



## Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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### May 2016 Progress Report

#### Education & Outreach

- Participated in a monthly **NAAEE Affiliate Steering Committee** conference call; Submitted a Demographics Report to NAAEE as a part of our EE Capacity Project with PAEE to be submitted to the EPA
- Notified that our small **\$850** mini-grant to the Get Outdoors PA! to support a Nature Photography Field Tour of AMD Sites wasn't funded by the **PA Recreation & Park Society**; Suggested to resubmit in a future round
- Provided *Kristen Klingaman*, **Tamaqua Area High School** Honors Environment & Ecology Teacher with an order of iron oxide for her to make AMD Tie Dye T-shirts with her students; She'll be visiting the Mary D AMD Treatment Site soon as a part of a tour and wanted to perform a fun activity with them following the tour
- Provided **Stanley Cooper TU** Programs Coordinator, *Joe Gruszkiewicz, Jr.*, with a summary description of EPCAMR's preliminary results of water quality, habitat assessment, problem areas, and chemistry that we've found during our watershed assessment of the Laurel Run sub-watershed of Mill Creek; EPCAMR Executive Director presented at the VFW, Anthracite Post, in Kingston, PA on May 4<sup>th</sup> to give an update and overview of our work on the assessment and future fishery electroshocking survey with TU
- EPCAMR Staff conducted a Seed Bomb Workshop at **Kistler Elementary** for nearly **375** students at their annual Earth Day Festival Event in Wilkes-Barre, PA; Wildflowers were incorporated into the mix and many of the seed bombs will be planted on abandoned mine lands
- EPCAMR Executive Director and EPCAMR was recognized at the **Wilkes-Barre Area Education Association's** 30<sup>th</sup> annual meeting EPCAMR for our collective efforts with many of the high schools and elementary schools for the numerous programs that we've done in partnership with the W-B Area School District over the years and I was recognized as a former alum of the same. EPCAMR was provided with a **\$2500** donation! EPCAMR Executive Director was super humbled by the gesture and the nomination from Amy Pascale from Plains-Solomon Elementary who said I had a personal impact on her while she was in 8th grade at EL Meyers HS back years ago when I had made a presentation in the classroom on our work and now as a teacher she gets to still work with us on these outdoor learning experiences and teacher training workshops that she was exposed to as a young student
- EPCAMR had two AmeriCorps Positions approved by the US Department of the Interior to support EPCAMR's mission and goals; One position is outreach and education while the other is a GIS/Mine Mapping position; EPCAMR is recruiting with OSM to fill those positions
- EPCAMR was informed by *Cliff Denholm*, **Stream Restoration Inc.**, (SRI) that they received Growing Greener funds for **Datashed**, although it was not completely funded; EPCAMR has **\$3500** for Technical Support and **\$1050** for Training

- Attended the **PA Anthracite Section Society of Mining & Engineers** PA Historical Marker Dedication in downtown Wilkes-Barre, PA
- Coordinated the release of native brook trout fingerlings in Abraham's Creek at the edge of the spillway at Frances Slocum State Park with **96 Wilkes-Barre Area Elementary** students who partake in the *Trout in the Classroom Program* with Trout Unlimited; Conducted several AMD EE stations and watershed education programs for the students at the pavilions with the EPCAMR Staff on May 13<sup>th</sup>
- Provided comments to the **PA AML Campaign** committee members on *HR4456*
- Conducted a Water Quality Monitoring Field Demonstration and Workshop with **5 EPCAMR RECLAIM** Crew volunteers on Solomon Creek with *Gabby* and *Liz*
- Worked with *Elizabeth Hughes*, **EC** to develop a SMCRA Resolution that their EC Board of Directors could pass to continue to support the reauthorization of the Surface Mining Control & Reclamation Act; The collection of fees to support Abandoned Mine Reclamation will sunset in 2021; EPCAMR and others in the watershed community working on AMD and AML projects would like to extend that to 2036; It sounds like a long way away, but it's not in legislative terms; It's only 5 years away and we certainly will not be done cleaning up AML in PA by then
- Continued to work with *Dr. Marianne Krasny*, **Cornell U.** and *Dr. Louise Chawla*, Professor Emerita for the Environmental Design Program at the **University of Colorado**, on further editing and developing a Chapter in the soon to be published **SESYNC Book on Civic Ecology** through Cornell University Press, that will detail some very personal reflections and life stories of the Executive Director on significant life experiences, social environmental identity, and history in place related to EPCAMR's work on abandoned mine lands and water quality issues facing the coalfields of PA
- **Hebei Canri Chemical Co., Ltd.** from Hebei, China, who manufactures iron oxide pigment and has done so for the last 23 years that is widely used in concrete cement, asphalt, brick, paint, and as a coating requested some of EPCAMR's iron oxide to test and sample; EPCAMR mailed some small samples across the world to see what the results are since they were going to provide them to us for free
- Secured the EC/EPCAMR Conference Room for an upcoming **PSU Extension Master Watershed Stewardship Workshop** being coordinated by *Liz Rosser*, who has recently moved on from EPCAMR to a full-time position with PSU Extension; EPCAMR will present and host at the workshop on AMD, EPCAMR Projects, Volunteer Opportunities, and AML Reclamation topics of interest to the 13 volunteers who will be participating in the program on July 27<sup>th</sup>
- EPCAMR Staff shared via social media, information provided by one of our Board Members, *Leigh Ann T. Henry*, on PEC's expression of concern with a recent bill to temporarily suspend mining operations; <http://www.paenvironmentdigest.com/newsletter/default.asp?NewsletterArticleID=35970>; Informed her that EPCAMR understands that the industry is having a tough time and are in an economic downturn and that it's not in our mission to directly work on issues with active mining; Although, we understand that if active mining operations cease to operate in PA, the fee on mine coal will also be decreased, and less money will be going into the AML Trust Fund for future reclamation

## Technical Assistance

- Provided *Tom Kashatus*, **Newport Township Community Organization**, with information and resources on old railroad beds in and around the Newport Township area and adjoining municipalities; In 1870 the tracks of seven railroads crisscrossed the eastern fourth of the township: the Delaware and Hudson, Delaware Lackawanna and Western (D. L. & W.), Illinois and Western, Lackawanna and Bloomsburg, Lehigh Valley, Central of New Jersey and the Pennsylvania; As companies and mining interests were bought, sold or otherwise acquired, the Jersey Central and the Pennsy eventually became the only two railroads operating in Newport Township

- *Carl Orechovsky*, member of the **Old Forge Historical Society**, had a concern about some major subsidence issues in the St. John's Creek, where water has been lost to the mines for years; Recently, water has been lost almost immediately to the mines in the problem area and EPCAMR was asked to investigate and research mine OSM Folio maps in the area for him; Met with PA DEP BAMR to review mine maps and to discuss the concern; This could become a major stream restoration project potentially; Suggested he also look at [www.psu.minemaps.edu](http://www.psu.minemaps.edu) to look more closely at the surrounding mine workings
- Provided *John Ackerman*, President, of the **PA Anthracite SME**, with information on webhosting services offered by EPCAMR in case the organization wanted to create their own website
- Reviewed information on the **Hammond Mine Pool Project** from *Dr. Dennis Wydra*, Elysburg, PA forwarded to EPCAMR from **SRBC**; Awaiting a late Summer or Fall 2016 meeting to discuss the proposed project
- Informed by *Jim Wetzel*, **Weatherly Borough**, that the **Wildlands Conservancy** is completing the necessary paperwork for the Growing Greener Grant that was awarded to allow partners to begin working on the development of the Qualified Hydrologic Unit Plan for the **Hazle Creek Project**, Luzerne/Carbon Counties; Jim informed EPCAMR of the conditions of the data loggers at the various monitoring points within the watershed and recent repairs to the weirs at the sites
- Directed *Gavin Pellitteri*, EPCAMR Watershed Outreach Specialist to sign up for Good360 and GrantStation Insider, an online newsletter to review potential upcoming grant opportunities; [www.good360.org](http://www.good360.org)

## **Community Volunteer Service Coordination**

- Completed a Community Partner evaluation of several students from **King's College Economics Class** under the direction of *Dr. Margarita Rose*, who participated in the Service Learning Project with EPCAMR and the **Huber Breaker Preservation Society** to develop a survey for the **Huber Miner's Memorial Park Project** and to create charrettes and designs about how to utilize the park in the best interests of the public and the community to promote historical preservation, eco-tourism, abandoned mine land reclamation, and the history of the Huber Breaker; Forwarded the evaluation to *Dr. William Bolan*, Ph. D., Director of the Shoal Center, at King's College
- *Mohammed Almoumin*, Pittston, PA and **LCCC** student applied for an internship with EPCAMR, however, there were no openings presently available
- *David Hooker*, Bloomsburg, PA and **Bloomsburg U.** student, with experience in GIS and AMD sampling signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer and was informed that he'd be invited to future events and volunteer opportunities
- *Elizabeth Wills*, Plymouth Meeting, PA and **Bucknell U.** graduate in May of 2015 with an interest in watershed science and geochemistry signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer and was informed of future opportunities as well as partners, such as the **Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper**, who is located much closer to her, in case she wanted to reach out directly to them to volunteer as well
- *Olivia Termini*, Hazleton, PA and student at **Dickinson College** signed up to become a member of the EPCAMR RECLAIM Crew and was placed on the newsletter email distribution list by Gabby
- Communicated with *Mario Fiorucci*, **Sugar Notch Borough** Councilman, about trying to partner with EC and EPCAMR on a community cleanup up of a few illegal dump sites within the Borough on abandoned mine lands that are on EC property; EPCAMR has offered to reach out to bring in volunteers for the cleanup and EC has offered to pick up the trash and possibly place a dumpster, if necessary; Looking into a late Summer, early Fall Cleanup 2016; Passed the correspondence along to *Gavin* to bring him into the loop on the project coordination

## Project Coordination

- Provided *Gabby* and *Liz* information from the ScarLift Report for the Mill Creek Watershed regarding Coalbrook Creek and Coal Run tributaries to Coalbrook for the **Laurel Run Coldwater Heritage Plan** draft that is being written and completed; Referred them to transportation studies and plans that cross the Old Route 115 corridor that cuts through the watershed; Offered that *Mike* and I would field investigate the tributaries that come down from the Wilkeswood Apartments; *Liz* provided Staff with Field Data Sheets for our field investigations; Prepared narrative on the field investigation and captioned pictures taken in the field of various locations of interest and sent to *Gabby* for inclusion in the plan
- Talked with *Ben Lorson*, **PA Fish & Boat Commission** to see where the Design Plans for the **Solomon Creek Dam Removal Project** need to be submitted; Provided *Ben* with a copy of the plans; Informed him that I would be submitting an invoice and reimbursement request for RiverLogic Solutions, LLC's invoice for the work completed on the design; Worked to PPL to find out who to discuss about a utility pole deepening within the project area to obtain a quote for the work to be completed, and completed a Relocation of Utility Facilities Application and provided it to *Heather Daddio*, Business Account Specialist for PPL Electric Utilities
- Provided **PAEE** Board members with responses that EPCAMR has received regarding the **EE Capacity Project** Survey for professional development and strategic planning purposes; The Board will decide which questions to pass along to Ruth Roperti to include in the overall survey development
- Began working on closing out the **Lewis Mine AMD Treatment System Rehabilitation Project** with the Growing Greener Grants Center and sought final reimbursement since the Final Report was previously submitted; Provided written correspondence to *Bill Kline*, PA DOT that the interior work on the Lewis Mine AMD Rehabilitation Project had been completed, grassed, seeded, and vegetated with a high percentage of cover as of May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016; The temporary driveway highway occupancy permit (HOP) can be removed and EPCAMR requested that the *Permit 03031238 EPS 85903* (Lewis, Sullivan County) be cancelled so that it can be attached to the EPS site
- Requested and received a **\$60** donation gift card from **TARGET** towards the **Fall 2016 Centralia Cleanup Project**
- Met with CSI Environmental, PA DCNR, and American Energy Solutions, LLC on moving forward and obtaining approval to conduct a State Forest Research Agreement on the Pinchot State Forest along the Mocanaqua Highlands, where the Mocanaqua AMD Mine Tunnel flows into the Susquehanna River to develop a 3D Mine Pool and Monitoring Program for the **Mocanaqua AMD Tunnel Project**
- Worked with *Mike* to discuss moving forward on sifting through the **900** plus mine reports/maps in the Rausch Creek Lands collection for the **Rausch Creek Mine Pool Study Mapping Project** for the SRBC; EPCAMR Staff are beginning to georeferenced maps and eventually digitize them; Informed Tom Clark and Pierre McCoy from SRBC of our progress on the project
- Informed **Wilkes-Barre Area School District's STEM** Teacher, *Mike Shimko*, that EPCAMR was recently awarded a **\$3000** EE Grant from the PA DEP EE Program for the **Release the Butterflies! Monarchs on Minelands Project**; Received all the grant paperwork from the PA DEP EE Grant Program and guidance documents; Informed *Denise Hernandez*, Urban Outreach Specialist to print of the information and place into the grant project binder; Obtained the proper signatures for the grant contract award and forwarded to PA DEP EE Office in Harrisburg, PA; Submitted a revised detailed budget sheet and scope of work/benchmarks to Ann Devine, PA DEP EE Program; Also submitted a request for the entire **\$3000** as working capital

## Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- Participated in our monthly conference call for the **18<sup>th</sup> Annual PA AMR Conference** and updated members of the committee on Silent Auction items acquired by EPCAMR including honey candy, honey sticks, and information on raising honey bees on abandoned mine lands, as well as a basket from SAFELIGHT Auto; Continued to finalize details for the upcoming Conference in June at IUP such as the menu, information on the

ECHO Award, the AMD Tour, incoming abstracts, sponsorship from SME, website updates, and new funding towards the conference for next year from PA DEP; *Jen Quinn*, from **PennFuture**, promoted the Conference through the Choose Clean Water Coalition ListServe; *Josie Gaskey*, Director of Environmental, Safety, & Health for the **PA Aggregates & Concrete Association (PACA)** promoted our conference in their newsletter; EPCAMR purchases a portable microphone for the AMD Tour; Provided Anne with edits for the Program she's creating for the Conference to be printed; Informed that Secretary *John Quigley* resigned and that there would be a new incoming Acting Secretary for PA DEP, *Patrick McDonnell*

- Met with Corey Richmond, **Sullivan County Conservation District** Watershed Specialist/Chesapeake Bay Technician to coordinate a County-wide AMD, History of Sullivan County, and Reclamation Tour for the Sullivan County Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade; Conducted the Tour with nearly **35** students on May 9<sup>th</sup> and visited numerous sites including the Lewis Mine AMD Treatment System and a reclamation site above Old Mine Road, outside of Bernice, PA, as well as having a historical discussion on coal mining and the lumber history in Sullivan County
- Attended the **7<sup>th</sup> Annual PA Choose Clean Water Conference: *Clean Water: Bridging to New Partnerships***, in Annapolis, MD and participated in the PA Strategy with other advocates working to protect the Susquehanna River Watershed for a facilitated dialogue about collaborations in PA to address water quality issues, including AMD; Shared ideas and work of EPCAMR, along with perspectives on how to reach PA's attainment of its required pollution load reductions by 2025; Attended a track session on Environmental Justice-Storytelling for Impact, one on Increasing Your Cultural Competency with coalfield communities that we serve in the EPCAMR Region; Was awarded a Registration Scholarship to attend
- Secured two speakers, *Brian Rogers* and *Bob Amelio*, Mid-Atlantic ADA Trainers, for an online webinar on ***Steps to an Inclusive Environmental Education Experience*** for our **EE Capacity Project**
- Invited by *Laura Ducceschi*, President & CEO of the **Scranton Area Foundation**, to participate in the ***Lackawanna County Department of Arts & Culture/Scranton Area Foundation's Summer Roundtable Discussion Series*** aimed at building connections between Arts, Culture, Health & Wellness, Economy, and the Environment; The Roundtable is an invite only and is scheduled for August 18<sup>th</sup>, the same day as our EPCAMR Board Meeting, however, a time hasn't been determined yet for the event

## **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 May 2016 monthly PA DEP 319 and EPCAMR Board Report
- Requested a transfer of **\$5693.30** from the Hicks Creek Community Pool INVEST Savings to the EPCAMR General Checking
- Informed *Gavin Pellitteri* to fill out a W-4 for the EPCAMR Personnel File since he was hired as a Part-time Watershed Outreach Specialist, and promoted from a non-paying intern to the position; Provided him with his evaluation and job description for the new position as well as reviewed his self-evaluation
- Provided *Gabby Zawacki* with her Benefits package information that the Executive Director enrolled her in for Health Care provided by EPCAMR through Highmark and United Corcordia since she was hired as a GIS Specialist and promoted from her Part-time Watershed Outreach Specialist position; Provider her with her evaluation and job description for the new position as well as reviewed her self-evaluation
- Ordered a PayPal Here Mobile Card Reader to be able to accept payments for registration at the PA AMR Conference in June 2016
- Convened our EPCAMR Quarterly Board Meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup> at the EPCAMR Office