

Coal River Mountain Watch
PO Box 651 Whitesville, WV 25209
304-854-2182

Dept. of Environmental Protection
601 – 57th. Street
Charleston, WV 25304
Attn. Secretary Timmermeyer

Dear Secretary Timmermeyer,

Feb. 14, 2005

Thank you for meeting with us last Thursday, Feb. 10. As a follow up to our meeting, we understand the following.

We, the citizens are awaiting the announcement of the fish kill and chemical spill in a stream in Prenter, Boone County. We are also awaiting the details of this spill, as this happens often in the coalfields without the citizen's knowledge.

For some reason, the mine spills are not being reported to the media. Either this is because the DEP is not releasing the information to the media, or the media is not reporting. We have contacted TV stations and they have no knowledge of this latest spill.

Either way, this is not serving the people, and it is a danger to the people living in the coalfields. We also know of black water spills that have not been reported. This is not acceptable. The citizens must know when and where these spills occur. It is our lives and property that are at risk.

We request to be included in the results of the investigation of the Sundial / Goals coal dam above Marsh Fork elementary School, as Mr. Browning was an employee that worked on the dam and informed you that the left side of the dam is weak.

We are also looking forward to hearing from you regarding the permit training for the citizens.

On the subject of the state legislators and the DEP, the citizens again ask that when the coal industry, or any other industry has agenda in the legislature to weaken water and or air quality laws or any mining laws for that matter, that we be advised immediately. We will go with the DEP to the legislators to make sure they understand that they have an obligation to protect all citizens of West Virginia, including coalfield citizens. Matt Crum often called upon the citizens to come to the legislative sessions with him for this very same reason. We ask that you be just as diligent in protecting the environment and the people.

Would you please inform us of what new bills the DEP will propose to this years legislature that will protect and improve air and water quality in our state? It is our hope that the DEP is not going to support any attempts to change and/or weaken existing air and water quality laws, thereby pacifying the mining industry and special interest. If so, please advise us now.

We expect the Department of Environmental Protection to be fully aware and conscience of the fact that our health, lives, and property depend upon the actions of this agency. We do not showboat. Our children's lives, our lives, our property are a serious matter.

Although recent actions give us cause for doubt, we certainly hope our state government feels the same way.

Sincerely,

Julia Bonds
Community Outreach Coordinator
Coal River Mountain Watch

Remembering the Past, Working for the Future

CC: Citizen Advocate Pam Nixon

CC: OVEC

CC: Governor Joe Manchin