

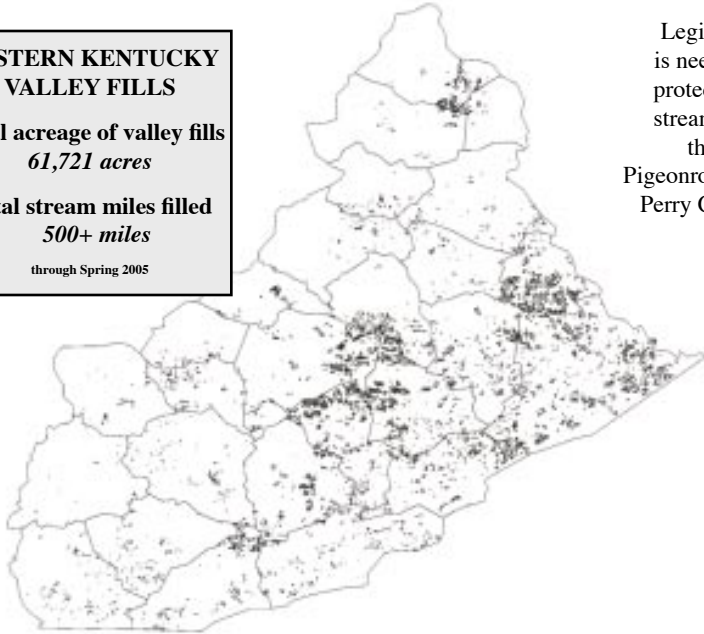
Support SB 139 & HB 416!

# KENTUCKY'S WATERWAYS ARE ONE OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT AND VALUED NATURAL RESOURCES

## Why Do We Allow Our Headwater Streams to be Buried and Permanently Destroyed?

We all know the value of water: economically for tourism, industrial and agricultural use; socially for recreation and enjoyment; personally for drinking water and domestic use. But valley fills associated with mountaintop removal coal mining have already buried — under thousands of tons of mining wastes — and permanently destroyed more than 500 miles of Kentucky's headwater streams.

**EASTERN KENTUCKY VALLEY FILLS**  
Total acreage of valley fills  
*61,721 acres*  
Total stream miles filled  
*500+ miles*  
through Spring 2005



Legislation is needed to protect vital streams like this one, Pigeonroost, in Perry County



Headwater streams are essential to the quality of our waterways for hundreds of miles downstream, and to our quality of life. The damage from valley fills is irreversible, and the cost to Kentuckians immeasurable.

### Some Consequences of Burying Headwater Streams

(based on the results from the Federal Environmental Impact Study on Mountaintop Removal and other scientific studies)

- ▶ **increased flooding, upstream and down**
- ▶ **increased water treatment costs**
- ▶ **loss of recreational use**
- ▶ **increased sedimentation and erosion**
- ▶ **altered stream chemistry and temperature**
- ▶ **loss of nutrient sources essential for downstream water quality and aquatic life**



“Reclamation” involves turning a vibrant stream into a sterile rock-lined drainage ditch such as this one at the head of Island Creek in Pike County.

Legislation proposed by KFTC would make sure this doesn't happen any longer. The Stream Saver Bill would protect our waterways by prohibiting the dumping of mine wastes into any “intermittent, perennial, or ephemeral stream or other water of the Commonwealth.” Mine wastes would be placed back on the mine site as part of the reclamation process already specified in state and federal law — rather than dumped over the side of the hill into valleys and streams and communities below.

# STOP BURYING KENTUCKY STREAMS

**PUT THE WELL-BEING OF KENTUCKY CITIZENS AND COMMUNITIES FIRST!**

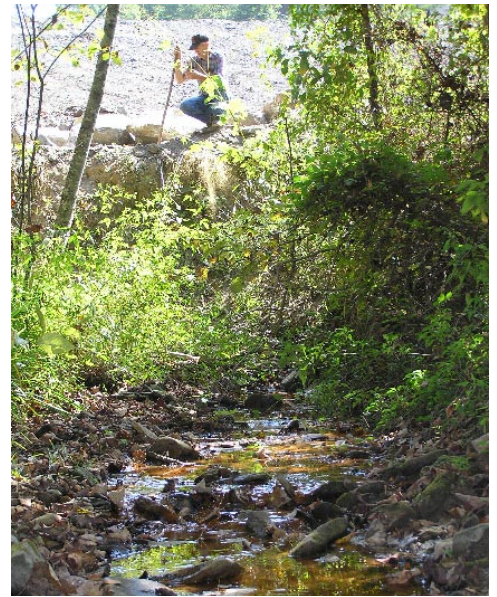


# The Destruction of Kentucky's Headwater Streams by Valley Fills

“Although state and federal regulatory requirements to protect water quality exist, **impacts to streams due to surface mining are still common and widespread**. Surface mining impacts streams both chemically and physically by increasing dissolved solids (e.g., sulfate, calcium carbonate) and sediment loading, and by removing the riparian (trees and bushes along the side of the stream) forest vegetation.” — Kentucky Division of Water, 2004



Hollows, or valleys, such as Puncheon Creek in Knott County (left) are filled with mine wastes from mountaintop removal operations above. This creek that once flowed gently up the hollow from where Eugene Mullins is standing is now buried under thousands of tons of mining wastes. In the process, all plant and animal life in the stream has been eliminated, and the surrounding forest is also destroyed. To the right, Eugene stands on the “toe” of the valley fills as it encroaches on Puncheon Creek.



To control runoff, companies dig trenches, lined with rock to lessen erosion, down the face of the valley fill to channel rainfall. Where there once was a stream teeming with life there is now a drainage ditch that supports no life.



Sedimentation degrades the health of streams, increases water treatment costs and decreases recreation and economic value for hundreds of miles downstream.



The loss of vegetative cover and the channeling of runoff increases the likelihood of more frequent and more severe flooding downstream.

Valley fills are unstable masses of dirt and rock — not constructed from the bottom up as they should be. Their proximity to homes and communities and use as building sites is alarming.



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**Change this — SB 139/HB 396!**