

2021 Programmatic Updates



Miners' Health & Safety

- ✓ This year, we have represented more than 500 miners & survivors affected by black lung disease. We continue to host virtual Black Lung Association meetings and publish the Black Lung Bulletin, so that miners and families can safely organize and stay connected during the pandemic.
- ✓ Our mine safety work has grown this year as well, as we have represented more than a dozen miners this year that have been discriminated against for standing up for their right to a safe workplace.

Environmental Justice

- ✓ We continue to elevate community voices as we work with multiple agencies of state government & academics in both public health & civil engineering to find ways of fixing Martin County's dilapidated water system. We advocate for Martin County residents to ensure that they are treated respectfully & fairly by the water district & to ensure the district's policies toward low-income customers are just & fairly applied.
- ✓ We have continued our work with East Kentucky Water Network in collaboration with other regional groups. Through EKWN, we engage & support similarly struggling communities so that all families in the region have access to safe, affordable water.
- ✓ In June, our deputy director Mary Cromer provided testimony to the House Natural Resources Committee's Natural Resources & Energy Subcommittee on the devastating impact coal mine abandonment is having in Appalachia.

Policy & Advocacy

- ✓ In July, ACLC submitted a petition for rulemaking to MSHA proposing a silica standard that would help prevent black lung disease & we continued to meet regularly with MSHA officials. We expect a proposed rule to be issued in 2022. We also continued fighting for an extension of the black lung excise tax. In September, Sen. Manchin introduced a bill to extend the excise tax for ten years & a four-year extension is included in the House of Representatives' Build Back Better Act.
- ✓ We continued pushing for proper enforcement of the Surface Mining Control & Reclamation Act (SMCRA). We prepared a briefing paper for the Office of Surface Mining & Reclamation Enforcement (OSMRE) that recommends regulatory reform & we are in discussions with OSMRE's Acting Director. In addition, we have drafted & are advocating for additional legislation to address these issues.
- ✓ We have met several times with staff from the Biden Administration's Interagency Working Group on Coal & Power Plant Communities & Economic Revitalization. We continue to provide insight into challenges & opportunities regarding the pursuit of a just & equitable transition.
- ✓ **Finally, the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act was passed by Congress. This bill makes a historic investment of \$11.29 billion in Abandoned Mine Land clean up funds & reauthorizes the AML Fee & Fund. This funding will spur economic development & make the region healthier & safer. This victory comes after years of coalition work from coal communities across the country.**