

EPCAMR



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

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****NOTE TO LUZERNE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS: BOLDED HIGHLIGHTS ARE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO LUZERNE COUNTY**

WEEK OF MARCH 4, 2006

- Directed Mike and Rob to visit the National Cooperative Soil Survey website (www.websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app) developed by USDA-NRCS where 57 of 67 counties soil survey maps have been digitized to cross-reference with our EPCAMR Region data; Visitors can go to the Web Soil Survey and follow three easy steps to generate soil maps, tables, and reports that can be printed or saved as PDF files
- **Participated in a tour with District Staff at the Humboldt Industrial Park to review concerns over stormwater BMPs and abandoned mine land issues with CAN-DO Development Corporation officials**
- Attended the Pocono NE RC & D Council Meeting, Wilkes-Barre
- Attended the Schuylkill River Congress along with Pam and Valerie, where EPCAMR served as a co-sponsor of the Annual Watershed Congress, as well as a technical service provider to the audience of nearly 125 attendees on AMD Remediation; EPCAMR is a regional Schuylkill Action Network (SAN) Partner and is on the SAN AMD Work Group
- **Worked with Valerie to get the domain name and 3 year web hosting plan setup with Elitehostingservice.com for the development of the stormwater resources site which includes information on the impacts of stormwater on abandoned mine lands and a handbook developed by the Pocono NE RC & DC, Luzerne Conservation District, EPCAMR, and other Conservation Districts who are sitting on a Regional Stormwater Focus Group that walks municipal officials through the Stormwater Management Act, NPDES, Chapter 102, MS4s, and other water related issues**
- Reviewed PEC Growing Greener Proposal and provided a letter of support for the CenterPoint AML Redevelopment Project, Jenkins Township, Luzerne County

WEEK OF MARCH 11, 2006

- Directed a link for Valerie to include on the (www.StormwaterResourcesforMunicipalities.com) on stormwater management BMPs for individual homeowners: (<http://www.greentreks.org/eacnetwork/pdf/PWDFinalHomeownerBMPManual11006.pdf>)
- Two articles were recently submitted on EPCAMR's new GIS AMLIS Tool; One in the Citizens' Voice (http://www.citizensvoice.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=16243635&BRD=2259&PAG=461&dept_id=455154&rfi=6) and the other in the Scranton Times Tribune (http://www.thetimestribune.com/site/index.cfm?newsid=16246811&BRD=2185&PAG=461&dept_id=415898&rfi=8)
- **Worked with Diane Madi-PA DCNR Nescopeck State Park to develop the April 4, 2006 Community Connections Agenda for the AMD Watershed Tour in the Wyoming Valley; Submitted revisions to the agenda and locations of the sites that will be visited along the tour as well as an abbreviated history timeline of the Wyoming Valley that will be gone over by the EPCAMR Program Staff Worked with Ryan Koch-Pocono NE RC & DC, to discuss plans for a Tour of various Conservation and AMD Projects as a part of the upcoming Mid-Atlantic RC & DC Annual Meeting that will be hosted by PA in 2006 Budget, & if Congress doesn't, there could be a National & State-wide reduction in Funding**

WEEK OF MARCH 11, 2006 (CONT'D)

- **Attended an LCD Fundraising Committee Meeting prior to the final plans for the District Banquet on March 11, 2006 at the Woodlands Inn & Resort**
- Reviewed a Growing Greener Grant proposal submitted by the Pocono NE RC & DC, in partnership with Applied Reclamation Techniques, LLC (ART) and the Louis Berger Group, Inc. which entails a mine reclamation demonstration project of manufactured cover soils as final topsoil cover layers for revegetation of reclaimed surface mine pits and coal refuse bank areas; The proposal will leverage the self funded efforts by ART and the matching funds to be provided by the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) for successful demonstration of this important regional mine reclamation demonstration in the Upper Swatara Creek Watershed; Pocono RC & DC are proposing to complete a comprehensive program for demonstrating the technical and environmental effectiveness of reclaiming mine areas with these cover soil admixtures, utilizing DEP approved residual mine reclamation materials, including Class A treated Biosolids, coal derived fly ash and mine site overburden spoils; Prepared a letter of support for the proposal
- Forwarded a State Response Document to "FY07-President's Budget-State Funding Facts" published by the US EPA to Russ Wagner-PA DEP BWM which discusses in great detail future funding levels for various EPA Programs, Nationally, including PA; If Congress were to pass a FFY2007 budget as suggested by ECOS (Environmental Council of the States), the document referenced, PA would see approximately \$1.3 million more than in FFY2006 in its Section 319
- Nominated Tamaqua Area High School's Chemistry & Environmental Science Teacher Kristen Klingaman, along with her students who participated in a small, but very effective, creative and visually stimulating, hands-on Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) Resource Recovery Display Creation for EPCAMR for a Schuylkill Action Network Educational Section Source Water Protection Award; Kristen was able to secure private donations on her own to acquire a pint of clearcoat minwax polyurethane stain, a pint of base-white latex paint, dozens of wooden toy items that were unfinished, picture frames, as well as hats, t-shirts, and bandanas that were used by her students under her supervision to help create a hands-on display that EPCAMR could use when it goes around to the elementary schools to talk to young students about water quality and AMD; The students generated their own iron oxide wood stain, latex paint, and tie-dye clothing products from a half-of-bag full of dried iron oxide powder that was provided to Kristen by EPCAMR; The iron oxide was recovered from the Silverbrook Mine Discharge on the Little Schuylkill, just below the NEPCO Co-Generation Plant, south of McAdoo and reused by the students as a resource that eventually created our display props for the children to be able to see and touch as we do presentations in the watershed and throughout the region on AMD and resource recovery
- Received an EPCAMR donation of **\$1500** from the former PA DEP Secretary, Dave Hess, which included a **\$500** anonymous donation to be applied directly towards the 2006 AMR Back to Basics State-wide Conference that is currently being planned by EPCAMR/WPCAMR and the 2006 Conference Steering Committee
- Prepared a tentative agenda for the upcoming April 20th EPCAMR Board of Trustees Meeting, secured the meeting room at the Columbia County Conservation District, and worked with Mike to forward the notice, EPCAMR Staff reports, and minutes to the Board and EPCAMR Partners and post them on the EPCAMR website
- **Attended a Streamside Cleanup Workshop hosted by the Plymouth Township Planning Commission, Plymouth Township and conducted by the SRBC and the PA Fish & Boat Commission**
- Provided Ryan Koch a facility contact for LCCC for an upcoming planned "Strategic Planning Retreat" for the Pocono NE RC & DC
- **Attended the Wyoming Valley Watershed Coalition Meeting at the PEC Office in Luzerne with Valerie to discuss plans for the April 22, 2006 Streamside AML Cleanup on Garden Creek, Plains Township, Luzerne County**
- Reviewed a Lackawanna Conservation District Growing Greener Proposal and provided a Letter of Support for the Wilson Creek Watershed Implementation Plan and Stormwater Retrofit Demonstration Project, Lackawanna County

WEEK OF MARCH 11, 2006 (CONT'D)

- **Attended the Luzerne Conservation District's Inaugural Banquet and Fundraiser for District Education and Outreach Programs; Presented two awards-One for the Conservation Educator of the Year and the EPCAMR Partnership Award**
- Reviewed a Schuylkill Conservation District Growing Greener Proposal and provided a Letter of Support for the Remediation of the Tracy Airhole AMD discharge in Good Spring Creek, Tremont Borough, Schuylkill County
- Conducted an AMD Watershed Tour in the Schuylkill River Watershed in partnership with the Schuylkill Conservation District and the Schuylkill Headwaters Association in Schuylkill County with the PA DCNR's Nolde State Forest Environmental Forum students (31) that represented 8 School Districts from Berks and Lebanon Counties who traveled north into the Coal Region to learn about impacts to the Upper Schuylkill Headwaters and AMD
- **Hosted a meeting with Dave Ross, UGI at the District to showcase some of the AMLIS GIS information related to culm banks in the Region that their corporation is considering reclaiming if they decide to build a Co-Generation Facility at the Hunlock's Generating Station, Hunlock's Creek, Hunlock Township**
- **Meeting with Pam Kattner, EPCAMR EE Intern and Ms. Woodeschick, Hanover Area HS Grant Coordinator to pick up supplies for the "Digging Up the Wyoming Valley" Fossil Education Program that is being planned for mid-May**
- Reviewed Mahanoy Township's Growing Greener Grant Proposal and provided a Letter of Support for two major Engineering & Design and Construction Phases on AML reclamation projects in the Mahanoy Creek Watershed, Mahanoy Township, Schuylkill County
- **Provided background information on Fran Gough, Crestwood Area School District HS Teacher to be read at the Luzerne Conservation District Banquet regarding his contributions to the LCD and Luzerne County's Environment**
- Provided information to Ryan Koch-Pocono NE RC&DC on LCCC's potential to accommodate the organization's future Strategic Planning Meeting; Forwarded the Education Conference Center Specialist's Irene Yeager's phone number and e-mail to him
- EPCAMR Program Staff worked on and completed a grant proposal to the Western PA Watershed Program in the amount of **\$21,370.00** to provide the following services for Western PA Non Profits, Watershed Groups, Conservation Districts and Municipalities to support the reclamation of abandoned mine lands and remediation of AMD impacted streams across the State since the Luzerne Conservation District's AML Program is the only Program in the State to provide this specific service to Conservation Districts and Watershed Groups across PA:
 1. **Up to Fifty CD's or DVD's containing:**
 - a. GIS Data including the above mentioned AML Databases, aerial photos, 303(d) Listed Streams due to Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD), OSM Harrisburg Field Office's AMD Passive Treatment System Database, and other data for user orientation such as county boundaries and roads
 - b. PA wide electronic maps in PDF, MXD and PMF formats
 - c. The free version of Arc Reader 9.x which is also downloadable at the ESRI Website (~ 200 MB file)
 - d. WPCAMR AML Trust Fund Distribution Estimator
 - e. An overview EPCAMR PowerPoint presentation on the AMLIS GIS Tool for PA
 - f. A descriptive EPCAMR PowerPoint presentation on "How to use the Arc Reader Tool"
 2. **A survey form for groups to ground-truth and update reclamation files to a separate, but similar database for PA as they relate to other types of land reclamation (ie., Remining, Growing Greener, Government Financed Contruction Contracts, and Private Redevelopment). Forms will be returned to EPCAMR for compilation. EPCAMR hopes that the groups will also take a photo inventory of the relevant P1, P2, and P3 sites on their own to submit with these updates.**
 3. **8 AMLIS GIS Overview Workshops in Western and Central PA in coordination with WPC, WPWP, WPCAMR. These workshop sites are to be determined by our Regional Partners and Conservation Districts.**

WEEK OF MARCH 11, 2006 (CONT'D)

- **Provided Josh with Joe Boyle's contact information provided to EPCAMR for the Luzerne County Municipal Cooperative Commission; Discussed setting up a future meeting with the MCC to talk about District Programs and the EPCAMR NFWF GIS Workshop**
- **Submitted comments to Ryan Koch-Pocono NE RC&DC on EPCAMR's ideas on the relevancy of stormwater to abandoned mine reclamation issues state-wide, to be included in the final draft of the Stormwater Handbook for Municipalities**

WEEK OF MARCH 18, 2006

- **Began working on a \$5000 PA Fish & Boat Commission Aquatic Resources Grant that would allow the EPCAMR Program and LCD Staff to purchase equipment, resources, materials, and introduce low-income housing children between the ages of 8-14 to environmental issues faced by communities throughout the Wyoming Valley, including AMD, combined sewer overflows, sedimentation, littering, road-side trash, streambank erosion, development pressures, and stormwater as well as provide them with an opportunity to fish at a location to be determined in the watershed; Aerial Color Maps of their community centers will be provided to the community rooms depicting which watersheds they live in and a community service project/cleanup project or volunteer opportunity will also be worked into the Program called "From City Streets to Valley Streams: Exploring the Wyoming Valley's Aquatic Resources, Non Point Source Impacts, and Fishing Opportunities "; EPCAMR Regional Coordinator is already a certified PA Fish & Boat Commission volunteer Fishing Skills Instructor and was encouraged to put a grant in by Walt Dietz, NE Region Aquatic Resource Specialist; Pam reviewed the application and documented the Environment & Ecology Standards that will be met during the course of the project, even though it is not a requirement of the grant because our organizations are not officially schools**
- **Inquired at the Washington DC Office of the Office of Surface Mining, with Mary Kay Gonzalez, Program Coordinator, about EPCAMR's upcoming Summer Watershed Internship Program set to begin around May 15, 2006 and when the funding would come through in the amount of \$1250 to support Devon Rother's position throughout the Summer 2006**
- **Reviewed Ryan's draft of the newly created Stormwater Handbook and provided comments and additions on the relationship of stormwater infiltration and abandoned mine lands**
- **Attended the PACD Capital Day Event with Josh, Carl, Shawn, and Risa, in Harrisburg to meet with local officials to discuss District Program needs**
- **Conducted the Archbald NFWF GIS Workshop in Archbald Borough, Lackawanna County**
- **EPCAMR Program Staff participated and conducted portions of the Lackawanna County "Community Connections to Our Watershed Forum" hosted by the PA DCNR Lackawanna State Forest to well over 150 students from 8 School Districts from the Northern Tier to discuss AMD issues, watershed restoration issues, community involvement, as well as career opportunities with the high school students**
- **Submitted a condensed biography to Jennifer Karsten, one of the planning committee members for the 2007 PAEE Conference which will be held in Wilkes-Barre in 2007**

WEEK OF MARCH 25, 2006

- **Updated the District's Potential Growing Greener List of Projects with some new information and highlights on progress made to date on recent grant submissions and other comments on who is taking a lead role on other projects from that list**
- **Provided comments on a Growing Greener proposal on Manufactured Biosolids for AML that ART, LLC has proposed for submission by the Pocono NE RC&DC to the Pocono NE RC&DC Projects Committee for review and discussion**
- **Attended the PEC NE Office Gardner Creek AML Cleanup Coordinating Meeting with Valerie Taylor, Luzerne Borough, as a part of the Wyoming Valley Watershed Coalition's Streamside Cleanup efforts; EPCAMR Program Staff and the Luzerne Conservation Districts are co-sponsors of the event that will take place on April 22, 2006 in Plains Township, Luzerne County**
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WEEK OF MARCH 25, 2006 (CONT'D)

- **EPCAMR Program Staff made a presentation before PA DEP Secretary Katie McGinty on our AMLIS GIS Tool and AML Trust Fund Cost-Estimator in Harrisburg as well as before the PA DEP Citizens Advisory Council**
- EPCAMR Program Staff attended the Schuylkill Headwaters Association Meeting, Pottsville at the request of the President of the Association to provide an update on EPCAMR Activities in the Region
- **EPCAMR Program hosted a meeting with Patrick Kennedy, New England Organics, from Maine, to discuss opportunities with regards to biosolids application on AML throughout the NE**
- Began working on the Program and Outreach Committee Tasks and Objectives for the upcoming August 24-26 2006 State-wide AMR "Back to Basics" Conference in State College, PA at the Atherton Hotel; EPCAMR Regional Coordinator serves as the Co-Chair for the Conference with the WPCAMR Regional Coordinator, Bruce Golden
- **EPCAMR Program Staff conducted an Education Program on AMD at Crestwood HS in front of 35 students in Fran Gough's Class, some of which are on the Enviro-Thon Team**
- **Attended the "Municipal Planning Code & You" Workshop in Wilkes-Barre with EPCAMR Program and other District Staff; Subdivision and Land Development as well as Stormwater and Zoning Issues were heavily discussed**

THROUGH MARCH 31, 2006

- Sent along an outline of tasks and objectives that need to be completed to the Program and Outreach Subcommittees for the 2006 AMR Back to Basics Conference; Delegated some of the workload amongst the volunteer members of the group and also created a poll to determine what type of venues that the entire Conference Steering Committee would like to see in 2006 as far as entertainment or special program events go to keep the attendees pleasantly amused while attending the 2 day Conference
- **Meeting with Commissioner Urban to showcase our AMLIS GIS Tool and to meet with Tom Pozluszny, who has information that could prove very useful as background water quality and mine pool mapping for several of the watersheds in Luzerne County, particularly the Wyoming Valley; EPCAMR Program Staff will be working with Tom to share the data and pursue potential funds that might allow him, as a consultant to work on compiling all of the data into a tabular, database format that is more user friendly and compatible with our current GIS system**
- EPCAMR Program Staff made our yearly presentation to the Environmental Ecotoxicology Class of 40 students at Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr prior to their departure for an Anthracite Region Field Tour
- Talked with Cathy Haffner-Columbia County Conservation District Watershed Specialist about an idea for a PACD Mini-Grant that could possibly support the 2006 AMR Conference; EPCAMR Regional Coordinator was thinking about using the funds to purchase plaster of paris or other material ingredients necessary to conduct both an AMD Tie Dye Workshop at the Conference or during for that matter as well as for making hundreds of pieces of iron oxide chalk with a newly designed "EPCAMR Chalk Block" that was designed with the help of our Environmental Education Intern, Pam Kattner, and the Machine Shop Class from a local West Side Tech Vocational School; We would need supplies, like washing powder, totes, baking soda, rubber bands, rocks, caps, paper, an exhibit board, etc; We will surely have to raise funds or find a way to purchase the T-shirts separately for the Conference, as we have done in the past, and EPCAMR, WPCAMR, Hedin Environmental, could donate the iron oxide for FREE to conduct the workshops and to make the chalk; An exhibit could be created that will have the logos of all of our Steering Committee Partners, PACD included, that could show some of the examples of iron oxide resource recovery; EPCAMR and other groups do have some other "props" that we could add to the exhibit; This way we are removing AMD from some of our local streams and re-using it for beneficial and outreach purposes to promote our Conference; St. Vincent College has created chalk before out of toilet paper and paper towel rolls and we are sure that Angela Belli will partner on the grant with us to promote the idea as well as many of the other groups since they practically started the concept; EPCAMR actually will have its own aluminum mold in a week or two and there is a possibility of getting additional molds created that might say, "2006 AMR CONFERENCE" or "RECYCLED CHALK"; Our mold will create 20 pieces of chalk at one time

THROUGH MARCH 31, 2006

- **Provided PEC NE Office with a completed Letter of Commitment of \$3500 in-kind services that was provided by the EPCAMR Program Staff several years ago for a previously completed Coldwater Heritage Partnership & Rivers Conservation Plan for the Bowman's Creek Watershed at the request of Julie McMonagle-Director of the PEC NE Office in order for PEC to close out the grant officially with the PA DCNR**
- Provided members of the PA AML Campaign an update on contacts that have been made with County Commissioners throughout the EPCAMR Region regarding getting them to pass resolutions to direct Congress to reauthorize the AML Trust Fund
- **EPCAMR Program Staff conducted a Field Investigation of 4 potential cleanup sites and used our GPS Unit to locate each of the sites for future purposes, under the PA DEP COALS Program in the Wyoming Valley with Chuck Rogers and Rachel Miller-PA DEP Waste Management Program and Land Recycling; Photographed the illegal dumping spots on the AML in the Wyoming Valley**
- **Sent around a Press Release to the local newspapers on the EPCAMR Fossil Box Education Program developed by our EE Intern, Pam Kattner; Nearly 150 2nd Grade students from Hanover Area Elementary will be trouncing around the Luzerne Conservation District Trail and Grounds on May 16 and May 23rd, 2006 for the exciting and fun Programs developed by the EPCAMR Program Staff**
- EPCAMR Regional Coordinator and Rob Lavelle-EPCAMR Municipal GIS Technician met with members of Old Forge Borough Council and toured and photo-inventoried about 2.5 miles of the St. John's Creek, Old Forge Borough, Lackawanna County in preparation for providing the municipality with a preliminary investigative findings report that will help them pursue additional grant funds to conduct a watershed assessment on the St. John's Creek Watershed, which is severely impaired by AMD, CSOs, streambank erosion, illegal dumping, and littering