

## THE SITUATION



**Mountaintop removal (MTR) mining creates devastating environmental and health impacts** throughout Appalachia, burying rivers and streams, impairing water quality and destroying wildlife habitat. The Obama Administration is currently developing a Stream Protection Rule to improve environmental protections from MTR mining.

## HOW'D WE GET TO THIS POINT?

**Environmental standards for MTR mining**, such as a 100-foot buffer between mining operations and streams, **have never been strongly enforced**.

## WHY SHOULD AMERICANS CARE?

The process causes immense environmental degradation, and an increasing number of **studies show that living in the vicinity of MTR mines leads to an enhanced rate of cancer, heart disease, and other health problems**. Opposition to MTR mining is at 57%, with 42% in strong opposition, compared to only 20% who support the practice, according to an Earthjustice poll of VA, WV, KY, and TN voters commissioned in 2011.

## WHAT'S THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT?

When streams are destroyed or buried, fish and other wildlife are **immediately killed** and water downstream is negatively impacted by toxic chemicals. Mountains are permanently destroyed and acid mine drainage from mining operations can continue in perpetuity.

## WHAT'S CONGRESS DOING?

Congress is debating blocking the Department of the Interior from issuing the Stream Protection Rule.



**Democrats believe that current regulations are outdated**, and that strong new regulations are required to protect human health and the environment.



**Republicans believe that the administration should not be allowed to issue new regulations** and have repeatedly attempted to block the Department of the Interior from issuing any.



A large coalition of **environmental groups strongly opposes MTR mining**.

## HOW DO WE MOVE FORWARD?

**The administration has issued a proposed Stream Protection Rule, which Republicans have voted to block six times**. The White House is currently reviewing the final rule.

## THE FACTS

Birth defects were **42% higher** from 2000-2003 in MTR mining counties compared to non-MTR Appalachian counties (Environmental Research)

Approx. **2,000** miles of Appalachian streams have been **lost or spoiled due to MTR mining** (EPA)