

Citizens Advisory Council
400 Market Street
P.O. Box 8459
Harrisburg, PA, 17105-8459

Dear Citizens Advisory Council,

I am writing to express my concerns about the findings of the fourth Act 54 Report assessing the impacts of underground coal mining and I support the Center for Coalfield Justice's comments on the report. In evaluating the effects of underground coal mining between 2008 and 2013, this report reveals alarming gaps in policy and a regulatory system which allows widespread destruction of homes, domestic water supplies, streams, wetlands, aquatic life, and damage to ecosystems.

Specifically, I am concerned about:

- The effects of underground mining in the Commonwealth are staggering: the 46 mines operating undermined a total of 31,343 surface acres.
- 230 cases of damage to buildings and homes were confirmed to be the result of longwall mining subsidence.
- Longwall mining resulted in the harm or destruction of more than 39 miles of streams . Only 23% of streams undermined during this period escaped significant flow-loss or pooling.
- Flow disturbances harmed entire ecosystems, leading to: excessive stream vegetation growth, increases in undesirable insects, reduced aquatic insect diversity, reductions in fish populations, habitat space reduction, higher water temperatures, and lower oxygen levels.
- The ability to repair damage to streams that have been undermined and have experienced subsidence impacts remains largely unknown.
- DEP's rampant disorganization of data severely hampers community engagement and enforcement actions.
- Public hearings on this report should be held in coalfield communities to foster meaningful public participation.

These impacts are extreme and unacceptable. As a resident of the Commonwealth, I want clean water, air, and soil, naturally flowing streams and rivers which are protected from the devastating impacts of mining. I ask that the Citizens Advisory Council make the following recommendations to the DEP:

- Address data organizational and management issues by implementing an information system and standards for data that are enforced to facilitate meaningful evaluation of information, accessibility, and transparency.
- Overhaul the permitting process which allows mining companies to simply revise existing permits continuously without meaningfully updating the baseline hydrologic information.
- Adopt an ecosystem view which considers cumulative impacts in its approach to approving and issuing mining permits.
- Full extraction mining should not be permitted under streams.

Sincerely,

Lauren Williams
4655 Louise Saint Claire Drive
Doylestown, PA 18902