



A DINOSAUR MORE RIDICULOUS THAN BARNEY

1872 Mining Law Fact #14:



*Protecting
Communities
and the
Environment*

While a certain dancing purple television star may seem a bit absurd, a far more preposterous dinosaur still exists in America—the 1872 Mining Law. Passed more than a century ago to lure adventurers to the western frontier, this law now has as much in common with modern mining as Barney has in common with Fred Astaire.

Pickax-toting 49'ers have long been replaced by multinational corporations that generate massive amounts of toxic waste to extract gold, silver and other precious metals. Yet the 1872 Mining Law remains unchanged.

Hardrock mining is rated the nation's top toxic polluter by the EPA, polluting stream reaches in 40% of western watersheds—but no environmental standards exist under the 1872 Mining Law. Corporations can also buy public lands for the 1872 price of \$2.50 per acre while paying no royalties to taxpayers for valuable public minerals.

New legislation introduced by Representatives Rahall (D-WV), Shays (R-CT) and Inslee (D-WA) would modernize the 1872 Mining Law to protect taxpayers and the environment. To learn more about the bill (H.R. 2141) or to become a cosponsor, please contact Deborah Lanzone in the Resources Committee at 5-2808.

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

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