

EPCAMR



ROBERT E. HUGHES, EPCAMR REGIONAL COORDINATOR
MONTHLY BOARD REPORT
JUNE 2006

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LUZERNE COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS

- Began discussions with the Wilkes University Art Department and Small Business Development Center in partnership with the Pocono NE RC & DC on our Iron Oxide Resource Recovery Efforts and Anthrascapes Art Project
- Provided PA Association of Environmental Educators (PAEE) with a dozen potential contacts to consider for funding or sponsoring of the April 2007 PAEE Conference that will be held in Downtown Wilkes-Barre
- Coordinated with Valerie-OSM/VISTA on status of community development projects in the Wyoming Valley
- Coordinated with Ryan Koch-Pocono NE RC & DC on information that was needed to be reported on the completion of the stormwater resources initiative project that EPCAMR was a partner in at the WREN PA League of Women Voters Grant Wrap-Up Meeting in Altoona later in the month
- Received a positive press release from Pittsburgh about Senator Santorum advocating a piece of Bipartisan Environmental Legislation Bringing **\$1 Billion** to Pennsylvania for Environmental Clean-Up Efforts and had it posted on the EPCAMR website; SB 2616
- Provided comments to OSM on a draft document (Memorandum of Agreement) that will help guide future OSM/VISTA Cooperative Agreements with new sponsor organizations who are interested in becoming a part of the Appalachian Coal Country Watershed Team
- Worked with Josh and Mike to come up with a County-wide GIS Map of Municipalities, Streams, Roads, and AML areas in order for the staff to assist the Luzerne County Municipal Government in conducting a preliminary assessment of damages to AML, streams, stream banks, and other areas impacted by the June 2006 Flood; A request was made by the Luzerne County Commissioners for assistance in identifying sites that will potentially be in need of future FEMA/PEMA aid
- Planned for participation in an upcoming Conference Call led by Valerie and other members of the Conference Steering Committee to discuss finalization of plans for the designated workshops and speakers for the August 2006 AMR Conference in State College
- Talked with Matt Mascaro, Environmental Compliance Specialist with JP Mascaro & Sons, Audubon, PA about discussing the possible uses of their Landscaper's Advantage Class A Compost material in the various projects that EPCAMR is involved with; The materials is very suitable for mine reclamation projects as well as other community redevelopment projects and is readily available for free; EPCAMR to post the availability of the material on the EPCAMR website

- Worked with Mike to create a statistical list of AMD Impaired Waterways by County for John Dawes and the PA AML Campaign using our AMLIS GIS System; However, we were able to create a list by watershed drainage basins because of our work on the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Implementation Plans only in the Susquehanna River Drainage and more time would be necessary to create the list for the entire State
- Coordinated and Exhibited at the 2006 June RiverFest Festival in Canal Park, Plymouth Township, Luzerne County, along the Susquehanna River; Previously had canoed a section of the Susquehanna River from Wilkes-Barre to Plymouth Township's Canal Park with PA Outdoor Life's Don Jacobs and his crew to publicize the events in conjunction with members of the Wyoming Valley Watershed Coalition and Susquehanna Outfitters
- Reviewed Contract Agreement with WPCAMR Regional Coordinator, Mike, and Steve Romig Sales Representative-Atherton Hotel on finalizing food, services, rooms, and banquet facilities, as well as prices for the upcoming August 2006 AMR Conference
- Meeting with Tom Yurich a member of Citizen Advocates United to Safeguard the Environment, Inc. (CAUSE) at the LCD Office, who is very concerned about the dumping of fly-ash, river dredge, and cement dust at the Hazleton City Landfill in the Cranberry Creek Watershed; EPCAMR provided Tom with information that we had on the mine pool locations in the area and informed him of our recent submission of grants to take a closer look at developing a fully integrated GIS Mapping system of the underground mine pool complexes throughout the NE; Provided water quality data to Tom as well on any relevant mine discharges in the area that had flow or chemistry data associated with it
- Attended a Strategic Planning Session of the Pocono NE RC & DC at the PA DCNR Musto Environmental Center at Nescopeck State Park
- Attended and assisted in the Coordination and Hosting of the OSM/VISTA Appalachian Coal Country National Watershed Team representing 15 states at the Penn-State Wilkes-Barre Campus
- Submitted a **\$20,000** PA DEP Environmental Education Grant to support the funding of a part-time position that would incorporate the EPCAMR Program's AMD Resource Recovery Project into Art Education in schools, with local government officials for community environmental and beautification projects, and with artists and art leagues throughout Luzerne and Lackawanna County;
- Attended the Luzerne Conservation District Municipal Outreach Workshop on Stormwater in Wilkes-Barre, along with Josh Longmore, and had an opportunity to touch on the use of alternative BMPs for areas impacted by abandoned mines so that infiltration is not always encouraged, unless certain procedures and precautions are implemented on site
- Conducted several AMD Watershed Tours with Devon Rother-EPCAMR Art Education Intern and several artists from the Arts YOUNiverse Gallery and the AfA Gallery in Scranton to pick up iron oxide samples to be dried and utilized by the artists for the upcoming Fall 2006 Anthrascapes Art Exhibit in Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties
- Prepared a grant request to support the coordination of the 2006 State-wide AMR Conference in State College to the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies; Through the Western PA Watershed Program, EPCAMR received a letter stating that we were awarded a **\$2,000** convening grant to support the Conference that will be utilized to keep the costs down of the overall registration, meals, and room blocks for non-profit watershed members who will be attending the 3 day Conference in August 2006

- The EPCAMR Program Staff participated in an illegal tire dump cleanup along Sickler Run, a tributary that flows from the Avondale Hill AML Reclamation Project along SR 11 and removed **175** tires out of nearly **500** that are located at the site; Wilkes University Freshman will be continuing to clean up the site with us on July 10
- Meeting with Sean Rybka over at Moon Lake Park with Nikki F., Park Naturalist, who is looking to coordinate 2 hr environmental education programs throughout the Summer at the Park
- Requested a firm letter of commitment of funds as matching funds from Jim Brozena, Luzerne County Engineer, from the Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority for the Hicks Creek AML Natural Stream Channel Restoration Growing Greener Project; Given the circumstances of the recent flooding throughout the Wyoming Valley, the PA DEP GG Grants Center has given us an extension on getting the letter in to Harrisburg; Provided Jim with a draft letter for his review and comment
- Created a Landowner Consent to Enter Form for illegal dump cleanups or stream cleanups that EPCAMR and the Luzerne Conservation District have agreed upon for use in situations such as these types of opportunities that come around for us to work with the local communities and private landowners to clean up the environment; The Luzerne Conservation District already has existing liability insurance that covers EPCAMR and any other program that operates out of the Conservation District Office; The less we have to pull out the legalese with landowners, the better of we will be, so as long as they understand what our original intent is going into a cleanup
- Sent an e-mail along to Diane Madl to discuss the possibilities of including the Luzerne Conservation District in on next year's Community Connection's Watershed Forum in order for us to plug the Envirothon and other District Programs; It would be a great inclusion to the program and it would encourage some of the other District staff to participate and possibly become mentors or give the students an opportunity to see other careers in the environmental field