



STOP THE ROLLBACKS ISSUE *By Alan Septoff*

This is not a horror story, although it could be. This is not a fairy tale, although we hope it has a fairy tale ending. This is the continuing story of the “3809” environmental mining regulations under the Bush Administration. It has ups, it has downs, a villain, and a hero (many heroes, actually). No dragon. And this is how it goes.....

After four years, dozens of public hearings, thousands of public comments, and five attempts by mining industry lobbyists to kill



“One of the greatest honors I’ve ever had is that I hold the seat of Gaylord Nelson, the man who founded Earth Day. When he called me to congratulate me on my victory in 1992 he said ‘just do one thing, reform the 1872 mining law’ that was the only instruction.”
Senator Russ Feingold
(D-WI) at (9May) StoptheRollbacks Press Conference.



MPC flew in over 20 community leaders from the West and other states in an effort to bring to members of Congress, the Bush Administration, regulators, and the press the message that they want to leave the new, stronger mining regulations in place. These community leaders included ranchers, farmers, business owners, academics, tribal leaders, mining experts, and conservationists.

them, the new, improved 3809 environmental mining regulations finally became effective at 12:01am on January 20th, 2001 — Inauguration Day.

For those readers not familiar with regulatory minutiae, the 3809 regulations are the only federal rules written specifically to protect BLM managed, publicly owned lands from irresponsible hardrock mining practices. That’s 260 million acres worth of public land (equivalent in size to all the states along the eastern seaboard, minus Connecticut and Maryland), and concentrated mostly in the Rocky Mountain West and Alaska. They’re nicknamed “3809” because that’s part of their official name: the mining regs are located at title 43 Part 3809 in the Code of Federal Regulations.

The 3809 regs were first drafted in the late 1970’s and enacted in 1980. Although 20 years might not seem like a very long time, for the mining industry it has been an eternity. Since 1980, the hardrock mining industry has widely adopted chemical leach technology that

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Letter From the President

With the Bush Administration's proposal to rollback the current mining safeguards, that all of you worked so hard to put in place over the past four years, we're once again fighting over the most basic protections for the environment, for taxpayers, and for our public lands.



Here's what we're fighting for—

- Requiring mining companies to pay to cleanup their own waste and reclaim mined lands.
- Minimal environmental safeguards that would help keep our water clean from mine pollution.
- The ability to “say no” to a mine that would cause permanent harm to environmental, scientific, or cultural resources.

That's it. Nothing controversial, just commonsense safeguards that should already be in place.

Yet an Administration that came in making promises to listen to all voices, it appears to listen to just one voice, the voice of the mining industry.

Here at Mineral Policy Center we decided to make every effort to make sure that the Bush Administration and Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton heard from other voices. The public's voice.

We asked people across the country and in the West to speak out on this issue. And they did, in record numbers. During the short forty-five-day comment period, over 40,000 people sent in comments to the Administration asking the administration to leave the current mining rules in place and “stop-the-rollbacks.” As far as we know that's a record. The Department of the Interior received more comments on this issue than on any other issue, ever!

We also assisted community leaders from across the West in their efforts to meet with Secretary Norton. Yet despite the fact that 20 people—ranchers, farmers, business people, academics, native American leaders, conservationists, elected officials—flew across the country, the Secretary was unwilling to meet with them.

With the support of tens-of-thousands of people across the West and in all corners of this country, we plan to win this fight and many others. We will win for the simple reason that reform of the 1872 Mining Law is long overdue and we have the voices of the people on our side.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen D'Esposito". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Stephen D'Esposito
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Campaign
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President Emeritus



General

- The U.S. is the world's leading mining nation, producing a wide variety of core commodities and minerals including gold, copper, silver, lead, zinc, and molybdenum. It produces nearly all major metals, except manganese and titanium.
- Mining contributed \$5.5 billion to U.S. Gross Domestic Product in 1999.

#1 Toxic Polluter

- Mining is the single largest toxic waste producing industry in the nation, the EPA estimates it has contaminated 40% of watersheds in the western U.S.
- Mining accounted for 17 of the top 20 toxic releasing facilities in the U.S. in 1998, according to the EPA's Toxics Release Inventory (TRI).
- Mining is responsible for slightly less than half (3.6 billion pounds) of all toxic releases in 1998 (7.4 billion pounds) by all U.S. industries combined.
- Mining is the largest releaser of arsenic. The mining industry reported releasing 585 million pounds of arsenic and arsenic compounds, 97 percent of all arsenic-related releases.
- Mining has polluted 12,000 miles of U.S. rivers and streams and 180,000 acres of lakes.
- The estimated cost to clean up past mining damage is \$32 to 72 billion, which under current law, will be paid by taxpayers.
- Mining is responsible for the largest hazardous waste site in the U.S.: the four contiguous Superfund sites in the Clark Fork River Basin of Montana. The Anaconda Smelter at Mill Creek, the Milltown Reservoir, Silver Bow Creek and East Helena cover about 90 square miles and encompass two entire cities Butte and Walkersville. The area contains millions of cubic yards of tailings, slag, and flue dust and billions of gallons of arsenic-laced groundwater and surface water. Arsenic and other heavy metals have been detected in soil and water.

General Mining Law of 1872

- The General Mining Law of 1872 – was signed into law by President Ulysses Grant on May 10, 1872. It regulates the mining of hardrock minerals (non-fuel minerals such as gold, copper, zinc, lead and silver). The law was enacted, in part, to promote settlement of the West by pick-and-shovel prospectors.
- Under the law, anyone discovering a “valuable mineral deposit” on open public lands has a right to mine it, regardless of the land's other value and may patent (purchase) the public land and minerals for \$5 an acre or less.
- This patenting process has been used to sell more than 3.2 million acres of public land, an area about the size of Connecticut, at giveaway prices.
- About 432 million acres of federal land is currently subject to the Mining Law of 1872. More than 730 patented claims are located in national parks, totaling 21,000 acres.
- Under the law, the U.S. charges no royalty for the value of the minerals extracted from public lands — the U.S. is the only country in the world that gives its minerals away for free.
- There are more than 225,000 active mining claims in the United States.
- There are more than 550,000 abandoned hardrock mines nationwide.

Reform Barometer



 = On Target  = Neutral  = Needs Fixin'

CHRONOLOGY

of a Good Decision, Overturned?

THE HISTORY OF THE "3809" MINING RULE

The Bush administration has repeatedly characterized the current environmental mining rules as "last minute" Clinton regulations. The chronology below indisputably refutes that claim. In fact, the stronger environmental mining rule finds its origins in 1991 under the *first* President Bush.

- November 1980** ■ Old mining regulations are published.
- November 1982** ■ Promised review of effectiveness of old mining rule fails to occur.
- October 1991** ■ Bureau of Land Management (BLM), under the first Bush Administration announces that it will review and update the rules.
- December 1991** ■ Four public hearings held in Anchorage, Denver, Reno, Spokane.
- December 1992** ■ BLM task force begins, but never completes, revisions.
- December 1997** ■ Secretary Babbitt announces that he will restart rulemaking.
- Feb – April 1997** ■ BLM consults with states and other interested parties.
- May – June 1997** ■ Public hearings held in 11 western cities and Washington D.C.
- April – July 1997** ■ BLM consults with states and other interested parties.
- September 1997** ■ Congressional rider delays new regulations proposal until November '98 rather than planned date of April 1998.
- February 1998** ■ BLM publishes first "discussion draft" of new mining rules.
- August 1998** ■ BLM publishes second "discussion draft" of new mining rules.
- October 1998** ■ Second congressional rider delays new regulations until approximately September 1999 and requires National Academy of Sciences study.
- February 1999** ■ Draft rule finally published in Federal Register. Public comment period begins.
- March 1999** ■ 16 public hearings held in western states and Washington D.C.

COVER STORY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

enables a mining company to transform mountains into craters, using cyanide and sulfuric acid. In part because the 1980 version of the regulations weren't written to address modern techniques, the environmental impacts have been devastating. By 2000, the last year the old rules were in effect, the EPA estimates that the mining industry has polluted 40% of the headwaters of Western watersheds.

The new, stronger environmental mining regulations were written specifically to deal with the modern mining industry. Although they are not perfect, they would improve environmental and taxpayer protection in three ways: (1) they would require mining companies to pay to clean up their own messes, the old rule left taxpayers potentially liable for billions in mining cleanup costs; (2) they would protect precious surface and groundwater resources, the old rules contained no environmental standards at all; (3) they would prevent the most irresponsible mine proposals from ever becoming actual mines, under the old rules BLM claimed they could not deny a mine proposal under any circumstance — even if it would pollute an adjacent National Park, or a town's drinking water supply.

So, back to our story. The modernized, stronger 3809 regs went into effect on

January 20th, hours before George W. Bush took the oath of office.

The rules almost didn't go into effect last January. The mining industry sued in federal district court but lost a preliminary decision, thanks in part, to a legal intervention by the MPC legal team of Jim Dougherty, Roger Flynn and Jeff Parsons at the Western Mining Action Project). On January 19th, the court ruled it wasn't in the public interest to prevent the new mining rules from going into effect.

That the rules became effective before George W. Bush became President proved very important. The day after George W. Bush became President, he tried to block all new environmental regulations by executive fiat. However, because the mining rules were in effect before he took office, he couldn't simply overturn them with the stroke of a pen.

On March 23rd, President Bush announced a new tactic to repeal the environmental mining rule — a new, questionable fast track rulemaking with the express intent of repealing the new rule and replacing it with the weak, inadequate, 1980 rule.

The Bush Administration justification for the mining rule rollback was to alleviate the "uncertainty" the rule was causing the mining industry. They ignored the fact that the new rule already went through a four-



"The amount of subsidies the hard rock mining industry receives is unprecedented even for Washington. It is one of the only industries that is subsidized from start to finish. They get gold for free, they buy taxpayer owned land for the price of a McDonald's hamburger and to top it off, taxpayers foot the bill for mine cleanup. When is this going to end?"

Jill Lancelot

Legislative Director and Co-Founder
of Taxpayers for Common Sense



“A few weeks ago the Bush Administration stripped our ability to keep arsenic out of our water. This week they’re increasing the ability of the mining industry to put arsenic into our water.”

Rep. Jay Inslee (D-WA)

year public comment process and that a federal court decided it wasn't in the public interest to block the new rule.

During the 45-day comment period the Bush Administration got the public comments they said they wanted. Over 40,000 people commented in support of the strong environmental mining rule and against the proposed mining rule rollback. According to BLM staff, it is the most comments they've received on a rulemaking in the past five years, and perhaps ever.

Besides people writing letters, sending emails, and mailing post cards, some truly hardy souls flew all the way out to Washington. People like Bev and Don Newhouse from Arizona, whose town would be showered by flying debris from the explosives used at a proposed mine adjacent to their town. People like Alan and Stephanie Shammel from Montana, whose ranch has been polluted and dewatered by an existing gold mine. (See MPC's Activists Profiles).

Despite the thousands of miles traveled by these people to come to Washington D.C., Secretary of Interior Gale Norton refused to meet with them.

Although the Bush Administration didn't want to hear from citizens impacted by irresponsible mining, Congress did. Over a span of four days in early May, the citizen activists met with dozens of members of

Congress — telling Senators and Representatives why the Bush mining rule rollback is such a colossally bad idea.

And, Congress listened! In June, the House of Representatives voted to prevent the Bush Administration from repealing the environmental mining rule by amending the bill that funds the Department of Interior. Although the House vote is not the final word, it sent a strong political message to President Bush — 30 Republicans voted to tell their President that weak mining regulations are a bad idea.

The constant public pressure appears to be having some impact on the Bush Administration. They recently announced their intention to keep the part of the rule that requires the mining industry — not taxpayers — to pay to clean up environmental messes. Unfortunately, they remained silent on the parts of the rule requiring better environmental protection. That's where we are now.

The story is not over, the ending remains to be written. As of today, the stronger mining rule remains in effect. But the Bush Administration may eviscerate or weaken its environmental provisions unless Congress prevents it from doing so. The Bureau of Land Management has not yet considered all of the 40,000 public comments urging President Bush to keep the strong environmental mining rule. We expect some sort of resolution by the fall. Stay tuned. 

- March 1999** ■ *Date BLM originally intended to publish updated mining rule.*
- February 1999** ■ Third congressional rider blocks issuance of new regulations until after NAS study is completed.
- September 1999** ■ NAS study completed.
- October 1999** ■ BLM reopens public comment period.
- November 1999** ■ Fourth congressional rider requires new mining rules be “not inconsistent” with NAS study findings.
- September 2000** ■ Fifth congressional rider, restates that new mining rules be “not inconsistent” with NAS study findings.
- November 2000** ■ Final rule published on November 21, 2000 (rule to be effective in 60 days).
- December 2000** ■ The National Mining Association files suit to block and overturn the new rules on December 15th.
- January 2001** ■ The National Mining Association files for a preliminary injunction on January 3rd.
The Newmont Mining Company files suit to overturn the new rules on January 5th.
On January 16th the Mineral Policy Center files a motion in support of the Department of Interior's (DOI) position on implementing the new regulations and argues that they should be even stronger.
- January 2001** ■ NMA loses its request for a preliminary injunction in Federal District Court.
- January 2001** ■ The State of Nevada sues DOI over the new regulations.
- January 2001** ■ On January 20th the new rules go into effect.
- March 2001** ■ Four weeks later on March 23rd, Secretary Norton proposed suspending the new rules and replacing them with the old rules. She asks for public comments on this over a 45-day period.
- May 2001** ■ The BLM receives over 40,000 public comments in support of current rule.
- July 2001** ■ In July, or soon thereafter, Secretary Norton will announce her decision.

Colorado

Ignacio Rodriguez lives right next to the Alamosa River, in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado. In 1992 the Summitville mine, at the headwaters of the Alamosa, was abandoned in the middle of the winter, and cyanide was released from the improperly designed, built and regulated heap-leach pad. That spring, huge amounts of acid mine drainage, and the associated toxic metals, raced down the river past Ignacio's home. The river, in which the area's children had played in and caught fish in for over 100 years, was killed. It remains effectively dead to this day. As a result, Ignacio became heavily involved in the community effort to ensure proper clean up and reclamation of the mine site. A true gentleman, Ignacio Rodriguez has become a passionate spokesperson and activist for those working to ensure the mining industry takes responsibility for its' actions.



The EPA estimates cleanup costs to be between \$175 and \$250 million at the Summitville Mine in Colorado.

"It's incredible that President Bush & Secretary Norton are so willing to take such a giant step backward. A group of us came to Washington to protest this action to her and our congressional delegations. In spite of all her pronouncements about seeking public input, she has refused to meet with us after repeated requests."
—Ignacio Rodriguez

Wendy Mellott grew up in the Wallace area of northern Idaho, in a mining family. She moved with her family to southern Colorado when her father became the foreman at the old underground Summitville mine. Wendy married a miner, and is proud of her mining heritage. Yet when the open-pit Summitville mine was abandoned in 1992, after the Alamosa River was killed during a spill, she took a job with the Summitville Technical Assistance Group (TAG), which worked to ensure proper remediation of the site. Wendy is actively helping to organize a Statewide Mining Activist Network which would serve as an educational and advocacy group for people around the state of Colorado that have been affected by open-pit cyanide heap leach mining.



"I am not anti-mining, it has been the vehicle in which I was raised and my husband and I raised our family. I truly believe that there is a place for responsible mining and hope to be a positive influence on helping to find the balance between industry and the environment."
—Wendy Mellott

New Mexico

Kathleen Tsoie is native American and lives in northwest New Mexico. She became involved in mining

issues after watching her relatives suffer health problems and even death, due to uranium mining in the area. This activity has been going on since World War II, and is all too common. Kathleen helped compile a book of oral histories of these people ("The Truth Comes in the Wind and Rain"). In it there are the stories not only of friends and relatives, but also her own story.



Arizona

Andy Bessler became involved in the fight to save the San Francisco Peaks of northern Arizona from a pumice mine that was supplying pumice to the stone-washed jean industry. The Grand Canyon Chapter of the Sierra Club recognized his passion and talent and hired him. In 2000 the mine was purchased by the Forest Service, and the Peaks were withdrawn from future mining. Andy has since stayed on to work with the many tribal communities in the area as a Sierra Club environmental justice organizer. Currently he works with Hopi, Navajo, and



Above: Andy Bessler and Don Newhouse
Below: Andy and Bucky Preston



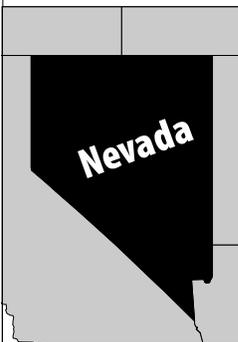
Acoma Pueblo folks on coal and uranium mining issues.

Bucky Preston

is a traditional Hopi, and also worked on the campaign to save the San Francisco Peaks. Currently, Bucky is fighting a proposal that would drain the aquifer beneath Hopi land to slurry coal from the Black Mesa area of northern Arizona to a power plant in Page, Arizona. Bucky has seen the devastation that mining can cause to important cultural and ecological resources, and supports the right of people and governments to say no to harmful mining proposals.

Bev & Don Newhouse from Yarnell Arizona, nearly had their town irrevocably changed and essentially destroyed by a

short-term gold mining project. The Yarnell Gold Mine would blast an open pit less than a quarter mile from the small town composed primarily of retired people. It would operate 24 hours a day, destroying the rural character and clean air that they and most of their neighbors moved to Yarnell to enjoy. While the project is on hold now, the rollback of the 3809 regulations could allow the project to move forward. As proud Republicans, and persistent activists on mining issues, the Newhouses are dismayed at the actions of the Bush Administration.



Lois Snedden

lives in Reno Nevada. An active member of both the Sierra Club, where she served on the National Committee, and the Republicans for Environmental

Responsibility, she has worked on mining issues for many years. Living as she does in a state with many examples of harmful mines, she fully understands the need for sensible and strong regulations on the industry.

Tom Myers

a PhD in Hydrology, is the director of Great Basin Mine Watch, a regional group that works to protect the resources of the Great Basin from irresponsible mining practices.

While Tom works on many mining issues, central to his current work are the dewatering of the Humbolt River and its' tributaries by the massive gold mines on the Carlin Trend in northeast Nevada, the Pipeline mine and others that threaten to destroy the Crescent Valley, and the toxification of Nevada's groundwater by poorly regulated closures of heap leach facilities throughout the region.

Bernice Lalo

works for the Battle Mountain Band of the Western Shoshone,

where she is also a tribal member. Bernice is a strong voice for the needs of the Western Shoshone, who have lived in the region of Nevada for thousands of years. She is seeking to prevent irresponsible mining practices like those that have led to problems over the past 100 years. Bernice is on the board of Great Basin Mine Watch.



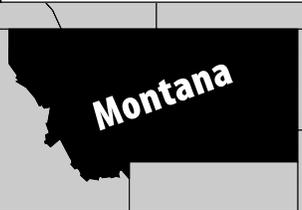
Edie & Jim Harmon

live in southern California, in the desert of Imperial County. The Harmons worked for many years to prevent the destruction of the beautiful Indian Pass area of the California Desert that was the site of the proposed Imperial Project gold mine. In large part due to Edie's work, and work of the Quechan people from the neighboring Fort Yuma Reserva-

(From L to R) Bernice, Edie, Jim, Tom & Lois at a press event outside the nation's capitol.

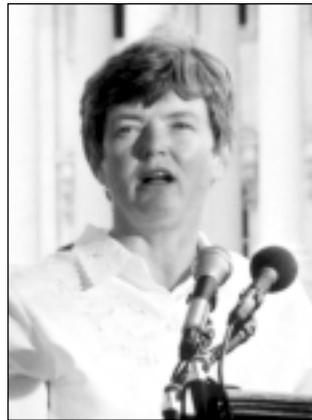


tion, the mine was denied by the BLM earlier this year. The Harmons also work to prevent irresponsible mine expansions at the Briggs and Mesquite Mines in southern California. Working as a volunteer activist for the San Diego Chapter of the Sierra Club, Edie is a hero in the community.



Alan and Stephanie Shammel

are cattle ranchers from Central Montana. Their family ranch is directly below the Canyon Resources Kendall Mine, an open pit cyanide heap leach mine. Despite the objections of the EPA the mine was permitted in 1989 by the BLM and the Montana Department of State Lands. In 1993 water contamination was detected around the mining operation. In 1995 the Shammel Family was notified of contamination on their family ranch. Efforts to control the water pollution are systematically dewatering the Shammel Ranch and other ranches below the mine. The CR Kendall is still in operation but is having financial difficulties. The state Department of Environmental Quality has seized the cleanup bond which is only \$1.89 million. Actual reclamation costs are estimated at \$14 million (including water treatment for at least 100 years). All this for a mine that operated for six years.



"My family ranch is below a cyanide heap leach mine. The mine has polluted and dried up some of our water. It is too late for us but the new regulations may help others."

—Stephanie Shammel

Kit McGinnis

grew up on the Cal-Creek Ranch outside of Sheridan, MT and also on the Bellota Ranch in Arizona. Over the past few decades of affiliation with those ranches, she has witnessed many abuses of both deeded and public lands by mining companies. One ongoing abuse in Montana has been the "Small Miner's Exemption". In the late 1970s a mining company began mining on less than 2 acres in what is known as Brown's Gulch on Cal-Creek Ranch. Over the past 20 years the operation has grown to encompass more than 80 acres of devastation. Why? Because none of the parties working the claims has ever done any proper reclamation. Five different operators have

worked the area during the last 20 years and have been exempt from meaningful bonding or other incentives to do any reclamation. Each project is preceded by a glowing operating plan detailing the 'planned' reclamation procedures. The State is very quick to approve the plans and start miners on their way. In each case, however, no reclamation has ever been done. Therefore, the damage has been extended up Brown's Gulch five acres at a time, with each operator walking away when they were finished or went broke. The land in Brown's Gulch has been taken completely out of production, and the stream bed and riparian areas have been destroyed. Current estimates to reclaim the area have been put at between \$1.5 and \$2 million dollars.

Don Bachman

has been active in mining related issues since 1977 when the AMAX corporation announced a molybdenum mine proposal adjacent to the community of Crested Butte, Colorado where he was a resident. He is a founding member the High Country Citizens Alliance which successfully opposed the mine. He has been on site of dozens of active, inactive and proposed mines in Colorado, Idaho and Montana since that time, including Summitville, AMAX Climax and Henderson, New Jersey Zinc, Red Mountain Alunite, Sunnyside, Idarado, Thompson Creek, Rock Creek, Butte, Annaconda, Sunshine District, Blackfoot, Stillwater and many others.

From 1989 to 1991 he worked for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition (GYC). During that time he worked to protect Yellowstone National Park from an open-pit

gold mine proposed on its border. He continues involvement in that project as a representative of GYC for the on-going US Forest Service clean-up process, as well as the TVX Mineral Hill closure project at Jardine, Montana. Don has also served on the Board of Directors on a number of regional grass roots environmental organizations in Colorado and Montana. He is currently serving in that capacity for the Center for Science in Public Participation in Bozeman, Montana.



"The 1st Earth Day in 1970 happened because people could smell and taste the pollution of our air and waters; these attempts to rollback the new mining laws over the will of the

people is creating another kind of stink here in our nation's capitol. I urge people all across country to scream NO to this sellout to the mining industry." Doug La Follette

Doug La Follette,

Wisconsin Secretary of State, has been a supporter of mining reform since the early 1970s. He earned his Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Columbia University and spent his career as an educator and public servant. Doug has worked on environmental issues with such groups as the Union of Concerned Scientists, Friends of the Earth and others.

WHO'S NEW

at Mineral Policy Center

Bonnie Gestring, Northwest Circuit Rider, began work with MPC in May 2001. For the last 5 years, Bonnie has worked as a Community Organizer at Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC) in Helena, Montana. She was a leader in campaigns to stop gold mining on the Blackfoot River and to pass the citizen's initiative banning open pit cyanide process mining in Montana. She has also provided critical support to residents in Libby, Montana dealing with illness and death caused by the W.R. Grace operation there. Bonnie is an effective strategist with a demonstrated commitment to local communities.

Prior to working with MEIC, Bonnie has been a Peace Corps Volunteer in Belize and a park ranger in several national parks across the West.



Bonnie Gestring



Lexi Shultz

Lexi Shultz, Director of Legislative & Regulatory Affairs, joined Mineral Policy Center this past June. For the previous three years, she served as a staff attorney for the U.S. Public Interest Research Group (U.S.PIRG), where she worked on mining as part of her research, policy development and advocacy work against anti-environmental riders and environmentally harmful federal subsidies. She has testified before the House Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee and the Senate Taxation and IRS Oversight Subcommittee, and has had extensive experience with lobbying in both the House and the Senate.

Jessica Zippin, Program Coordinator, came from Toronto, Canada to join Mineral Policy Center in May 2001. Over the last year Jessica held a position at the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, where she organized and led an international delegation to the UN Ninth Commission on Sustainable Development. Before that Jessica spent a year in Gujarat, India working for a local NGO, carrying out water and sanitation projects at the grassroots level.



Jessica Zippin

Rivers Shouldn't Be Red! Stop Mining Pollution!

Dear Interior Secretary Gale Norton:

I urge you to protect our environment from mining pollution like arsenic and cyanide. Keep the current mining safeguards that protect our public lands, drinking water, wildlife, and rural communities. Don't roll back the rules - leave a legacy of a healthy, clean environment.

Sincerely,
Joe Citizen

ACT NOW!

acid mine pollution

Click here to send your email TODAY!

www.stopherollbacks.org

"This e-mail advertisement helped us generate some of the 40,000 comments submitted to the BLM."

A Special Thanks to the following organizations for supporting our campaign to “Stop The Rollbacks”:

- Alaska Community Action on Toxics
- Great Basin Mine Watch
- High Country Citizens Alliance
- Northern Plains Resource Council
- Pyramid Lake Paiute
- NM Sierra Club
- Clean Water Action Council
- Citizens for a Better Environment
- Friends of the Columbia Gorge
- Midwest Treaty Network, NW Ecosystem Alliance
- Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
- Southern Environmental Center
- Wisconsin Environmental Decade
- Lewis & Clark Greencorps
- Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund
- Citizens for Victor!
- Citizens to Restore Terry Peak Mountain
- Clark Fork Coalition
- Friends of the Santa Rosa Marsh
- Indigenous Environmental Network
- Montana River Action
- NW Ecosystem Alliance
- Predator Project
- Colville Indian Environmental Protection Alliance
- Ely Shoshone Tribe
- Gila Resources Information Project
- Idaho Conservation League
- Northern Alaska Environmental Center
- Okanogan Highlands Alliance
- Rock Creek Alliance
- Siskiyou Regional Education Project
- TeMoak Tribe of W. Shoshone
- Wetlands Preserve
- GA Sierra Club
- Georgia Republicans for Environmental Protection
- Southern Environmental Center
- Sovereign Media
- Izaak Walton League of America - Indiana Division
- Wyoming Outdoor Council
- Guardians for the Rural Environment
- Montana Environmental Information Center
- Project Underground
- Colorado Environmental Coalition
- Forest Guardians
- River Alliance of Wisconsin
- West Virginia Environmental Council
- Women's Voices for the Earth
- Wilderness Watch
- Fort Lewis College Environmental Center
- National Wildlife Federation
- UC Berkley earthweek
- Cold Mountain, Cold River
- Friends of the Rocky Mountain Front
- Defenders of Wildlife
- League of Conservation Voters
- Western Organization of Resource Councils

A Special *Thank You*

MPC was fortunate that **Roger Featherstone**, former Director of GREEN was available to work as a fulltime consultant for three months during the height of the “stop the rollbacks” campaign. MPC’s success at generating public comments and creating an e-activist network was due largely to the expertise and dedication of Roger. He is currently on his way back home to the Southwest and will be missed by everyone at MPC.



Get Active **ONLINE!**

MPC has three electronic newsletters/ updates you can use to keep informed on mining issues. If you would like to begin receiving any of these lists please send us an email and specify which list you would like to subscribe: **info@mineralpolicy.org**.

- 1 MPC Action Alerts:** Alert system for immediate action.
- 2 Mine Wire:** In depth newsletter on global mining issues, specific community fights, and new developments.
- 3 Metals Watch:** Publicizes industry and market developments.

Call Action: “STOP THE ROLLBACKS”

In five short weeks, the Mineral Policy Center led the conservation community in generating comments to stop rollbacks proposed by the Bush Administration. Although the BLM is still counting comments and will not have an “official” count for several more weeks, our tally shows that more than 41,000 comments were sent to the BLM opposing the rollbacks. The comments are 50:1 in favor of keeping the “3809” Rules in place.

Shortly after the announcement to suspend the rules MPC set a goal of generating a minimum of 10,000 public comments. At the time, we viewed the figure as being difficult to reach—our membership base is 4000 and we had only 45 days to mobilize. But we knew critical mass was needed to get the government’s attention and to preserve and support MPC’s media, political and legal efforts.

We would like to make a special thank you to the MPC members who took action by writing letters, phoning their elected leaders, and sending post cards. The fight is not over yet and your support is the cornerstone of a successful defense against environmental rollbacks.

Please keep the pressure on President Bush by sending the enclosed letter. You can send it to MPC and we will forward or send it directly to the White House:

**President George W. Bush
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500**

Dear President Bush,

I am writing because I strongly oppose the proposal to roll back the current mining regulations because:

1. The current rules help protect our public lands and keep our water clean. The old rule contained no environmental performance standards while the current rule requires protection of rivers, streams and groundwater.
2. The current rules are good for taxpayers. They require mining companies, not taxpayers, to foot the bill for expensive mine cleanups. Too often, the old rule allowed mining companies to walk away from their environmental reclamation responsibilities.
3. The current rules allow land managers to deny mine proposals that would irreparably harm environmental, cultural or scientific resources. The old rule made it close to impossible for the government to deny irresponsible mine proposals on OUR public land.
4. The old, outdated rules leave a legacy of polluted water and scarred landscapes. Streams and drinking water are polluted with acid, heavy metals like arsenic, and poisons like cyanide. Cultural treasures such as sacred mountains have been ripped-up and crushed.

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that mining has polluted 40% of the headwaters of all western watersheds. The Center for Science in Public Participation and the National Wildlife Federation estimate that taxpayers are potentially liable for over \$1 billion in environmental cleanup costs at currently operating mines — due to the old, weak and outdated regulations.

Although we thank you for announcing that you will probably keep the taxpayer protections in the rule, the job is not done. In response to your call for public comment, over 40,000 Americans called upon you to keep ALL provisions of the current, strong mining regulations – including those that directly protect our water, and those that call for the denial of the most irresponsible of mine proposals.

Do not suspend these regulations, and do not replace them with the old rules. I do not want to pay to clean up mining mess—these are our public lands!

Sincerely,

Signature

Address



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Health Code Reg. #13-1534(J)

“One of the greatest honors I’ve ever had is that I hold the seat of Gaylord Nelson, the man who founded Earth Day. When he called me to congratulate me on my victory in 1992 he said ‘just do one thing, reform the 1872 mining law’ that was the only instruction.”

Senator Russ Feingold

(D-WI) at (9May) StoptheRollbacks Press Conference.



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