



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

March 2016 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- Presented as the guest speaker for the *Newport Township Crime Watch Organization* on EPCAMR Projects, Partnerships, Grant Opportunities, and Illegal Dumping Issues in the Township on abandoned mine lands; Provided *Amy Saraka*, with links to various grants, upcoming volunteer opportunities, and resources on AML in Newport Township for the Crime Watch Organization to research and consider as they seek partners and grants in the future
- EPCAMR Staff (*Mike* and myself) were interviewed for an upcoming documentary being directed by *Dave Edwards* on Abandoned Mines in PA; Provided him with a brief tour of some AMD sites and scheduled another field visit with him in April 2016 to obtain more footage in the surrounding watersheds of the EPCAMR region; Referred him to several organizations and other people that he might want to consider interviewing throughout the region
- Conducted a phone interview on EPCAMR and our work with *Claire Lichtenstein*, a former OSM/VISTA for *Dr. T. Allan Comp*, working on her Senior Thesis for College on addressing the links between environmental education and environmental justice
- Attended the **PA Anthracite Section SME Board Meeting** on March 28th in Hazleton, PA and reported on the upcoming June 22-23rd PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference and was invited to be the guest speaker at the April Annual Meeting to discuss EPCAMR's work in the region on underground 3D mine pool mapping and other work throughout our coverage area; Nearly **60** members were in attendance; <http://community.smenet.org/anthracite/home?ssopc=1>
- Attended the **Lackawanna Valley Community Connections Watershed Forum** hosted by PA DCNR in Tunkhannock, PA as a guest speaker, along with *Dr. Ken Klemow*, Wilkes University, to discuss EPCAMR's role on the Governor's Pipeline Infrastructure Task Force Environmental Protection Working Group and potential impacts of pipelines in areas impacted by abandoned mines; Nearly **75** students were present from the Lackawanna Valley School Districts who participated in the program
- Posted an abstract authored by *Bode J. Murin*, Eckley Miner's Village Executive Director, on the "*Death of the Huber Breaker: Loss of an Iconic Anthracite Feature*" to the Huber Breaker Preservation Society website; http://huberbreaker.org/home/wpcontent/uploads/2016/03/Death_of_Huber_Breaker_paper.pdf
- Prepared an article on EPCAMR and the RECLAIM Act that was featured in the **PA Aggregates and Concrete Association** (PACA) E-Alert newsletter the week of February 24th and received a copy of it from *Josie Gaskey*, Director of Environmental, Safety, and Health

- Received a copy of the updated SMCRA Resolution template from WPCAMR to be distributed to EPCAMR Partners, Counties, and Conservation Districts to see if they would sign on; *Tim Ferrence* mentioned that it was brought up at a recent PACD Meeting, therefore EPCAMR is following up with partners following that discussion
- Prepared a “Thank You” letter to Central Hardware, Enola, PA (Dauphin County) for allowing a **Community Aid** bin to be placed on their lot to allow local residents to recycle clothing and generate pounds of clothes and household goods that when weighed will provide EPCAMR with a donation of revenue based on the tonnage collected quarterly; Followed up with another Diner owner lead in Enola, PA who said that in June 2016, EPCAMR can have a bin placed on their lot; www.communityaid.net
- Submitted a small **\$850.95** Get Outdoors PA! Mini Grant to *Emily Gates*-Grants and Training Coordinator for the PA Recreation & Park Society, supported by a grant from the PA DCNR to conduct a **Nature Photography Tour in the Anthracite Region’s Recovering Landscapes** with amateur photographers and videographers and purchase a GoPro HERO Camera and other materials and supplies to promote the event
- Prepared a Letter of Support for the Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment (SENSE) Act (HR #3797), [<https://rothfus.house.gov/sites/rothfus.house.gov/files/SENSE%20Act%20Overview.pdf>], which seeks to establish an additional alternative compliance standard for coal refuse facilities based upon the removal and control of SO₂ relative to the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards Rule (MATS) and it also seeks to provide coal refuse fired plants with the same SO₂ allocations in Phase II as in Phase I of the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR) while ensuring that CSAPR SO₂ does not increase the overall state-level CSAPR budget; Provided it to ARIPPA to forward to legislators
- EPCAMR and WPCAMR Staff worked on completing the webpage for the 2016 ARIPPA AML/AMD Mini-Grant Applications; <http://epcamr.org/home/current-initiatives/funding-project-management/arippa-aml-reclamation-awards/>
- Participated in a conference call with various new partners in the **Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed**, led by *Kate Gibbons*-PennFuture NE PA Outreach Coordinator; Discussed an opportunity to provide geographic “exchange tours” within the watershed outside of our regional areas to highlight impacts in the headwaters and throughout the entire watershed to see what other groups are working on and could potentially work on together or at least provide support to one another; Provided Kate with a list of other partners to contact and follow up with to join the Coalition in other parts of the Delaware River Watershed, particularly those working on AMD issues; Discussed the RECLAIM Act, our PA AMR Conference in June, and an update on the future of Growing Greener
- Reviewed the “**Bird Boosters: Building Bird Boxes for Mineland Recovery**” PPL Proposal and provided comments on the narrative and budget to *Liz Rosser*-EPCAMR Watershed Outreach Specialist prior to submission to the PPL Foundation; Requested **\$19,366.22** to allow local schools to participate in an abandoned mine reclamation project where students will build birdhouses to increase native bird populations in NEPA as well as bring a more productive use to abandoned mine land areas; The project will teach the students about NEPA's history, the impacts abandoned mines have on our area, and how they could help reclaim them; With the assistance of EPCAMR Staff, schools will also build a solar iron-oxide kiln to complete this project to ensure that similar abandoned mine reclamation projects can be facilitated at the school in the future
- EPCAMR was asked by *John Levitsky*-Luzerne Conservation District Watershed Specialist to assist with conducting the Aquatics PA EnviroThon Test Administration at the Luzerne County Fairgrounds; He had a proctor not be able to attend last minute and *Gabby* was able to attend and administer the test on short notice

- Provided *Daniel Snowden*, Mineral Resources Program Specialist-PA DEP Bureau of Mining Programs with the details for the PA AMR Conference to include on the May 4th Agenda for the **Aggregate Advisory Board**
- *Palmira Miller*, PEC NE Office requested EPCAMR's assistance in spreading the word about a tree planting on mine lands in the Weiser State Forest, Columbia County, PA under their new project called the **Legacy Mine Lands Reforestation Project**; EPCAMR was not initially a part of the project pilot, however, after talking with *Patrick Starr*-President, PEC, he was going to follow up with us after the first year of the grant to see if there ways that we could collaborate on the continuation of the project

Technical Assistance

- Met with *Mike Dziak*, Earth Conservancy CEO about Askam Boreholes Treatment System Maintenance, Operations, Water Quality, and Flow Monitoring in preparation for an upcoming meeting with *Todd Wood*, PA DEP BAMR to discuss future funding for mine pool hydrogeological investigations to be completed by EPCAMR; Discussed future early Summer AMD Tour schedule with EC at Askam since there will be active road construction and blasting activities in the vicinity on certain dates; Met with *Todd Wood* and *Mike Dziak* on March 22nd about the **Askam Boreholes AMD Treatment System Project**
- Met with *John Levitsky*, Luzerne Conservation District Watershed Specialist to provide him with water quality data and maps on the Plainsville Borehole AMD discharge, Plains Township, PA and to discuss AMD treatment options for the Askam Borehole in Hanover Township, PA; Discussed RECLAIM Act
- Met with Ashley Borough Mayor *Joe McGlynn* and Borough Manager *Greg Gulick*, along with representatives from Larson Design Group to discuss infrastructure projects on and over Solomon Creek and EPCAMR's **Solomon Creek Trout Stream Habitat Improvement Project**, in partnership with PA DOT and PA F&BC, within the Ashley Borough Park where the old Huber Breaker Water Dam that is now defunct is located and several check dams that need to be removed to restore the proper hydrology to the section of the stream that has been modified
- Made a suggestion to the Huber Breaker Preservation Society Board to prepare a formal budget to submit to the Earth Conservancy to request utilization of some of the space within the building for HBPS
- Conference call with SRBC, Ridge Global Inc., Hydration LLC, and CSI Environmental Inc., to further discuss the **Mocanaqua Tunnel AMD Mine Pool Mapping, Flow Monitoring, and Hydrogeological Investigation Proposal** prior to installing a demonstration AMD treatment technology on the discharge patented by CSI Environmental Inc.; Prepared an outline in advance of the call with CSI Environmental's *Dr. Lowell Sieck* and assisted *Brad Domitrovitsch*, Hydration, LLC with pulling together technical information to include with the PA DCNR State Forest Research Agreement proposal; EPCAMR provided estimates for completing various tasks in two phases of the project proposal to CSI Environmental, Inc. and a probable mine pool boundary estimate map on a topo
- *Chris Layaou*, PA DCNR Forester, requested a copy of some mine openings that EPCAMR has in its RAMLIS GIS Database; EPCAMR provided PA DCNR with a copy of our most recent version of RAMLIS containing all available AMD/AML layers that might help our State partner in locating AML features on State Forest lands; *Chris* will be assessing the newly acquired Mocanaqua Highlands Tract from the Earth Conservancy, that has recently become the Pinchot State Forest
- Provided *John Ackerman*, PA Anthracite Section-SME/AIME President with information on website hosting and development that EPCAMR offers since the organization is considering going online

- Reviewed *Gavin Pellitteri's*, EPCAMR's newest Watershed Outreach Intern, Bloomsburg, PA compilation of the inventory and working status of the Stevens Recorders EPCAMR has acquired from SRBC; Inquired with the USGS about the utilization of some defunct USGS Gauging Stations and Stilling wells for placement of a few of the Stevens Recorders in the Wyoming Valley; Talked to *Dr. Chuck Cravotta*, USGS about several of the ones that we'd like to restore starting in the Nanticoke Creek watershed
- *Dr. Dennis Wydra*, Elysburg, PA contacted *Tom Clark*-SRBC AMD Coordinator to see if we could get together for a future meeting on the Hammond Mine in the Mahanoy Creek Watershed to discuss the topic of mine pool displacement with limestone to treat and access additional water; SRBC to set up the meeting

Community Volunteer Service Coordination

- Met with *Christine McCarthy*, Lafayette College, Easton, PA who is a Senior in Chemistry, Geology Minor, originally from Dallas, PA in the Wyoming Valley, who offered to volunteer to take 6 water quality samples of several AMD discharges as a part of her independent study class and run them through an atomic absorption spectrometry analyses and provide us with the detailed information on the chemical makeup and metal concentrations of the mine water samples and correlate the pH and perhaps sulfate concentration (measured using UV/Vis spectroscopy) to the samples for educational purposes and to get a handle on the lab chemistry results that EPCAMR cannot afford; Worked with *Gabby* to provide her with a Google Map route of the locations of the AMD discharges for her to grab samples; Talked with her professor *Dr. Melissa M. Galloway*, Ph.D, to see if we can promote the work that she is doing as an independent study through Lafayette College for EPCAMR via our social media outlets
- *Chris Cook*, Freshman at King's College, Wilkes-Barre, PA volunteered to research and find EPCAMR a word cloud generator to use for future outreach and marketing projects
- *Olivia Termini*, student from Dickinson College, who lives in MountainTop, PA submitted her resume for consideration for a possible Summer 2016 Internship with EPCAMR and signed up to become an EPCAMR volunteer through our MailChimp online data form; EPCAMR Executive will conduct an interview with her and follow up after the Spring Semester in over in mid May 2016
- *Brittany Legg*, Johnstown, CO signed up through GiveGab as a virtual volunteer artist who would like to work with some of our iron oxide; Sent her some iron oxide packets to utilize for some of her artwork
- *Wesley Mech*, Nanticoke, PA signed up through GiveGab to volunteer for future cleanup opportunities in the area and *Matthew Evans*, student at Wilkes University, Wilkes-Barre, PA signed up through MailChimp to volunteer for future opportunities
- *Mario Fiorrucci*, Sugar Notch, requested assistance with coordinating a possible cleanup along the Sugar Notch Trails owned by the EC; EPCAMR followed up with *Liz Hughes*-EC and she mentioned that if we can coordinate a cleanup with some volunteers that EC would be willing to pay for the dumpster and hauling away of the trash; Reached out to Mario to inform us of where exactly the site is and to schedule a field investigation with some of the Staff to assess the area in question in the Sugar Notch area

Project Coordination

- EPCAMR Staff (*Mike* and myself) met with *Nick Sufrinko*-Outreach Coordinator for the Maternal and Family Health Services, Wilkes-Barre, PA and *Kaylee Dunning*-Youth Services Coordinator for the United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern PA-Oppenheim Center for the Arts, Scranton, PA to partner with them and several school districts to create a service learning project involving pottery art out of EPCAMR's recycled iron oxide pigments and glaze with at risk teenagers; Students will work with *John Washicosky*-Arts Coordinator during the classes to make AMD Pottery pieces that will be fired in the Center's very own large kiln; The UNC of NEPA will allow EPCAMR to utilize the kiln anytime we would need it to dry future pottery pieces and is interested in pursuing future grants to continue the pilot program in the Scranton School District and surrounding community; The effort is funded through a **Personal Responsibility Education Project (PREP)** by the PA Department of Health with 9th-12th grade students from Scranton School District's Monticello School; EPCAMR scheduled an AMD Field Tour with the Monticello School students and teachers to visit the Old Forge AMD Borehole in the Lackawanna River watershed in April 2016
- Submitted Hedin Environmental's Final Invoice for the **Lewis Mine AMD Rehabilitation Project** to our Project Officer, *Eric Rosengrant*- PA DEP Moshannon District Mining Office and the Lewis Legislative Summary Document in order to close out the grant and await for final distribution of funds; Provided a copy of the Legislative Summary document to the *Carol Kafer*-President of the Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association, *Corey Richmond*-Watershed Specialist for the Sullivan County Conservation District, and *Mr. Marc Lewis*, landowner where the project was completed
- Updated *Ben Larson*, PA F & BC on our **Solomon Creek Trout Stream Habitat Restoration and Dam Removal Project** in Ashley Borough, PA; Informed him of EPCAMR's met with *Jeff Boyer* and *Dale Bentz*, River Logic Solutions, LLC, who will be involved with the design and construction aspects of the project and Larson Design Group who will be submitting the E & S Plan Approval package and the PA DEP Restoration Waiver package under separate contract agreements
- Followed up with *Paula Longo*, Bear Creek Charter School to remind her that EPCAMR has her Waterboxxes and seedlings ready for pickup under the **Waterboxx Phase III Reforestation and Research Project**; Asked *Gabby* to send *Becky Seman* from the Nanticoke Community Gardens the monthly reporting form when she sends them out to the rest of the partners
- On March 9th, EPCAMR informed Gregg Davis, our Project Manager for the **Hicks Creek Natural Stream Channel Design/Construction Project** that we have edited our bid package and provided it to Skelly & Loy for final completion for us to put it out to bid. With the pending deadline of June 30th, 2016, we would more than likely be able to get the bid package completed and have a bid showing, and not get to construction, therefore EPCAMR has officially requested an extension due to the timing sequence that would more than likely be given to us by the selected contractor and a relatively short window of construction. We've asked for the waiver on March 30th, 2016, due to the extreme circumstances of having to wait an official extension from the previous year from the Grants Center and provided justification for the request
- Followed up with *Shawn Rummel*, TU, to see if he has heard anything from *Amy Wolfe* on EPCAMR's request for technical assistance in terms of conducting a fish shocking survey on the tributaries and main stem of Laurel Run as a part of the **Laurel Run Coldwater Heritage Conservation Plan** development and watershed assessment

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- PAEE Leadership Team developed the tentative agenda for the EE Capacity Workshop on April 16th at the PAEE Conference via e-mail; Coordinated the Silent Auction setup for the PAEE Conference; Printed regional PAEE Maps for the PAEE Conference for Conference Roundtable Discussions; Attended the **PAEE Conference** at the Inn at Pocono Manor, from March 14-15th and made several presentations during the Conference on EPCAMR's AMD Education and Outreach Programs, facilitated and participated in the **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Environmental Education Capacity** Workshop on the 16th with the PAEE State Affiliate Leadership Team and members of the Community of Learners as a part of our NAAEE EE Capacity Grant; Completed the Year 4 Detailed Work Plan for EE Capacity and submitted it to NAAEE; Received an invoice from Pocono Manor for the luncheon that was a part of the PAEE NAAEE EE Capacity Workshop from PAEE Vice President, *Scott Cope* that will be reimbursed under our NAAEE EE Capacity grant; Inquired about NAAEE membership renewal through PAEE Secretary *Patrick McKinney*
- Participated in a monthly **2016 PA AMR Conference** planning conference call on March 31st to provide updates on the website, final confirmation of speakers, budget development, tour route and costs, scholarship deadline was set, registration page, and other details; EPCAMR received word that our request for **\$5000** from the PA DEP was approved towards the sponsorship of the conference; www.treatminewater.com; Secretary *John Quigley* confirmed his attendance at the Conference as a Keynote Speaker; Robert requested a sponsorship from PA Anthracite Section SME from *Mike Korb* and *John Ackerman* since they have been a sponsor in the past and I'm an active member of the Board of Directors

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 February 2016 monthly PA DEP 319 and EPCAMR Board Report
- Interviewed and selected *Gavin Pellitteri*, Bloomsburg, PA and graduate from the University of Roanoke, VA for a Spring/Summer unpaid internship on March 21st, 2016
- EPCAMR Staff Meeting with Watershed Outreach Staff, *Gabby* and *Liz* to review projects and get updates on grants being administered; Talked about upcoming RECLAIM Crew events
- Reviewed a Position Summary document provided by *Sara Eckert*, Program Analyst from OSM/AmeriCorps, to get an idea of what types of work and example descriptions of the work that EPCAMR may want to consider in its application for two full-time OSM/AmeriCorps direct service positions in the next round of funding; Completed an OSMRE AmeriCorps Application for the two positions and submitted it to *Sara* and *Dr. T. Allan Comp* for consideration on March 7th, 2016; One position would be for Education & Outreach Capacity Building Support and the other position would be for GIS Training & Mine Pool Mapping Support; Providing *Dr. Comp* with a budget estimate of **\$100,000** to provide yearly funding to support 2 part-time EPCAMR positions to support the two OSM/AmeriCorps positions EPCAMR has applied for directly through OSM
- Communicated with *Bernie McGurl*-EPCAMR President, the status of HR4456 and the fast-moving discussions that have been occurring since our trip to Washington DC and the markup comments on the legislation; Mike prepared comments that I concurred with and asked to send them down to John Dawes at the Foundation for PA Watersheds

- Provided an EPCAMR Letter of Recommendation to Hank Zielinski, Fuels Manager for NAES Corp.- for the 2016 Nomination for the U.S. Department of the Interior's OSMRE "National Award and/or Good Neighbor" Award-Northampton Fuel Supply Company, Inc. Loomis Bank Operation, Hanover Township, Luzerne County, PA—SMP Number 40940205
- Received the **MSI Mine Map Grant** amendment documents that need Board Signatures from *Jim Charowsky*, PA DEP and got them signed and delivered back to PA DEP to extend our grant for 2 more years
- Received a resume from *Jason Laboranti*, Scranton, PA, a Senior from Bloomsburg University, seeking a Summer Internship; Will schedule an interview with him in late May 2016