

Pennsylvania's Resolution for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

Whereas, substantial coal mining has occurred in Pennsylvania for over 125 years in part providing the fuel for the United States industrial revolution and for support of two World War efforts, and the industry has been a significant employer of our citizens for most of those years;

Whereas, the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA) imposed on coal operators a fee of 35 cents per ton on surface mined coal and 15 cents per ton on underground mined coal.

Whereas, those fees were sent to the Secretary of Interior for deposit in the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Fund for the purpose of paying for the reclamation and remediation of lands mined prior to 1977.

Whereas, even though those fees were to be spent for reclamation and remediation of lands mined prior to 1977, over \$1.3 billion collected and earmarked for this work remains unspent in the US Treasury as of September 30, 2001.

Whereas, Pennsylvania has an estimated cleanup cost of \$15 billion with over 3,500 miles of streams impacted with heavy metals from mine drainage, such as iron, aluminum and manganese, that can be toxic to human health and has 250,000 acres of scarred landscape containing dangerous hazards such as highwalls and water filled pits.

Whereas, the people in Pennsylvania have the right to safe homes, viable communities, clean water free from abandoned mine drainage.

Whereas, this fund is set to expire in the year 2004 without its reauthorization by Congress.

Whereas, many jobs will be created with the increased spending of these fund.

Resolved that the undersigned watershed association/ interested citizen supports the initiative to reclaim more old mine sites, to clean up more water resources of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and to provide more jobs for the citizens of the Commonwealth and also urges Congress through the Secretary of the Interior to reauthorize the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund and to increase the obligation of monies in the Trust Fund to the state for the purposes for which they were collected.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone (____) _____

Please return to the Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR), 25 North Front Street, PO Box 765, Harrisburg, PA 17108-0765 or fax to (717) 234-7929.

Please copy and distribute this form to other individuals, organizations, and units of government. Contact POWR for additional copies by phone at (717) 234-7910 or e-mail at tschaeffer@pawatersheds.org.