

Sample Written Comments on the Draft Mined Land Reclamation Board (MLRB) Rules

Colorado House Bill 08-1161 was passed in 2008 to establish the groundwater restoration standards that uranium mining companies must meet before they are allowed to do in situ leach mining in the state of Colorado. The MLRB Rules should abide by these strict standards to prevent the contamination of groundwater and not allow the mining industry to weaken ground water protection standards for in situ leach uranium mines. The rules need to adhere to the letter and spirit of the law that holds uranium mining companies accountable to restore the ground water to the original condition. The industry's attempt to allow changes to the established baseline characterization after mining activity begins should be rejected. Such a process would allow the groundwater standards to be changed and lowered, even after mining begins. Restoration standards should be clear and established up front, and not allowed to be changed as mining progresses.

Colorado Senate Bill 08-228 lifted the veil of secrecy when the mining company is prospecting to do mining. The MLRB Rules should ratify current staff practice of accepting public and local government comments on prospecting activities, and reject the industry's attempts to eliminate all public involvement for any pre-mining approvals. These pre-mining activities often have the potential to result in concrete impact to communities and water quality, and warrant public involvement. In addition, the MLRB Rules should expressly provide the public and local governments the opportunity to seek administrative review of prospecting approvals as well as in-situ baseline characterization plan approvals.

The deadline for filing written public comments is March 1, 2010. Submit written public comments (including name, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number) to:

Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Board

Attn: Irene Stanton

1313 Sherman Street, Room 215

Denver, CO 80203

Or email Irene.Stanton@state.co.us

Get info at: <http://mining.state.co.us/RulemakingInformation.htm>

Verbal comments can be made at the first Public Hearing, April 15 in Loveland (1pm to 9pm) at the I-25 Embassy Suites at the Ranch).