



Citizens Advisory Council
to the Department of Environmental Protection

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DEP Citizens Advisory Council Schedules Additional Public Hearing in Southwestern PA on Act 54 Underground Coal Mining Impact Report; Extends Public Comment Deadline until April 14, 2015

Harrisburg (February 26, 2015) – The Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection announced today it will hold an additional public hearing to accept testimony on the 2008-2013 Underground Coal Mining Impact Report required by the state’s Bituminous Mine Subsidence and Land Conservation Act (Act 54).

The hearing will take place on March 27, 2015, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at DEP’s California District Mining Office, Monongahela Conference Room, 25 Technology Drive, California Technology Park, Coal Center, PA 15423. An additional hearing on the Act 54 Report, scheduled for March 17, 2015, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in Room 105 of the Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, will take place as previously scheduled.

Pre-registration for the hearing scheduled on March 27, 2015, is encouraged to reserve a time to testify. Individuals who do not pre-register may testify at the hearing as time allows. Organizations are encouraged to designate one representative to provide testimony. Testimony is restricted to 10 minutes per speaker and is limited to comments on the Act 54 Report only, including the data, analysis and findings included in the report. Individuals are encouraged to submit a written copy of their testimony to the CAC.

To pre-register to testify at the March 27, 2015, hearing, contact Michele Tate, Executive Director of the CAC, by March 19, 2015, at 717.787.8171 or by email at mtate@pa.gov.

The 2008-2013 Act 54 Report is the fourth in a series required under 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 was prepared by the University of Pittsburgh and reviewed by DEP staff prior to its release on December 30, 2014. 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.

In addition to accepting public testimony, the CAC is inviting the public to submit written comments on the Act 54 report and is extending the public comment period deadline to April 14, 2015. Comments may be sent by mail to: DEP Citizens Advisory Council, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 13th Floor, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8459 or by email to: mtate@pa.gov.

The CAC 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 May 2015.

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

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 Citizens Advisory Council was created by statute to advise the Department of Environmental Protection on environmental issues affecting Pennsylvania. The CAC is comprised of 18 members who are appointed by the Governor, Senate and House. CAC meetings are held in Room 105 of the Rachel Carson State Office Building in Harrisburg.

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

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