



Citizens Advisory Council

to the Department of Environmental Protection

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 23, 2015

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DEP Citizens Advisory Council Invites Public Comments On Act 54 Underground Coal Mining Impact Report

Harrisburg (January 23, 2015)- The Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is now accepting public comments and will accept public testimony during its March 17 meeting on the 2008-2013 Underground Coal Mining Impact Report required by the state's Bituminous Mine Subsidence and Land Conservation Act (Act 54).

The report includes information that documents and assesses the surface impacts resulting from both longwall and traditional room and pillar underground bituminous coal mining, including damage to surface structures and impacts to aquatic life, pH and conductivity of streams and the loss of domestic water supplies from mining in Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria, Clearfield, Elk, Greene, Indiana, Jefferson, Somerset and Washington counties.

The report, the fourth in a series required under Act 54, was prepared by the University of Pittsburgh and reviewed by DEP staff and released on December 30. DEP is required to submit the impact report to the CAC, the General Assembly, and the Governor every five years. Three previous Act 54 reports, also reviewed by the CAC, covered 1993 through 2008.

The University was selected by DEP to complete the report due to the expertise of its faculty and research staff on all aspects of the effects of mining-related subsidence.

"Ensuring the public has the opportunity to provide input on the findings and conclusions included in the Act 54 report is critical to the Council," said Council Chairman Terry Dayton. "The CAC is very interested in hearing the public's perspectives on the report and encourages the public to share its comments with Council."

Staff from the University of Pittsburgh will provide a presentation on the report and its findings at the CAC's next public meeting on February 17. The meeting is open to the public.

The CAC has reserved two-hours on its March 17 meeting agenda to accept public

testimony on the Act 54 report. Pre-registration is encouraged to reserve a time to testify. Individuals presenting testimony to the CAC will be asked to limit the duration of their presentation to accommodate all who have pre-registered to testify.

Organizations are encouraged to designate one representative to provide testimony. Individuals who do not pre-register may testify as time allows on the CAC's meeting agenda. Individuals providing testimony are encouraged to submit a written copy of their testimony to the CAC.

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To pre-register to testify, contact Michele Tate, Executive Director of the CAC, by March 9 by calling 717-787-8171 or by sending an email to: mtate@pa.gov

Individuals in need of accommodations, as provided for in the Americans with Disabilities Act, should contact the CAC to discuss their needs at 717-787-8171 or through the Pennsylvania AT&T Relay Service at 800-654-5984 (TDD) or 800-654-5988 (voice users).

The public is also invited to submit written comments on the Act 54 report to the Council by March 31. Comments can be sent by mail to: DEP Citizens Advisory Council, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 13th Floor, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8459 or sent by email to: mtate@pa.gov.

The Council will use the comments in its own review of the Act 54 report and is expected to issue its assessment and recommendations on the report in April.

The Act 54 Report (2008-2013) is accessible on DEP's website at: <http://goo.gl/nF54zB>.

CAC meetings are held in Room 105 of the Rachel Carson Building in Harrisburg.

The 18-member Citizens Advisory Council is appointed by the Governor, Senate and House and was created in statute to advise the Department of Environmental Protection on environmental issues affecting Pennsylvania..

For more information, visit the DEP Citizens Advisory Council webpage at: <http://goo.gl/aydPm0>.

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