



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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October 2015 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- Posted an article on the recent termination of the Black Lung Program at John Hopkins University on EPCAMR's social media site; <http://www.publicintegrity.org/2015/09/30/18104/johns-hopkins-terminates-black-lung-program>
- The PA Game Commission provided EPCAMR with a copy of the *PA Wildlife Habitat Plan* (<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=514&objID=622722&mode=2>) that was recently forwarded to the US Fish & Wildlife Service for review; EPCAMR Executive Director participated on the Habitat Advisory Committee that provided comments on the plan over the last year on wildlife habitat and abandoned mine lands; EPCAMR provided GIS data to the PA Game Commission on AML problem areas that could coincide with endangered bat habitats, fish, and other wildlife species of special concern; EPCAMR can potentially apply for future implementation grants for management, research, and monitoring, that may be offered in 2016
- Provided *Ryan Pipan*, Legislative Assistant for Representative *Aaron Kaufer*, with information on EPCAMR's Mine Map outreach to municipalities in the Wyoming Valley below the proposed PennEast Pipeline Project and some information on our 3D Mine Pool Modeling for the Lackawanna & Wyoming Valleys
- Prepared a document on "Advice from a former NAAEE Conference Attendee" to the members of the PAEE Community of Learners involved with EE Capacity that will be heading to San Diego, CA in November to give them guidance on what to expect and how to navigate an international conference
- Followed up with *Dino Faiola*, Director of Operations, Pennsy Supply, to inquire about some future partnership with the local quarries in the EPCAMR Region on potential grant opportunities that incorporate wildlife habitat projects in their service area; Dino provided EPCAMR with their outreach and grant coordinator's name, *Dawn Darkess*, who will follow up with EPCAMR and *Holly Ostopick*-Project Manager, for the Small Mountain Pennsy Quarry-North Region, in Pittston, PA to discuss future collaborations
- Registered with FERC to act as an intervenor to be able to receive additional information on the status of the PennEast Pipeline proposed project in the Wyoming Valley that is anticipated to cross the Susquehanna River in an area that is severely undermined and to stay informed of all communications regarding the project
- Attended a meeting in Harrisburg, PA at the PA DEP Rachel Carson State Office Building with three of the PA DEP Secretaries to discuss future ideas for a Growing Greener III funding package with

dozens of environmental stakeholders groups; Participated in a follow-up conference call with Sec. *Cindy Dunn*, PA DCNR to discuss further EPCAMR's ideas on utilizing GIS more effectively to prioritize watershed priorities and initiatives based on available natural resource and other available data sets that could help to create overlapping areas of high priority that typically are looked at in isolation by the various Bureaus within the PA DEP and the PA DCNR, including PA DEP BAMR

- Reviewed *Ryan Ellis's* Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC) commented presented at the 2015 NAAMLPA Conference on the status of the AML Fund; Participated in a PA AML Campaign conference call
- Provided *Tara Muenz*, Environmental Educator for the Stroud Water Research Center, Philadelphia, PA with a link to EPCAMR's "*The AMD Avengers vs The Pollution Posse*" Activity Book and our contact information for Costumes by Barbara (<http://costumesbybarbara.com/>), Luzerne, PA who designed our children's costumes for several of the characters in the book created by the EPCAMR Staff
- Provided *Andrea Nerozzi*, Chemistry Teacher from Wyoming Seminary Upper School with statistical information and background information on AMD in the Wyoming Valley that her Environmental Club, Artisan Club, and AP Environmental Science could use in their assembly presentation to the school to discuss a partnership they are working on with EPCAMR; EPCAMR Staff coordinated an AMD Tour for the **24** school students and **3** teachers on October 21st, in the Wyoming Valley and provided them with iron oxide for their December 2nd, "*From Waste to Create*" Art and STEM Program Exhibit for the community that will be held in Kingston, PA; *Gail Smallwood*, Associate Director of Communications of Wyoming Seminary, mailed EPCAMR a CD with pictures that she took while along on the field tour of the activities and places seen by the students; EPCAMR Staff printed a set of mine maps in the area of the entire Wyoming Seminary School District footprint in Kingston, PA at their request
- *Mike* and the Executive Director had a meeting with Congressman *Lou Barletta's* legislative director, *Joe Gerdes III*, to provide him with educational materials on SMCRA, our 3D Mine Pool Modeling, Mine Mapping, information on the Jeansville Mine Fire, and AML Reauthorization
- *Paul Golias*, Staff Correspondent for the Citizens Voice is interested in interviewing Mike and the Executive Director to get an update on our Mine Pool Mapping and 3D modeling efforts sometime in early November 2015; Provided him with an overview presentation that was given to the Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition (GDAC) and suggested he follow up once he had a chance to review the information earlier in the month; <http://citizensvoice.com/news/more-voicing-concern-over-pipeline-project-1.1963122>
- Provided a link to a great resource website on macroinvertebrate identification to the EPCAMR Staff that should come in handy during field investigations or macro identification; http://macroinvertebrates.org/?utm_source=Leaf+Pack+Network+News&utm_campaign=4d5a4d7d32-2015_Fall_Newsletter10_6_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ba9fd8514f-4d5a4d7d32-121244161#/
- Worked with *John Welsh*-Photographer, to prepare a usage agreement for photos that were taken by him to be included in an e-book Chapter for the Civic Ecology MOOC with Cornell University written by the EPCAMR Executive Director; *Kimberly Snyder*, Cornell University provided John with the necessary information to write up the agreement
- Completed a survey from NAAEE and EE Capacity on the size and diversity of environmental professionals in the field of Environmental Education across the country

- Presented at the 5th Annual Arts & Education Symposium, hosted by the Education Policy and Leadership Center (EPLC) Conference in Camp Hill on EPCAMR's AMD and Art Programs for in-school and after-school programs that incorporate the use of iron oxide pigment into the programs; <http://www.artseducationpa.org/register-now-for-the-fifth-annual-arts-and-education-symposium/>
- Worked with *Elizabeth Hughes*, EC to partner with them on an application with Newport Township Police Department for a new recreational vehicle to patrol EC abandoned mine lands and assist with providing an educational/outreach component on the responsible use and safety lessons of ATVs, OHVs, Side by Sides, and other smaller recreational vehicles to school students; The project ties in to promoting the use of the POLARIS TRAILS program on publicly accessible lands

Technical Assistance

- Reviewed, revised, and provided additional comments to the Land, Water, and Air BMP draft documents provided by *Hayley Jeffords*, PA DEP, along with other members of the Pipeline Infrastructure Task Force Environmental Protection Working Group
- Provided the City of Nanticoke with some historical background information for an area along Lower Broadway Recreational Park property that is being considered for a **Brownfields to Playfields Pilot** grant from PA DCNR; <http://www.pagenweb.org/~luzerne/patk/nanti.htm>
- Reviewed and provided comments on the draft *Community EE Framework Outline* being produced by NAAEE and submitted them to *Bora Simmons*-National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education; This set of guidelines will, when completed, focus on how environmental educators can work successfully in communities to protect the environment and promote community well-being and sustainability; These guidelines will also strive to help environmental educators to create more inclusive working environments that support social equity, effective partnerships, and coalition building; <http://www.naaee.net/programs/community-ee-guidelines-review>
- EPCAMR was asked to review and provide a letter of support for the Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment (SENSE) Act (<https://rothfus.house.gov/sites/rothfus.house.gov/files/SENSE%20Act%20Overview.pdf>) by the *Vince Brisini*-Director of Environmental Affairs for Olympus Power, LLC; To continue to provide the environmental benefits of the bituminous coal refuse to energy plants, it is necessary to address some erroneous technical decisions made in the regulations; The SENSE Act is addressing those issues in a fashion that will allow those facilities to continue to provide environmental, safety and health benefits while meeting appropriate regulatory requirements while ensuring those facilities do not experience an inappropriate economic windfall; Forwarded the information submitted to the EPCAMR Executive Board to see if a Letter of Support should be submitted on EPCAMR's behalf, since ARIPPA has already supported it
- Assisted *Elizabeth Hughes*, EC in choosing tree species from the PA Game Commission for future seedlings that will be planted on the Penobscot Trail system, the Askam AMD Wetlands Treatment System, and other reclamation sites in the Wyoming Valley
- Met with *Craig Stevens* and *Lowell Sieck*, from CSI Environmental, LLC to discuss an innovative AMD water treatment system technology that they would like to work with EPCAMR on taking a look at potential funding opportunities over the Winter 2015/Spring 2016 and AMD discharges to bring in a mobile demonstration unit of their technology to treat AMD; Scheduled a meeting with them on November 9th to do a field visit to some AMD discharges to grab water samples and to assess sites

Community Volunteer Service Coordination

- *Emily Kipiel*, and *Nick Martino*, students at King's College, are interested in becoming an EPCAMR Community Service volunteers and working with us when we have tree plantings or future cleanups; Encouraged them to sign up through our GiveGab site
- *Jennifer Kozlansky*, is interested in putting together a short video for EPCAMR highlighting some examples of our work and projects; Forwarded her some pictures and will be working with her to develop the video; www.kozlansky.com
- Provided *Bill Bolan*, Director of the Shoal Center, King's College, details of the service learning project that was conducted on October 15th at the Huber Miner's Memorial Park with EPCAMR and HBPS, with **14** college students
- *Lyric Paskel*, Oley, PA provided EPCAMR with a copy of her resume and was interested in volunteering with EPCAMR; She's a senior at Kutztown University

Project Coordination

- Continued having discussions with EPCAMR Staff on the development of future development of grant programs and projects being considered through various funding and foundation sources that will continue to build our organizational capacity to continue to provide services in our region; Suggested distributing our draft Strategic Plan update to all Staff for comments; Provided a copy of "What's Good in Your Hood!" to the Outreach Staff to help them with looking at ways to conduct community assessments based on the Executive Director's previous involvement in a Community Environmental Education Workshop with *Akiima Price*, a colleague of EPCAMR
https://mdehndotorq.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/nyrp_whatsgoodinmyhood_workbook.pdf
- The Moshannon District Mining Office of the PA DEP was possibly considering the addition of a 8206 sq. ft., 30-mil, 10 oz. textile geo-membrane liner to the flush pond for the **Lewis Mine AMD Rehabilitation Project**, however, the quote from Rexers, LLC came back with a considerably high price quote and it was decided that given the state of affairs with the State Budget stalemate, that it would have been prudent to make an additional request for funds; It's anticipated that the soils will become more compact over time; Following the completion of the construction project, the road entrance will be decommissioned and the rock entrance closed off from the PA DOT highway; Received Rexers, LCC first Invoice for payment and submitted it to PA DEP Moshannon DMO and requested a brief write up report to go along with it after discussions with *Eric Rosengrant*-Project Officer; EPCAMR was informed that our working capital request was approved, which would expedite some funds coming in for construction that could immediately go back out to Rexers, LLC to pay a portion of their invoice; Reviewed PA DEP Moshannon District Mining Office Surface Mine Inspector-*Aaron Pontzer's* Inspection Reports of the progress being made on the construction project for the last two months that were copied to EPCAMR
- EPCAMR was awarded a **Chesapeake Bay Trust AMD EE Model mini-grant**, funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in the amount of **\$3549** for personnel, transportation, and supply costs for **25** Wilkes-Barre Area 8th grade students to participate in an AMD issue investigation with multiple field experiences, culminating in the design and creation of mini AMD treatment systems

- Received additional gloves, garbage bags, and safety vests from *Michelle Dunn*, Keep PA Beautiful, for a planned third Fall **Cleanup Centralia, PA** should EPCAMR be able to generate some funds to cover the costs of the hauling away of the trash and feeding volunteers; It was suggested that PEC NE Office has funds for disposal and EPCAMR is awaiting confirmation from *Janet Sweeney*, PEC; EPCAMR may move the cleanup until the Spring of 2016, if we need to secure additional funds for a third cleanup of the town; Provided information on the cleanups and the history of the mine fire to *Arpita Aneja*, Associate Producer, who works with TIME Video, an affiliate of TIME Magazine, who is interested in creating a future documentary and recording our future cleanup efforts in Centralia, PA
- Communicated with *Ben Lorson*, PA F&BC about the **Solomon Creek Trout Stream Habitat Improvement and Dam Removal Project**, Ashley, PA on reimbursement procedures and EPCAMR's desire to possibly put out an RFP for the permitting and bid document preparation or keep it in house, and continuing to work with River Logistics for the construction of the project; Provided Tom Venesky, Outdoors Writer for the Times-Leader with before photos and an interview on the project
- Coordinated two conference calls for the PA Community of Learners and the PAEE EE Capacity Leadership Team on the status of the upcoming **NAAEE EE Capacity Project** grant and forwarded the minutes and proposed budgets for each of the partners out to those who were on the call
- Reviewed *Patrick Jaquay's* comments on EPCAMR's submissions of mine map work from July and August 2015 and the minor corrections that needed to be updated and resubmitted under the **MSI Mine Map Project**
- Provided *Liz* with contact information for several Conservation Districts that were within the boundaries of the Atlantic-Sunrise proposed Pipeline project; EPCAMR prepared a **Williams Pipeline** grant application for submission that would have provided free technical assistance, tributary baseline water quality assessments, and mine maps to all adjacent municipalities along the pipeline corridor
- Forwarded Batch #10 of engraved pavers to Olde Mill Impressions on behalf of the Huber Breaker Preservation Society that will eventually be placed in the Miner's Memorial Park, Ashley, PA by late November 2015; Coordinated a photo opportunity with ESSA Bank & Trust representatives at the **Huber Miner's Memorial Park** with *Margaret Steele*
- EPCAMR received its formal extension for the **Hicks Creek Natural Stream Channel Design Project** on October 7, 2015 that was requested back in April 10, 2015 with a new deadline for completion of June 30, 2016; Contacted Skelly & Loy to try and pick up where we left off over 6 months ago since no work could be dedicated to the project during the delay in obtaining the extension; Responded to questions provided to EPCAMR by *Mike Lower*, Skelly & Loy, provided him with the landowner agreement form signed by Highland Manor years ago, EPCAMR's procurement procedures, certificate of liability insurance, special conditions exhibits in the PA DEP grant agreement, and discussed an anticipated bid package being prepared and an eventual site showing before Winter 2015; Provided *Mike Lower* with an updated set of photos taken by Mike Hewitt in late October to review the current site conditions

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- Attended the **PAEE 2016 Conference** Planning Committee Meeting at the Pocono Manor, in the Poconos to continue planning for the March 2016 Annual Conference; EPCAMR supports the environmental education components of the Conference and have made presentations and exhibited over the last two decades at several events; EPCAMR serves on the Program & Planning Committees; Sent out a request to a dozen local Pocono area businesses seeking small donations for the Silent Auction

- Participated in a PA AMR Conference Planning Committee conference call to discuss and rank venue locations and bid comparisons prior to choosing where the **2016 PA AMR Conference** will be held; Discussed presentation slots and presenters; EPCAMR Staff will be coordinating a tour of Bucknell University's facilities in early November 2015 for consideration with Gina Stockdale, Conference Coordinator; Provided potential Tour Ideas and Itinerary to the entire PA AMR Conference Planning Committee, should Bucknell U. be considered;
 1. Any number of AMD Treatment systems in the Shamokin Creek Watershed (EPCAMR can coordinate with the Northumberland County Conservation District and the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance); <http://shamokincreek.org/>
 2. Centralia Tour (with needed permission from the PA DCED, who owns much of the properties in the borough at this time and can coordinate with Mike Korb-PA DEP BAMR & Central Office of PA DCED); <http://www.centraliapa.org/>
 3. Pioneer Tunnel Underground Mine Tour and Museum, Ashland (EPCAMR can coordinate with Ed Wytovich, who is on the Board for the Pioneer Tunnel); <http://www.pioneertunnel.com/>
 4. Mahanoy Creek Proposed Trail in Gilberton/Girardville Area (EPCAMR can coordinate with Roseanne Weinrich and Tom Flannery); <http://republicanherald.com/news/mahanoy-creek-watershed-association-plans-trail-water-treatment-1.1958140>
 5. Knoebel's Amusement Park; <http://www.knoebels.com/>
 6. Top 10 Things to do in Lewisburg; <http://www.lewisburgpa.com/things-to-do/top-ten-things/>

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
- Prepared a Letter of Recommendation for *Cait Dickson*, former EPCAMR Watershed Outreach Fall 2014 Intern from Bloomsburg University, who has applied for a full-time position with KidsPeace
- Forwarded a potential grant opportunity to *Denise Hernandez*, to review and consider applying for; <http://www.cognizant.com/company-overview/sustainability/educational-opportunity>
- Provided *Sister Eleace* at the McGlynn Learning Center with a copy of the Executive Director's FBI Clearance for her records since we will be working with the youth on projects throughout the next few years; Other EPCAMR Staff clearances will be forthcoming in the next month
- EPCAMR signed on to a letter with the Choose Clean Water Coalition advocating that the President's FY17 budget keep targeted conservation funding levels to support the Chesapeake Bay watershed
- Provided an updated October 2015 Memo to the EPCAMR Executive Committee on project updates and grant proposal considerations that the Staff are working on developing and submitting
- Forwarded information to *Gabby* on the *Norcross Foundation* grant opportunity for possible field equipment, water quality equipment, and supplies
- Sought several quotes for commercial liability, recreational vehicle, and renter's insurance for EPCAMR from various insurance companies
- Forwarded information to *Denise* on a Monarchs on Minelands grant opportunity that could be written into a \$3000 PA DEP EE grant due on December 19th; Milkweeds are free with a minimum order of 6 flats; Considering partnering with EC and Wilkes-Barre Area's Meyers High School, who referred us to the idea, once we find out if the seeds aren't modified since they are coming from Monsanto; <http://monarchwatch.org/bring-back-the-monarchs/milkweed/free-milkweeds-for-restoration-projects/>