

# SUPPORT PUBLIC LANDS HYGIENE. STOP UNLIMITED MINE WASTE DUMPING ON PUBLIC LANDS.

## 1872 Mining Law Fact #21:

*Protecting  
Communities  
and the  
Environment*



**The 1872 Mining Law is a pretty good deal for the mining industry – with one exception. Although the law allows multinational mining companies to take billions in publicly owned minerals without payment to the taxpayer, although the law contains no environmental standards, although the law has resulted in thousands of miles of polluted streams, although the law has allowed the mining industry to abandon hundreds of thousands of mines ...it does contain one provision in the public interest.**

**Known as the "millsite" provision after the type of land involved, this part of the mining law limits the amount of public land the mining industry may use to dump its toxic mine waste. Although contained within the letter of the law, the millsite provision was unenforced until 1999 -- when a Congressional compromise allowed the Interior Department to begin limiting toxic mine waste dumping for new mines.**

**Now, the Bush Administration is considering reversing the Interior Department's interpretation of the millsite provision – and allowing the unlimited use of public land for the disposal of toxic mine waste.**

**Apparently, the Bush Administration sees nothing unhygienic about toxic dumping on public lands.**

1612 K Street, NW  
Suite 808  
Washington, D.C.  
20006

*Telephone:*  
202.887.1872

*Fax:*  
202.887.1875

*Email:*  
mpc@mineralpolicy.org

*Website:*  
www.mineralpolicy.org

***Part of a series on the 1872 Mining Law, highlighting impacts on taxpayers, community health, and water resources—and the need for meaningful reform.***

*For more information contact Lauren Pagel at (202) 887-1872 x 207.*

*August 07, 2003*