

Stream Protection Rule Fact Sheet

The final Stream Protection Rule (SPR) updates rules that are over 30 years old in order to more completely implement the law, the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act, to better protect the health and safety of people and the environment from the adverse effects of surface and underground coal mining.

The final SPR will protect or restore about 6,000 miles of streams and 52,000 acres of forest over two decades. Key elements include:

- Prevents water pollution outside the permit area.
- Requires comprehensive premining data collection and monitoring provisions for the proposed mining operation and adjacent areas.
- Requires protection or restoration of streams and related resources.
- Authorizes approval of mountaintop removal mining operations only when natural watercourses will not be destroyed.
- Requires implementation of fish and wildlife enhancement measures commensurate with any long-term adverse environmental impacts.
- Ensures that premining land use capabilities are restored.
- Updates measures to protect threatened and endangered species.
- Requires guaranteed treatment of unanticipated water pollution discharges that require long-term treatment.

The final SPR economic impacts are small relative to the size of the coal industry:

- Employment will increase an average of 156 full time jobs.
- Coal production may decline by an average annual 0.08% from baseline, accompanied by an approximately 1% increase in average annual coal prices.
- Total industry compliance costs per year would average slightly more than \$80 million, which is 0.3% or less of \$31.2 Billion *estimated 2015 coal revenues*.
- Impact on a household's monthly electric bill is negligible. Average wholesale electricity prices are expected to increase by approximately 0.02%, which means a household using 900 kw paying \$113/ month would pay 20 cents more per month.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Consultation: OSMRE completed consultation under the ESA with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, resulting in a new 2016 Biological Opinion that supersedes the 1996 Biological Opinion for the existing regulatory program. The new 2016 Biological Opinion provides clear, expeditious ESA compliance and incidental take protection for industry and state regulators but will not provide protection to them if the SPR is not implemented.