

ED PERRY: My name is Ed Perry. I'm an aquatic biologist working for the National Wildlife Federation, on their clean energy and climate change campaigns. The monetary benefits of mining coal are well known, but what I hope your EIS will focus on is the considerable cost to human health, our economy, our nation's wildlife by our government's continued support for coal mining on public lands. Climate scientists have firmly established that fossil fuels are causing the planet to heat up, lead to massive wildfires, more intense hurricanes, loss of wildlife and public health problems. These costs generated by these environmental disasters are being borne by the people who are being harmed, not by the companies who are creating this harm. Already, wildlife are seeing the effects of climate change all across our great country. And here in Pennsylvania scientists forecast that our state tree, the hemlock, our state fish, the brook trout, and our state bird, the rough grouse, will be gone in the next 90 years unless we take action to reduce carbon pollution. This costs and this loss of our biological heritage needs to be considered and someone should be bearing that cost. The adverse impacts on human health are also substantial. Just one example, every body of water in our country is contaminated with mercury. And here in Pennsylvania, the State of Pennsylvania lists an additional 86 streams and lakes, thousands of stream miles and thousands of acres of lakes that are so contaminated they recommend women of childbearing age only consume one meal of fish per month. Finally, I hope you consider what the impacts on our public lands is costing us. As you well know, coal use is declining rapidly. And here in Pennsylvania coal companies going out of business are infamous for not cleaning up after themselves. And as a result, we have thousands of miles of streams that are devoid of aquatic life that we will have to bear the cost of restoring. So question is if western coal companies go bankrupt, is your bond sufficient to restore our public lands? Or once again are we going to be stuck with a bill for that cleanup? And finally, when we consider the direction our country is going and the emphasis the President is putting on moving to clean, renewable energy, you have to wonder why we are continuing to allow coal mining on our public lands. You have to wonder why we are continuing to do that. And as I understand it, this EIS is only going to focus on future leases, but any business today, when it's recognized that they are causing damage to public health or pollution problems, they have to clean up their act. So I strongly recommend that this EIS,

whatever you come up with, also applies to existing coal operations. Thank you.