



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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September 2017 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- ***Scorched: Mine Fires of NE PA Coal Country*** short film, was selected as a winner to be shown in the Orlando Film and Adirondack Film Festivals
- Helped Earth Conservancy begin to promote the ***Environmental Workforce Development Training Program*** that we are partnering with them and others on in the region funded through the US EPA Brownfields EWT Program; <http://www.earthconservancy.org/workforce-development/>
- Coordinated and held an AMD Tour in the Wyoming Valley for *Dr. Andrea Nerozzi's* Wyoming Seminary Upper School Environmental Science Class on September 13th
- *Parikha Mehta*, photographer, provided EPCAMR with a link to her photo collection that she had taken while on her visit with the Executive Director in August for the Give A Shot campaign; <http://www.parikhamehta.com/blog/2017/10/21/eastern-pennsylvania-coalition-for-abandoned-mine-reclamation-non-profit-photography/>; *Parikha* said she was willing to come back and do a human interest story for her website that we could also then share to our followers and supporters in the region; *Annie Nyborg*, from Peak Design (www.peakdesign.com) will be creating a community folder for the pictures to be uploaded to for all to view
- Attended the Annual Fall PA Council of Trout Unlimited Meeting where the Executive Director was voted in as the Volunteer NE Regional Vice President of the PA Council due to the deep level of involvement with many of the NE Chapters of TU; Provided an update on EPCAMR Projects and partnerships with the Stanley Cooper Chapter of TU
- Received resources from *Branden Diehl*, Foundation for PA Watersheds on the RECLAIM Act that EPCAMR will be providing as educational materials to Senator Bob Casey's Staff related to abandoned mine land impacts within his Senatorial District and on examples of economic redevelopment projects; Requested an inquiry to apply for a convening grant to attend the NAAMLPA Conference in Lexington, KY to present on the PA AML Campaign; Sent a letter to Senator Casey requesting that he oppose the Federal cuts that are being considered for the US EPA and many programs that are directly related to EPCAMR's work on AMD in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and received a response letter

- Provided two events to *Tarsha Scovens*, to be publicized on the PAEE page where an open invitation existed to come and volunteer with EPCAMR and the Executive Director who is also the NE Regional Director of PAEE to create additional awareness about PAEE
- Drafted and submitted a Letter of Support for the SENSE Act (HR 1119) to *Craig Kemper*-Legislative Assistant to Congressman *Rothfus's* Office in Washington DC at the request of *George Ellis*, Executive Director of ARIPPA, our regional partner that are reclaiming abandoned mines
- Attended the Stanley Cooper Chapter Trout Unlimited Meeting, Kingston, PA and provided updates on our EPCAMR Projects in the Solomon Creek and Abraham Creek Watershed
- Sent back to Cornell University Press an agreement for the inclusion of the Executive Director's introspective biography of growing up in the coalfields for a single chapter in an environmental education book with the chapter heading of: ***Returning Orange Waters to Blue: Creating a Culture of Civic Engagement through Learning Experiences*** in a volume currently titled *Civic Ecology: Broader Impacts*, edited by Dr. Marianne Krasny to be published in the Spring of 2018
- Talked with *Carol Parenzan*-Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper, *Lisa Hollingsworth-Segedy*-American Rivers, and *Bernie McGurl*-LRCA about nominating the Lackawanna River as an Endangered River for the 2018 Report; A conference call was set up to discuss the nomination
- EPCAMR Staff attended the ***Wyoming Seminary Founder's Day Program***, Kingston, PA to hear the student presentations on the legacy of coal mining in the Wyoming Valley and it's impacts on the school and region; *Mike* and *Gavin* set up an exhibit and answered technical questions for the students and attendees; Over **460** people were in attendance and EPCAMR's partnership was highlighted by the school
- Informed *Ann Devine*, PA DEP EE Grant Program Coordinator that EPCAMR has already requested an advanced payment of our grant funds for the **\$3000** for the ***Solomon-Plains Elementary AMD EE STEM Program*** at the Plainsville Borehole in the Fall 2017; Selected all the AMD Tour dates with the Wilkes-Barre Area School District's Science Coordinator-*Mike Corcoran* for late October and early November 2017 for the 6th grade class after meeting with all the teachers and explaining the program benchmarks
- Booked the ***Danville Iron Heritage Festival*** for July 21st, 2018 for EPCAMR to attend and set up an AMD Outreach/Awareness Program and Exhibit; *Van Wagner*, local folk art musician will be donating funds for EPCAMR to put on an AMD Tie-Dye Workshop that we've done in the past
- U.S. Senate Majority Leader *Mitch McConnell* (R-KY) and U.S. Representative *Harold "Hal" Rogers* (R-KY-05) introduced the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Reform Act, which would reform the Commission to focus its mission on investing more in the poorest Appalachia communities; <https://www.mcconnell.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=99C571E4-A8A7-4EC7-B797-59E5EF2E2725>
- Conducted a water quality and macro-ID sampling educational program for the entire 6th grade students (~44) at Bear Creek Charter Elementary School, Bear Creek, PA on 10-Mile Run

Technical Assistance

- *Kim Snyder*-PA DEP BAMR provided EPCAMR with a PDF of a potential funding source for future economic development related projects on abandoned mine lands from the federal Economic Development Authority (EDA) for Coal Country; He wasn't sure if an organization like EPCAMR's would qualify; EPCAMR Executive Director to review the background on the grant source and see if it could benefit our organization
- Finalized the NFWF Technical Assistance Grant for **\$49,500** with Clauser Environmental, LLC for the Green Infrastructure Planning/Design Project with the City of Wilkes-Barre, PA for various open space areas
- Provided technical assistance to *Maureen Devine*, Lake Noxen Elementary, who is also setting up a Trout in the Classroom tank for her students
- Provided the City of Wilkes-Barre with the details of the NFWF Chesapeake Bay Technical Assistance Capacity Grants for **Green Infrastructure Planning for Open Spaces in Wilkes-Barre, PA** that EPCAMR is applying for with Clauser Environmental, LLC to obtain a Letter of Support; *Joyce Morrash Zaycowski* provided EPCAMR with a letter in time for submission of the grant; Made final edits to the narrative document and submitted them to *Dr. Aaron Clauser*; Provided an EPCAMR Letter of Support and In-kind matching funds valued at **\$2500** to review mine maps throughout the City and our updated EPCAMR Brochure to include with the submission; Copied *Mike* and *Gavin* on the completed application that was submitted; EPCAMR stands to receive **\$5000** in funds from the total grant budget
- Provided the PAEE Board with research information on costs of utilizing PayPal for online payments for the organization
- Provided the EPCAMR Staff with two research documents and abstracts from *Dr. Elick* from Susquehanna University on the Centralia Mine Fire; *Mike* and the Executive Director are in conversations with *Dr. Chuck Cravotta* and another *Professor Amy Williams* from Towson University, MD that wants to consider going for a NSF Grant or something to do additional research not only on the Centralia Tunnel AMD, but that could include the 3D Mapping of the mine pool and the Centralia Basin
- Followed up with *Ted Naeckel*, American Energy Technologies, LLC, Arizona to discuss his idea for a project proposal for a **Gob Pile Liquefaction Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Project**; Provided him with links and contacts to various funding programs and sources for future follow up should he decide to further pursue the project with the U. of the Grand Canyon; AET, LLC has no PA presence
- Assisted the Huber Breaker Preservation Society with answering some questions from the PA DCED about their reimbursement payment request #3 for the **Anthracite Region Miner's Memorial Park Reclamation Project**; Neal-Lynn, the construction company needs to format their invoice in the way that is acceptable by the PA DCED; Worked with *Tim Connelly*-Tetra Tech to get the paperwork straightened out for the change orders and the standard AIA document for the previous two reimbursements

- EPCAMR was informed by *Bernie Walko*-PA DEP BAMR that our previously submitted PA AML Pilot proposal with Twin Oaks Research Labs for the **Solomon Creek AMD Boreholes Mobile Water Treatment Unit** Demonstration Pilot was not being considered in this round; Followed up with *John Ackerman*, PE and the Project Lead for Twin Oaks to inform him of the decision; EPCAMR and Twin Oaks will be submitting the application proposal to other funding sources later in the Fall 2017
- EPCAMR Staff performed a field investigation with the PA DEP BAMR Office in Newport Township along old Vandermark Road and recorded the water level elevation in an abandoned mine water pump borehole before it was going to be backfilled as a safety hazard

Project Coordination

- *Brad Domitrovitsch*, AES, LLC provided EPCAMR with some mapping of the Mocanaqua AMD Tunnel and surrounding project area for inclusion with our Fall Report to SRBC
- Informed *Jeff Boyer*-River Logic Solutions, LLC that EPCAMR had just received one of the reimbursement payments for **\$50,000** towards the construction costs for the Solomon Creek Dam Removal and Trout Stream Restoration Project and mailed them their payment; Informed *Jeff* that *Ben Lorson* from the PA F&BC had dropped by the site to inspect it and found a few minor issues with two of the cross vanes, where a few boulders had moved due to high flows and gravels and cobbles that had been washed downstream; Mailed *Ben* a large number of photos of the project construction from start to finish for his files on a thumb drive since it is difficult to send high resolution images through e-mail to a state government account; We were going to be discussion solutions to the project at a later date; *Jeff* and *Ben* returned to the site to come up with a few recommendations to fix the minor changes to the structures; Received some positive publicity on the project in the local newspaper; <http://timesleader.com/news/local/670416/project-stabilizes-solomon-creek-in-ashley>;
<http://timesleader.com/sports/670616/outdoors-with-tom-venesky-loss-of-dam-in-solomon-creek-a-challenge-that-can-be-overcome>
- *Matthew Williams*, Dallas, PA and an Eagle Scout candidate is interested in proposing a project to the Boy Scouts of America to assist EPCAMR at the Ashley Borough Park; EPCAMR Executive Director will set up a time with him over the Fall to meet with him at the project site where he is interested in building a kiosk at the entrance to the park, putting together some bird boxes for wildlife habitat that EPCAMR has in storage for the park, conducting a stream cleanup along Solomon Creek in the location of the trout stream habitat improvement project area, and helping to donate funds for a picnic table for the park; Matt was referred to EPCAMR by the Stanley Cooper Chapter of Trout Unlimited, one of our partners on the project
- EPCAMR received our successful completion and close-out letter from the PA DEP EE Program for our **Monarchs on Minelands: Release the Butterflies!** mini-grant
- *Senator Yudichak's* Office informed the EPCAMR Executive Director that we were awarded a 3-year (July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020) PA DEP Non-Point Source Pollution Program grant in the amount of **\$390,000** that originally came from the US EPA Region III, under their Clean Water Act Program; Worked with *Mark S. Grochocki*-Chief of Staff in the Senator's Office to come up with a press release to

be distributed to the media; <http://www.senatoryudichak.com/senator-yudichak-announces-grant-for-eastern-pa-coalition-for-abandoned-mine-reclamation/>

- Provided *Gavin* with a copy of the February 2017 Progress Report on the ***Waterboxx Phase III Research Project***; EPCAMR will be preparing an end of the year report to close out the project in the Winter 2017; Directed *Gavin* to create a close out report by compiling all the data that was collected on the seedling survival rates and monitoring that occurred at the multiple sites around the region so that we can submit it and receive our final reimbursement
- Began reviewing and researching the PA AML Pilot 2017 Program Guidance Document as EPCAMR continues to develop the ***Harry E. Reclamation Pilot Project Proposal*** in Swoyersville Borough; <https://www.osmre.gov/programs/aml/pilotProgramGuidance.pdf>; EPCAMR has received word that our initial draft proposal in July was considered by the PA DEP BAMR and we will need to have a few other meetings to further develop the entire application; Provided our Intern, *Llywellyn* with a copy of the draft grant and background information on the project to catch him up to speed on our efforts
- Began working with *Gabby* and the EPCAMR Staff to work on developing a working draft ***Toby Coldwater Conservation Heritage Planning (CHP)*** grant for the Toby Creek watershed; *Gabby* did some initial research on the watershed and found some resources that will be helpful in the development of the proposal; Followed up with Rep. Kaufer's Office to inform him that we would need additional funding to conduct a full-blown assessment of the entire watershed because **\$5000** will only get us so far in developing the plan, based on a tributary strategy; The CHP grant is due December 15th, 2017; Informed *Tali MacArthur*-PA Council of Trout Unlimited that EPCAMR would be interested in applying for the CHP grant and she gave us the approval to proceed with the application
- Reached out to the new administrator of Highland Manor in Exeter Borough, *Mrs. Jennifer Roberts* to discuss with her having the ability to access the rear parking lot for the upcoming bid showing for the ***Hicks Creek Natural Stream Channel Restoration Project***; Since Highland Manor is under new ownership, EPCAMR is concerned that access is not permitted until we get an authorization from the new administrator, although the previous administrator, *Len Brown*, from Cherry Hill, NJ said that the landowner agreement should still be in effect; Informed *Mike Lower*, PE for Skelly & Loy and Gregg Davis-PA DEP BAMR Project Office that EPCAMR had reached out to Highland Manor and is awaiting a response officially before we can set the Bid Showing date and advertise for the Bid Package
- Worked with *Llywellyn* to seek out quotes from printing and sign companies for a few educational signs that we would like to have made for our Plainsville AMD site under our PA DEP EE Grant that are designed so that they are durable, weather-proof, and general enough to be used at multiple locations

Community Volunteer Coordination

- Registered our 4th Annual Centralia Cleanup with the International Coastal Cleanup website to receive additional supplies and promotional materials through Keep PA Beautiful; Directed *Llywellyn* to begin researching local grocery store chains to obtain gift cards to purchase supplies, snacks, refreshments for the Centralia Cleanup and draft up a letter of request for the donations; Asked *Llywellyn* to find a food vendor willing to donate lunches to the volunteers; Sent an official Donation Request Form for funds to *Gerrity's Market* to *Ms. Kathy Flaherty* at the corporate headquarters in Scranton

- *Ken Price*, freshman student at King's College, Wilkes-Barre, PA requested information on the Centralia Cleanup; Forwarded him our social media event page for the October 21st 4th Annual Cleanup; Rob and Kay Polukis also were interested in participating as volunteers; Provided *Jason Nark*, a freelance report from the Philly Inquirer, who will be joining EPCAMR at the cleanup and doing a write up with details on the cleanup and reference materials and abstracts; Several of Dr. Amy Williams's Geology Club students from Towson University in Maryland will be attending the cleanup; <https://www.facebook.com/events/1014056958678984/>

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- Left a message with *Eric Rosengrant*, PA DEP Moshannon District Mining Office to see if they are interested in working with us to set up an ARD Tour along I-99 or to see if we needed to coordinate with PA DOT for the 2018 **20th Anniversary PA AMR Conference**; Received a confirmation from *Jay Russell*, Graymont Limestone Quarry, in Pleasant Gap, who will e-mail specifics to his Plant Manager about doing a tour; They would be more than happy to provide us with a tour; We will need to give them additional details later; <http://www.graymont.com/en/locations/lime-plants/eastern-us/lime-plant/pleasant-gap> ; Conference call was convened to discuss the 20th Anniversary PA AMR Conference theme, format, and presentations; Discussed a joint conference in 2019 with NAAML and ASMR; Locked in the Contract with the Ramada Inn, State College for June 20 & 21st, 2018
- Participated in a **Green STEMS Honda Grant** Planning Conference call with PSAYDN, several 21st CCLC sites, several Intermediate Units, and Gettysburg College preparing a grant for the Spring of 2018; Reviewed the GLOBE site and focused on the Hydrosphere Training module and forwarded to the EPCAMR Staff; www.globe.gov; Planned for April 2018 through March of 2019
- Prepared a joint presentation that the Executive Director will be making with the help of Anne Daymut-WPCAMR on the PA AML Campaign; Provided Justin Adams, KY Division of AML with the Executive Director biography and copy of the presentation for the Conference; Attended the **2017 NAAML Conference** in Lexington, KY to present on the PA AML Campaign and to obtain information on the National AML Pilot Program as well as the RECLAIM Act; Provided a recap on the NAAML Conference with notes to the Foundation for PA Watersheds and the EPCAMR Staff upon return from the trip
- Confirmed our AMD/AML Watershed Tour date for February 1st, 2018 with *Dr. Elizabeth Hughes-Earth* Conservancy and the EWT Workforce Training students who will eventually be participating in the workforce training and development program; Sent around the date to all EPCAMR Staff to be available to participate and attend

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Accounts and PA Invest Accounts; Completed bi-weekly Payroll Reporting and submitted to OneSource; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register
- Cleared up a Toshiba Business Solutions billing error with *Brooke Test*, for our copier maintenance agreement and declined an extension of the agreement due to an increase in costs and a lack of meeting the minimum usage to warrant the agreement

- Reviewed the PA Budget Proposal to continue to follow where the environmental cuts might be considered and to evaluate their effects on EPCAMR; Worked with *Mike* and *Abbie* to create a “Legislative Alert” to go out to all of our Board Members and volunteers in our monthly newsletter; Provided *Mike* and *Abbie* with an important list of all the House e-mail addresses and contacts for the PA Legislators that voted Yes and NO on the State Budget to raid the environmental funds and other pots of monies to try and balance the budget with a one-time transfer
- Officially offered *Llywellyn Westrick*, King’s College, PA, originally from Maryland, the Fall Watershed Outreach Work Study Internship from September 12th through December 15th, 2017; *Llywellyn* completed his background check applications and forwarded his approved clearances once they came back clean and cleared to volunteer around children for our environmental education programs; Provided *Llywellyn* with a draft template for his monthly reporting requirements; Provided him with a task oriented list of projects for the next few weeks and suggested he begin his Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) Protocol online training once approved by *Phil Thomas* from TU; Suggested he follow up with *Mohammed Almoumin*, another student from King’s and EPCAMR volunteer to begin planning another cleanup in the City of Wilkes-Barre along Dana & S. Pennsylvania Avenue, along the railroad tracks and below High St.
- Worked with EPCAMR Volunteer, *Andrew Friefeld*, former EPCAMR Intern for the Huber Breaker Preservation Society projects, to create his Senior Thesis project around his capstone class at Temple University, Philadelphia, in Landscape Architecture at the “Black Desert” abandoned mine lands area and the Harry E. Reclamation site in Swoyersville Borough, Luzerne County
- Worked with *Bernie McGurl*-EPCAMR President to create a new online e-grants account with a different address for EPCAMR so that we can have him and our Secretary be able to sign electronically for our recently awarded PA DEP EE STEM Grant with the Wilkes-Barre Area School District’s Solomon-Plains Elementary at the Plainsville AMD Borehole in Plains Township, Luzerne County; *Christine Haldeman*, Secretary-EPCAMR was able to sign hers and complete the e-signature process
- Enrolled EPCAMR in www.escrip.com to allow us to be accepted in to the program that will provide an annual check of donated funds based on a small percentage of people’s total receipts to our organization for people who shop at Gerrity’s Market and other affiliated stores and restaurants throughout the year and select EPCAMR as the organization to receive the funds; EPCAMR was approved and another potential unrestricted revenue generated source of funds will now be added to our organization
- Completed *Abbie Keefe’s* and *Rachael Grube’s* OSMRE AmeriCorps yearly evaluation and submitted it to *Kaitlyn Foley*-Conservation Legacy; Made some recommendations on how to improve the second year community service program in terms of Program Management
- Informed the EPCAMR President, *Bernie McGurl*, that *Kelsey Biondo* provided EPCAMR with her two-week notice because she took on a Managerial position in the Restaurant business much closer to home; Discussed options about filling the position with another GIS Technician and how to go about doing that and informing the Board’s Executive Committee
- EPCAMR was informed by Community Aid, Inc. that our recent request for funds to continue our COALS Illegal Dumping Cleanup Program wasn’t able to be funded in this round
- Spoke with *Dan Taroli*-EPCAMR Board Member and Attorney to see how we should approach private entities who are looking to develop more formal partnerships with EPCAMR on abandoned mine reclamation, AMD, or economic development projects; Determined that it should be a broader discussion with the full board at the next quarterly meeting in the Fall 2017