annual PAEE Awards as the Chair of the Awards Committee and a suggestion to become a member of PAEE to those formal and non-formal environmental education professionals that EPCAMR works with throughout NE PA and the PAEE NE Region, where the EPCAMR Executive Director serves as the Regional Director; <http://www.paee.net/2017-paee-awards.html>; Attended the PAEE last quarter Board Meeting in State College at PRPS on 12-19-16
- Sent a letter to *Senator Bob Casey* regarding S. 921, the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act of 2015; Informed the Delaware River Watershed Coalition of the action and response from *Senator Casey's* Office; The Delaware River Basin Conservation Act would direct the Interior Secretary to provide technical assistance and to establish a competitive grant program to help coordinate funding for restoration and protection efforts of the four-state Delaware River Basin region; S. 921 will help develop a coordinated approach to enhance habitat, water quality and flood control for the 15 million people that depend on the Delaware River Basin for their water supply; *Senator Casey* is an original cosponsor of S. 921; The Committee on Environment and Public Works considered and passed S. 921 during a mark-up on May 18, 2016; In addition, S. 2848, the Water Resources Development Act of 2016 (WRDA), was introduced by *Senator James Inhofe* of Oklahoma and *Senator Barbara Boxer* of California on April 25, 2016. This legislation seeks to strengthen our Nation's waterways infrastructure and maintain navigation routes for commerce, which help to keep us competitive in the global marketplace; On September 15, 2016, *Senator Casey* voted in support of S. 2848, which included the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act, and the Senate passed it. The legislation is currently with the U.S. House of Representatives for consideration; *Senator Casey* recently signed on to a letter to the Senate Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and the House Chair and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to request that the final version of WRDA include the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act

Education & Outreach

- Met with *Emily Rinaldi*-newly hired Outreach Coordinator for [PennFuture](#) NE Region and welcomed her to the area; Forwarded her contacts in the NE Region that she may want to reach out to in the near future to become introduced into the environmental professional organizations and circles within the area; Informed her of our RECLAIM Crew; Gave her the dates of our upcoming 19th Annual PA AMR Conference in downtown Wilkes-Barre at the Genetti's Best Western Hotel; Provided her with contact information for organizations that she may want to reach out to in the Delaware River watershed, including the Schuylkill River watershed as well, since she is going to be a State Lead organizer for PennFuture in those areas specifically, in addition to working on NE PA environmental issues; Mentioned to her EPCAMR'S involvement with [Green Drinks](#) with the previous Outreach Coordinator, *Kate Gibbons*-to see if she was interested in starting up those meetings again to network
- Provided *John Welsh*, John Welsh Photography, and EPCAMR Board Member with a copy of our EPCAMR logo for inclusion on one of his videos he shot for EPCAMR; Abbie posted it on our EPCAMR website; <https://vimeo.com/194706342>
- Communicated with *Ezra Thrush*-new Campaign Manager for Watershed Advocacy for PennFuture and new State Lead for PA with the Choose Clean Water Coalition to introduce him to topics involving AMD and to give him updates on watershed work in the EPCAMR Region and my recent introduction to Emily Rinaldi-the new Outreach Coordinator for the NE Office of PennFuture; Discussed having a PA specific sub-group of the Choose Clean Water Coalition for AMD; Participated in a Choose Clean Water Conference PA Call on 12-10-16 and discussed the RECLAIM Act, PA AMR Conference 2017, and the possible formation of a PA sub-committee on AMD; RECLAIM Act was introduced by 5 Democrats
- *Virgil Anderson*, an advocate for mesothelioma requested that EPCAMR put up a link on asbestos mesothelioma on our website <https://mesothelioma.net/>
- Reached out to *Dr. Bill Bolan*, King's College, to request students who can help us further develop our Marketing Plan to reach a larger regional audience; We don't have funds for advertising and branding just yet...but need ideas on how to do it cheap and free or through other outlets and branding ideas; We have such a small staff and marketing is not our strong point at the moment, however, we do have an AmeriCorps Volunteer working with us now who is from Cabrini College who has a degree in Social Media and Marketing that is helping us do stories, FB content, and writing stories for the website
- Reviewed *Abbie* and *Rachael's* Quarterly OSMRE/AmeriCorps Reports that were submitted to OSMRE/AmeriCorps and provided them with feedback on their work; Suggested that they provide the Executive Director with a draft copy of their submissions prior to sending to OSM so that any minor corrections could be made to either names, organizations, places, or discharge locations could be corrected ‘
- Made a follow up request to have EPCAMR become an Evangelist for the Save the Monarchs Foundation to be able to freely distribute milkweed seeds that we've been using on the abandoned mine lands for our ***Monarchs on Minelands: Release the Butterflies!***

Technical Assistance

- Continued working with *Joyce Morrash Zaykoski*, Program Manager for the City of Wilkes-Barre on the **Green Infrastructure Plan** under the **NFWF Stormwater Management Technical Assistance Grant** with LandStudies; Provided her with a very large data file transfer of files and resources (2.4GB) on an external hard drive for their future reference; Looked over potential project site locations provided by the City and one of the members of City Council, *Tony Brooks* to be included in the Plan; Asked *Andrew Korzon* to provide the City of Wilkes-Barre with the link again to access additional data
- Attended the **Tunnel C AMD Anoxic Limestone Drain Treatment System Biopsy** with several of the EPCAMR Staff, *Corey Richmond*-Watershed Specialist from the Sullivan County Conservation District, *Rexers, LLC*, and *Neal Wolfe*-Hedin Environmental at the White Ash Land Association property where the AMD Treatment System exists and is in need of rehabilitation due to plugging of the system; EPCAMR's *Gavin Pellitteri*, Watershed Outreach Specialist, requested the Technical Assistance through a grant with Trout Unlimited on behalf of the White Ash Land Association and the Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association and has been coordinating the project; Explained the buildup of the aluminum precipitate in the pipes within the system that are plugged up to *Abbie Keefe*-EPCAMR OSMRE/AmeriCorps, who was preparing a post for our social media site
- Finalized the **Abraham Creek Coldwater Conservation Heritage Plan** proposal and **\$6000** budget and submitted it to the CHP along with several municipal government Letters of Support, regional non-profit Support Letters, and local legislators who are behind EPCAMR's efforts to assess the watershed and the fishery of Abrahams Creek; Supporters included: Abrahams Creek Watershed Association; Anthracite Scenic Trails Association; *Representative Aaron Kaufer*; Stanley Cooper Chapter TU; Forty-Fort Borough; Wilkes-Barre Area School District; Senator Yudichak's Office; *Senator Lisa Baker's* Office; Dallas Township; Luzerne Conservation District; Pennsylvania Environmental Council-NE Office; West Wyoming Borough; Swoyersville Borough; Kingston Township; Exeter Township; Wilkes-Barre Area School District; Future letters that may come after the grant submission are expected to come from the North Branch Land Trust, Franklin Township, Exeter Borough, and Wyoming Borough
- Provided *Tarsha Scovens*-SE PAEE Regional Director with some grant writing technical assistance on her application to the PA DEP EE Grant PG for her **PAEE Mixing Greens PG**; EPCAMR completed a Partner Form and forwarded it along to *Tarsha*
- Provided *Kathleen Lavelle*, Field Coordinator for Trout Unlimited's PA Coldwater Habitat Restoration Program with the GPS Coordinate System (Lat. & Long.) of the EPCAMR Office in order to be more effective in communicating the locations and efforts of EPCAMR; [41.2103694, -75.9058757]
- Directed *Rachael Grube*-EPCAMR OSMRE/AmeriCorps to download the Delaware River watershed LANDSAT data satellite imagery for the counties in the EPCAMR Region; www.drproject.org

Technical Assistance

- Registered for the **ESRI Federal GIS Conference Training** in Washington DC February 12-14th, 2017 that has free registration for non-profits working on GIS projects; EPCAMR's two OSM/AmeriCorps will be going and the Executive Director as their Immediate Supervisor is going to be introducing them to our Federal partners in the Office of Surface Mining during the Conference
- Worked with Mike to prepared an Invoice for EPCAMR Staff time spent on inputting data into **Datashed** for Stream Restoration Inc. for the last several months
- Reviewed *David Edwards*, soon to be released trailer and rough cut of his documentary, "**King in the Mountain**" on coal mining, abandoned mines, and the impacts on coalfield communities; Provided him with comments on the documentary upon his request; EPCAMR will be featured in the documentary
- Prepared a Letter of Support for the City of Wilkes-Barre who are submitting a Community-wide US EPA Brownfields Assessment grant and forwarded it along to *Joyce Morrash Zaycoski*-Capital Projects Program Manager
- EPCAMR provided additional abandoned mine land inventory details from our RAMLIS Tool for Problem Areas within the Little Shickshinny Creek watershed to *John Levitsky*, Watershed Specialist, Luzerne Conservation District

Project Coordination

- Communicated with *Andrew Korzon*, LandStudies on how to prepare an EPCAMR Invoice for Staff time spent on the **NFWF Stormwater Management Technical Assistance Grant** with the City of Wilkes-Barre and provide additional in-kind value towards the project; Committed to working on it and completing it in late November, early December 2016; Prepared an Invoice and 11 page Narrative EPCAMR Progress Report and submitted it to *Andrew* through December 2016 with the assistance of *Denise Hernandez*-EPCAMR Bookkeeper and Urban Outreach Specialist; Provided a thorough examination, review, and comment on the draft **Green Stormwater Infrastructure** Plan being finalized by *Andrew*
- Informed *James Young-Larson* Design Group that EPCAMR had gone with RiverLogic Solutions, LLC to complete the Dam Waiver Restoration permit application to the PA DEP and the E & S Plan submission to the Luzerne Conservation District for the **Solomon Creek Dam Removal and Trout Stream Habitat Restoration Improvement Project** in Ashley, PA; Too much time had passed and we needed to move forward on the project; Provided *Jeff Boyer*-RiverLogic Solutions, LLC with Ashley Borough's Borough Manager contact information for *Greg Gulick* as he began to prepare details for the permitting process; *Jeff* will be obtaining the Dam Number from *Jack Krieter*-PA DEP Dam Safety

Project Coordination

- *Laura Saccente*-PSAYDN sent EPCAMR their in-kind matching funds paperwork for the Phase II **EE Capacity Grant** funded by NAAEE that is being administered by EPCAMR for PAEE; *Will Tolliver*-Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy also provided his reporting information for the final report; EPCAMR submitted the Phase II Final Report to *Lori Mann*-NAAEE, along with several Appendices documents to close out the grant on behalf of PAEE; Posted documents and resources to the NAAEE Google Shared Folder site before they are uploaded to EEPro; Submitted our Phase II Reimbursement Request to NAAEE; Provided PAEE with a copy of the same reports for the upcoming Board Meeting on December
- Responded to questions that remained from *Theron Bisko*-Skelly & Loy, Inc. on our draft Bid Package preparation for the **Hicks Creek Natural Stream Channel Design & Construction Project**; Requested a few referrals from two EPCAMR Board members of an Arbitration Agency in case of future contract disputes that needs to be included in the bid package
- *Pierre MaCoy* EPCAMR the final Scope of Work and Contract Agreement; EPCAMR began working on the sub-contract agreement with AES, LLC; *Tom Clark*-SRBC informed EPCAMR of the initial results of the water quality from the stripping pit and the Mocanaqua AMD Tunnel for our **Consumptive Use Feasibility Study on the Mocanaqua AMD Tunnel Project**; Two pieces of good news-the Mocanaqua Tunnel water quality is going to be very conducive for AES's treatment technology; The chemistry is slightly acidic, high Fe, with low Al, and Mn; Second piece of good news, if the strip pit is a reflection of #3 mine pool, the water quality is pretty good; If that water is the reflection of the #3 pool, then it is feasible to pump it into the wet area and create a duck hunters paradise; The water would then exit the wet area, get lost in the #2/#1 pool and increase the Mocanaqua AMD Tunnel flow, where it would be treated by the AES treatment technology; Due to the #3 pool water quality, it may not be a true reflection of the mine pool and could possibly be just surface water infiltration, however, it can't be verified until we get drill holes into the ground and compare the water quality from within the pool; If the pit is part of #3 there is a chance that being open to the air and receiving rainfall and organics from leaves creates a "clean" layer at the surface; Pierre suggests that we use some sort of depth water quality sampling to determine if there is a chemocline in the mine pool; Sulphates are low and even if there was natural treatment occurring, the sulphates would remain; All of our partners still need to inform John Maza-PA DCNR of our results, findings thus far, and our discussions at this stage; We are going to need some sort of approvals, clearance, or possible permits on anything that we propose for eventual treatment or even wetland and wildlife enhancements. EPCAMR thinks it is also going to be critical to compare the water level elevations in those manifestations of what we think are the mine pools just in case we aren't in a perched aquifer and there is no connection at all; The boreholes will allow us to get the most accurate elevation of the water and possibly allow us to sample the pool water to make a better determination;

Pumping water temporarily is one thing, long term pumping operations is another; Getting electricity to the site is a longer term issue because I doubt that the pool connections from one to the other has a positive gravity feed where one would drain from one to another

Project Coordination

without it, particularly if we find that the water elevations are the same or connected; It is also possible that once we determine the pool boundary and the elevation at which it is at, the AMD could possibly be pumped from another location for treatment since it's unlikely that PA DCNR is going to allow treatment at the tunnel itself; AES may have to propose to purchase some land around the discharge and see if PA DCNR is willing to subdivide the liability that is on their property now; There's no doubt we need to drill a few boreholes; Locations to drill are being reviewed and evaluated by *Pierre MaCoy-SRBC* Hydrogeologist, PG and the EPCAMR Staff; Discussions are continuing around the installation of weirs, pressure transducers, stilling wells, and stream gauges on the Mocanaqua Tunnel, Black Creek, and possibly Turtle Creek; Depending on the size of the holes we drill, that will determine the type monitoring device we can send down the hole for a sample within the pool; Kemmerrer Samplers are not skinny, unless there is another type of skinnier sampling device that EPCAMR is not aware of;

It would be interesting to find out the existing treatment capacity for the Shickshinny Sewer Authority near the Mocanaqua AMD Tunnel and is something EPCAMR will request; EPCAMR and SRBC come January will be working towards developing a plan for installing water level loggers and resampling the pit at depths; EPCAMR can create a LIDAR map to identify approximate surface water elevations for the wet areas, the pit, and other surface features that might be connected to the mine pools; EPCAMR will bring AES up to speed since they will be in charge of getting a driller and request referrals from Newport Aggregates that is right across the street from the entrance to the Pinchot State Forest; We need a field excursion to walk the streams from the Susquehanna River up to the pits to see where we are losing flow; A dye study is an option; We would like to use SRBC's deep sonde (90') to measure the pH/conductivity/ DO/NTU/Temp to get a profile and maybe depth of the pit; We would like to use SRBC's bathymetry equipment and get a 3D of the pit to estimate volume; These are all options that are available to our partners at this time

- EPCAMR Staff continue to care for the **Trout in the Classroom Program** in our office and the fry are at the point where are beginning to "swim up" as a part of their life cycle [stage](#); Order TIC Shirts for the Staff
- Worked on updating *Rachael Grube*-EPCAMR OSMRE/AmeriCorps on our **Rausch Creek Mine Pool Mapping Project** following *Tom Clark's* request to provide SRBC with an update on the Good Spring #1 Mine Pool Mapping progress before 12-15-16 that they can use for an internal meeting to help determine the best locations for drilling boreholes for the project on Rausch Creek lands

Community Volunteer Coordination

- Provided *Abbie Keefe*-EPCAMR OSMRE/AmeriCorps with a list of contacts for Colleges/Universities for her to reach out to them to create some additional awareness of our RECLAIM Crew and upcoming future events and programs where volunteer opportunities led by EPCAMR will be offered; Provided her with a separate list of contacts just for Penn-State University Commonwealth Campuses across the EPCAMR Region

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- Informed *Parras Ashe*-Conference Director of Sales & Events for Genetti's-Best Western, Wilkes-Barre, PA that the PA AMR Conference Planning Committee has agreed to utilize the facility for the **2017 PA AMR Conference** on June 21st-22nd ; Everything is in order to continue moving forward with the contract agreement; An \$800 deposit was made; The Committee will look over the food choices in January and make our selections and get back to Genetti's; The Committee will be seeing who has what AV Equipment and Screens; At this point, we are planning on two tracks and depending on how many presentations we end up with, we could go to three; However, that will be decided based on the number of presentation slots that we decide to fill based on the quality of the presentations submitted and reviewed by the Committee over the Winter; *Erin Pisarcik*, Sales Coordinator will handle the Conference planning going forward
- *Tim Stahl*, Senior Civil Engineer-PA DEP BAMR was interested in submitting a presentation abstract to the Conference Planning Committee; Directed him to send the abstract submission to *Anne Daymut*-WPCAMR; EPCAMR invited the Mayor of Wilkes-Barre, *Tony George* to the Conference to provide a morning "Welcome to Wilkes-Barre"; Wilkes-Barre City Councilman *Tony Brooks* has offered to do a walking tour of the downtown historical buildings within a few block radius of the Hotel of former mine barons homes, prominent mining figures and professionals of Wilkes-Barre that have a connection to anthracite coal mining
- Provided a draft copy of a Letter of Request for **\$5000** to the PA AMR Conference Planning Committee for review and comment towards the PA AMR Conference Coordination from the PA DEP; Worked on a Sponsor Letter for the Conference with *Anne Daymut*-WPCAMR; Started designing the website for the 2017 PA AMR Conference with *Mike* and provided the copy text for the page with some comments by the Committee; www.treatminewater.com

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
- Completed the December 2016 Monthly 319 Progress Reports and EPCAMR Board Reports and forwarded them to Mike to prepare reimbursements to send down to the PA DEP 319 PG for approval

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Provided *Bernie McGurl*-EPCAMR President with my notes from the Personnel Committee Meeting and requested that upon conferring with the entire Committee's notes from their Executive Session that he forward on to the Executive Director their Final Merit Raise adjustments for 2017
- Forwarded *Mike* an EPSON flyer and brochure on SureColor P-Series Plotters
- Worked with *Mike* to draft up and send out an initial e-mail request to our EPCAMR Board and membership to seek their active participation in our EPCAMR Strategic Plan Update for 2017
- Worked with *Mike* to update our www.sam.gov registration information
- Signed up for [GivingAssistant](#) to provide another way to generate some revenue for EPCAMR
- Worked with *Mike* to update EPCAMR's rates for 2017 due to a slight increase in health care costs from Highmark/Blue Cross Blue Shield based on the demographic factors of our community pool in which we are in