



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

Michael A. Hewitt, GISP
Program Manager

101 South Main Street
Ashley, PA 18706

Fax & Main Line: (570) 371-3522

E-mail: hardcoal@epcamr.org

May 2016 Progress Report

Highlights:

- EPCAMR staff continued to scan 10 mine maps into TIFF images, georeferenced 139 & digitized 50 maps for the MSI Mine Mapping Grant. Lost staff and changing positions.
- EPCAMR staff prepared for and hosted an EPCAMR quarterly board meeting, a **Plains Township (Luzerne Co.)** Zoning Hearing Board meeting and participated in an **AML Campaign** conference call and 2 **AMR Conference Committee** calls.
- Processed hundreds of registrations and purchased supplies for the **PA AMR Conference**.
- Sampled the **Askam AMD Treatment System** near **Nanticoke, Luzerne Co.**
- Refurbished a USGS gauge station complete with a Stevens Recorder below **Askam TS** then built a trompe from parts acquired at hardware stores and installed it at **Espy Run TS** both in the **Nanticoke Creek Watershed, Luzerne Co.**
- Updated www.epcamr.org and www.treatminewater.com. Administered the EPCAMR Facebook and Google Apps for Nonprofits accounts; maintained GobbaDaPile in-house data server.

Education, Outreach and Admin.:

- Followed up with Kayley Dunning from the United Neighborhood Centers as they were preparing to start the pottery classes with at-risk youth from the Scranton Monticello School. Provided them with dried iron oxide and some leftover glaze from a previous pottery program with Nanticoke School District.
- EPCAMR Staff participated in 2 AMR Conference calls and followed up with tasks to coordinate the 2016 PA AMR Conference which is only a month away. Updated www.treatminewater.com.
- Placed a Quill order in preparation for the upcoming conference and to fulfill some general office supply needs.
- Completed the Program Manager's monthly report for March and submitted invoice for reimbursement to the PA DEP 319 Program.
- Briefly reviewed the Laurel Run Coldwater Heritage Plan (CHP) draft report pieces on the server created by EPCAMR Outreach Staff. Made a few recommendations, but it was difficult to envision the whole report at such an early stage before it was combined.
- Attended a Plains Township zoning hearing board meeting about the Plainsville floodplain area and in particular the contested zoning change proposal at the request of Planisville Borehole landowner, Gregory Price. A farm plot was recently purchased and the plan was to create a topsoil mine on an adjoining property. The existence of mine water on the property was a risk to the mining operation in that the mine water would easily migrate through the highly erodible and permeable soils into the proposed topsoil pit once excavation commenced. Aside from this probability, there were many residents that were opposed to the mine and the loss of the prime farmland. There were native Indian tribal representatives that claimed that there were sacred burial grounds on the property as well. Fortunately, the issue was resolved by the O'Mallia

Brothers, Larry and Gary, purchasing the contested land back from Stell Enterprises at the purchase price, with the promise to continue the farming the land.

- Experiencing an issue with purchase order emails not sending from the EPCAMR Online Store. Contacted tech support who said to remove short codes related to invoice data. Apparently this was something that was “fixed” in the last set of updates to the PremiumPress Shop Theme. This workaround got the emails sending again, but the “invoice emails” were now devoid of any line item purchase data. Tech support apologized, but said those short codes are broken and could not give a timeline for their repair. Robert had been forwarding completed PayPal payment emails to show credit/debit card purchases, but check purchases have to be deduced now with incoming checks and attempting to match up orders in the store. Not an ideal situation and not really acceptable, however we do not do enough in sales (other than the few months before the conference) to completely switch to another service.
- Participated in an AML campaign call to discuss ongoing legislation at the federal level related to mining reclamation.
- Updated AMR Conference presentations and program pages on www.treaminewater.com.
- Updated EPCAMR Online Store checkout pages to notify customers that they need to print the checkout page before submitting order for payment with a check. This way they have an invoice of sorts. If they pay with PayPal, the email from PayPal should contain items purchased.
- Went to Wilkes-Barre City to pick up the remainder of the maps for the EPCAMR Intern to scan and catalog.
- Started an investigation of Coal Brook, a severely impacted tributary of the Laurel Run watershed, for the Laurel Run CHP.
- Sent out reminder via MailChimp to register for the AMR conference next month.
- Final report for 319 for fiscal years 2014-2016 to close out the current 319 Program Grant.
- Worked on QuickBooks with EPCAMR bookkeeper in preparation of the Treasurers Report for the upcoming board meeting. Checked to see that invoices were being applied sales orders. Learning that we need to create more general sales orders based on grant budgets to make it easier to apply invoices. It will suffice to simply record big categories like time, travel, supplies, subcontracts, and etc.
- Caught up on watching Premium Press video tutorials for the new version of Shop Theme installed. Found out that a new front page was needed because the old format was dropped.
- Heard that AMR Conference website registration page was not showing up for many people. This year I tried to bring the EPCAMR store in to the AMR Conference website through iframe coding, which basically allowed people to be on the EPCAMR store without leaving the AMR Conference website. This was working for newer computer / browser configurations, but not older browsers/computers. Reverted the page back to a list of links to the EPCAMR Online Store on the AMR Conference registration page and this remedied the issue.
- Updated the EPCAMR board page with information about the upcoming meeting. Prepared a draft agenda, proposed and current grant lists. Sent out a reminder with the board packet attached.
- Participated in the Lackawanna River Fest as search and rescue. Many boaters starting at Archbald put-in did not make it to Blakely. The river was up this year and several boaters may have been unprepared for the swiftness of the river. Found them and offered to take some to the Blakely put in and the rest to Sweeney’s Beach (the end).
- Invoiced webhosting customers
- Prepared for and hosted the EPCAMR board meeting here at the EPCAMR Office.
- Meeting with CSI Environmental and DCNR to talk about an access agreement to monitor the Mocanaqua Tunnel discharge on their newly acquired property from Earth Conservancy.

- Spoke with Corey Richmond, Sullivan County Conservation District as a follow up to the discussion at the EPCAMR Board Meeting regarding SMCRA Reauthorization Resolutions and other federal legislation that may open up funding for AML Reclamation.
- Continued to evaluate the Rausch Creek Lands map collection.
- Caught up on email and some general housekeeping tasks after vacation.
- Processed AMR Conference registrations.
- Contacted PayPal about some cards being rejected in purchases through our EPCAMR Online Store. They said that some cards have security measures built in, usually by request of the card owner, to not allow them to be used on online stores. Most online stores do not bother to honor the request, while PayPal does. I added this information to the EPCAMR Online Store to the FAQ help section. They said if customers are having issues, to call PayPal with the card number and they can tell them the issue. Nothing more than the number is needed (not the expiration date or the security code).

Technical Assistance:

- Georeference 5 more difficult maps from Plymouth, Hanover Township, Old Forge, and Scranton areas for the Mine Subsidence Insurance (MSI) Mine Mapping Grant (MMG).
- Purchased and installed a fine bubbler for the Espy Run trompe. The fine bubbler at the oxidation pond produced bubbles as soon as the air pressure lever was released at the trompe unit at the outflow of the treatment system. This was the final test to see if the trompe would work, and it did. Unfortunately, a quick test of dissolved oxygen levels at the AMD source and at the end of the treatment system did not show any substantial increases that could be attributed to the trompe. However, chemical reactions in the oxidizing ponds are complex and the additional air could be precipitating more dissolved iron, which in turn depletes dissolved oxygen. More testing of dissolved oxygen, total iron and dissolved iron levels is recommended.
- Spoke with John Levitsky, Luzerne Conservation District, about Plainsville borehole discharge and capacity of the flooded topsoil pit. Landowner states that the pit is 15-20 feet deep and approximately 11 acres in size. That would give 7-9.5 million cubic feet of capacity. Calculated the retention of iron solids in the pond at 80% (1,215 lbs/day In – 208 lbs/day Out = 1,007 lbs/day iron solids retained in the pond). Possibly the ad-hock treatment system only needs to be modified slightly to boost dissolved oxygen and settling. The pond might need to be dredged.
- EPCAMR staff sampled the Askam Treatment System and relayed the results to Earth Conservancy.
- Setup a Stevens water level recorder at the end of the Askam Treatment System. When Earth Conservancy was raising the level of the ponds, they installed a stilling well. We placed a rescued USGS gauging station hood on top of it.

[] - Denotes funding source where applicable.