



A kayaker pauses to enjoy the view of Lion's Head Mountain from the pristine waters of Berners Bay near Juneau, Alaska. The U.S. Supreme Court recently ok'd plans by Coeur d'Alene Mines Corporation to dump its mine waste into an alpine lake above the bay.

# Protect Our Clean Water

from mine waste dumping

**Congress and the Obama Administration need to hear from you!**

Before passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972, mining companies frequently dumped tailings and waste in the nearest lake or river, often with catastrophic consequences for those water bodies, for fish, and for human health. As a result, our country created practical standards that allow the mining industry to thrive while protecting clean water.

The Bush Administration changed this by redefining solid-laden industrial pollution as "fill." For 30 years after the Clean Water Act was passed, "fill" was defined as material placed in waters for construction purposes, such as building a bridge or breakwater. But in 2002, EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers changed this definition to allow for the disposal

of wastes, such as mining wastes. This rule change is what made possible mountaintop removal coal mining and the Kensington Mine's plan to dump mining waste into Lower Slate Lake.

**To protect our lakes and streams, we need to put these regulations back the way they were before the Bush Administration. We need your help to tell President Obama and Congress to end the outdated practice of using our lakes and streams as mine waste disposal sites.**

### President Obama:

Tell President Obama's EPA Director and Council on Environmental Quality Chairwoman that you want them to revise the Bush administration's definition of "Fill Material" so mines cannot dump waste in America's clean water.

#### Contact:

Lisa Jackson, EPA Administrator: [jackson.lisa@epa.gov](mailto:jackson.lisa@epa.gov)

Nancy Sutley, Council on Environmental Quality: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/>

#### Sample Letter:

*Dear Administrator Jackson and Chairwoman Sutley,*

*A generation ago, Americans made a commitment to clean up and protect our lakes, rivers and wetlands when we passed the Clean Water Act. Thanks to this commitment, lakes and streams that were once polluted are now once again safe for fishing and swimming. At the time, many argued that the economy would be injured if industry could no longer dump its untreated wastes into our nation's waterways, but after years of strong pollution control and strong industry, it is clear that clean water is not only essential for public health, but it is good for business.*

*The Bush Administration's policies on disposal of mine waste into waters of the U.S. has undermined the intent of the Clean Water Act and America's commitment to responsibly managing our clean water. The redefinition of "Fill Material" to include waste material to be used to "fill" streams, lakes, wetlands, and other waters, has allowed for the damaging practice of mountaintop removal and the permitting of the Kensington Mine to destroy an Alaskan lake by dumping toxic, chemically processed mine tailings into it.*

*I am asking you to immediately revise the Bush Administration's policies on disposal of mine waste into U.S. waters and return the definition of fill to what it was before the Bush Administration.*

*Sincerely,*

### Congress:

Tell Your Congressman and Senators to support HR 1310, the Clean Water Protection Act. The Act is a bipartisan bill that would put the definition of "Fill Material" back to what it was before the Bush Administration.

More about the Clean Water Protection Act.

Who are my elected officials and how do I contact them?

#### Sample Letter:

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*I am asking you to support HR 1310, the Clean Water Protection Act, an act that would amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify that fill material cannot be comprised of waste.*

*Sincerely,*