



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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September 2015 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- Filled an iron oxide pigment order for the *Friends of Blackwater*, Davis, WV
- Passed along The DragonFly Gazette newsletter to EPCAMR Staff on Urban Stormwater from Georgia's Project WET EE Program
- EPCAMR Staff conducted our annual EarthFest AMD & Outreach Program for over **104** 4th & 5th graders from the *Bear Creek Charter School* at Camp Kresge, White Haven
- EPCAMR Staff completed the **\$10,000** Atlantic Sunrise Community grant entitled: ***Mine Mapping for Municipalities: Outreach and Interpretation of Maps & Abandoned Mine Land Impacts*** and submitted it online with support from the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance and the Northumberland County Conservation District where we proposed to provide free mine maps and tributary assessment technical assistance to municipalities and community groups within the right-of-way and adjacent areas near the proposed pipeline project that runs through abandoned mine lands and coal lands; Received confirmation of the acceptance of the grant submission
- Nominated by *Ruth Roperti*-former PAEE President to become a member of the NAAEE Affiliate Steering Committee and was accepted by the Nominating Committee of the national NAAEE organization due to my involvement with PAEE through EPCAMR over the last 15 years and because of the outdoor environmental education programs that we offer in our region; Participated in a conference call with NAAEE to receive updates from the entire Affiliate Steering Committee
- *Kris Berlied*, Director of Trucking & Warehouse Operations, ***Community Aid***, sent EPCAMR an application to belong to a recycling program involving bin placements in the coalfields to encourage clothing and household goods being donated to local charities instead of ending up as piles of trash on abandoned mine sites; Community Aid serves several areas within the EPCAMR region and can apply and work with local companies to a bin or several bins placed strategically within those communities where the eventual donated tonnage will provide funds for EPCAMR and eligibility that would allow us to apply for a **\$5000** grant; EPCAMR to review the application process and discuss with the EPCAMR Board; EPCAMR could donate clothing cards to some of the underserved schools that we partner with
- *Mike Hewitt* and the Executive Director participated in a half-hour radio show interview with *Jim Riley*, Talk Show Radio Host for Community Forum, a weekly public affairs public service program, owned by Bold Gold Media to talk about EPCAMR and our work in the region;
<http://www.mediafire.com/listen/6pdquvetvir4373/CF-Mines.mp3>

- Forwarded newsletter from Groassis to *Gabby* and *Liz* related to our **ISI/Waterboxx Phase III Project**
- Prepared an EPCAMR Letter of Support for HB1370, a Tax Credit Bill for Co-Generation Plants to reclaim Coal-Refuse and forwarded it off to ARIPPA
- Provided minor edits *Dr. Marianne Krasny*, editor, Cornell University, to the Chapter being worked on by the Executive Director and *Dr. Louise Chawla* for the anticipated online e-book on civic ecology practices entitled: *Returning Orange Waters to Blue-Creating a Culture of Learning to Reclaim Abandoned Mine Lands and another e-book Chapter on the Huber Breaker Miner's Memorial Park Development authored by the Executive Director that will also be a feature story for the 2016 Massive Open Online Community (MOOC) Storify site*
- Prepared for HydroMania and ChalkFest 2015 where EPCAMR Executive Director helped over 100 youth create iron oxide chalk at our Chalk Station along Wilkes-Barre's River Common; *Gabby* created a Chalk Making Instructions Poster for future use
- Created 2 EPCAMR car magnets designed by *Gabby* for use when we are out in the field conducting field investigations, water monitoring, education and outreach activities, and watershed assessments
- Participated in a meeting in Harrisburg, PA hosted by Secretaries *Hanger, Dunn, and Quigley* to discuss the potential for a new round of Growing Greener, what the focus of the funding would be, where the funding streams could come from, priority areas, and the design elements and criteria that should be used to consider future projects
- Posted an interesting article on abandoned wells and well drilling to our social media site; <http://examiner-enterprise.com/news/local-news/abandoned-wells-drilling-s-dangerous-legacy>
- EPCAMR Executive Director sent *Senator Casey* and *Senator Toomey* a request that should be forwarded along to EPA Administrator McCarthy that the EPA not cut funding for the Chesapeake Bay Program or for the Chesapeake Stewardship Grants (National Fish & Wildlife Foundation administered Small Watershed Grants and Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Removal Grants); Funding for the Bay Program and these grants are tremendously important and the Choose Clean Water Coalition has long advocated for their robust funding
- Attended the Moses Taylor Foundation Community Event with *Gabby* and *Liz* at the St. Mary's Center, Scranton, PA to find out more about their upcoming foundation grant rounds and priority funding areas
- Attended the Clean Power Plan Listening Session hosted by the PA DEP at Wilkes University, Wilkes-Barre, PA; EPCAMR Executive Director prepared a Comment Letter for *PA's eventual Compliance Plan for EPA's Final Rule for Carbon Pollution Emissions Guidelines for Existing Stationary Sources: Electric Generating Units (Clean Power Plan)* and submitted it to the PA DEP

Technical Assistance

- Participated in an EECapacity conference call with the PA Community of Learners Leadership Team to discuss further development of the **NAAEE EECapacity** grant that is aligned with the Strategic Plan that was developed and revealed at the March PAEE 2015 Conference; Provided *Denise Hernandez*, Urban Outreach Specialist with a final budget document, work plan, information on rain gardens, rain barrels and timeline, for the **NAAEE EECapacity Building** grant prepared by EPCAMR Executive Director and the PA Community of Learners Leadership Team members in the amount of **\$10,000**; Provided a Letter of Commitment to NAAEE from EPCAMR towards the project; Informed that the project was awarded to PAEE and EPCAMR, who will be the fiscal agent and grant administrator

- EPCAMR Staff discussed the best ways to provide the digital mine maps to municipalities under the **Wyoming Valley Mine Mapping PennEast Community Connector** grant, including online free transfer file sites and the use of returnable thumb drives, which is the option we settled on; A recent article appeared in a local paper on the concerns of residents in Plains Township, PA and another by Rep. Matt Cartwright; <http://citizensvoice.com/news/pipeline-route-changes-worry-landowners-1.1945629>; <http://citizensvoice.com/news/cartwright-calls-for-information-on-pipeline-approval-process-1.1949407>
- Attended Earth Conservancy's press event on the **\$400,000 EPA Brownfields** grant announcement they received for the continued reclamation of the **Bliss Banks** in the City of Nanticoke; EPCAMR is an active partner in the project
- Provided EPCAMR Staff with links to information on PA's responsibilities for MS4s and stormwater management, including in watersheds impacted by AMD
- Provided EPCAMR Staff with a copy of the Best Management Practices Recommendations letter prepared by the Executive Director that was forwarded on to members of the Pipeline Infrastructure Task Force Environmental Protection Working Group Land and Water Subcommittees for consideration; Comments will be included in the draft BMP Pipeline Infrastructure Development Manual that will be presented to the Governor by the overall Task Force in early November 2015; Participated in several Pipeline Infrastructure Task Force conference calls during the month and an Environmental Protection Working Group meeting in Harrisburg, PA on 9-23-15
- Worked with the City of Wilkes-Barre, LandStudies, and EPCAMR Staff to fully develop our NFWF grant proposal for technical assistance, the narrative, budget, and to take pictures of the problems areas around the City that are experiencing stormwater issues severe enough to be addressed under the grant; Contacted RI Lampus for an update quote on Eco-Tek permeable pavers
- Followed up with *Tom Clark*-SRBC on the Yourley property in Schuylkill County and our initial assessment of the tributaries on his property that were not impaired, although he had several stripping pits on it and abandoned mine features; Informed Tom that we passed along his name to the Schuylkill County Conservation District and to PA DEP BAMR to look at other alternatives for reclamation on the property
- Obtained water quality data from *Jim Wetzel*, Weatherly Borough, who had a copy of some assessment data collected by the Wildlands Conservancy on some of the AMD discharges in the Upper Lehigh River that John Levitsky, Watershed Specialist from Luzerne Conservation District had inquired about
- PA Tectonics sought technical mine mapping information related to the mine fire that is spreading in the Jeansville Basin; <http://standardspeaker.com/news/jeansville-mine-fire-not-going-out-soon-1.1925672>; Looking for advice on how to calculate the volume of the water in the mine pool to see if they can safely draw it down enough to utilize the water to douse the mine fire, contain it and put it out
- Meeting with *David Brocca*, Director of the **Knox Mine Disaster** documentary who has asked EPCAMR for technical assistance with mapping the underground mines in the area of the disaster for his film with our 3D Mapping technology and to review the mine maps in that area from PHUMMIS; www.knoxminedisaster.com

Community Volunteer Service Coordination

- *Cheryl Steffen*, Pittston, is interested in photography and volunteering with EPCAMR when we go on our field excursions or future photography tours; Signed up through VolunteerMatch website
 - *Mark McDonough*, Wilkes-Barre, is interested in cleanup projects in the Wyoming Valley; His name was forwarded to EPCAMR through PEC NE Office; Suggested a needed cleanup at the now closed Valley Crest Nursing Home on Valley Crest Drive, Wilkes-Barre
 - *Katrina Richards*, White Haven, is interested in becoming a volunteer with EPCAMR and signed up through our MailChimp mailing list to become a stream Water Quality Monitor
 - *Ray McConnell*, Madison, NJ, is interested in becoming a volunteer with EPCAMR to photograph some AMD sites in the future when we conduct other AMD Tours; <http://rmphotography.biz/> and www.flickr.com/photos/rmccconnell/; Followed up with him and informed him that we would be in touch when events are planned
 - *Sneha Venkataraman*, Sunnydale, CA, is interested in becoming a data entry volunteer with EPCAMR, should we need to have her put any type of water quality into any databases that may need to be populated in the future
 - *Jillian Beuschel*, Medford, NJ, is interested in becoming a volunteer and working with EPCAMR to use some of our iron oxide in her artwork; Followed up with her and awaiting a response
 - *Andrew Ray*, Redmond, WA is interested in gathering fossils for EPCAMR and becoming a Volunteer Fossil Hunter who may have the time to put together any kind of map or brochure that might indicate where certain fossil types are commonly found, particularly in Eastern PA for EPCAMR through an online literature search or gray literature search
 - *Stefan Diaz*, Hawley, PA is a photographer is interested in participating in our AMD Photography Tour
 - *Alexander Redmond*, E. Lansing, MI, an Michigan State University student is interested in developing some marketing posters for EPCAMR; Provided him with some details on our Actions Speak Louder than Words Campaign for him to work form
 - *Cassandra Carter*, Vancouver, BC, Canada is interested in coming to the US when EPCAMR coordinates the next cleanup in Centralia, PA; She is obsessed with the town and is very interested in being a part of the cleanup
 - *David Kelly*, Wilkes-Barre, PA signed up to become a tree planter/landscaper volunteer with EPCAMR, should future events arise; He registered with EPCAMR on GiveGab; Informed him of future efforts that the Huber Miner's Memorial Park
- Bryan Calabro*, Olyphant, PA is interested in helping EPCAMR with some marketing ideas and posters; Will need some time to select photos to drop into a DropBox for him to review and use
- *Dan Pomlett*, South London, UK, is interested in helping EPCAMR with some marketing ideas from afar; He's going to try and break down our SMCRA Title IV Fact Sheet into a more graphical representation of the facts, numbers, and statistics
 - *Michael O'Horo*, Scranton, PA is interested in building networking groups with good people and volunteers

- EPCAMR assisted the Huber Breaker Preservation Society with the placement of the Shift man's Shanty into the Huber Miner's Memorial Park, Ashley, PA

Project Coordination

- ARIPPA and EPCAMR released a press release on their donation of **\$5000** in funds to support projects and programs totaling **\$2500** to EPCAMR and WPCAMR awarded to community groups in their respective regions in this year's ARIPPA AMD/AML mini-grant program; <http://epcamr.org/home/2015/epcamr-awards-2500-in-arippa-mini-grants-to-3-community-partners-throughout-the-region/>; <http://citizensvoice.com/news/grants-awarded-to-environmental-projects-1.1938783>
- Provided *Duane Feagley*, Executive Director from the PA Anthracite Council with EPCAMR's summary of the Twin Oaks Research LLC PA DCED research proposal with EPCAMR to demonstrate a pilot AMD Treatment System technology developed by the private consulting firm on the Solomon Creek boreholes in South Wilkes-Barre; The goal is to determine if the use of a new evaporative water harvester can be used to treat AMD in a cost effective manner by eliminating the need to use chemical reactants to raise the pH while investigating how to economically recover the main metals (iron, aluminum, and manganese) present in AMD. A final part of the project is to determine the content of the rare earth metals and uranium in the AMD flows and how they can be further concentrated for mineral processing. Potable water will be the end result of the treatment process requiring only disinfection prior to human consumption and the potential for removal of metal ions from the concentrated water remaining from the treatment process will incentivize the private sector to undertake cleanup projects without government funding. The funding will be used to construct a pilot plant using the Rainmaker water harvesting process to treat the AMD flows, to pay for operational expenses associated with operation of the water harvester during the testing period, to pay EPCAMR to operate the pilot unit for third party documentation of the treatment process, payment for water testing materials for use by the EPCAMR for process optimization, and payment for third party water testing by a PA certified testing laboratory
- Followed up with *Marc Lewis*, **Lewis AMD Rehabilitation Project**, Sullivan County, PA to see if he could follow up with *Rich Rexer*, about the cutting, sorting of the pole wood, piling, removal, and sawing of the trees at the location of the second flushing pond area since they are ready to begin construction; Rexers LLC is ready to begin construction on the site and has gained access to the upper and lower areas to mobilize their equipment; Visited the site with PA DEP, Hedin Environmental, Rexers LLC, to take a look at the soil conditions of a few test pits, the E & S controls that are in place, and to discuss the construction sequence; Glacial rock piles are being placed to create wildlife habitat on the uphill side of the flushing pond; Pond and channel were constructed within a few weeks' time; Gabby posted some pictures on our social media site of the initial construction activities that were forwarded to her
- Obtained Executive Board signatures for 3 copies of the **\$130,000** PA Fish & Boat Commission **Solomon Creek Trout Stream Habitat Improvement Construction & Dam Removal Project**, Ashley, PA and forwarded them along to Ben Lorson, PA F&BC; Informed Greg Gulick, Borough Manager, Ashley Borough, of the positive news and updated them on the project
- EPCAMR Staff made a trip to Blue Ridge Polaris to order the Polaris EXT side by side under the **Polaris Trails Grant** and stopped at Taylor Sheds to order our 10' x 16' storage shed; Double checked the height and width dimensions of the shed and the side by side to be sure that it would fit properly in the storage shed; Began asking for quotes for liability, recreational vehicle insurance, and renter's insurance from local insurance companies and PEC, where EPCAMR has its general liability insurance

- Reviewed comments and questions from *Patrick Jaquay*, GISP, PA DEP Project Manager on our **MSI Mine Mapping Project** that were responded to by Mike Hewitt, Program Manager
- EPCAMR Staff investigated an area below the Knox Mine Disaster location after noticing AMD emanating from the eastern shore of the streambank during a low flow period along the Susquehanna River; Photographed and walked the area and returned to work to try and determine which mine pool the AMD is flowing from to update our 3D Mine Pool model for the Wyoming Valley
- EPCAMR Staff began brainstorming about ideas for a proposal to the PPL Foundation for the “*Boost the Birds Birdhouse Construction on Abandoned Mine Lands*”; Suggestions were made about potential AMD Treatment sites, AML sites, schools, and EC property
- EPCAMR Staff began brainstorming about ideas for a proposal to the Moses Taylor Foundation for a Human Services Project for 2016; EPCAMR Executive Director provided two pages of topics, suggestions, and ideas

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- Provided *Gabby* with additional e-mail addresses for photographers interested in becoming volunteers with EPCAMR and attending our first **AMD Photography Tour** of the year on September 26th; Reached out to all photographers interested in attending; Continued the planning and development of the tour route, itinerary, and time frame
- Provided some constructive comments to PAEE Board members on the redesign of their website at www.paee.net and suggested utilizing www.slideshare.net for annual conference presentations starting in March 2016
- EPCAMR Executive Director was asked to present as a Panel Presenter at the EPLC Arts in Education Conference in Camp Hill, PA on October 29th to highlight our unique environmental education, art programs, and after-school programs in our region that utilizes iron oxide and AMD to teach STEM concepts; EPCAMR Executive Director agreed to present
- Participated in a PA AMR Planning Committee conference call to begin to discuss preparations for the 2016 annual conference and to review potential venues for quotes and RFPs

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; Provided Merit Raise and hourly rate adjustments to Payroll Administrator
- Completed a Board Development Survey for the NAAEE Affiliates Steering Committee
- EPCAMR’s renewal of our website www.epcamr.org notification received and automatically renews on October 15, 2015
- Prepared a Letter of Recommendation for *Jeff McNelly*, former ARIPPA Executive Director, at his request as he begins to pursue another career path

- Participated in an online webinar on 3-D Printing and STEM Tools partnerships with schools; Reached out to *Dr. Winnie Black*, Project Accelerate Coordinator-PSADYN, about the possibility of becoming involved in a joint pilot beta testing program with E.L. Meyers HS's STEM Program or Keystone College, Lackawanna County, and their current 3D Printing Programs to work on further developing our underground mine pool modeling and mapping; Met with Dr. Black and Laura Saccente, Director of PSADYN in Camp Hill, PA to introduce them to EPCAMR's work in the region
- Conducted a Staff Meeting to review EPCAMR Board Management Directive with all Staff; Discussed use of Google Calendar due to the various schedules of Staff being in and out of the office, meeting conflicts, and time off; Suggested that *Denise Hernandez*, Urban Outreach Specialist sign up for the NCAC NEPA Alliance newsletter that contains information on grants and workshops and the PA DCNR Resource Newsletter
- Sent out two Grant Updates Summary Memos developed by *Liz Rosser*, *Denise Hernandez*, and the Executive Director to the EPCAMR Executive Committee for projects being proposed and developed in early October 2015
- EPCAMR received our updated IRS Letter of Determination regarding our 501 (c) (3) status at our request to provide to grants and foundations
- Requested that *Gabby*, *Liz*, and *Denise* obtain their FBI Fingerprinting Clearances due to the high likelihood that they will be continuing to be working with children and school-aged children either in school or after-school during our environmental education and outreach programs; Executive Director went for his fingerprinting at the Luzerne Intermediate Unit, Kingston, PA
- Forwarded grant application information for the Coldwater Heritage Partnership (CHP) and PPL Foundation to *Gabby* and *Liz* for review and consideration; Met with Watershed Outreach Specialists to discuss workload, grants, projects, and future funding opportunities
- Provided *Basil Lynch*, Kovalchik & Kollar, LLC, EPCAMR's CPA with summary links of our 2014 Year in Review highlights
- Worked on making additional comments to EPCAMR's Strategic Plan that is in need of updating; Provided those comments to *Gabby* and *Liz*, who are also looking at updating the plan in the best interest of EPCAMR since our staff has grown and our projects have become more diverse
- EPCAMR Executive Director asked the MSI Program Staff and Program Manager to also begin brainstorming on projects that were more related to GIS, Mine Mapping, Mine Fire Mapping and Modeling, 3D Printing, and other ideas; Met with MSI Staff to discuss future potential projects
- Completed the PA Department of Labor & Industry Annual Refiling Survey