



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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October 2024 Progress Report

Highlights:

- EPCAMR staff georeferenced, mosaicked & digitized mine maps for the **DEP MSI MMG** program. Continue QA/QC of **HU's** Southern Anthracite Mosaic work.
- EPCAMR Management staff participated in weekly **PA AML Campaign** calls and weekly **AMR Conference** calls; co-hosted the **PA AMR Conference** in State College
- Sampled Askam AMD Treatment System, upstream & downstream on **Nanticoke Cr.** for **EC**; 3 AMD TS, upstream, downstream in **Loyalsock Creek Watershed** for **LCWA & SCD**; and 5 discharges in the **Southern Wyoming Valley** with **USGS**.
- Updated www.TreatMineWater.com and www.EPCAMR.org; administered GobbaDaPile local domain, G Suite for Nonprofits, and social media sites.

Education, Outreach and Admin.:

- Continued to review the final Community-based Watershed Organization (CWO) Study report as Cliff from Stream Restoration Inc. (SRI) added final touches to submit it to Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR).
- I received word from MSI program staff at DEP that my "contractor account" was going to be deactivated without immediate action. The system needs me to change the password every 30 days. I typically contact tech support if I cannot access PHUMMIS since I cannot change the password myself. The system usually doesn't threaten account deactivation, however. There must be new heightened security practices in effect. I also needed to complete Fraud Awareness Prevention and Emergency Awareness online courses (literally the same courses every year). All this to maintain access to the PHUMMIS database for the MSI Program. While most do not pertain to me directly, I do find some of the courses interesting and think more people in management positions should take them as yearly reminders. Sent completion certificates back to MSI Staff. [MSI]
- Continued to process AMR Conference registrations, and sent out confirmations almost daily as this is the month of the conference. Received word that we got 2 more sponsor, Kleinfelder Inc and RESPEC.
- Warned our president that there's an email from the state asking for an e-signature that is legitimate. We knew of a recent grant award, but it can be weeks to months by the time the paperwork is to be signed and EPCAMR staff aren't notified when the emails are sent. The system also doesn't give an email confirmation that the signature was received. Our treasurer got the email and asked if it was legitimate. We were able to read the email and confirm it was legitimate. There are so many hoaxes out there to be wary of and the grant center could do a better job of letting us know when these are sent to our board members.
- Gathered shirt sizes of the AMR Conference committee so I could send them to Bass Pro Shops for embroidery. In the process, some of the committee members wanted to change the logo again. So those changes were sent along again to the design person.

- Cleared up an issue with the Ramada's computer code for getting block rooms for the AMR Conference. At one time it was requested to be "AMR Conference", but I confirmed it was "AMR 2024" with the Ramada. They said they could not change it, but sales staff did not follow up at the time to tell us what the code really was. So for months, the code was incorrect on our website and in confirmation emails. This caused a lot of confusion as folks were signing up for rooms, but also they released the block of rooms on September 30th and calling alerted them that we needed more rooms added back to the block. It was wishful thinking on the venue's part that all attendees would secure their room a month before the conference. We were able to get the lodging deadline extended to October 11th (a few days later). Updated info on treatminewater.com. Deadline to register for a scholarship to cover the rooms was October 1st, but the committee approved a straggler nonprofit volunteer who waited till October 8th to request a room. Luckily it was before the extended lodging deadline and the committee approved it quickly over an email vote. The 125 trucker hats for the AMR Conference arrived today. Unfortunately (or fortunately depending on how you looked at it), the attendance was above 125 and well on its way to being the most attendees we have ever had at a state-wide AMR conference.
- Kept getting calls over a few weeks from a concerned student from Wilkes University that was trying to reach Laura Rinehimer over email. Laura cannot be reached at the office number because she rarely works at the office anymore and I was not at liberty to give out staff personal phone numbers. The student was part of a class where he needed to interview an environmental professional, an agreement we had with Wilkes professor, Dr. Julie McMonagle. I asked her to remove Laura from the list since she was not getting back to him and had already canceled a meeting over email. I apologized to the student and Dr. McMonagle as Laura's actions were not very professional and did not represent EPCAMR policy. I offered to do the interview instead, but Laura did finally get back to him for the interview.
- Discussed handouts for the AMR Conference Tour with the AMR Conference Committee over email. Received materials from DEP for certain sites they were affiliated with and worked them into handouts being prepared
- Continuing to field questions from attendees, sponsors and exhibitors for the AMR Conference. Kept the conference committee apprised of the rising attendance (now at 172) and any questions that I felt needed their attention. AMR Conference Committee meetings were being held weekly. Spoke with Beth Wessinger, sales associate for Ramada, to give her updated food count numbers and the need for 30 exhibit tables. Sent along an old room plan of how the tables fit in 2018. Updated Chad Krick from DEP's Watershed Support Section with information about the newest update for RAMLIS 2024 for their 2024 Nonpoint Source Management Annual Report to EPA.
- Received diagrams from Bryan Ryves via Beth from the Ramada of how 30 tables could be added to the director's room and lobby area. Received word that our dinner was moved to the Ballroom since our count was up. But confirmed that lunches were still in the Atrium, which didn't make sense. Dinner was likely moved since it was scheduled past 8PM and the Atrium is surrounded by rooms (in case we were too noisy they wouldn't want complaints from guests). This meant the venue needed out registration desk for the bar and we would have to clear out before 4PM and setup the registration desk again. Only the beginning of a series of minor inconveniences that compounded over time.
- 17 Made contact with an assistant for Sharon Buccino, OSMRE Principal Deputy Director. He was able to relay information about her attendance and talking points from the AMR Conference Committee and DEP staff. Prior to this Andy McAllister was in contact with an assistant, but lost contact and we were unsure that she was still able to attend. We were making contingency plans. Sent off the Master Room List of scholarship awardees who would have their room covered by the AMR Conference committee at the Ramada Inn. Could not attend the Catawissa Creek Restoration Association because of my work load this month also their decision to move the meetings to the 3rd Thursday of the month is starting to show my unavailability as I mentioned when the decision was made.
- 18 Aided in contacting Beth at the Ramada as Andy as he was missing a BEO contract from the Ramada a week before and changes still were not made to reflect some corrections proposed at

the beginning of October. Closed AMR Conference Registration at the close of business on the 18th.

- EPCAMR and WPCAMR along with the rest of the committee hosted the PA AMR Conference at the Ramada Inn and Conference Center in State College from the 21st - 24th. EPCAMR staff and OSMRE Fellow ran registration and AV in each room along with Anne Daymut (and her baby) to record the presentations. This included a virtual presentation of the mayfly award to Bill Reichert who was live streamed in via Zoom from the small celebration they were having at the Schuylkill Conservation District. Dealt with a lot of last-minute requests and other chaos that a conference of this size often brings, but to the general attendee, the conference went smoothly. Those on the conference committee were taking notes as to how things could be improved and reasons as to why our audience may be outgrowing the Ramada Inn. AV staff from the Ramada were the same staff that were serving food so we were often left to decipher the AV equipment for the rooms. This led to audio cutting out in the morning of the last day, but we quickly found a replacement wireless microphone on a charging station in the AV booth. Scholarship awardees were being charged for their rooms even though I gave Beth the list again when we arrived at the conference center. There was a miscommunication between the sales office and the food service staff that had some of our attendees with food allergies upset. There were some issues that arose which needed immediate sales staff attention, but Beth was out for at least one day. We had to deal with Bryan on these occasions and in hindsight it would have been nice to deal with Bryan from the beginning. These sentiments were shared with the hotel via feedback forms. I am sharing them here as well because DEP often hosts meetings at this venue. If we go with Ramada again, we will ask for Bryan to manage our account.
- Received many accolades from AMR Conference attendees following the conference talking about a successful it was. Approximately 180 attendees were able to attend over 20 presentations some from dignitaries such as the PA DEP Secretary, OSMRE Principal Deputy Director, a representative from the Interagency Working Group to name a few over the 2 days. The pre-conference tour was successful with approximately 50 attendees, good weather, and no transportation issues. Many compliments on the cornhole tournament hosted by Kleinfelder as a networking activity and team building exercise.
- Followed up on USGS sampling earlier this month and the confusion of names of discharges in the Southern Wyoming Valley. Chuck Cravotta, a retired USGS staffer, supplied the team with some data for age dating conducted by USGS in 2000 (a method to detect residency time in mines using gas dissolved in water). Some discharges have a local name usually associated with the closest town or neighborhood. EPCAMR likes to use the official name of the mine colliery and the type of AML feature which is more in line with USGS methods. Chuck brought up a point that they sampled the "Honey Pot" discharge (aka the Susquehanna No. 7 Airshaft discharge) near Weis Markets in Nanticoke could be connected in part to the Askam Discharge Mine Pool and we should consider placing more than one probe to detect the dye. Askam was a definite place to test. We suggested the South Wilkes-Barre Boreholes as well.
- Took a much needed vacation from October 29th to November 5th.

Technical Assistance:

- Made 3 GeoPDF maps for the Bernice Basin in the Loyalsock Watershed to take into the field next week and use Avenza maps app to track out GPS location with the intent to find water disappearing into the underground voids above the Connell B and C Vein Tunnel discharges. Maps showed topographic maps overlaid with the Scarlift map, AMLS Features, known streams, and watershed boundaries. Created 8 RAMLIS investigation reports to take in the field as reference materials to aid the investigation. [Shick]
- Sampled Loyalsock Upstream, Downstream, & in/out of 3 treatment systems (Connell B Vein, Connell C Vein and Gutten Drift) with Steve and Frank. [LCWA]
- Added EPCAMR_008877-01 to 03 NMMR Summit Hill Colliery map to the Skidmore Mosaic to replace an unreadable piece of OSMA_FOLIO_100_S-2 and 3 maps in the mosaic. EPCAMR_008877-03 maps says "East Skidmore Gwy" and should help digitizing the vein on both maps. [MSI]

- Created 4 PDF maps of the Little Shickshinny, Paddy and Rocky Run area for Avenza so staff can follow their way to certain AML features already mapped and potentially find others. Aside from AML features, the maps included the location of photos taken, streams, sub-watershed boundaries and a basemap (aerial photo or one of the coal vein underground mine maps). [Shick]
- Processed Hydrologic Year data for monitoring sites on the Nanticoke Creek and reported them to Earth Conservancy. Elizabeth Hughes was preparing her presentation on the restoration of Espy Run for the AMR Conference and asked the approximate percentage that was gained back from the Askam discharge after the stream was restored to the surface. Sometimes this is referred to as a "water budget" study. Over a 2-year period (10/2022-10/2024), Espy Run made up 14% max percentage of the Askam Discharge. Also calculated that Nanticoke Headwaters makes up ~26% of the Askam Discharge. It's interesting that during Tropical Storm Ophelia flows in the headwaters made up ~47% of the Askam discharge. This says that over 50% of the discharge is groundwater in high flows, but normally it would be about 75% groundwater make up. This tracks with other mine pool studies (ex. Jeddo Mine Pool flow study by SRBC in the 1990s). [EC]
- Discussion about a dye test at Nanticoke Headwaters led us to supply Earth Conservancy with dye test results at the Askam Treatment System in 2015 and more recent dye test done by Wilkes University at Nanticoke Headwaters.
- Purchased a YSI 9800 Photometer from Fondriest Environmental from funding in the Shickshinny grant from American Water Charitable Foundation. Also looked into getting our YSI 9500 Photometer serviced. Fondriest sent along a service request form.
- Spent the day leading USGS staff as they were taking another round of field sampling in the Southern Wyoming Valley. We visited the Mocanaqua Tunnel and ended at the South Wilkes-Barre Boreholes.
- Sampled Askam Boreholes, Treatment System, upstream and downstream on Nanticoke Creek, and 2 flow sites. [EC]

[] - Denotes funding source where applicable.