

To: HANLON.EDWARD@EPA.GOV,
Date: 09/19/2010 07:08 PM
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT ON FEDERAL REGISTER

PLEASE SEND ME FULL INFORMATION ON PARTICIPATING IN THE TELECONFERENCE ON MOUNTAIN TOP MINING WHICH IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DEVASTATING, DESTROYING ALL PLANTS AND WILDLIFE THAT LIVES ON THE SITES WITH HUGE EXPLOSIONS AND DIGGING. AND WHICH CAUSES SPILLS WHICH WIPE OUT TOWNS AND HOMES IN MUD SPILLS FROM THE WATER POOLS USED BY THESE MINING SITES. I SEE YOU PLAN EXPENSIVE STUDIES ON THIS HOWEVER THERE WERE MANY PICTURES AND REPORTS FROM THE RECENT SPILL IN TENNESSEE WHERE A MOUNTAIN TOP REMOVAL PROJECT HAD MASSIVE RAINFALL AND THE POND WHERE THE SPILLINGS WERE KEPT OVERFLOWED AND BURIED HOMES IN THE VALLEY BELOW IN HORRIBLE MUD PITS. CERTAINLY THEIR WATER SYSTEM WAS CONTAMINATED TO THE UTMOST EXTENT. WE HAVE THE PROOF AND REPORTS FROM THIS INCIDENT. WHY ARE WE SPENDING MORE TAX DOLLARS WHEN THE REPORTS ARE THERE FROM THAT CATASTROPHE. WE NEED TO PHASE OUT MOUNTAIN TOP MINING. IT IS HORRIBLY DEVASTATING TO ALL PEOPLE, WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENT IN AN AREA. Steps and Effects

1. Forests are clear-cut; often scraping away topsoil, lumber, understory herbs such as ginseng and goldenseal, and all other forms of life that do not move out of the way quickly enough. Wildlife habitat is destroyed and vegetation loss often leads to floods and landslides. Next, explosives up to 100 times as strong as ones that tore open the Oklahoma City Federal building blast up to 800 feet off mountaintops. Explosions can cause damage to home foundations and wells. "Fly rock," more aptly named fly boulder, can rain off mountains, endangering resident's lives and homes.
2. Huge Shovels dig into the soil and trucks haul it away or push it into adjacent valleys.
3. A dragline digs into the rock to expose the coal. These machines can weigh up to 8 million pounds with a base as big as a gymnasium and as tall as a 20-story building. These machines allow coal companies to hire fewer workers. A small crew can tear apart a mountain in less than a year, working night and day. Coal companies make big profits at the expense of us all.
4. Giant machines then scoop out the layers of coal, dumping millions

of tons of “overburden” – the former mountaintops – into the narrow adjacent valleys, thereby creating valley fills. Coal companies have forever buried over 1,200 miles of biologically crucial Appalachian headwaters streams

5. Coal companies are supposed to reclaim land, but all too often mine sites are left stripped and bare. Even where attempts to replant vegetation have been made, the mountain is never again returned to its healthy state. Reclamation Problems

Community Impacts

Coal washing often results in thousands of gallons of contaminated water that looks like black sludge and contains toxic chemicals and heavy metals. The sludge, or slurry, is often contained behind earthen dams in huge sludge ponds. One of these ponds broke on February 26th, 1972 above the community of Buffalo Creek in southern West Virginia. Pittston Coal Company had been warned that the dam was dangerous, but they did nothing. Heavy rain caused the pond to fill up and it breached the dam, sending a wall of black water into the valley below. Over 132 million gallons of black wastewater raged through the valley. 125 people were killed, 1100 injured and 4000 were left homeless. Over 1000 cars and trucks were destroyed and the disaster did 50 million dollars in damage. The coal company called it an “act of God”.

Marsh Fork Elementary by Brittany Williams.

The school is in lower left of photo. The clear green patch in the lower left is the football field. The tall cylindrical white object is the coal silo, less than 200 feet from the school. The zigzag is the earthen dam holding the sludge lake (2.8 billion gallons), directly above the school.

Traditional mining communities disappear as jobs diminish and residents are driven away by dust, blasting and increased flooding and dangers from overloaded coal trucks careening down small, windy mountain roads. Mining companies buy many of the homes and tear them down. Dynamite is cheaper than people, so mountaintop removal mining does not create many new jobs.

Mingo County flood in West Virginia
June 2004

Mountaintop removal generates huge amounts of waste. While the solid waste becomes valley fills, liquid waste is stored in massive, dangerous coal slurry impoundments, often built in the headwaters of a watershed. The slurry is a witch's brew of water used to wash the coal for market, carcinogenic chemicals used in the washing process and coal fines (small particles) laden with all the compounds found in coal, including toxic heavy metals such as arsenic and mercury. Frequent blackwater spills from these impoundments choke the life out of streams. One "spill" of 306 million gallons that sent sludge up to fifteen feet thick into resident's yards and fouled 75 miles of waterways, has been called the southeast's worst environmental disaster.

Of course, it's not only the people who suffer. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has written that mountaintop removal's destruction of WV's vast contiguous forests destroys key nesting habitat for neo-tropical migrant bird populations, and thereby decreases the migratory bird populations throughout the northeast

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[Page 56104-56105]From the Federal Register Online via
GPO Access [wais.access.gpo.gov][DOCID:fr15se10-72]

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY[FRL-9201-8] Science Advisory Board
Staff

Office; Notification of Public Teleconferences of the Mountaintop
Mining Panel AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). ACTION:
Notice.-----

-----SUMMARY: The EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) Staff Office
announces two public teleconferences of the SAB Mountaintop Mining
Panel to discuss the Panel's draft reports. DATES: A public
teleconference will be held on Wednesday, October 20, 2010 from 1 p.m.
to 5 p.m. (Eastern Time). Should the Panel need additional time, a
second public teleconference will be held on Tuesday, October 26, 2010
from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time). ADDRESSES: The public
teleconference will be conducted by telephone only. FOR FURTHER

INFORMATION CONTACT: Any member of the public wishing to obtain general information concerning the public teleconference may contact Mr. Edward Hanlon, Designated Federal Officer (DFO), via telephone at (202) 564-2134 or e-mail at hanlon.edward@epa.gov. General information concerning the EPA Science Advisory Board can be found on the SAB Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/sab>. **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C., App. 2, notice is hereby given that the SAB Mountaintop Mining Panel will hold a public teleconference to discuss its draft reports. The SAB was established pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4365 to provide independent scientific and technical advice to the Administrator on the technical basis for Agency positions and regulations. The SAB is a Federal Advisory Committee under FACA. The SAB will comply with the provisions of FACA and all appropriate SAB Staff Office procedural policies. The Panel met on July 20-22, 2010 to review EPA's The Effects of Mountaintop Mines and Valley Fills on Aquatic Ecosystems of the Central Appalachian Coalfields and Field-Based Aquatic Life Benchmark for Conductivity in Central Appalachian Streams draft reports [Federal Register Notice dated May 25, 2010 (75 FR 29339-29340)]. Materials from the July 2010 meeting are posted on the SAB Web site at [http://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/a84bfee16cc358ad85256ccd006b0b4b/\[\[Page 56105\]\]4bb87d5b9c6dea458525770400481586!OpenDocument&Date=2010-07-21](http://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/a84bfee16cc358ad85256ccd006b0b4b/[[Page 56105]]4bb87d5b9c6dea458525770400481586!OpenDocument&Date=2010-07-21).

The purpose of the October 20, 2010 teleconference call and the October 26, 2010 teleconference call if it occurs is to discuss the Panel's draft peer review reports of the two EPA documents.

Availability of Meeting Materials: Agendas and materials in support of these meetings will be placed on the EPA Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/sab> in advance of each meeting. For technical questions and information concerning EPA's draft documents, please contact Dr. Michael Slimak, EPA Office of Research and Development (ORD), at (703) 347-8524 or by e-mail at slimak.michael@epa.gov.

Procedures for Providing Public Input: Interested members of the public may submit relevant written or oral information for the Mountaintop Mining Panel to consider on the topics of this advisory activity.

Oral Statements: In general, individuals or groups requesting an oral presentation at a teleconference meeting will be limited to three minutes per speaker, with no more than a total of one hour for all speakers. Interested parties should contact Mr. Hanlon at the contact information provided above by October 13, 2010, to be placed on the public speaker list for the October 20, 2010 teleconference call.

Written Statements: Written statements should be received in the SAB Staff Office by October 13, 2010 for the October 20, 2010 teleconference call, so that the information can be made available to the Mountaintop Mining Panel for their consideration prior to the teleconference call. Written statements should be supplied to Mr. Hanlon in the following formats: One hard copy with original signature

and one electronic copy via e-mail (acceptable file format: Adobe Acrobat PDF, MS Word, WordPerfect, MS PowerPoint, or Rich Text files). Submitters are asked to provide electronic versions of each document submitted with and without signatures, because the SAB Staff Office does not publish documents with signatures on its Web sites.

Accessibility: For information on access or services for individuals with disabilities, please contact Mr. Hanlon at (202) 564-2134 or e-mail at hanlon.edward@epa.gov, preferably at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting, to give EPA as much time as possible to process your request. Dated: September 8, 2010. Anthony F. Maciorowski, Deputy Director, EPA Science Advisory Board Staff Office. [FR Doc. 2010-22979 Filed 9-14-10; 8:45 am] BILLING CODE 6560-50-P