



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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September 2016 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- Updated the RECLAIM Act Working Group on the fact that the Choose Clean Water Coalition (CCWC) was going to be sending a support letter and a fact sheet ([RECLAIM Act Fact Sheet](#)) to the PA Delegation to see if they would co-sponsor the bill in support of the RECLAIM Act; Forwarded *Jen Quinn-PennFuture*, an infographic on the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund, a support letter resolution template from Kentucky and a RECLAIM Primer document; [5.5 Million Appalachians Live Within 1 mile of an Abandoned Mine](#); EPCAMR signed on to a letter to support the RECLAIM Act and the CCWC letter; <http://www.powerplusplan.org/blog/>; Sent the same information to PA partners in the Delaware River Watershed Coalition to see if their organizations would be interested in signing on to the support letter; Reviewed a draft Public Opinion Survey that will be going out to Coal States Regional Survey on the RECLAIM Act; Informed the EPCAMR President-*Bernie McGurl*, of the outreach work that I have been conducting across multiple watersheds and among dozens of community groups
- Interviewed by *Melanie Mizenko*, Southern Valley Beat Reporter for the Times-Leader, Wilkes-Barre, PA for an article on our recent ARIPPA Mini-Grant Awards for the Labor Day edition of the newspaper
- EPCAMR signed on to a letter along with members of the Choose Clean Water Coalition to the House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee asking for their support of HR 908 (Rep. Everett), to conduct a study of a water usage fee in PA
- Participated in a conference call with the PA Leadership Team for EE Capacity to get updates on the regional and state-wide projects; The PAEE EE Capacity Professional Development Survey has been completed and was distributed by members of the PA Leadership Team, PAEE, and EPCAMR; <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PAEECapacityPDSurvey>
- Publicized an opening for PennFuture's NE Regional Office for a Community Outreach Coordinator at the request of *Mike Helbing* since we worked with the former Coordinator, *Kate Gibbons*; <http://epcamr.org/home/2016/pennfuture-hiring-ne-pa-outreach-coordinator-based-wilkes-barre/>
- EPCAMR Staff participated in the Bear Creek Charter School's annual EarthFest in the Fall at their new school in Bear Creek and conducted four environmental education stations, including macro-BINGO, Macro-BUG ID, Macro-PICTIONARY, and a full in-stream Macro Sampling training and identification on 10-Mile Run that flows through the school property; Educated nearly **104** students from the 4th and 6th grades over the day-long event

- Contacted State Representative *Gerald Mullery* about SB1168 and asked him to support it; Representative *Mullery* is very active with the House Game and Fisheries Committee and as the Vice Chair, EPCAMR wanted to let him know that EPCAMR is supportive of the bill to establish a sustainable future for fishing and boating in PA; The PA Fish & Boat Commission needs a fee structure that will generate sufficient revenue to sustain its work on behalf of anglers, boaters, and PA's aquatic resources, while having the least possible negative effect on families and outdoor recreational enthusiasts participation and sales; Copied the PA Fish & Boat Commission on my letter; Informed Representative *Mullery* of our efforts to bring the Trout In The Classroom to EPCAMR and via a virtual live feed on our YOUTUBE channel for EPCAMR so that we can let local schools know about it in the region; Received THANK YOU notes from *Amidae Daniel* and *Walt Dietz* from the PA Fish & Boat Commission for supporting their agency
- Held a conference call with *George Ellis*, Executive Director of ARIPPA to discuss our upcoming testimony at the Senate Environmental Resources & Energy Committee in Jim Thorpe, PA and to go over some of the findings of the recently completed and soon to be released *Economic and Environmental Impact Analysis Study* by Econsult Solutions, LLC on the Waste Coal Industry
- Provided *David Brocca*-Director of the upcoming Knox Mine Disaster documentary with the EPCAMR Logo since we have become a sponsor of the film for \$200 and we've been instrumental in providing underground mine maps of the area and interpretation of the maps for the film; [Knox Mine Disaster Documentary](#)
- Met with *Breeann Hall*-Associate Director of Development for the College of Agricultural Sciences, Penn State University to see if EPCAMR can further develop our continued relationship with the University and find ways to connect Penn-State students to our volunteer and internship opportunities as well as partnerships with faculty on abandoned mine, reclamation, and watershed restoration efforts; She provided EPCAMR with Career Services Coordinators for several regional Commonwealth Campuses in order for us to spread the word on the availability of seasonal internships and volunteer opportunities
- Informed *Andrew Heath*-Renew Growing Greener Coalition that EPCAMR is a supporter of a Growing Greener III Package for PA's 2017 Budget; [Growing Greener III](#)
- *John Levitsky*-Luzerne Conservation District Watershed Specialist and EPCAMR Board Member brings up an interesting concern that the rivers and streams of Northeastern PA along the Susquehanna River are grossly underrepresented and prioritized in the PA DEP BAMR AMD Set Aside Program Implementation Guidelines; Topic for discussion at Fall 2016 EPCAMR Board Meeting
- Provided *Abbie* with a copy of the Iron Oxide Artists brochure for her to send along to new interested artists who want to work with EPCAMR on iron oxide art projects and programs
- Prepared a Guest Speaker-Letter to the Editor for the Citizens Voice on the importance of passing the RECLAIM Act; <http://citizensvoice.com/opinion/reclaim-act-can-play-a-role-in-shaping-northeastern-pennsylvania-s-next-economy-1.2096336>; The Letter was also featured in the PA Environment Daily; <http://paenvironmentdaily.blogspot.com/2016/09/op-ed-federal-reclaim-act-can-help-in.html>
- *Dave Edwards*, Documentarian and Journalist forwarded to EPCAMR his trailer for a new documentary that will soon be released on the impacts of coal mining past and present on the region; EPCAMR will be featured in the documentary; www.kinginthemountain.com
- Networked with *Michael Hansen*-Executive Director of the Greater Birmingham Alliance to Stop Pollution (GASP), who is a part of the National RECLAIM Act Working Group; www.gaspgroup.org

- Directed Abbie to download a free e-book on Event Sponsorship called the "***Ultimate Guide to Event Sponsorship***" and review it; <https://whova.com/pages/ultimate-guide-to-event-sponsorship-ebook/>

Technical Assistance

- Provided the City of Scranton and the LRCA with a Letter of Support for the NFWF Technical Capacity Project for green infrastructure and riparian corridor enhancement at Sweeney Beach, along the Lackawanna River, in Scranton, PA; *Gabby* assisted *Bernie McGurl*-LRCA Executive Director in writing the grant
- Provided *Joe Sapienza* with contact information for *Dave Philbin*, OSMRE so that he could follow up with him on a future potential documentary on the Laurel Run Mine Fire, Wilkes-Barre Township, Luzerne County, PA; <http://www.abandonedcountry.com/2015/05/12/laurel-run-pennsylvania-fire-on-the-mountain/>
- Left a message with *Stephen Donches*-Archivist and *Mike Korb* about approaching EPCAMR to possibly assist with the proposed scanning and digitizing of industrial mining maps and image files from Blue Coal at the Earth Conservancy Office and other available image files throughout the region
- Provided *Douglas McCarty*, a student at Keystone College, LaPlume, PA with a research paper on various methodologies, parameters, and tests to run on AMD samples for a paper he was working on for his Senior Project

Community Volunteer Service Coordination

- Scheduled September 8th for multiple interviews for the OSMRE AmeriCorps Environmental Stewards year-long volunteer positions funded; *Abbie Keefe*, *Racheal Grube*, *Robert James*, and *Gabrielle Byzcek*; Eventually selected *Abbie Keefe* and *Rachael Grube* who accepted the offer to fill the positions; Participated in a Supervisor Orientation with *Michael Rendon*-Environmental Steward Program Director for Conservation Legacy on how to administer the AmeriCorps Program Support for *Abbie* and *Racheal*; They began to fill out their paperwork for the positions with OSMRE and received orientation to EPCAMR, the Office, and the Staff; <http://epcamr.org/home/2016/epcamr-pleased-sponsor-host-2-bright-ameriCorpsosmre-members-year-help-build-capacity-coalfield-communities/>
- Discussed with EC the potential for EPCAMR to coordinate a small trailside cleanup along the Sugar Notch Trail with the Wilkes University Lacrosse Women's Team and some of our EPCAMR RECLAIM Crew volunteers in the late Fall
- *Andrew Malmgren*, Allentown, PA signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer

Project Coordination

- *Matt Cochran*, Olympus Power, LLC provided EPCAMR with a copy of a proposed Site Plan for the **Harry E. Colliery Banks Reclamation Project** for our internal analysis
- EPCAMR Staff reviewed some 2011 aerial mapping imagery provided to us by Gabby of the **Plainsville AMD Borehole Project** area to take a closer look at the results of the flooding that took place that year in the Fall and how the water from the Susquehanna River receded around the area and flooded certain lowlands along the floodplain; Discussed with EPCAMR Staff the possibility of developing a proposal this Fall for a PA DEP EE Grant for **\$3000** for Community Outreach on AMD around the Plainsville AMD Borehole working with the Wilkes-Barre Area School District's Plains-Solomon Elementary, Plains Township, and Mr. Greg Price, the landowner
- *Dave Skoronski*, Director of the GIS Department for Luzerne County provided EPCAMR, LandStudies, and the City of Wilkes-Barre with the data sets that we had inquired about for the City to utilize in the development of our Green Infrastructure Plan under the **NFWF Stormwater Management Technical Assistance Grant**
- Registered our **Centralia Cleanup** Event with *Michele Dunn*-Keep PA Beautiful, who turned around and registered it with the International Coastal Cleanup and the Ocean Conservancy; She shipped EPCAMR some supplies for the cleanup; Worked on securing some different locations for screenings of *Joe Sapienza's* "Centralia: America's Lost Town" documentary; Provided Abbie with some pre-cleanup pictures of dozens of locations throughout Centralia that are anticipated to be cleaned up on September 24th following a return trip to scout out cleanup and dumpster locations; Conducted the cleanup with over **60** EPCAMR Volunteers and within **3 hrs, 2 30** cubic yard dumpsters were filled totaling an estimated **6.02** Tons of trash; Nearly **\$4253** in volunteer services were generated for the project and over **\$2000** was raised by EPCAMR for the cleanup; Provided a list of organizations that participated to *Michelle Dunn*-KPB, who mailed out certificates of appreciation with their names on them in order for EPCAMR to distribute; *Abbie* worked on putting together a cleanup video following the event on Vimeo for EPCAMR that was featured in a story on Centraliapa.org, a site run by Andrew Hagenbaugh- (<http://www.centraliapa.org/video-photos-centralia-pa-cleanup-documentary-update/>); *Bruce Forsyth*, a volunteer from Canada even pitched in and wrote a blog on his website about the cleanup; <http://militarybruce.com/the-great-american-clean-up-volunteers-clean-up-illegal-dumping-in-centralia/>
- *Joe Sapienza II*-Director of the Centralia documentary, "Centralia: America's Lost Town" inquired about doing another documentary on the **Laurel Run Mine Fire** in Georgetown (Wilkes-Barre Township, Luzerne County) in the near future and has been approached by local folks to begin to tell their stories; EPCAMR has indicated that we would be interested in working with him again; I've done my Senior Research Project on the Laurel Run Mine Fire while I was a student at Penn-State for my Environmental Geology and Hazards class with *Dr. Art Rose* and EPCAMR just completed the Laurel Run Coldwater Heritage Conservation Plan in the Summer
- Reviewed the final draft report and budget for the **Laurel Run Coldwater Heritage Plan** to *Tali MacArthur* at PA Council of Trout Unlimited for her final review
- Worked on researching mine maps to rename and label specific geographic areas within the Rausch Creek drainage, Schuylkill County, PA for the **Rausch Creek Mine Pool Mapping Project** with SRBC

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- Attended and presented a presentation entitled, “*Climate Resilience in Abandoned Mine Reclamation and National Efforts Under the RECLAIM Act to Support Economic Changes*”; at the **4th Annual Delaware River Watershed Coalition Forum** at the Normandy Farm Hotel & Conference Center in Blue Bell, PA on September 20th; [EPCAMR Presentation](#)
- EPCAMR will be hosting a [Datashed Training Workshop](#) with our partner, Stream Restoration Inc., at the EPCAMR Office on November 4th from 10-4, and began promoting it to partners in our region, on our website, and our social media outlets
- Contacted Genetti’s Hotel-Best Western in Wilkes-Barre, PA to obtain a quote for hosting the **19th Annual PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference** in the City in June of 2017

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
- Created the September 2016 EPCAMR Staff Agenda and sent along to Staff for our meeting on the 7th
- Completed the September 2016 Monthly 319 Progress Report and EPCAMR Board Report
- Forwarded *John Janick*-Owner of Good Host Plants, Philadelphia, a donation letter receipt for the \$177.50 worth of 71 swamp milkweed plants he contributed towards our **PA DEP EE Monarchs on Minelands: Release the Butterflies! Project**
- Formally requested from *Geoff Shaw*-EC, how much of an additional increase in rent for one year would it cost for the use of the office space outside of the EPCAMR Office near the hall for the two OSMRE AmeriCorps volunteers