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## Ohio EPA Issues Draft Discharge Permit for Belmont County Mining Site

Ohio EPA has issued a draft permit to the American Energy Corporation (AEC) for discharging treated runoff and drainage from the company's Century Mine (43521 Mayhugh Hill Rd., Beallsville) into Piney Creek.

Ohio EPA held a public hearing in Beallsville on Aug. 14, 2012, to explain the project and accept public comments. In addition to oral comments provided at the meeting, Ohio EPA equally considered written comments before issuing the draft permit.

Runoff from a new coarse refuse disposal area at an existing disposal site would receive chemical treatment and be sent to two existing settling ponds. The draft permit would allow the company to discharge treated runoff and drainage from the ponds. Unlike fine coal refuse and water (coal slurry) stored in impoundments, coarse refuse is dewatered at the coal preparation plant and landfilled. Permits to construct and operate coarse refuse disposal sites in Ohio are reviewed and approved by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Any approved discharge may result in a change from the current water quality conditions of Piney Creek, two small tributaries and the Captina Creek watershed, but it cannot violate Ohio's water quality standards.

The public can submit comments through Nov. 30, 2012, regarding the draft permit. Comments can be sent to [dswcomments@epa.state.oh.us](mailto:dswcomments@epa.state.oh.us) or Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water, Permits Processing Unit, P.O. Box 1049, Columbus, OH 43216-1049. Ohio EPA will consider the technical, economic, social and environmental aspects of the project before deciding to issue or deny the final permit.

The draft permit and related documents are available for review at Ohio EPA's Division of Surface Water (50 W. Town St., Suite 700, Columbus) by first calling (614) 644-2001 or Ohio EPA's Southeast District Office (2195 Front St., Logan, OH 43138) by first calling (740) 385-8501. Interested parties also may write to the Southeast District Office for more information.

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*The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency was created in 1972 to consolidate efforts to protect and improve air quality, water quality and waste management in Ohio. In the past 40 years, air pollutants dropped by as much as 90 percent; large rivers meeting standards improved from 21 percent to 89 percent; and hundreds of polluting, open dumps were replaced with engineered landfills and an increased emphasis on waste reduction and recycling. **Ohio EPA -- 40 years and moving forward.***