

# EPCAMR



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

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## January 2011 Progress Report

### Highlights

- Provided continuing information to graduate student researching the Anthracite Coal Region and the Huber Breaker Park Project for master's thesis.
- Scanned and edited photographs from past Huber Breaker Preservation Society events to be added to their website, updated with new captions and information.
- Continued monitoring depths of boreholes in the Lackawanna River Watershed.
- Participated in AmeriCorps VISTA Martin Luther King Jr. Day Event at the Wilkes-Barre Blvd. Townhomes collaborating with four other VISTAs.
- Attended Friends of Nescopeck meeting in Conyngham, PA.
- Currently working on re-writing of grant for the Solar Kiln EE program to apply for a Captain Planet Foundation grant.
- Attended webinar on Marcellus Shale monitoring for watershed groups.
- Met with Mike Corcoran and Alana Roberts of PP&L for publicity photos regarding Tree Trout grant.
- Attended presentation by Bob Wolensky and Bill Hastie for a special meeting of the Huber Breaker Preservation Society.
- Attended "Taste of the Summit," a satellite presentation of the Delaware Estuary Science 2011 Environmental Summit.

### Education and Outreach

- EPCAMR was invited by Alana Roberts of PP&L to a photo opportunity with the Kistler Elementary science teachers, Science Coordinator Mike Corcoran, and several students of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class. Photos will be used for future publicity by both the School and PP&L.
- WCDC obtained more supplies to create backdrops for the AMD Avengers Vs. Pollution Posse environmental education comedy skits. The backdrops will be an on-going project throughout the spring, and they will illustrate geological time periods and the layering processes that created coal. Canvas has been cut to size to hang on the portable garment racks that will be used to erect the back drops in schools and other presentations. Velcro fastenings and gesso have been applied to half of the back drop panels to date.

- Received PA fishing license and Scientific Collectors Permit in order for legal collections and micro-invertebrate identification in the field and during Tree Trout and other environmental education programs. Meets requirements of PA Fish and Boat Commission grant.
- WCDC coordinated with four other VISTAs, Krista Hill of Wilkes University/Lands at Hillside Farms, Jeffrey Bowlby of Kings University, Mike Bloom of Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor/Greater Hazelton Area Civic Partnership and Mike Stanton of Schuylkill Headwaters Association for the 2011 Martin Luther King Jr. Day event. VISTAs presented a lesson on non-violence and acceptance of differences to **23** children at the Wilkes-Barre Township Blvd. Townhomes Community Center. The children then made and packaged a total of **76** peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to be delivered to the St. Vincent de Paul Soup Kitchen. Children and VISTAs then made cheerful cards decorated with original art and stickers and put one into every sandwich bag. The lessons of tolerance and acceptance were emphasized with the action of charitable giving, all ethics taught by Dr. King and an important part of honoring his legacy.
- WCDC pitched ideas about the new t-shirt logo idea being designed by Meghan Calderone of Marywood University. Originally suggested as “Orange you glad we’re here?” by graphic designer Paul Haggerty, and then offered on facebook by WCDC, Meghan developed the slogan of “Orange you glad we’re cleaning up AMD?” for new t-shirts to be tie-dyed and future promotional materials.

### **Professional Development**

- Attended Friends of Nescopeck meeting on January 6. WCDC had not yet attended a watershed group meeting, and wanted to personally view the meeting structure and experience some of the decision making process. Obtained information on WREN grants from the meeting, and met President Rick Walck, Carl Frankel, Betsy Doan, and Tim Ferrence. The meeting included a reassessment of the goals of the Friends of Nescopeck in order to emphasize current goals and objectives of the group, and defining its roles in the community. WCDC also received information on Riparian Buffer Zones and the important work that watershed organizations foster in maintaining them. OSM/VISTA Mike Bloom and his fiancée, Tara Snyder, were also in attendance. Mike Bloom has been working on redesigning FoN’s website and as well as documenting historical bridges through the area and providing informational materials for them.
- Attended webinar on water monitoring within the Marcellus Shale region. The seminar detailed the necessary tests to indicate whether the water is being affected by fracking including tests for TDS, barium, and strontium. WCDC also discussed with webinar leader the potential of EPCAMR to offer training to watershed groups to test for these parameters. Webinar leader Candie Wilderman stated she was familiar with EPCAMR and would send information on requirements to become a trainer for watershed organizations throughout the region testing for these specific issues. WCDC will follow up with her to obtain this information.
- Attended “Taste of the Summit” a satellite presentation of the Delaware Estuary Science and Environmental Summit. The main Summit was taking place January 30 – February 2 in Cape May, NJ, with a satellite location for the January 31 sessions in Reading, PA. WCDC attended with OSM/VISTA Mike Stanton and his supervisor Megan Blackmon of Schuylkill Headwaters Association. The Summit emphasized the importance of revitalizing urban water access areas, particularly in underserved areas, and the “sound science” of city greening. Speakers included

U.S. Representative Frank LoBiondo, discussing the high ratio of financial return on investments for environmental improvements; EPA Region 3 Administrator Shawn M. Garvin on the expansion of the Cape May refuge and its positive effects on the surrounding communities and for the state of New Jersey; Commissioner Bob Martin with NJ DEP on the growth of green economy and its future expansion in NJ and the region with new wind turbine factories being built for off-shore wind farms in the Atlantic; Meredith Chalfont, Executive Director of the Hay Creek Watershed on the Schuylkill Scrub spring clean up events coming up in April and May of 2011. 'Pick It Up PA' will be going on from April 17-May 1, with many groups all over the state working to remove litter and refuse from Pennsylvania open spaces. WCDC hopes to organize clean ups in areas of the EPCAMR service region during these times.

- WCDC sat in on meeting with Vincent Carbone, Senior Geologist for HDR Engineering regarding the development of renewable energy on abandoned mine lands. Also in attendance were Jackie Dickman and Mike Dziak of Earth Conservancy. Mr. Carbone approached EC and EPCAMR as sources of knowledge on finding funding for future renewable energy projects.

### **Technical Assistance**

- Composed and completed Quarterly Report as required by the Appalachian Coal Country Team (formerly Watershed Team) as part of VISTA duties. The reports detail all of the individual VISTA's activities for a three month period (October – December 2010), and provide quantifiable assessments of financial contributions by the VISTA to EPCAMR and partnering organizations, as well as EPCAMR's contributions to the VISTA program. The Quarterly Reports from all of ACCT's VISTAs are then compiled and reported to the Center for National and Community Service, who manage the AmeriCorps and VISTA programs, and help ACCT keep funding for their positions and to expand their program. Quarterly Report was edited by EPCAMR Executive Director for accuracy before submission.
- Continued to assist Harvard Graduate School of Design student Jessica Wolff in her research on her master's thesis project. Her project is trying to design sustainable landscapes within the coal region for economic stimulation throughout the depressed region. Currently she is focusing on the efforts of the HBPS to create a park and educational facilities that would be powered by solar panels on the property, and building structures to be heated via geothermal heating harnessed from the mine pool below. WCDC continues to search for grants to fund projects for the Huber Breaker, partnering with Ray Clarke.
- WCDC began editing and re-writing of the Solar Kiln project (originally submitted for a PP&L grant; not awarded) to fit parameters of a grant for up to \$5,000 from the Captain Planet Foundation. To get funding, proposals must:
  - Promote understanding of environmental issues
    - Focus on hands-on involvement
    - Involve children and young adults 6-18 (elementary through high school)
    - Promote interaction and cooperation within the group
    - Help young people develop planning and problem solving skills
    - Include adult supervision
    - Commit to follow-up communication with the Foundation (specific requirements are explained once the grant has been awarded)

Grant applications are due March 31, 2011. WCDC will have completed draft available for Executive Director's editing early in February 2011.

- EPCAMR received a **\$10,000** charitable donation from Bank of America in response to WCDC filling out an eligibility form to receive monies from local bank branches of the conglomerate. The money has no specific allocation restrictions, and will be used for general operating funds.