



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy

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Coal Surface Mining Reclamation Regulations to be Amended

RICHMOND, VA – Public comments will be received through October 3, 2008, on proposed amendments to Virginia's Coal Surface Mining Reclamation Regulations, the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) announced today. The amendments would maintain consistency with corresponding federal regulations, allow more natural design of stream restoration channels, and clarify requirements for requesting reviews of decisions not to inspect or enforce. The sections being amended for consistency with federal regulations deal with redistribution of topsoil and topsoil substitutes and measuring success of revegetation efforts on reclaimed mine sites.

The amendments will produce environmental benefits by enabling more successful reforestation of reclaimed mine sites, and more natural stream restoration channels. They will also provide clearer instructions to those wishing to apply for a formal hearing to review the agency's decisions not to inspect or enforce sections of the regulations on particular sites. Benefits of the clarified requirements for requesting a review of decisions not to inspect or enforce include certainty about the deadline for making such requests and the specific part of the agency to which such requests should be addressed.

Written public comments concerning the proposed amendments may be submitted by mail, email or fax to Gavin Bledsoe, Legal Services Officer, Division of Mined Land Reclamation, P.O. Drawer 900, Big Stone Gap, Virginia, 24219; phone (276) 523-8157; fax (276) 523-8141; email Gavin.Bledsoe@dmme.virginia.gov. The public may also comment online using the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall Public Comment Forum at www.townhall.state.va.us. Written comments must include the name and address of the commenter.

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Coal Surface Mining Reclamation Regulations to be Amended - Continued

Comments must be received by October 3, 2008, in order to be considered. A public hearing will be held on September 9, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 219 at the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, Buchanan-Smith Building located above the Mountain Empire Community College campus in Big Stone Gap, VA. Both oral and written comments may be submitted at the hearing.

Special accommodations for the disabled will be made available at the hearing on request. Anyone needing special accommodations for the July hearing should contact the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, Division of Mined Land Reclamation at 276-523-8157 or by calling the Virginia Relay Center TTY/TDD 1-800-828-1120 or 1140 by September 26, 2008.

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