Oral History Interview: Ric McDowell

Ric McDowell

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WEST VIRGINIA STRIP MINING

Public Hearing held by: WV Dept. of Energy

June 28, 1988

Speaker: Ric McDowell

WVSM-8
Statement by Ric McDowell:

My name is Ric McDowell. I live on Harvey's Creek, outside of Hamlin. I'm a member of "Save our Mountains" and "Homeplace".

This hearing tonight is about values. It is about what ought to matter in the lives of people who live in the area of the proposed mine, who live in Lincoln County and who live in our state of West Virginia. And it is about the environment that we all a part of. The environment that we depend on for clean water and clean air; for value for which we do not access in economic terms and so often ignore. The environment value is something which lifts our spirits as people in which affects our ethical and psychological well-being. And it is about the legacy of the land use and values that we leave our children and our children's children. You have heard and will continue to hear a profoundly disturbing list of reasons why no permit should be granted to Black Gold and Black Diamond. The application doesn't meet requirements regarding mountaintop removal operations as specified in section 410. The application is incomplete. The company lists themselves as operators when they publicly stated that they are not going to be the actual operators. There is no estimate of cost per acre for reclamation as required in SUGAR. The application doesn't meet requirements regarding alternative post-mining use as required in section 73. The application does not include a joint venture agreement between Black Gold and Mountain Black Diamond. The application circumvents requirements for achieving approximate original contour. The company has not obtained water discharge rates, flow frequencies, or volumes as they said they would in their ground-water monitoring plant. The application doesn't meet the requirements for variance for approximate original contours, section 1412. The application should have been prepared and certified by a qualified, registered engineer; it was not. Though the coal seam proposed to be mined _____________________ it was considered arctic. The application says treatment facilities will not be required. This is fraudulent. There is no mining plan in the application - a violation. There are no provisions for perpetual treatment of acid seepage. There is inadequate treatment proposed for surface runoff during mining. There are inadequate sediment and pollution control measures. There is not enough stability analysis of the valley fill. There is not enough stability analysis of the area for stacking the overburden. There are no provisions for replacement of surface and ground water that will contaminate by acid mine drainage. The application does not deal properly with the incapacity of Six Mile Creek to take the influence from the mine. Where the application deals with the possible hydraulic consequences of the mining, it does so dimly and casually, failing to address the real concern. The question of 48 on the DR-4 form, the company says that the land does not now offer a variety of uses. This is not true. The applicant has failed to state the outstanding violations. Falling
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