

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF COAL LESSORS
5260 Irwin Rd.
Huntington, WV 25705-3247

January 30, 2017

Dear Members of Congress:

The National Council of Coal Lessors strongly supports action from Congress to stop the final Stream Rule by passing a joint resolution of disapproval under the Congressional Review Act (CRA).

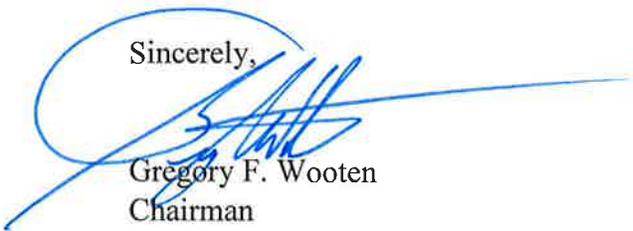
The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) finalized the Stream Rule on December 20, 2016, in order to guarantee it will take effect the day before a new administration is sworn into office, over the objections of states who are the exclusive regulators for coal mining under federal law.

The Stream Rule is a massive re-write of more than 400 separate regulations which does nothing to protect our streams that state and Federal regulators are not already doing, providing no environmental benefit. A real-world analysis performed at 36 operating mines in every coal producing region of the country concluded the rule threatens the jobs of at least one-third of the coal mining workforce, which will also greatly affect jobs in the coal supply chain. Under the rule, one half or more of total U.S. coal reserves could be off limits to mining.

In addition to the significant impairment of the coal mining industry, the Stream Rule would also severely impair the ability of previously mined lands to be put to beneficial use after reclamation. Under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act mining operators are directed to work with surface owners to prepare land for post mining land use. The Stream Rule includes several provisions which prohibit beneficial post mining land use, further magnifying the economic harm of the rule to rural coal mining communities. Passing the joint resolution of disapproval would prevent OSM from acting as a local planning and zoning board and violating surface owner property rights.

Congress should take decisive action and pass a resolution of disapproval of the Stream Rule without delay.

Sincerely,



Gregory F. Wooten
Chairman