



pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

SECRETARY

December 22, 2014

Ms. Michele Tate
Citizens Advisory Council
Rachel Carson State Office Building
P.O. Box 8459
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8459

Dear Ms. Tate:

I am pleased to present you with one paper copy and one compact disk of a report titled, *The Effects of Subsidence Resulting from Underground Bituminous Coal Mining, 2008 – 2013*. This report, which is required by Section 18.1 of the Bituminous Mine Subsidence and Land Conservation Act (BMSLCA), was prepared by the University of Pittsburgh on our behalf.

The report describes the effects of underground mining during the period August 21, 2008 to August 20, 2013. This is the fourth report prepared pursuant to Section 18.1, which was added to the BMSLCA by statutory amendment in 1994. Section 18.1 requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to compile information from permit applications, monitoring reports, enforcement actions and other appropriate sources and to analyze this information, utilizing the services of recognized experts, for the purpose of determining, to the extent possible, the effects of underground mining on surface structures and features of water resources, including sources of public and private water supplies. Section 18.1 further provides that an analysis of this information and any relevant findings be presented in the form of a report to the Governor, the General Assembly and Citizens Advisory Council (of DEP) at five-year intervals commencing in 1993.

The reporting requirement in Section 18.1 was added in conjunction with other statutory amendments that effectively changed the focus of Pennsylvania's subsidence regulatory program in 1994. These amendments imposed new provisions requiring mine operators to repair or compensate for subsidence damage to many different types of structures and to replace water supplies affected by their underground mining operations. The amendments also repealed former provisions that afforded absolute protection to dwellings in place on April 27, 1966, and gave property owners the right to purchase coal support for their structures. The reporting requirement in Section 18.1 was included to allow the Governor, General Assembly, and Citizens Advisory Council to evaluate the effects of the 1994 amendments.

The University of Pittsburgh has done a commendable job of analyzing the information contained in DEP files and databases and gathering supplemental information needed to assess the effects of underground mining. The University was selected to perform these services because it employs faculty and research staff with the expertise in biology, geology, hydrology, and other fields germane to these analyses. The use of University researchers also presented an opportunity to have these analyses performed in a truly independent manner.

Ms. Michele Tate

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I trust that you will find the report informative. Copies of this report will be made available to the general public through DEP's Web site and on compact disks (CDs).

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Aunkst". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "A".

Dana K. Aunkst
Acting Secretary

Enclosure