

From: hollowtree0511@gmail.com
To: [DEP, MiningComments2016](#)
Subject: Reject the "new" mining rules
Date: Monday, September 12, 2016 6:50:58 PM

September 12, 2016
Cynthia Bertocci

Dear Cynthia Bertocci,

Please deliver these comments to the BEP.

Dear Chairman Parker and members of the Board of Environmental Protection:

Before approving the revised mining rules, ask yourself if you know of one single case, at any time and anywhere in the world, where extensive mining did not lead to any significant damage, or where there was full remediation and the responsible company fully covered all the costs. If you know of such a case, I would like to know about it.

I have personal experience with how mining works. I grew up in Scranton, Pennsylvania, once the coal capital of the country, within a block of an exhausted anthracite breaker and the huge pile of tailings (called culm) it left behind. It was ugly, but our neighborhood was fortunate in that it never caught fire. Many of the piles did, and the fires can burn for decades, stinking, causing respiratory disease, and peeling off house paint; some communities never recover. [See <http://thetimes-tribune.com/news/long-time-burning-mine-fires-widespread-hard-to-douse-1.1695663>]

I know that DEP and the mining companies will say, Oh, that was a different era, that was not Maine, and coal is not the resource here. All very true, yet the basics are the same. Corporations are machines made to make money, and when there is an activity that loses money, they drop it, and they find a way to avoid paying for the consequences, or they go bankrupt and leave the local jurisdictions holding the bag. That is what happened in the coal region. That is what happened with the Callahan Mine, closed to mining in 1972 and still fouling the beautiful Brooksville area. And that is what will happen to Bald Mountain. The only protection an area has is to get an irrevocable bond from the company that is more than sufficient to pay for ALL remediation that may be required. The safeguards in these regulations do not come close to doing that; it is an open question whether any upper bound can be put on the cost of environmental damage that mining could cause. Or whether a price can be put on permanent damage to an area's air, land or water.

The new version of DEP's mining rules is just a warmed over version of the first two, and will do nothing to prevent mining companies from coming in, squeezing out all the profits they can, and leaving a legacy of pollution for Maine to suffer from, and pay for, for generations. And the environment may never recover.

You are the Board of Environmental Protection. Please follow the lead of both the 126th and 127th Legislatures, and reject these mining rules, which protect no one except the mining companies.

Yours truly,

Neil Gallagher
4 STOWE LN
BRUNSWICK, ME 04011-3439