



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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June 2017 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- Reviewed *R. John Dawes'* latest iteration on the points that the PA AML Campaign are supporting in relation to the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund and Surface Mining Control & Reclamation Act Reauthorization; Provided John with comments developed by the Executive Director and *Mike Hewitt* for *Eric Cavazza* to address related to the AML Trust Fund and future allocations and disbursements; On June 20th, the House Natural Resources Committee marked up RECLAIM (HR 1731) in two sessions starting on June 22nd and again on June 27th; Two other bills (mining schools, Good Samaritans are now referred to as community reclaimers partnerships) will be marked up as well, but will be reported out of Committee separately, not as a package; EPCAMR signed on to a RECLAIM Act Support Letter submitted to the Committee on Natural Resources in support of the amendment on HR 1731; On June 27th, HR 1731 passed out of the House Natural Resources Committee with the Beyer amendment included; <http://paenvironmentdaily.blogspot.com/2017/06/us-house-natural-resources-committee.html>
- *Emily Rinaldi*, PennFuture Outreach Coordinator, provided EPCAMR with talking points for an upcoming meeting with ACE volunteers with Senator Yudichak's Office to discuss environmental issues of regional importance including AMD, Methane, PA DCNR funding, PA DEP funding, Act 129, and reclamation work throughout the EPCAMR Region on June 16th
- EPCAMR signed on to a letter to the PA House from PennFuture showing our opposition to the repeal of the MS4 Program under House Resolution No. 284 and another letter for the Susquehanna River Rally through the Growing Greener Coalition
- EPCAMR Executive Director received an Expert Certification from Cornell University for completing an online course in Urban Environmental Education and for completing an AMD Treatment System Lesson Plan example to be used by other educators working in watersheds impacted by polluted mine water
- Provided *Beth Berkhauser-Chair*, International Interdependence Hexagon Project-Keystone College Art Education with contact information for PA American Water in order for her to pursue a grant opportunity in partnership with EPCAMR on using iron oxide in the arts and Hexagon Project that integrates Arts Standards into an Iron Oxide STEAM Curriculum Unit; Beth sent the Executive Director a draft copy of the unit to allow for comments and collaboration from EPCAMR; www.hexagonproject.org

- Followed up with *Walt Dietz*, NE/SE Regional Outreach & Education Coordinator-PA Fish & Boat Commission to see if the EPCAMR Staff can work with them to become certified Fishing Skills Instructor volunteers with them to be able to teach youth the SMART Angler Program and proper fishing technique and etiquette
- Met with *Nick Oulette*, Director for the Graham Academy in Kingston, PA about the ***Trout in the Classroom Program*** and our Waterboxx Research Project to see if he was interested in having students participate with us in the late Summer or early Fall
- *Daniel Snowden*, D. Ed., PA DEP Mineral Resource Program Specialist, requested information on illegal dump sites on abandoned mine lands and EPCAMR's work to recycle AMD into art to have the ideas included on the agendas of future Professional Recyclers of PA (PROP) Conferences since our work qualifies as recycling/reuse of a waste material by turning it into a product (art, pigment); He is interested in having some relevant mining-related matters included as sessions for future PROP conferences; <http://www.proprecycles.org/2017-conference-program>; Provided *Dan* with two presentations related to the topics of his concern and provided him with connections to both the PEC and Keep PA Beautiful, both partners of EPCAMR's in the region when it comes to illegal dumping and the cleanup of these areas when funding is available
- The "Centralia: PA's Lost Town" documentary that EPCAMR is featured in received some media coverage recently in the news; <http://wnep.com/2017/05/07/documentary-puts-centralia-on-the-big-screen/>
- EPCAMR asked *Dr. Ken Klemow*, Wilkes U. Professor if the Institute for Energy & Environmental Research (IEER) would like to co-host an international speaker on energy policy from Germany's Wuppertal Institute, *Timon Wenhert*, an Economist who will be coming to the US to speak on Germany's Transitional away from Coal and into the Renewable Energy markets; <http://wupperinst.org/en/c/wi/c/s/cd/1097/>; *Dr. Klemow* obliged and secured the Stark Learning Center, Room 101 for the venue scheduled for July 20th from 7-9pm; EPCAMR has also secured funding from the Foundation for PA Watersheds and the Heinrich Boll Foundation to support the event that is open to the public and will be videotaped by *Scott Cannon*, Video Innovations for future use; Requested that *Wendy Cominsky*, Candidate for Luzerne County Council become involved as a panel presenter due to her support for renewable energy and abandoned mine reclamation; Developed a Save the Date poster for the event with Wilkes U. Graphics Design Department; Prepared a \$750 Convening Grant to the Foundation for PA Watersheds to support the public event; Provided *Dr. Klemow* with logos of financial supporters, a working title of the program, websites to sponsors and panel presenters, and created a [Facebook Event Page](#)
- Provided *Gwen Harleman*, Verve Vertu Studios, with our weblink to purchase iron oxide; <http://epcamr.org/store/listing-category/mine-drainage-products/>
- Interviewed by *John Timmons*, a MS Civil Engineering candidate and graduate student from Ohio University who was interested in EPCAMR's work with iron oxide pigment, markets, and art

- Provided an AMD STEM Educational Program to the Wilkes-Barre Area School District's Elementary STEM Program at EL Meyers High School to **18** students and then planted 2 Waterboxxes on the school grounds with the EPCAMR Staff, along with STEM Coordinator, *Keith Eberts*
- EPCAMR Staff were invited to the Headframe Construction Completion at the Pioneer Tunnel on August 14th, 2017, Ashland, PA; EPCAMR was a project partner and supporter of the preservation project
- Representative *Aaron Kaufer* asked EPCAMR if we had an interest in pursuing a Coldwater Conservation Planning Grant for Toby's Creek, Luzerne County, PA; EPCAMR responded that we would have to research it further and that the grant was not open yet; Toby's Creek is around 36 sq. miles and is partially impacted by abandoned mine lands in the Wyoming Valley, has some serious flash flooding issues, is a coldwater fishery, and has its fair share of urban development stormwater issues
- Provided *Brian Hutchison*, Editor from Cornell U. with several photos that he'd like to include as Figures in the SSEYNC Book Chapter written by the Executive Director and Dr. Louise Chawla, from the University of Colorado-Boulder for an upcoming book in the Fall of 2017

Technical Assistance

- *Allen Nakachi* is interested in paying for a commissioned iron oxide art piece to provide to his wife for her 20th Anniversary; EPCAMR tried to get an idea of what he was interested in and he suggested a sculpture of some sort; EPCAMR is going to work with *Mark Chuck* who is interested in working with us on the project; <https://www.markchuck.com/>
- EPCAMR Staff attended an EC Press Event at the Hanover #9 AML Reclamation site in Nanticoke, PA where they were having the US EPA Region III announce a **\$200,000** Workforce Development & Environmental Job Training Grant that EPCAMR will become a partner in during the Fall 2017; <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-awards-earth-conservancy-ashley-pa-environmental-workforce-and-development-job>; Sent around a letter of support to all the EPCAMR Staff that was submitted along with the grant so that they were familiar with the technical assistance that we will be providing to veterans who will be returning to the workforce in surveying, reclamation, and environmental restoration work; EPCAMR will give feedback and insights on curriculum development as it relates to and addresses the needs of our environmental work
 - Provide in-class discussions of brownfields in relation to legacy mining and the impacts related pollution has on our local ecology;
 - Give examples of field work surveying of abandoned mine sites and how to GPS and locate sampling or monitoring points in the field;
 - Give examples of how to conduct water quality, chemistry, and flow monitoring on abandoned mine land sites in need of reclamation to establish existing conditions or baseline conditions prior to reclamation; and
 - Provide on-site tours of abandoned mine lands and impacted streams, allowing for hands-on learning opportunities
 - Should the Earth Conservancy have a Career Fair with a Workforce Investment Board, EPCAMR would participate and consider interviewing graduates for potential seasonal, part-time or full-time employment, should openings arise and funding be made available

- *John Ackerman*-P.E., P.G., BCEE, F.NSPE and President of Twin Oaks Research Labs, copied *David Pedri*, Luzerne County Manager on the recently submitted **\$1,504,000** application to *Eric Cavazza*, PA DEP BAMR Director, through the **PA DEP BAMR AML Pilot Funding Grant Program** for a scaled mobile AMD treatment system to be placed at the Solomon Creek AMD discharge to be operated by EPCAMR to obtain lab results and water quality results
- Fact-checked a thought to be abandoned mine site in the Trevorton area in the Western Middle Coal Fields for *Branden Diehl*, Foundation for PA Watersheds; Turned out that the site was an active mine owned by Reading Anthracite, called the Reading Trevorton 228 Mine, a coal reprocessing operation; However, it is sure to be causing impacts to Zerbe Run in the Mahanoy Creek Watershed
- Provided *Bernie McGurl*-LRCA with a copy of the ARIPPA Mini-Grant Application for him to submit a grant for a concrete set of pre-cast steps for the Old Forge Borehole site for easier access; Suggested that *Gabby* and *Kelsey* help him put the application together with *Barb Semian*
- Reviewed the **Central Appalachian Habitat Stewardship Program Proposal and** made some comments after honing in on what EPCAMR might be able to partner on with LandStudies, Inc. and the City of Wilkes-Barre before the August Deadline; Forwarded the comments and suggestions to our project partners and EPCAMR Staff for further discussions
- Left a message with *Emmitt Burke*, who had inquired about whether or not there were mines beneath his home on Austin Avenue in Parsons, PA informing him of some cursory investigative work done by the EPCAMR Staff; Invited him to stop in to the Office to have it investigated further
- Worked with *Sean Lane*, Executive Vice President of Governmental Affairs-Olympus Power to discuss the possibility of future emissions monitoring of mine fires for carbon sequestration and methane capture around PA; EPCAMR began putting out a request for a teaching hospital such as Geisenger to see if they would partner with us on the epidemiological side of the research and data collection and a few doctor friends who are colleagues of the Executive Director to network; Provided research and contact information to *Stephen Lee*, Bloomberg News Associates (BNA) Reporter on work that EPCAMR did related to various community health impact correlations to people living near abandoned mines; <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/isrn/2012/251201/>; Provided *Stephen* the following names from Marc Incitti from the Geisenger Commonwealth School; *Marc* runs the Rural & Remote Medicine Club at the Medical School; He is interested in any possible joint ventures; He's a Critical Care RN and Medical Student at Wilkes-Barre Geisenger Hospital; <https://www.linkedin.com/in/marc-incitti-4aa42b33/>; <https://tcmc.edu/facultymember/mushfiq-r-tarafder-phd-mph-mbbs/>; <http://health.usnews.com/doctors/alfonso-rodriguez-109240>; http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2015/03/us_appeals_court_backs_dismiss.html

Project Coordination

- Worked on creating a video with *Gavin, Rachael, and Abbie* for the ***Waterboxx Phase III Research Project*** on the site of the Huber Breaker Miners Memorial Park; ISI, LLC requested submission of photos to be included in their online GIS database of where the Waterboxxes have been planted around the world; Discussed getting things together in preparation for beginning the ***Coldwater Conservation Plan for the Abraham Creek Watershed*** in a few weeks
- *Donna Wagner*, PA DEP 319 Project Officer, informed EPCAMR that the only comments that the US EPA Region III would like for us to add to our multi-year funding proposal was an output for reporting the number of projects/sites planned/sites reclaimed and the funding our two positions assisted in leveraging for our US EPA 3 year grant; Funding for the FY 2017-2018 is secured and we're awaiting our contract retroactive to July 1, 2017
- Provided *Gregg Davis*, PA DEP BAMR Project Officer with our revised budget on the 2006 Forms for the ***Hicks Creek Natural Stream Channel Design/Construction Project*** that were requested by the Grant Center; Requested an update on the formal extension
- EPCAMR received word from the PA Fish & Boat Commission that we could release our ***Trout in the Classroom*** raised trout fingerlings anywhere downstream on Solomon Creek below the confluence of Pine Creek in the Solomon Gap because it is a Class A Wild Trout fishery above that location; EPCAMR anticipates releasing the fish on July 31st with youth from the Wilkes-Barre area's Living Youth Ministry who assisted EPCAMR with a cleanup in the Solomon Creek watershed earlier in the month
- Participated in a conference call on June 14th with *State Representative Kaufer* and project partners with PA DEP Staff on the status of the ***Harry E. Banks Reclamation Project*** AML Pilot Funding Grant in Swoyersville Borough that EPCAMR is preparing to submit in a few weeks; Began drafting the application with additional information that had been coming in from project partners such as the PNDI Search Results, Wetlands Delineation and National Wetland Inventory database, and the Zoning Ordinance from Swoyersville Borough, along with other exhibits, conceptual final grades, and design drawings
- Reviewed the PA DEP EE Grant Webinar pertaining to our recently awarded **\$3000** PA DEP EE Grant to work with the 6th grade in the Fall of 2017, from Solomon-Plains Elementary School within the Wilkes-Barre Area School District on some STEM Stations developed by the EPCAMR Staff for the ***Plainsville AMD Borehole STEM EE Project*** that enters the Susquehanna River in Plains Township; EPCAMR was 1/53 mini-grants that were awarded
- Received some pictures from the W. Ross/W. River ***Infiltration Trench Stormwater BMP Construction Project*** from *Joyce Morrash Zaykowski*-City of Wilkes-Barre; It's nearly completed and now awaiting plants to be delivered and planted to complete the demonstration project
- Received a copy of the bid package details from *Tim Connolly*-Tetra-Tech that was provided to PA DCED for the ***Huber Breaker Miner's Memorial Park*** abandoned mine lands reclamation project

- Coordinated a **COALS Community Cleanup** in the Plainsville Area with incoming Wilkes University first year students on some abandoned mine lands owned by Pagnotti Enterprises, along an old haul road parallel to River Street in Plainsville, PA; **30** students participated in the cleanup coordinated by the EPCAMR Staff; **9** Waterboxxes were also planted on the property with the permission of the landowner
- Received the Final Invoice for the Design & Permitting for the **Solomon Creek Dam Removal and Trout Stream Habitat Improvement Project** from RiverLogic Solutions, LLC; EPCAMR sought an update on the replacement, deepening, and relocation of the utility pole from UGI; *Bill Youngblood*, UGI Foreman, stated that the pole will be placed the week of June 19th; Construction is set to begin the same week on the four crossvanes placement, bank stabilization, and dam and check dam removal; Planned for the Pre-Construction Meeting on-site with project partners including *John McGovern* and *Mike Yech*-President, with the Ashley Children's Trout Stocking Association, Ashley Borough Manager, *Greg Gulick*, EPCAMR Staff and RiverLogic Solutions, LLC construction crew for a pre-construction meeting on June 26th ; Drafted up the Construction Contract with RiverLogic Solutions, LLC and sent it along for a signature from *Dale Bentz* and then will get it signed by *Bernie McGurl*, President-EPCAMR as soon as he gets back from vacation; Provided *Greg Gulick* with a copy of the Water Drawdown Permit Request Application that needed to be signed and sent back to the PA Fish & Boat Commission for approval through *Ben Lorson*; Obtained the signature from *Greg* and scanned and sent off the documentation to *Ben* for an expeditious review and approval from their Division of Environmental Services; Provided *Ben Lorson* with a Progress Report on the project; EPCAMR signed up to become a *River Ambassador* for American Rivers due to our recent project and success that we want to share with the public on the removal of the dam on Solomon Creek to promote free-flowing waters and further downstream native trout population migration and in-stream habitat restoration; Worked with *Rebecca Long*, *Caity Valley*, and *Lisa Hollingsworth-Segedy* to be considered for a future blog post about the project on American Rivers website

Community Volunteer Coordination

- Provided *Frank Dombrowski*, Benco Dental, with a letter outlining several regional volunteer opportunities that Benco Dental employees might be interested in participating with EPCAMR Staff and volunteers over the Summer and into the Fall 2017; EPCAMR also mentioned that we were very interested in becoming an eligible recipient of any donations from the Work Place Dress Down Days or Wear Jeans to Work Day
- Met with *Wesley Mech*, Nanticoke, EPCAMR Volunteer, to schedule a day the field to do stream monitoring on Nanticoke Creek along with *Spencer Zuraski* on June 15th ; Provided Wesley with information on the Newport Creek Watershed as background information and on our water monitoring protocols through various links; Provided Wes with an overview of EPCAMR and our work in the region and a copy of our blank data form for water quality monitoring and visual habitat assessment scoring in the field; <http://epcamr.org/home/current-initiatives/technical-assistance/watershed-assessment/watersheds/wyoming-valley-watersheds/newport-creek/>; <http://epcamr.org/home/current-initiatives/technical-assistance/water-quality-monitoring/>; <http://www.epcamr.org/storage/projects/FIELDBINDER.pdf>
- *Mark Margavage*, Edwardsville, PA and Wilkes U. graduate signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer
- *Samory Benjamin*, an Environmental Engineer from Ghana, and EcoSave Africa signed up to become aware of our work with EPCAMR

- *Andrea Morello*, Hanover Twp., PA signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer
- *Parihka Mehta*- Photographer, from SE PA, who connected up with EPCAMR through the www.GiveAshot.com site looked to schedule a time for her to come up and shoot some AMD footage to support EPCAMR; www.parikhamehta.com

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- EPCAMR Executive Director was provided with **150** maps that were donated by the Diamond City Partnership and the Downtown Wilkes-Barre Business Association, as inserts for our Conference Packets; They are the size of two copy pages in length and can be folded to fit into a folder or torn off at the registration desk to be given out to attendees as they register; www.downtownwilkes-barre.org; They promoted our Conference through www.Evensi.us and their membership list; Staff headed to Old Forge Borehole along the Lackawanna River to improve the access down to the site and to remove the invasive Japanese Knotweed from along the culvert in preparation for the AMD Watershed Tour; Talked with *Kathy Jeremiah*, from Northumberland County Planning Office about her presentation on the AOAA at the Conference; Set a meeting with *Mia Robichaux*, Genetti's Banquet Coordinator to review final logistics for the upcoming Conference; Reviewed *Mike's* hand-drawn schematic of the layout of Genetti's floorplan; EPCAMR was informed that *Senator Yudichak* was not able to attend the PA AMR Conference to speak due to the ongoing budget talks in Harrisburg; Provided *Lisa Brown*, Economic Development South (EDS) and Director of Environmental Initiatives and Projects, Pittsburgh, PA with an overnight scholarship to attend the Conference upon her request; Provided *Carol Parenzan*, Executive Director for the Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper, with a lodging scholarship to attend the Conference; Commonwealth Equipment, Ashley, PA became an Exhibitor for the Conference; PA DEP MSI Program will also be exhibiting; Explained the parking situation for the Conference and *Mike* uploaded an image showing where the visitor parking lot was in comparison to the overnight guests on the property; SMS, LLC became a \$1000 sponsor of the Conference and *Bill Letwinsky* delivered a check to the Office; *Alana Mauger*, EPCAMR Board member stopped over to assist with packing folders in preparation for the Conference ; EPCAMR Staff organized, priced, and labeled Silent Auction Items for the Conference and created various baskets for display; Coordinated the last minute logistics with *Dr. Bill Bolan*, King's College, for our portion of the downtown Wilkes-Barre Walking Tour that will take attendees to the Sue Hand Exhibit, the Miner's Memorial, and the Anthracite Altar in the Chapel on campus; Reached out to the local newspapers (Times-Leader and Citizens' Voice to see if they were interested in a press pass to attend)
- Provided *Mark Chuck* with the information for the (2) 2017 Mayfly Award sculpture that he's creating that will be presented at the PA AMR Conference; Picked up the Mayfly Awards from Marywood University's Insalaco Art Building; *Joe Sapienza* will be mailing two copies of the Centralia: PA's Lost Town to EPCAMR for the Film Festival; Received the trailer for the "Knox Mine Disaster" documentary from Director, *David Brocca*; Followed up with *Andrea Nerozzi*, Artist, who is producing a small original AMD art piece to be auctioned off at the PA AMR Conference; Followed up with *Anthony Brooks*, Wilkes-Barre City Councilman, who will be conducting the Downtown W-B Historic Walking Tour as a part of the Conference and informed him of how many attendees would be going along

- Coordinated the 19th Annual PA AMR Conference on June 21st and 22nd at Genetti's Best Western Plus in Wilkes-Barre, PA; Presentations are posted on www.treatminewater.com ; Coordinated the Pre-Conference Field Tour, Walking Tour, and Film Festival on June 21st ; Followed up with *Chis Langdon*, Accounts Receivable, following the Conference to deal with some service issues that we had with delays in getting lunch out on the 22nd and forgetting to provide water for the Field Tour; *Spencer* compiled the evaluations that were filled out following the Conference and sent them around to the PA AMR Conference Committee for further review
- Provided *Ruth Roperti*, PAEE with a copy of the PAEE EE Professional Development Survey example from Wisconsin of both traditional teachers and non-traditional teachers and organizations like EPCAMR; She forwarded EPCAMR a few figures to add into her final summary for EE Capacity of our PAEE EE Professional Development Survey that will presented to the full PAEE Board at their next quarterly meeting
- Attended the Annual Meeting on June 15th of the PA Anthracite Section of the Society of Mining Engineers (SME) in Hazleton, PA at the Top of the 80s with EPCAMR Summer Watershed Specialist Intern, *Spencer Zuraski* and introduced him to members of the Society; Suggested that he may become a scholarship candidate for the Kaminsky Scholarship Award; Forwarded the Board his background and news article released by EPCAMR; <http://epcamr.org/home/2017/mansfield-university-junior-spencer-zuraski-joins-epcamr-summer-internship-watershed-management/>
- Coordinated the Rain Barrel Downspout Disconnect Workshops in the City of Wilkes-Barre for July 24th and July 27th from 10-2 on Public Square during the Farmer's Market under the NFWF Stormwater Technical Assistance Grant with the City of Wilkes-Barre and LandStudies; Worked with *Patty Hughes*, Events Coordinator for the City of Wilkes-Barre to secure a spot on the Square for the free education and outreach event on EPCAMR's work with the City; Discussed with Staff the logistics of the event and worked with *Spencer Zuraski* and *Josh Rinehimer* to put the Rain Barrels together before the event

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Accounts and PA Invest Accounts; Completed bi-weekly Payroll Reporting and submitted to OneSource; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register
- Continued providing Payroll Service information to OneSource and hours bi-weekly
- Discussed with *Abbie* and *Rachael* about questions that EPCAMR had for their Non-Competitive Eligibility for Federal jobs once their service opportunity is up with EPCAMR; *Abbie* and *Rachael* were going to plan a conference call to address some of their concerns and questions to *Sara Eckert-OSMRE*
- Sent around the draft agenda for the June 8th EPCAMR Staff Meeting; Convened the Staff Meeting and everyone was updated on the status of projects and grants
- Met with *Janice Perry*-Financial Advisor for EPCAMR at First National Bank to review our full-time Staff's Traditional IRA Accounts and to communicate the type of accounts to OneSource, our new Payroll Service Provider

- Provided a verification of previous employment for *Liz Rosser*
- Followed up with *Kyle Halat*, Field Technician-CSI Environmental, LLC out of Maryland, who attended the PA AMR Conference and provided some very positive feedback on how well it was run and the high quality speakers and program that was put together by EPCAMR and the PA AMR Conference Committee; Invited him up again for a separate tour in the late Summer, early Fall of other AMD sites in the region
- Forwarded a TechSoup Product Alert to *Mike* to see if he also gets them to become aware of the new licenses that are available
- Filled out a survey for the Delaware RiverKeeper Network on the importance of understanding more about AMD in the Upper Schuylkill Headwaters and EPCAMR's desire to partner and assist them with any future AMD Tours in the upper watershed as we have done in years past in partnership with the Pottsville District Mining Office and the Schuylkill Headwaters Association, as well as the Schuylkill Conservation District; Followed up with *Chari Towne*-Delaware RiverKeeper Network-Schuylkill Programs and long-time friend and colleague of EPCAMR's
- Provided *Spencer Zuraski*, EPCAMR Summer Watershed Intern with the link to apply for the Kaminsky Scholarship Award through the PA Anthracite Section of SME;
<http://community.smenet.org/anthracite/scholarships>