MOUNTAINTOP REMOVAL COAL MINING

Devastating communities in Appalachia and destroying America's oldest mountains.

The Alliance for Appalachia
is a coalition working to end mountaintop removal coal mining and support a just, sustainable economy in Appalachia.

"This isn't mining. This is the wholesale destruction of a land and people."
- Ann League, Tennessee

WHAT IS MOUNTAINTOP REMOVAL?

Mountaintop removal is a method of extracting coal that occurs in Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia and Virginia. This dangerous and destructive practice has destroyed over 1 million acres of land.

The trees are bulldozed, the mountaintops are blown off, and tons of debris are dumped in the valleys. Less than 5% of mountaintop removal sites have been "reclaimed" for commercial / economic use; native forests destroyed during the process will not grow back for generations—if ever.

Our electricity connects us to mountaintop removal coal mining. When we flip our light switches, we may be contributing to the destruction of mountains, communities, and even lives.

TAKE ACTION TO STOP IT

• Find out if your home uses mountaintop removal coal for electricity and hear community members' stories at our partnership website, **ilovemountains.org**.

• Support the **Clean Water Protection Act** in the House and the **Appalachia Restoration Act** in the Senate, to ban valley fills at the federal level. Urge your legislators to enforce regulations on coal and endorse renewable energy, energy efficiency, and conservation.

• Spread the word by hosting speakers and movie nights, planning fundraisers, writing letters to your local paper, and sharing info on the internet.

• Pledge to use less energy and strive for renewable energy at home, at work and in your community.

Please contact a member of The Alliance for Appalachia to learn how you can see mountaintop removal firsthand and to get involved in stopping this destructive practice.

KENTUCKY

- **Appalachian Citizens Law Center**
  appalachianlawcenter.org (606) 633-3929
- **Appalshop**
  appalshop.org / (606) 633-0108
- **Kentuckians For The Commonwealth**
  kftc.org / (606) 878-2161
- **Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED)**
  maced.org / (859) 986-2373

TENNESSEE

- **Save Our Cumberland Mountains**
  socm.org / (865) 426-9455

VIRGINIA

- **Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards**
  samsva.org / (276) 523 4380

WEST VIRGINIA

- **Coal River Mountain Watch**
  crmw.net / (304) 854-2182
- **Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition**
  ohvec.org / (304) 522-0246
- **West Virginia Highlands Conservancy**
  wvhighlands.org / (304) 924-5802

REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- **Appalachian Voices**
  appalachianvoices.org / (828) 262-1500
- **Heartwood**
  heartwood.org / (812) 723-2437
- **Sierra Club Environmental Justice Program**
  sierraclub.org/ej / 304-389-8822 / 423 944 3220
- **SouthWings**
  southwings.org / (828) 225-5949

www.TheAllianceForAppalachia.org

Join us as we create a more sustainable path

Photo by PaulCorbitBrown.com

"Coal is not cheap. Not for the residents. Not for the miners. The truth about coal is my baby girl is paying for coal with her childhood and her health, and to me that's not cheap at all."
Erica Urias, KY

Mountaintop Removal Destroys Our Communities

Loss of Heritage

Mountains are the heart of Appalachian culture. Mountaintop removal mining displaces people and destroys ancestral homes and access to cemeteries. The places that helped shape the culture are destroyed, and a people's way of life are forever altered.

Destruction of Mountains and Habitat

Over 500 mountains have been destroyed by mountaintop removal, permanently removing habitat for hundreds of species. Conservative estimates say that over 2,000 miles of streams have been destroyed by valley fills.

Damage From Blasting and Dust

Blasts shake and crack homes, destroy wells and send huge rocks rolling down hillsides. Mining dust covers homes and can cause deadly lung diseases.

Loss of Economy and Job Opportunities

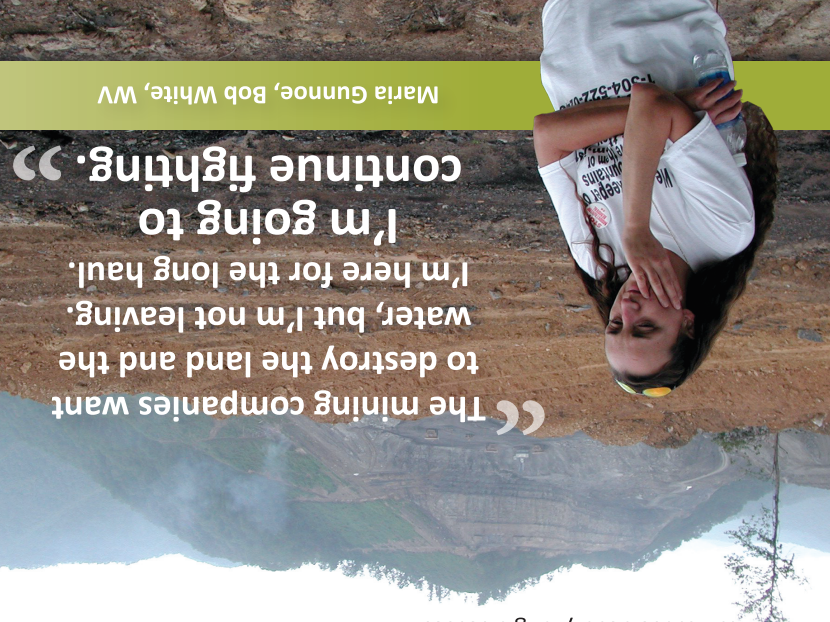
Mountaintop removal takes fewer workers than underground mining. Some claim flat land is needed for economic development, but less than 5% of mountaintop removal sites have been developed.

Contamination of Water Supplies

Many rural areas are dependent on well water. Toxins from coal processes poison entire communities' drinking and bath water, and pollute streams. Valley fill run off releases harmful chemicals into water.The waste from coal processing—called sludge or slurry—is disposed by pumping it underground or filling valleys to create giant retention ponds known as sludge impoundments.

Increased Flooding

Topsoil and trees absorb rainfall, which helps protect valley communities from flooding. Mountaintop removal sites are hard and barren, causing flash floods and landslides.



"The mining companies want to destroy the land and the water, but I'm not leaving. I'm here for the long haul. I'm going to continue fighting."
Maria Gunnoe, Bob White, WV

But There IS Another Way...

Appalachian coal counties worked hard to fuel the nation and make America rich—and yet they remain among the poorest region in the United States.

However, many new projects seek to create a more just and sustainable transition away from the unstable boom and bust economy of coal.

Photo by Mark Schmerling

- **Sustainable Forestry** provides long term income while preserving valuable native plants.
- **Renewable Energy** projects can provide healthy jobs, permanent energy, and a stronger economy.
- **Energy Efficiency and Conservation** creates jobs, saves residents money and reduces coal use.
- **Tourism** is among the fastest growing industries in Appalachia and encourages small business growth.

"We should not divorce our history, but it is time that we begin to create a new history, and become part of a solution to save our state, our country, and the world."
Kathy Selvage, Wise County, VA