

Appalachian Citizens Come to DC to Speak Out Against Bush Administration Plan to Increase Mountaintop Removal Coal Mining, Repeal 20 Year-Old Stream Buffer Zone

Media Advisory

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For More Information, Contact

Vivian Stockman, OVEC 304-522-0246

Residents of West Virginia, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Kentucky will be traveling to the nation's capitol on Tuesday March 30th to protest a Bush administration proposal to repeal a 20-year-old ban on disposing of mountaintop removal coal mining wastes into streams. This latest proposal by the administration to weaken environmental limits on mountaintop removal is currently out for public comment. The Department of the Interior's Office of Surface Mining is holding a hearing in DC at 2:00 on Tuesday to take comments on the repeal of the existing regulations.

Coalfield residents and local activists will present testimony at the hearing about how mountaintop removal coal mining is destroying the environment and communities of Appalachia. Representatives will also speak at a press conference/rally at noon on Tuesday before the public hearing.

When: Tuesday March 30

12:00 Noon -- Press Conference in the park outside Interior Department Headquarters, on C Street, NW, between 18th and 19th. *(In addition to coalfield residents, other speakers include Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and U.S. Rep. Frank Pallone)*

2:00 --- Department of the Interior Hearing (2:00 to 4:00 pm) DOI South Interior Auditorium, 1951 Constitution Avenue NW (photo ID required)

Who: Appalachian residents in attendance will include:

Mary Miller and Pauline Canterberry with the Sylvester, W. Va Dustbusters
Maria Gunnoe with Coal River Mountain Watch in Whitesville, W. Va.
Frances Lamberts of the Tennessee League of Women Voters
Vivian Stockman, organizer with Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition of Huntington, W. Va.
Cindy Rank, mining chair with the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
Joe Lovett Executive Director, Appalachian Center for the Economy and the Environment

From 6 to 9 pm on March 30, Interior will also be holding public hearings in Charleston, West Virginia; Greentree, Pennsylvania; Hazard, Kentucky; and Harriman, Tennessee.

For more information about these hearings, **or to arrange to visit coalfield residents affected by mountaintop removal coal mining, please call:**

Abraham Mwaura, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, 304-522-0246

Judy Bonds, Coal River Mountain Watch, 304-522-0246

Jerry Hardt, Kentuckians For the Commonwealth, 606-349-4860

Bill Price, Sierra Club, Environmental Justice Coordinator, 304-854-1179