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August 30, 2018

The Honorable Tom Wolf
Governor of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania State Capital
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Cc: Patrick McDonnell, Secretary, Department of Environmental Protection
Cindy Adams Dunn, Secretary, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Dear Governor Wolf:

The undersigned organizations write to request your assistance in a matter now draining critical resources of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) and organizations like ours, representing citizens who seek to preserve and protect Pennsylvania's natural resources and scenic and historic values.

The matter concerns large noncoal surface mining. We write with specific reference to a large noncoal surface mining permit (Permit No. 01180301) by Specialty Granules, LLC, that seeks expansion into a "specially protected watershed" area (Attachment 1) and puts Toms Creek, a High Quality stream, with exceptional values, at risk of degradation. *Pa. Code, Title 25 Chapter 93.4b(a)*.

The above-referenced permit is currently under review by PA DEP and is strongly opposed by the surrounding communities. During this time of extremely constrained budgets, it makes no sense that we, and these communities, are compelled to fight against permitting large surface mining in a protected watershed and that we are compelled to write to you for assistance to stop it. It is indeed audacious that this permit — involving a watershed with High Quality and Exceptional Value streams that flow directly to the Chesapeake Bay — is even under consideration, much less being greedily pursued for the grinding of greenstone (metabasalt), a rock known to contain naturally occurring asbestos.

The land we seek to protect is locally called "Pine Hill". It consists of 112 acres of pristine, verdant woodlands, wetlands that support fragile and rare flora and fauna, including the beautiful Nodding Trillium, an endangered plant species now extinct in Ohio, and incredible wildlife. Pine Hill stands tall at 1300 feet and stood as an obstacle to over 15 miles of troops, teamsters, and wagon train on July 4-5, 1863, as Confederate Civil War troops sought to escape Federal Cavalry following the Battle of Gettysburg. At the base of Pine Hill, a pristine High Quality stream (Toms Creek), with exceptional values, quietly meanders and two historic roads, Iron Springs and Gum Springs roads, merge. These roads are part of the Great Wagon Road. And, adding to its

historic significance, Pine Hill was previously owned by Thaddeus Stevens, Pennsylvania's most famous abolitionist.

Pine Hill was itself in the news in 2011 when a "back door" deal resulted in the "swap" by PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) of Pine Hill —then part of Michaux State Forest and previously part of the Glatfelter Tree Farm — for 3 small inholdings. This PA DCNR swap, approved by the previous administration, continues to inflame the taxpayers who fought to preserve the land from development. It is unfathomable that these same taxpayers — who overwhelmingly approved a local bond to conserve the land — now face large scale surface mining and total mountain removal.

A mountain is a precious resource with scenic, and in this case, important historical values. These values are supposedly constitutionally protected under the Environmental Rights Amendment. *Pa. Const. Art.1 § 27*. If protected, why must concerned citizens search the PA Bulletin to ensure another back door deal is not in the works? Why must nonprofit organizations be forced to independently monitor the surrounding creeks and streams for contaminants? Why must historic preservationists battle Goliaths whose insatiable appetite for minerals puts history at risk of being lost?

We simply should not be forced into the position of expending time, energy, money (all of which are in abundant supply to large surface mining companies) when the asset at issue is located squarely within a protected watershed. That fact alone should slam the door!

We urge you to weigh in on this extremely important matter and provide a bright line rule to PA DEP and PA DCNR: protected watershed = no mining! If that's not enough, align with history, a lasting and sustainable resource, and direct that large surface mining of Pine Hill is off limits.

Our organizations stand ready to work collaboratively with your offices and private industry. Our goal — to preserve and protect natural resources and historic and scenic values — is one that all industries should endorse.

Please contact Hazel Keahey (717)794-0088, hckahey@verizon.net or info@friendsoftomscreek.org for more information on this request. We would be pleased to meet with you or a member of your staff to discuss this matter.

Sincerely yours,

/s

Sue DeVeer, Friends of Tom's Creek

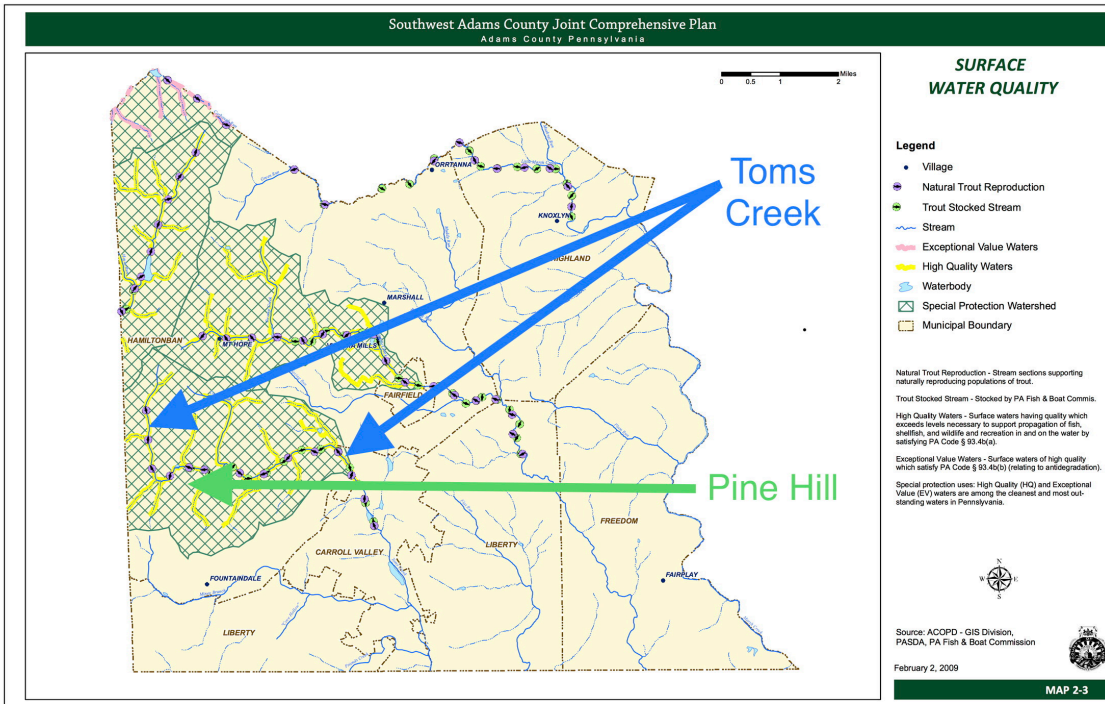
/s

Brent Walls, Upper Potomac Riverkeeper, Potomac Riverkeeper Network

/s

Anne Zabawa, President, Historic Gettysburg Adams County (HGAC)

Attachment: Map 2-3, Surface Water Quality, Southwest Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Adopted April 7, 2015



<http://www.adamscounty.us/Munic/HamiltonbanTownship/Documents/Plans/SWJCP-2016.pdf>

<http://www.friendsoftoms creek.org>