

WPCAMR Regional Coordinator's Report

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LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

STATE

- **SB111**

Amends the Surface Mining Conservation and Reclamation Act adding language requiring the following to be transferred by the Department of Environmental Protection into the Reclamation Fee O&M Trust Account: civil penalties collected for a violation of The Clean Streams Law which is any manner connected with or related to coal mining activities; and moneys collected as a result of a violation of any rule, regulation or order of the department or condition of any permit issued under The Clean Streams Law which is in any manner connected with or related to a coal mining activity. Further provides all of these civil penalties and moneys shall be used to pay for construction costs and operation and maintenance costs associated with treating post-mining pollution discharges at ABS Legacy Sites.

SB111 was introduced on Jan 18, 2023 and referred to Environmental Resources and Energy in the Senate the same day. No movement on this bill.

- **State Budget**

On August 3, Gov. Shapiro signed the general appropriations bill containing spending amounts for the FY 2023-2024 budget.

- **HCO2102**

Co-sponsorship Memo. PA House Rep Webster (D) will soon introduce a resolution to direct the Joint State Government Commission to study the usage of geothermal energy in abandoned mining locations. By way of background, geothermal energy uses the consistent heat output of the subsurface earth to create energy or regulate temperatures in residential, commercial, and industrial capacities. This resolution was previously introduced in 2022.

<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=41187>

FEDERAL

House Bills

- **Community Reclamation Partnerships Act (CRPA) H.R.1146 (*Previous number: HR 315*)**

This was the third iteration of this bill and still no major movement. A type of Federal Environmental Good Samaritan bill introduced in the House and reported out of committee, most of the work on this language has been done through the Interstate Mining Compact Commission, TU and the States. This continues to be very promising. This bill proposes a way to protect watershed groups working on AMD by amending SMCRA. WPCAMR had supported CRPA but recognizes it needs more work to be relevant to our community. It was reported out of the House Committee on Natural Resources by unanimous consent on April 25, 2022. We still do not know if it will be re-introduced in this Congress.

WPCAMR's Reauthorization Work

With reauthorization having passed and the Infrastructure funding secured along with the STREAM Act passed, the AML Campaign continues to meet with regard to understanding and potentially mitigating issues surrounding implementation of the Infrastructure funding and the STREAM Act.

OTHER ITEMS

Quick Response

We are still expending funds from QR9 and are taking applications for funding to conduct urgent repairs to water quality BMPs, not just for AMD-related projects but other water quality BMPs as well. We won't use up all the QR9 funding so I requested an extension to that grant until December of 2023.

We have received notice from DEP that our Growing Greener application for QR10 has been approved and the contract paperwork was signed.

We also requested permission to apply for several Watershed Cooperative Agreement Program grants from OSMRE to act as a fiscal sponsor. One of these is for WPCAMR itself, to provide funding for materials for Quick Response projects through a WCAP grant. We got word that our

WCAP for Quick Response type projects (mining only) has been approved.

Related to OMR/Quick Response, I have been in discussion with OSMRE staff as they are beginning to put together a grant program specifically for OMR projects using appropriated funds that are proposed for FY24. We will have a zoom meeting with them on August 7th to discuss the Quick Response program and our perceptions of OMR needs across the state.

AMD Passive Treatment Training

I have been working with Jon Smoyer (DEP) and OSMRE staff to arrange for an AMD Passive Treatment 3 day training in September. We have the venue details worked out and are working on some final details. We got an amazing response to our call for registrations. We have 24 participants associated with Conservation Districts and we hope to have another class in the spring of 2024. We received a \$15,000 grant from FPW to cover mileage, lodging, and food for participants.

2023 Statewide AMR Conference

We have begun working on the planning for the 2023 conference. Anne will have more information about our conference and the planning.

Administrative

I continued to perform the usual administrative duties and work with our Treasurer Kelly Williams on account reconciliations, check signing, etc.

I am getting materials together for our annual financial audit/review for Henninger Associates.

Our previous Vice-President, Jared Zinn, Watershed Specialist from Greene Conservation District left there in May to work for DEP Oil and Gas. If you know of someone who wishes to be Vice-President of WPCAMR, please let Andy and Dennis know.

Also, we received \$2,000 ARIPPA award match from our anonymous donor. \$1,800 goes to WPCAMR region ARIPPA award with \$200 going toward admin.

Other Meetings

- PA annual AMR conference planning committee
- Weekly AML Campaign phone calls ongoing.
- Various phone calls from watershed groups and/or others.
- Zoom with OSMRE staff to discuss Quick Response and OMR needs.