



**SHERPA MINING CONTRACTORS, INC.
GURKHA MINING SERVICES, LLC**

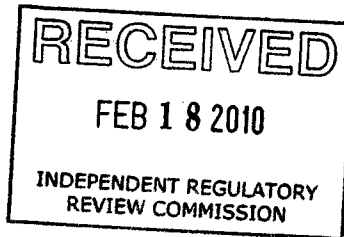
337 Benny Road
Hooversville, PA 15936
Ph: 814-754-5560 Fax: 814-754-5359



February 8, 2010

2806

Pennsylvania Environmental Quality Board
PO Box 8477
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477



RECEIVED

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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

RE: Total Dissolved Solids Regulations

Dear Board Members:

The Department of Environmental Resources (Department), in a knee-jerk response to water discharges from Marcellus shale gas drilling activity, has proposed rulemaking regulating the discharge of total dissolved solids and sulfates into water of the Commonwealth. While it is understandable that the Department may need to control brine water discharges from gas well drilling, the one-size fits all, very restrictive approach proposed will devastate industry in Pennsylvania. The Department loses all credibility when it proposed regulations that will so severely harm the citizens of Pennsylvania. The economic impact, which DEP admits they did not consider, will effect much more than just gas drilling. It will place unachievable limits on every segment of the economy that has a water discharge. Public sewage treatment plants, water treatment plants, industrial water users, mining operations, and anyone else who discharges treated wastewater.

As a surface mine operator, we discharge treated water from our sites on a routine basis. Imposing the proposed limits of 500 mg/l TDS will force our mines to close because no practical way exists for us to treat our discharge to this standard. We employ 17 in Somerset County.

I urge you to reject the proposed rule making. The Department must be able to evaluate the economic impact of its action and also demonstrate that a practical treatment option exists before rule making of this magnitude can be imposed.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Andrew J. Hewitson
President
Sherpa Mining Contractors, Inc.