

Dear Landowner:

Sunrise Coal LLC of Terre Haute, Indiana has been approaching landowners in Vermilion and Champaign Counties and asking them to sign a lease granting Sunrise the ability to mine coal under the prime farmland of this area. A group of landowners, property owners and residents of the area that includes the towns of Allerton, Sidell, Fairmount, Homer and Broadlands, Illinois have formed a group to prevent the destruction of our farmland and agricultural quality of life. We have called our group, Stand Up To Coal.

Stand Up To Coal believes everyone possesses individual property rights and certainly any owner of real estate has the ability to lease the mineral rights to Sunrise Coal LLC or any entity they chose. However, over 140 years of work, sweat, and investment has created some of the most highly productive, valuable and sought-after farmland in the world. While coal has the potential to create some short-term profits, those profits can come at a tremendous cost to individual tracts and to the overall wealth of the area. The long-term benefits could actually be negative. Our group would like to make sure everyone is aware of some of these possibilities.

Here are four of the areas that we think individuals and communities should consider before signing a lease with Sunrise Coal, LLC.

1. Coal mining, even underground coal mining, leaves a big, industrial imprint on the land. From entrance and extraction sites, to coal washing sites, to railroad and truck transportation of the coal, to dealing with the waste left from processing the coal on site—a new coal mine will leave a multi-generational legacy. The track records of these coal companies in other communities often show that promises made to restore and clean up mines are not always kept, leaving the community with a big, polluted, dangerous mess.
2. Underground mining often results in land sinking, or subsidence. Even if Sunrise uses the best, most up-to-date techniques, they cannot guarantee the land will not sink sometime in the next two generations. Fly over other coalfield communities during the spring, and you will see how many sink holes are due to mining. If subsidence is possible on the land, it will prevent many future uses.
3. During the next 30 years when our communities would be turned into a coalfield, what kind of life should we expect? Coal mining creates dust and. It uses more water than our communities currently have. Where will this water come from, and where will the water go once it is full of toxic chemicals from washing coal? What kind of pollution issues including air, noise and water will affect this area? How would the coal company clean up the mess, when would they have to do it, and how are we guaranteed they will?
4. Will the presence of a lease on the title to my property increase or decrease the value of my property and are the lease fees being offered fair and just compensation for any negative impact these exceptions will create to my title? In 20-30 years, will my land be worth more or less than comparable land without a lease or actual coal mine presence? Just because a lease is executed there is no guarantee of mining actually occurring, but can the mere presence of a lease lower the value of my property?

Stand Up To Coal has developed a web site at www.standuptocoal.org where we will continue to post information about this proposed mine in order to keep you informed. Some of the information already at this site includes a sample of the current proposed coal lease, a map of the affected area, a copy of press coverage on the issue, and a list of those landowners who and residents who do not want coal mining

We welcome new members of Stand Up To Coal. If you would like to join our group to help us accomplish our goals, please send us an email or letter or call. If you would like to share your e-mail address with us in order for us to send you alerts when new information is posted to our site or to create a more efficient way for us to communicate with you, please do so.

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