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PUBLIC HEARING
ON
GILBERTON COAL-TO-CLEAN FUELS AND POWER
PROJECT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
NATIONAL ENERGY TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY

BEFORE DOE PANEL: JANICE BELL, NEPA Document Manager
 ROY SPEARS
 DIANE MADDEN
 KEN MARKEL
 ROBERT MILLER

TIME: 7:06 p.m.

DATE: Tuesday, January 10, 2006

PLACE: D.H.H. Lengel Middle School Auditorium
 1541 West Laurel Boulevard
 Pottsville, PA 17901

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Nanette Ketrick, RPR

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1 Before we get started, I just want to
2 point out the exits in this room. There are two at the
3 top and two on each side. And rest rooms, if you go
4 out this exit door, they're to the right.

5 For tonight's agenda there will be a
6 few brief presentations before we get to the heart of
7 the hearing, comments on the Draft EIS. First, I'd
8 like to explain the purpose of the public hearing, and
9 Diane Revay Madden, the Project Manager, will provide
10 an overview of the Gilberton project; and after that
11 I'll have a few slides on the National Environmental
12 Policy Act and the EIS process. And, finally, audience
13 members will have an opportunity to provide their
14 comments on the Draft EIS.

15 Okay. Why are we here having this
16 public hearing? This evening is an opportunity for you
17 to comment on the Draft EIS. Incidentally, the Draft
18 EIS is made publicly available to those individuals who
19 requested to be placed on DOE's mailing list. In
20 addition, copies of the draft were made available in
21 local libraries, the Pottsville Public Library,
22 Frackville Public Library, Mahanoy City Public Library,
23 as well as the Mahanoy State Correctional Institution
24 Library.

25 What we need to emphasize this evening

—Nanette Ketrick, RPR—

1 is that your comments are important. This is your
2 opportunity to present your concerns. Prior to this
3 evening's public hearing, there was an informal
4 question and answer session. If you have additional
5 questions, project members will be available for
6 informal discussion after the public hearing, but the
7 panel members will not be answering questions during
8 the formal hearing process. Your comments are very
9 important in insuring that the DOE has considered all
10 the environmental issues before making a final decision
11 on the project.

12 The focus of your comments tonight
13 should be on the Draft EIS and the environmental
14 impacts of the project. We'd like to maintain that we
15 would like the comments to stay within the scope of the
16 Draft EIS.

17 DOE must consider and respond to all
18 the comments that are received tonight and as well as
19 those that are written and mailed to us. All comments
20 presented this evening are being transcribed by a court
21 reporter for the public record. Please note that in
22 addition to the verbal comments that are made here this
23 evening, written comments will be accepted through
24 February 8th, 2006.

25 Okay, I'd like to invite Diane to come

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1 up and go over a little bit about the project.

2 MS. MADDEN: In 2002 the United States
3 Congress established the Clean Coal Power Initiative
4 Program. The purpose of the program is to showcase
5 technologies in which coal fired power plants can
6 continue to generate low cost electricity with improved
7 efficiency and in compliance with the more stringent
8 environmental standards expected in the future.

9 The government assists the project
10 participant by sharing in the project costs; but after
11 successful demonstration of the technology, the
12 participant must repay the government's cost share.

13 After a thorough review of the
14 proposals received from this competitive solicitation,
15 the Gilberton Coal-to-Clean Fuels and Power Project was
16 one of the projects selected for award. The project
17 addresses the congressional mandate to demonstrate
18 advanced coal based technologies that can generate
19 cleaner, reliable, and affordable electricity in the
20 United States. The participant is WMPI, and they have
21 proposed the leading technology and engineering team to
22 design, engineer, construct, and demonstrate the first
23 clean coal power and fuel facility in the United States
24 using coal waste gasification.

25 The team members include Nexant

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1 Incorporated, and they are an affiliate of Bechtel
2 Corporation. Shell Global Solutions, they're an
3 international energy company with a major presence in
4 gasification technology. Uhde is the engineering, the
5 global engineering company and the authorized Shell
6 gasification technology supplier; and Sasol Technology,
7 a world leader in Fischer-Tropsch liquefaction
8 technology.

9 This is a simplified block flow diagram
10 of the process. The individual technologies, that is
11 Shell gasification technology and the Fisher-Tropsch's
12 technology, have individually been operated. This
13 project would demonstrate the integration of these
14 technologies.

15 The culm, limestone, and oxygen are fed
16 to the gasifier to produce a synthesis gas composed
17 mainly of hydrogen and CO. The synthesis gas is cooled
18 and cleaned and the CO₂ and sulfur are removed, and the
19 clean synthesis gas is then fed to the Fisher-Tropsch's
20 units and the product work-up units to produce the
21 diesel fuel and the naphtha. The combined cycle plant
22 would use the excess fuel gas to generate electricity
23 in a combustion turbine; and the steam turbine is
24 generated by the steam generated in the process, and it
25 is fed to a steam turbine to generate electricity.

—Nanette Ketrick, RPR—

1 MS. BELL: Okay. Now, a little bit
2 about NEPA and the National Environmental Policy Act.
3 Driver force comes out of developing the Environmental
4 Impact Statement, or EIS, is the National Environmental
5 Police Act also known as NEPA. This federal law
6 applies to all major actions taken by federal agencies.
7 It is the national charter for protection of the
8 environment. The mandate of NEPA is to make
9 environmental information available to the public
10 before final decisions are made on any major federal
11 action that could significantly affect the quality of
12 the human environment.

13 NEPA's objectives are simple. NEPA
14 emphasizes the need to make well-informed decisions
15 based on the potential environmental consequences of a
16 proposed action. DOE wants to take actions that
17 protect, restore, and enhance the environment. The
18 focus is on truly significant issues. We are asking
19 that you comment on the issues identified in the draft
20 EIS, so that the Federal Government can make the best
21 decision possible.

22 This is a list of the contents of an
23 EIS. Some of them are quite straight forward, the
24 cover sheet, the summary, the table of contents, the
25 statement and purpose of need for the agency, an

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1 examination of reasonable alternatives, the
2 characteristics of the affected environment; and most
3 importantly for tonight, the environmental consequences
4 of the proposed action.

5 We also are required to list all the
6 agencies, organizations, and persons to whom the
7 document was sent to and also a list of the preparers
8 and an index.

9 This flow chart shows the process for
10 which is used for an EIS. Initially, I believe it was
11 April of 2003 a Notice of Intent was filed in the
12 Federal Register that we intended to prepare an
13 Environmental Impact Statement for this project, and
14 that began the public scoping period for the Draft EIS.
15 That public scoping period takes 30 days. During that
16 30-day period on May 5, 2003, a public scoping meeting
17 was held here at Pottsville Middle School.

18 After that meeting, the comments that
19 were transcribed were used to develop parts of the EIS
20 as the issues that we, that the public, felt were
21 important to consider in the EIS. After that the
22 development took place; and after a year and a half, a
23 draft was issued on December 8 th, 2005, which
24 initiated the beginning of the public comment period.
25 The public comment period is required to be 45 days.

—Nanette Ketrick, RPR—

1 In this instance the public comment period is actually
2 going to be 62 days. We've incorporated some extra
3 time because the draft actually came out just before
4 the holidays.

5 During the public comment period,
6 we're required to have a public hearing; and we've
7 elected to have two public hearings, one last night in
8 Shenandoah, and one here tonight in Pottsville.

9 After these comments are -- we have
10 until February 8th to receive all of your comments. At
11 that point, those comments will each be considered.
12 Each comment will be noted and addressed in the final
13 document. That document will be reviewed; and after a
14 30-day period, a Record of Decision will be filed with
15 our Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy.

16 I just want to go over some logistics
17 for the oral comments. I'm asking that each speaker
18 that is called to the microphone use only five minutes.
19 If we have additional time at the end after all those
20 speakers who wish to speak this evening have presented,
21 then we can go back to those that have already started,
22 and they can continue for a period of three minutes.

23 Pre-registered speakers will be called
24 first; and then at that time if anyone in the audience
25 is interested in speaking, they will have an

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1 opportunity to do so. Please remember that a
2 transcript is being prepared. So when you come to the
3 microphone, please state your name and spell it so that
4 it's transcribed correctly.

5 In addition, if you don't feel
6 comfortable commenting orally this evening, there are
7 plenty of comment cards out in the hallway, or we'll
8 have some after the meeting. Please feel free to take
9 some of those along with the self-addressed envelopes
10 and mail them back to us so that your comments can be
11 included. Okay.

12 Two things I want to address this
13 evening. I want to emphasize that the DOE panel is
14 here to listen to your comments. After the formal
15 hearing, if you still have questions or want to discuss
16 things, panel members will be available to do that.
17 Also we would appreciate if you would please try to
18 refrain from personal attacks. The focus here tonight
19 is to receive your comments on the Draft EIS and the
20 impacts of the project. We can only address
21 appropriately those comments that are within the scope
22 of the Draft EIS.

23 Our first scheduled speaker is Ed
24 Pautienus. Is he here this evening?

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, he isn't.

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1 MS. BELL: I haven't seen him this
2 evening.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He's not here.
4 He had another engagement.

5 MS. BELL: Okay. All right then. Our
6 first speak will be Sharon Chiao.

7 MS. CHIAO: Good evening. My name is
8 Sharon Chiao, C-h-i-a-o, and I'm chairman of the
9 Mahanoy Township Supervisors.

10 I'd like to start with a quote from
11 Time Magazine, which states: "Washington has a rich
12 history of catering to special and corporate interests
13 at the expense of ordinary citizens." In the weekend
14 Pottsville Republican, WMPI's Mr. Rich insists that the
15 opponents, or some of the opponents are overstating the
16 contaminants which will be produced by this process by
17 listing upper permit limits in the company's
18 Environmental Impact Statement, which he states, "which
19 will likely not be reached."

20 There are too many if's, and's, likely,
21 maybe, could possibly, will likely in this draft.
22 There are no definites as to what is going to happen to
23 us.

24 I would also like to comment that this
25 meeting has been held tonight in Pottsville, and I

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1 would hope that maybe that's the news, that maybe the
 2 plant is going to be built in Pottsville or Auburn.
 3 The West Mahanoy Township and Mahanoy Township where
 4 the plant is supposed to be built are served by the
 5 Shenandoah Valley and the Mahanoy Area School
 6 Districts, and both meetings should have been held in
 7 those school districts where the plant is going to be
 8 built and the people have to live with it.

9 Toward the back of the Impact
 10 Statement -- in the front it says we won't have any
 11 problem with sulfur oxide. Toward the back of the
 12 Impact Statement it talks about the plant in Africa
 13 receiving at least three complaints a month about the
 14 rotten egg smell from the hydrogen sulfate, which
 15 occurs at the lowest emission of the plant running.

P1-2

16 Mr. Rich also stated that the opponents
 17 are opposing an effort that would incur 630 million
 18 dollars a day being spent on the import of oil. That's
 19 not true. I buy oil to heat my home. I buy gas for my
 20 vehicles. I'm concerned with the price of fuel also.

21 On page 4-34 of this impact statement,
 22 it says that during the construction of this proposed
 23 facility, potential health impacts could result from
 24 the fugitive dust emissions into the atmosphere.
 25 However, it states, these impacts would occur only a

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1 short period of time. It's like killing me softly. I
2 mean long or short, I don't want to be affected by it.

} P1-3

3 I firmly state my concerns are only for
4 the health and safety of the township where I live and
5 I serve. Water is a very important issue there. Seven
6 million gallons of water a day. On page 3-17 it speaks
7 of the Morea Citizens Water Company, its 105 homes, its
8 300 residents. This plant will be built 1,000 feet
9 from Morea's well.

} P1-4

10 Morea's Water Company has been in
11 effect since 1949 and there's never been a day without
12 water. Morea does not want to lose water due to this
13 project. It is happy with its water system.

14 On page 4-23 it states, that this
15 project could have a short-term effect on employment
16 and income in this region, because most of the direct,
17 indirect and induced jobs during this construction and
18 operation would be filled by workers who reside at
19 least an hour away from the project. And this also
20 assumes that none of the workers would move into the
21 area. I would love to see you come to Mahanoy Township
22 to work. I would love for you to come and live there
23 when the project is finished.

24 I have respect for the union workers
25 who are here, and I understand their concerns and their

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1 need for work. But like I said, come to Mahanoy
2 Township, come to Mahanoy Township and work and come to
3 Mahanoy Township and live.

4 My father was a, my stepfather was a
5 coal miner, a union man from West Virginia, and so was
6 my two brothers. My husband was a union worker for
7 33 years. My two sons, one drives from home to
8 Harrisburg, the other one from home to Stroudsburg
9 every day. I understand the faith of the union worker,
10 and I respect you for being here.

11 I'm concerned with noise during this
12 plant. It says that noise would be no problem because
13 of the distance between the prison and the project
14 site. I'm more concerned that the Morea Community Park
15 is closer to this project than the state prison. I'm
16 concerned with the Mahanoy City Little League team that
17 comes to that field to practice and the children that
18 go to that park to play. They will be closer to this
19 project than the state prison.

20 I'm concerned with the noise, the odor,
21 the air quality from this prison. This is also being
22 built in the fog capital of Pennsylvania. Everyone in
23 here knows how bad the fog gets on Interstate 81 from
24 Pine Grove to McAdoo. There will be six big smoke
25 stacks, five 200 feet one, one 300 feet one, and there

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1 will be more emissions in this fog area. And we talked
2 to EMS last night; and we did tell them how many
3 accidents and fatalities that we have on that road, and
4 the emissions here will increase the fog in the
5 Frackville area. And I will resume my speech at the
6 end of the program.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. BELL: Okay. The next speaker will
9 be Evelyn Andrews.

10 MS. ANDREWS: I yields my five minutes
11 to Sharon. Sharon, go finish your speech.

12 MS. BELL: You know what, we have to
13 keep with the schedule. I'll bring you back up at the
14 end. That's fine.

15 MS. ANDREWS: I yield my five minutes
16 to her.

17 MS. BELL: You don't want to -- I still
18 have to go with the --

19 MS. ANDREWS: Forget about it.

20 MS. BELL: Okay. The next speaker will
21 then be Robert Leggo.

22 MR. LEGGO: Good evening. Robert
23 Leggo, L-e-g-g-o. I reside in East Union Township,
24 Schuylkill County, and I'm a member of the Electricians
25 Union, Local 743 in Reading, Pennsylvania. I would

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1 like to respond to some of the air quality issues that
2 were brought up on the initial meeting in '04, I
3 believe it was, and last night in Shenandoah.

4 A gentleman on the initial meeting
5 voiced his concern about the air pollution problems
6 that Sasol Company in the past had in South Africa. I
7 spent a few years working there in the late '60s and
8 early '70s, and I'm still in contact with a lot of my
9 old friends from there.

10 And I worked in Durban, which is
11 southeast of Sasolberg, and -- well, people thought so
12 much of Sasol that they named the town after it. So I
13 don't think the people are really that upset about that
14 company.

15 And at any rate, also nearby is NATREF,
16 which is an oil refinery. It's the National Iranian
17 oil Refinery built by Iran. South Africa had numerous
18 prolonged energy shortages throughout the years due to
19 their racial policies. And as a matter of fact,
20 England and a coalition of nations had sanctions,
21 economic sanctions along with an oil embargo at that
22 time frame. Then later with the overthrow of the Shah
23 of Iran with the Iranian refinery, they were, they had
24 more concerns and shortages of oil. A much greater
25 demand was needed, so Sasol may not have initially

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1 given air emissions a primary concern because the
2 country was in dire straights to replace their energy
3 supplies.

4 However, since then all has changed
5 both politically and socially. There's no need for the
6 sanctions and oil embargoes now or in the future. So
7 through conversations with my friends there, it seems
8 even that the old plants along with the new state-of
9 the-art-plants either meet or exceed their pollution
10 requirements today in South Africa. So that's a need,
11 a big step ahead. And the company is known world wide
12 for being a front runner in synthetic fuels.

13 Now, if any of you lived any large
14 amount of time in the coal region, you can remember
15 years ago when the people could financially afford,
16 they remodeled their homes, because we're a proud
17 people, and resided their homes. This could be 30,
18 40 years ago. And at that time it didn't take long at
19 all before those white aluminum siding homes became
20 gray and pitted; and because of all the culm and silt
21 banks we have, every time the wind blows, that gritty
22 caustic petroleum product just deteriorates even
23 aluminum, not to mention what it does to us.

24 Well, this was -- incidentally, this
25 was before there was one cogen, one power plant built

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1 in the area. The people talk about all this cumulative
2 pollution that these cogens are spewing out. As time
3 goes by, we're not going to have any of these culm and
4 silt banks. As a matter of fact, there's a lot less
5 now and there's a lot less coal dust in the air, and we
6 can't stop the wind. And no one is going to take our
7 coal banks away from us, all these culm banks and silt
8 banks, but now we have a way to make clean fuel.

9 And even all the by-products, there's a
10 market for that. As a matter of fact, John Rich says
11 he's got all kinds of contracts lined up for all the
12 benzenes and all the different paraffin and different
13 things that come through this process. So I think we
14 could be pretty happy about some day not seeing all
15 this grit in the air every time the wind blows; and,
16 like I said, measurably it has decreased just with the
17 six or seven that are around now.

18 And also after reading the independent
19 draft of the environmental statement, which is compiled
20 by the U.S. Department of Energy, I'm even more
21 reassured that this is going to be beneficial to our
22 area and our country.

23 Currently, many high steel draftsmen
24 daily need to drive great distances during the week
25 from home and their families. Some may have to stay

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1 away. This project will bring them home; also what
 2 will immediately help our economy after it's built.
 3 Many high paying jobs will be created for us and future
 4 generations unlike the Wal-Mart Distribution Center
 5 just west of here.

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6 MS. BELL: You have to stop.

7 MR. LEGGO: These jobs will bring
 8 construction and permanent jobs and be filled by local
 9 tax paying American citizens. Thank you very much.

10 (Applause.)

11 MS. BELL: The next speaker will be
 12 Frank Mansell.

13 MR. MANSELL: Good evening. My name is
 14 Frank Mansell, St. Clair. Do you want me to spell it?

15 MS. BELL: That would be great, yes,
 16 please.

17 MR. MANSELL: M-a-n-s-e-l-l. Should
 18 not there be great concern when an Environmental Impact
 19 Statement states that currently there is not even an
 20 estimate of hazardous air emissions from the proposed
 21 coal to oil plant, especially when some of those, these
 22 emissions include mercury, beryllium, sulfuric acid,
 23 hydro, hydrochloric acid, hydrofluoric (sic) acid,
 24 benzene, arsenic, and various heavy metals. These
 25 trace emissions are not quantified in the report, but

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1 the DEP has issued an annual limit to ensure the
 2 proposed project would be a minor new source of these
 3 pollutants.

P3-1

4 In this statement two of the most
 5 dangerous problems to this proposal, odor and
 6 explosions, were disposed with a few sentences. Nearly
 7 is not sufficient guarantee the removal of hydrogen
 8 sulfide. Odorous emissions of hydrogen sulfide should
 9 not be deemed perceptible to simply settle a problem of
 10 plaque, plaques, pardon me, that plagues coal to oil
 11 plants. The words nearly complete and barely
 12 perceptible should be refined and qualified.

P3-2

13 Another adverse impact treated too lightly
 14 is traffic. The number of trucks to be used by the
 15 plant was discussed; however, in the interest of public
 16 safety, consideration must be given to the traffic
 17 congestion already on Route 61, 309, Interstate 81, and
 18 the Morea Road. In each of these routes has sections
 19 that have had multiple accidents that cause fatalities
 20 and tied up traffic for hours. All routes have fog and
 21 snow squalls. To add to the danger, some of the plant
 22 trucks would be carrying hazardous material.

P3-3

23 The plant's waste products are all lumped to
 24 and left to the requirements of DEP to be designated
 25 for land reclamation, which means designated as

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1 beneficial. For the sake of Pennsylvanians who do not
 2 agree that beneficial means safe. The environmental
 3 statement should do their own testing and determine.
 4 Since there is no wind data available, shouldn't the
 5 study be conducted to obtain wind data.

P3-4

6 It is vital to determine what area will
 7 receive the heaviest dispersions. The winds on Broad
 8 Mountain and its valleys are unpredictable. Please try
 9 to do more than estimate and assuming. Would there be
 10 rushes of concentrated pollutants as happened at
 11 Joliett. That was not just fog that closed the
 12 interstate.

P3-5

13 We were told part of the purpose of the
 14 proposed project is to generate environmental data
 15 including hazardous air pollutant measurements from the
 16 operation of the integrated technologies at a
 17 sufficiently large scale to allow industries and
 18 utilities to assess the project's potential for
 19 commercial application. Before spending vast amounts
 20 of money building a project, should not modern
 21 technology solve some of the obvious problems and
 22 adverse impacts.

23 When asking permission to operate a
 24 plant whose hazardous air pollutants has no currently
 25 available data, should not the environmental statement

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1 collect data at all, of all the air pollutants from
 2 existing facilities and total them in order to obtain
 3 the true impact many facilities has on this single
 4 area.

P3-6

5 Residents have asked for accumulative
 6 pollution data for years. St. Clair Borough is located
 7 in the valley at the south end of a gap on Broad
 8 Mountain, where a finger can prove the wind usually
 9 blows south from the cogeneration facilities with the
 10 added pollution of huge strip mine and is subject to
 11 severe air inversions. DEP's red pollen proves St.
 12 Clair receives pollution from the cogen on Broad
 13 Mountain and receive additional pollution from the
 14 proposed plant.

P3-7

15 Do not let all assumptions worry you.
 16 The plant is safe. All used light bulbs will be
 17 considered as hazardous waste.

18 (Applause.)

19 MS. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Mansell. Our
 20 next speaker is Gary Martin.

21 MR. MARTIN: Gary Martin. I'd ask you
 22 to bear with me. I'm not much of a public speaker; but
 23 as they say in Minersville, I have a frog in my throat.

24 My name is Gary Martin, and I have the
 25 honor of being the President of the Schuylkill County

—Nanette Ketrick, RPR—

1 Building and Construction Trades Council, which is
2 comprised of 15 construction unions.

3 As I have stated at previous meetings,
4 I'm not a scientist, nor am I an expert in any field of
5 study that could qualify me to determine whether this
6 project will be good or bad for the environment. I've
7 heard testimony of others who sound very knowledgeable
8 when it comes to citing all of the potential hazards
9 that could occur if this plant is built; and I don't
10 know if any of those people are scientists or not, but
11 I certainly respect their right to believe whatever
12 they want.

13 I alone with the membership of the
14 Building Trades Council believe in this project,
15 support this project, and we have a very hard time
16 believing that John Rich or any businessman today would
17 ever consider building a plant of any type knowing it
18 was going to be a pollutant. It just doesn't make
19 business sense.

20 The pros and cons of this plant have
21 been studied now in this country by experts in the
22 private sector as well as state and federal
23 environmental agencies and two administrations. I just
24 can't believe that the project has gotten this far if
25 is poses an environmental threat.

—Nanette Ketrick, RPR—

} P4-1

1 I've heard public testimony that attack
2 Mr. Rich personally as if he were some sort of traitor
3 to the people of the coal region. Those of us in the
4 building trades feel quite differently. Unlike most
5 businesses and business development organizations in
6 this County, he has and he is committed to using local
7 union building trades, and that means everything to us.

8 when you drive by places like High
9 Ridge Industrial Park and see all construction done in
10 KOZ zones by work forces from all over the country and
11 even Mexico, with your tax money and ours, that's where
12 the betrayal comes in, and I never heard anyone
13 protesting at public meetings about that.

14 This is the first time since the
15 building of the McAdoo cogen plant in the late 1980's
16 that a Schuylkill County businessman has committed to
17 using only local building trades workers. That's
18 20 years since anyone has cared enough about local
19 labor to actually do something about it.

20 Finally, we appreciate the 10-year
21 struggle that Mr. Rich has gone through to make this
22 project a reality. We know that there are already
23 plants that copied his plant in West Virginia,
24 Illinois, Montana, and Wyoming.

25 we wholeheartedly support this project.

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P4-3

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1 we eagerly look forward to finally putting Schuylkill
2 County construction workers to work in Schuylkill
3 County, and I guarantee that by using local union
4 building trades not only will this plant be the first
5 of its kind in American, it will be the best.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. BELL: Our next speaker is Mike
8 Ewall.

9 MR. EWALL: My name is Mike Ewall.
10 It's E-w-a-l-l. I'm going to continue from the
11 testimony I didn't get to finish yesterday.

12 In my scoping comments two years ago
13 one of the things that I asked is that issues on dioxin
14 and furan production be addressed. I've read every
15 word of this document, and the words dioxin and furans
16 don't seem to appear here at all. So that needs to be
17 addressed whether this facility is going to put out
18 those type of pollutants or not and why.

19 Also it talks about hazardous air
20 pollutants and how there's a permit in it for them, so
21 we don't have to worry that it's going to go over that
22 permit limit because the state said no. Well, nowhere
23 in here does it mention the fact that they're not going
24 to be monitoring --

25 MS. BELL: Excuse me. We need to --

P5-1

P5-2

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1 excuse me.

2 MR. EWALL: Yes, if someone out
3 there -- I'm sorry

4 MS. BELL: You know what, if you want
5 to talk, we can register you, but please let Mr. Ewall
6 continue his comments.

7 MR. EWALL: There's not going to be any
8 actual real monitoring of hazardous air pollutant
9 releases from any of the stacks of this facility, so
10 there's no way to actually know whether they'll be
11 meeting the limits that are being set.

12 Also this document relies on
13 non-attainment designations which say basically that
14 the air quality in this county is acceptable. They
15 rely on that conclusion based on testing that was done
16 35 miles away in a different air shed with air monitors
17 around Reading. That makes no sense to use as a way of
18 founding a claim that somehow this won't affect the air
19 quality here in this area.

20 Now, one of most amusing parts of this
21 document I find here it talks about noise pollution.
22 It says no long-term impacts on the hearing ability of
23 wildlife species would be expected from construction
24 generated noise. How do you know that? Do you say, if
25 you can hear this sound, raise a paw? I'd like to see

P5-3

P5-4

P5-5

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1 that document. I think it really makes it hard to have
2 credibility on this document when you make statements
3 like that.

4 On red ash you mentioned in response to
5 comments from two years ago on 4-12, you tried to
6 address the concern that was raised in transportation
7 section about that; and that, you completely missed the
8 point. The comment when it was made, was not by me,
9 but by others, was that there's this red ash that's
10 being dumped from the cogen plants as anti-skid
11 material on the roads. And the construction vehicles
12 and other vehicles driving on the roads kicks up dust
13 from that ash, so the toxins in that ash are
14 contributing to air pollution. The comments in this
15 document are answering some other claim but not the
16 actual claim that was raised.

P5-6

17 As far as permits, there's also a
18 section here that talks about what other permits are
19 needed, but doesn't list all the permits that are
20 needed at the state level. There are two permits that
21 they still don't have from the state DEP, one is the
22 water quality permit, and other is a site specific
23 installation permit for the storage tanks for the
24 chemicals and fuels. So those permits need to be
25 listed.

P5-7

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1 It should also mention that the air
2 permit that they've already received is under appeal
3 and so is not legally settled. And, finally, the one
4 permit that they do have that's settled is the water
5 withdrawal permit for 7 million gallons a day of water
6 withdrawal from mine pools in the area. That's a
7 permit from the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, and
8 nowhere in this document does it talk about the fact
9 that that permit has a lot of caveats in it. It
10 mentions that if they aren't able to withdraw the
11 amount that they fuel, that they want to withdraw from
12 that mine pool, if it's actually not recharging as much
13 as it should, then they may have to come back for
14 another permit; and that they may have to find other
15 ways to get the water supply that they hope to get.

P5-8

P5-9

16 On the criminal justice issues, you
17 talk about the fact that there are all these prisoners
18 right next door. Yet, in this document makes the claim
19 that somehow they won't be impacted because they're not
20 breathing the same air that people outdoors do, which
21 is pretty ludicrous. As far as I know, there's no
22 pipeline of fresh air from another county coming into
23 that prison. So those comments need to be fixed and be
24 realistic. Am I out of time? Did that buzzer ring I'm
25 out of time?

P5-10

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MR. SPEARS: You have about a minute.

MS. BELL: A minute.

MR. EWALL: A minute, okay, great. On the labor issues, 4-34 talks about how many injuries and deaths, actually on the following page, talks about how during just the construction period they expect 79 injuries and a 20 percent chance that one of the workers will die on construction. But they also mention that some studies need to be done; and the studies aren't done yet, but this document they hope to complete even though there's going to be a hazard in operability review and a process hazardous analysis basically discussing the workplace hazards. These studies have not been done yet, and I would argue that this document should not be considered complete until those studies are done.

And, finally, on labor and the alternatives to oil issues, there are cleaner, safer, and cheaper options that would even produce more jobs than this facility. One of the examples of this type of facility that will be a clean way of getting off of foreign oil -- this is my last comment, so I'll keep it short -- is the biodiesel plant they're trying to build not far from here. In Delano there's a proposal for a biodiesel plant that would use soy, which is not the



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1 best environmentally friendly way of doing things; but
2 they produce biodiesel from algae at a cost of
3 production that's cheaper than the fuel that they'll be
4 selling to the state, and they produce enough of that
5 to meet all of our diesel needs in the whole country
6 and not have to worry about the pollution impacts that
7 this type of refinery would involve.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. BELL: Thank you. Is there anyone
10 else that hasn't registered that would like to speak?
11 Your name?

12 MS. SLUZIS: Helen Sluzis.

13 MS. BELL: Helen Sluzis. Can you
14 please spell it?

15 MS. SLUZIS: Sure. S-l-u-z-i-s. Hi,
16 everybody. I've lived here in this area my whole life,
17 the last 23 years right in Morea.

18 And when I read the Environmental
19 Impact Statement, I had many concerns. I still do.
20 Concerns about the increase truck traffic on Morea Road
21 in particular and the dirt it would bring. Concerns
22 about the air emissions and air quality. Concerns
23 about the waste product and where it will be disposed
24 of and what that may do later on as far as leaching
25 into the groundwater. But right now I'm going to limit

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1 my comments and questions to only two areas addressed
2 by the Environmental Impact Statement. Those will be
3 noise pollution and the impact of the facility on the
4 Morea water supply.

5 According to the Impact Statement, the
6 highest sound level of the proposed facility is
7 projected at 55 decibels. The same as the highest
8 sound level at the Gilberton Power Plant. Because I
9 live near the Morea cogeneration plant, I know that
10 when the plant is firing up, the noise is unbearable,
11 and my home is at the opposite end of Morea, away from
12 the power plant. The noise is loud enough to wake me
13 when it occurs at night. If it occurs when I'm in the
14 yard, I go in the house to escape it. If it occurs
15 when I'm in the house with windows shut, we stop
16 talking until the noise passes because you just can't,
17 you just can't carry on a conversation it's that
18 loud.

19 Fortunately, this firing up noise occurs
20 only very occasionally, less often than weekly and
21 lasts for only a couple of minutes. So my question is
22 how frequent and how long in duration will this same
23 level of noise be at the proposed facility? Will it be
24 as infrequent and short as at the cogeneration plant,
25 or could it perhaps be a daily level of noise that we

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1 will have to adjust to. Because if it will be a daily
2 occurrence, it could seriously impact the quality of
3 life.

4 The other comments I'd like to make
5 surround the impact of the facility on the Morea water
6 supply. The site of the proposed facility is close to
7 the well that provides water to the 350 residents of
8 Morea.

9 According to the Environmental Impact
10 Statement, the facility will reduce groundwater
11 recharged to the aquifers on Broad Mountain and may
12 disrupt water service to Morea. According to the DOE,
13 if the water supply were affected, the facility's
14 owners would address the situation by establishing a
15 connection with one of the public water suppliers.
16 That's unacceptable. We're happy with our water right
17 now. We have very high quality water at a very low
18 cost. More importantly, we control our own water, an
19 essential resource, the most essential next to air.
20 The Morea Citizens Water Company controls our own
21 water, and that my friends is priceless. It's
22 unacceptable to ask us to give that up. Thank you.

23 (Applause)

24 MS. BELL: Is there anyone else who
25 would like to speak? Your name, sir?

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1 MR. DYSZEL: John Dyszel. Mine is
2 going to be based on, if you want information. You
3 control the U.S. Bureau of Mines, don't you --

4 MS. BELL: No.

5 MR. DYSZEL: -- in your department?

6 MS. BELL: No, we don't. We're the
7 Department of Energy. That's the Department of
8 Interior.

9 MR. DYSZEL: Okay. Well, you have a
10 government agency, because see, they have --

11 MR. BELL: Okay. Make your comments,
12 five minutes and --

13 MR. DYSZEL: Well, I have to talk to
14 you because --

15 MS. BELL: We need your name.

16 MR. DYSZEL: Oh, John Dyszel,
17 D-y-s-z-e-l. I guess there's an old statement, those
18 who forget their past are then destined to repeat.
19 That's it.

20 If you're interested in information on
21 these plants, our government after World War II was
22 over had fully funded coal gasification and
23 liquefaction in this country. They actually built a
24 plant in a little town called Louisiana, Missouri.
25 That will be basically right here. It was right on the

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1 Mississippi River right there. (Indicating on a map.)
2 Right there it is.

3 And there's a book written on it. They
4 published a book from a symposium. It was coal
5 gasification and liquefaction of coal. Copyrighted
6 1953 by the American Institute of Mining and
7 Metallurgical Engineers, New York, New York; February
8 the 21st, 1952, printed by the Maple Press Company,
9 York, PA. This book contains 15 papers given at the
10 symposium. Seven describe new methods or modifications
11 of gasification process. One reveals trends in the
12 gasification of coal. Two deal with the hydrogenation
13 of coal, and five discuss the significance of
14 successful coal gasification to American industry.

15 Now, the two that deal with coal
16 hydrogenation is coal-to-oil. That's what it's called.
17 That's the official title or coal-to-gas-to-liquid
18 fuel. The chief fuels technologist from Bureau of
19 Mines and general chairman at symposium, which met in
20 Washington D.C., August 15, 1952, was a man named Arno
21 C. Fieldner. It's F-i-e-l-d-n-e-r, and a man named
22 L.C. Skinner. He was the chemical engineer of
23 synthetic fuels demonstration plant, U.S. Bureau of
24 Mines, Louisiana, Missouri, from '49 to '51.

25 I only had the book for four days. It

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1 came from an estate, and it had to be sold. So I never
2 got to keep it. So it's a book. It's all
3 technological stuff that was done. Even one of the
4 projects, ironically, which is being used today. It's
5 called coal, coal bed methane extraction was they
6 started an underground coal mine fire in Alabama to
7 gasify coal underground. Because what kills the
8 project is the extraction of the coal, because, see,
9 that's where the problem comes in.

10 It's not that -- you can't say replace
11 a depleting carbon resource called oil with another
12 rapidly depleting carbon resource called coal, because
13 it's far more easier to get a liquid fuel out of the
14 earth than it is to mine a ton of coal. And that's
15 been the problem here, and I even brought the
16 historical record for anthracite coal. We have never
17 since 1918 mined one ton more of coal or even employed
18 another man. We cannot mathematically, economically
19 get anthracite from the earth feasible anymore. We
20 don't got the money.

21 You're talking an anthracite mining
22 operation and its preparation facilities just even make
23 the raw material for the plant will be a multi-billion
24 dollar investment. And the trend in the American
25 mining industry today is that there's less companies

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1 mining more tons of coal, and most of them companies
2 are publicly owned then.

3 Peabody Energy is the number one
4 producer. Arch Coal is the number two producer, which
5 ironically, the second coal-to-oil plant that was going
6 to be built was in the state of Wyoming because of then
7 its vast reserves of coal; but the biggest problem
8 facing them at the time is you know in the west of the
9 Mississippi rainfall is very sporadic. There's -- and
10 they could not build the plant because of an unstable
11 supply of water which you need for the gasification
12 process.

13 And worldwide we are taking more coal
14 from the earth every year. We do not mine less coal
15 ever. So that means we are depleting the resource at
16 an ever quickening pace just like with oil and gas.
17 And it is not mathematically possible to take something
18 that's far more expensive to extract to convert it into
19 a fuel so, what, somebody can take a ride to the
20 Wal-Mart. It's not feasible. You have to look at it
21 from a practical standpoint, and that's what these
22 papers and all this investigation came because what
23 they did -- this was created after World War II, and
24 they brought home from Nazi Germany all the technology
25 and the scientists that went with it, because they are

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1 the ones that invented the coal-to-oil technology.

2 The Fischer-Tropsch process was done in
3 1923, and the first coal-to-oil project was done, was
4 the Burgess process, which was discovered in 1910,
5 which all it is is a over-glorified coal gasification
6 plant which was the major utility in this country
7 preceding electric power. It was Edison and
8 Westinghouse that brought the coal industry to its
9 knees in the 1920s. And that's -- we used to make
10 hydrogen engines -- which I know I'm running out of
11 time here.

12 If you want to see hydrogen powered
13 internal combustion engines, you can go to the Cool-
14 spring Power Museum in Jefferson County, Pennsylvania.
15 They have -- these engines were developed in the 1870s
16 because we didn't have -- that's what coal gasification
17 is, it's 60 percent pure hydrogen. So you're basically
18 trying to go to the future by going back to the past.
19 So that's about all I got the time to say.

20 (Applause.)

21 MS. BELL: Anyone else? Okay, the
22 gentleman in the back, green jacket. Can you state
23 your name?

24 MR. HILL: Bill Hill.

25 MS. BELL: Bill what?

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1 MR. HILL: Hill, H-i-l-l.

2 MS. BELL: Okay, Bill Hill.

3 MR. HILL: I heard a lot of comments
4 tonight, and that's what's great about this County.
5 You can say what you want without getting your head
6 chopped off. But a great American industrialist once
7 said, I will tell you the might and strength of a
8 country by its smoke stack industry. Where is our
9 smoke stacks? Out of the country.

10 Let me tell you something. We need
11 this job because it's good paying jobs, and good paying
12 jobs bring taxes. They pay for infractions (sic).
13 They pay for things to get done, roadwork. It pays for
14 schools. It pays for libraries, gives an opportunity
15 to hire more teachers. That's the bottom line, jobs,
16 good paying jobs.

17 UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: Unenvironmentally
18 friendly jobs.

19 MS. BELL: Okay.

20 MR. HILL: They're --

21 MS. BELL: All right.

22 MR. HILL: Mrs. Chairman, madam
23 chairman, he's out of order.

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. BELL: Excuse me.

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1 MR. HILL: I want my five minutes just
2 like everybody else, madam chairman. He's out of
3 order.

4 MS. BELL: Okay.

5 MR. HILL: I want to proceed.

6 MR. BELL: Okay, you have an additional
7 minute added on. Please refrain from talking while
8 someone else is talking.

9 UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: This is not about
10 jobs. This is about the environment.

11 MS. BELL: We have to take everyone's
12 comments whether they're in the context or not. I
13 can't -- it happened --

14 MR. HILL: Did you ever hear of freedom
15 of speech, brother. We didn't lose that yet. I just
16 want to close by saying in the bottom line, you all
17 know the bottom line. You need good jobs, good paying
18 jobs; and believe me, if we were all worried about the
19 environment and everything, we'd be doing a lot more
20 than sitting here tonight and worrying about other
21 nonsense that's going on, statewide and nationwide.
22 Thank you.

23 (Appause.)

24 MS. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Hill. There
25 was another gentleman here. Please keep your comments

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1 to the Draft EIS.

2 MR. SKIBIEL: Ed Skibiell. I'd like to
3 say that in the beginning the minutes stated something
4 about the government taking advantage of middle class
5 people? Was that -- am I stating that correctly? In
6 the very beginning somebody had stated about the
7 government taking --

8 MS. BELL: That may have been one of
9 the commenters. The DOE did not present that.

10 MR. SKIBIEL: Yeah, I understand.
11 well, as I look around the room, there's a lot of
12 middle class people in here that would benefit from
13 this situations that are going to take place up on that
14 hill.

15 I'd also like to say that anybody that
16 has pros and cons about this, hey, it is a free
17 country. State it. You got your facts. That's great.
18 But this is not a jab at anybody as an individual.
19 Every morning you get up, and what do you do, you start
20 your car to go to work.

21 So somebody that wants to come out here
22 with all kind of facts and figures about the
23 environmental impact and the sulfur dioxide and
24 everything else, I think it's rather hypocritical that
25 you use a vehicle to get where you got to go. And in

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1 the wintertime, you start it up and you let it run for
2 five minutes. What are you doing with that vehicle I
3 ask you. You tell me.

4 As far the jobs being created, guys,
5 let's face it. The big talk anymore is the budgets,
6 local budgets, school budgets. I think that your
7 environment and your municipalities tend to go hand in
8 hand to some degree. You know, we got to give one to
9 get one.

10 This area, Schuylkill County, come on,
11 everybody has been at school board meetings and
12 township meetings. Budgets are tight, and they're not
13 going to get better. If we can get an influx of tax
14 dollars here, I think that's a big plus. If we can get
15 over a hundred, I don't know what the numbers are, but
16 I imagine it's going to be quite a few hundred local
17 labor guys in here working spending their tax dollars
18 here, whether it be for buying a car, building a home,
19 or paying their taxes to the local school district.
20 That's a plus guys. So I say my vote is for it.

21 (Applause.)

22 MS. BELL: Thank you. Anyone else?

23 MS. ANDREWS: Sharon wants to.

24 MS. BELL: I'm sorry. There's a
25 gentleman in the back. Your name, sir?

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1 MR. REED: Thomas Reed. Yes. When I
2 go out of Schuylkill County people look at me and they
3 say, they just hear the way I talk and they say, you're
4 a coal cracker, ain't you?

5 UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: And proud of it.

6 MR. REED: Yes, yes. I'm a coal
7 cracker. My dad was a coal cracker. His dad was a
8 coal cracker. I'm in the union. Before that I was a
9 coal cracker pushing silt dams out for Jack Rich and
10 his brother Mike, and I was making money.

11 The bottom line is, sure, the union
12 guys want that job up there, but there is going to be
13 other jobs for people that ain't union. The union
14 ain't bringing their own coal in there. It's going to
15 be local people with coal companies that need help that
16 need laborers that need people that are going to work,
17 and there's going to be money out there. There is
18 money to be made out of this process.

19 I can understand you are thinking
20 about the environment and everything. And like it was
21 said last night, they're going to be taking money, or
22 water from the wells and putting it back into the
23 mining wells. Them mining wells ain't touching our
24 water table now. They ain't touching our own water
25 supply now, so how are they going to touch it if it's

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1 going right back into the same source that it's coming
2 from.

3 I can understand yous are concerned
4 with the smoke and stuff like that, but I see a lot of
5 people here that are -- I'm 31 and I'm probable one
6 of the younger generations here. There's some, I see
7 some people my age. Yous guys went everywhere. You
8 were allowed to smoke in a mall. You were allowed to
9 smoke everywhere but in a church years ago; and people
10 didn't care about that, but yet yous are worried about
11 the smoke and stuff.

12 I worked in the cogens. It's --
13 there's nothing wrong with me. I still function. I
14 can run, you know. I mean I don't have arms or nothing
15 like that. You don't get diseases out of it do you
16 know what I mean.

17 The bottom line is there's money out
18 there for everybody; but I mean everybody has their own
19 opinion, and I respect that. I mean I ain't out for
20 nobody, you know. I respect all of yous, you know.
21 Yous talked. You said what yous wanted to say. But
22 the bottom line is we can do something here for, you
23 know, our children that are growing up later, you know.
24 There's money for them too, you know, and for your
25 families. You can have -- if yous make that money,

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1 yous can have a good life, you know. Not that, I
 2 mean -- I ain't saying that yous don't now, but that's
 3 the bottom line. Thank you.

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4 (Applause.)

5 MS. Bell: Okay, Sharon.

6 MS. CHIAO: I'd like to finish what I
 7 was saying. I was talking about the emissions and the
 8 quality air between Pine Grove and McAdoo and the
 9 increased, and in the impact statement it says that
 10 there will be an increase in the fog that we already
 11 have there. But their solution is by putting flashing
 12 lights along the highway. I don't really think that's
 13 acceptable. I don't think any of the fatalities, any
 14 of the big truck wrecks that we have are worth it.

P11-1

15 Today we stood up on top of Broad
 16 Mountain, and we looked, and you could see how the
 17 smoke was coming out of the three cogens and at which
 18 direction it took. Depending on how the wind is
 19 blowing, St. Clair and Port Carbon will get their share
 20 of it. And it's so ironic that we change all of these
 21 black banks into red banks, and now we have all this
 22 red ash. We did not think enough when the five cogens
 23 were being built in our area, and now all of that air
 24 is compromised. And we have those five cogens putting
 25 out this pollution, and now we're going to put another

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1 big plant with six smoke stacks in the middle of all
 2 that to the people. That is the part that is a
 3 concern.

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4 Also even with talking tonight, there's
 5 been too many likely, possibly, maybe, what if. I
 6 think there should really be a new impact statement
 7 done because there's not enough definites. When it
 8 gets to be definite, then write an impact statement.
 9 It's not acceptable when you have too many guessing in
 10 the impact statement.

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11 Also I was given a note when I came in
 12 which makes so much sense. It says: The old time
 13 miners said Mahanoy City is sitting on a bed of coal,
 14 and the coal is floating in a sea of water. If the new
 15 plant, the coal to gas plant, is going to pump water
 16 out of the Gilberton 7 million gallons a day, what
 17 affect will this have on the Mahanoy Valley? Will the
 18 town drop or settle and cause considerable damage to
 19 the properties in Mahanoy City? Once that water level
 20 is pulled out that's supporting that ground, will that
 21 ground collapse?

P11-4

22 This could cause considerable damage to
 23 the properties. Do all the property owners need to buy
 24 mine settlement insurance, and what is the cutoff date
 25 for this type of insurance with this plant going in.

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1 Also talking about tax dollars, this
2 plant is going up in Mahanoy Township because there's a
3 KOZ; and I'll have you to know, I was no part of that
4 KOZ. So we will not be getting, looking at tax dollars
5 from this.

P11-6

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. BELL: Your name?

8 MS. FEESER: Laurel Feeser,
9 F-e-e-s-e-r. This is a little intimidating. I never
10 spoke in front of so many people, but I just want to
11 say that, you know, if you look around, I'm definitely
12 a minority in this crowd. I'm a 17-year-old-girl who
13 goes to Schuylkill Haven High School, and I just want
14 to say that I'm astonished by the ignorance that's
15 shown a lot tonight.

16 with all due respect, in 20 to 30 years
17 you guys might not be around, but I will. And the
18 pollution in this area might determine whether or not I
19 want to raise a family here. And if my children are at
20 risk, I'm not going to want to. I'm going to move out
21 of the area, and this place is going to get worse than
22 it already is. And the fact that I'm 17 might mean
23 that you won't listen to me, but I'm your future and so
24 is everybody else. And even though I'm not -- even
25 though I'm the only 17 year old here willing to speak

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1 up, I speak for a lot of people. So I think you guys
2 need to consider that. Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. BELL: Thank you, Laurel. Anyone
5 else?

6 MS. WORHACH: Sheila Worhach. I just
7 want to thank that young girl, that 17-year-old girl
8 that had enough courage to come up here and say what
9 she said. I just congratulate you.

10 (Applause.)

11 MS. WORHACH: And the bottom line is
12 m-o-n-e-y and g-r-e-e-d. You know, she's absolutely
13 right. I mean people don't look at the long term.
14 They look at the short term. They look at, well, let's
15 throw in the towel. This man up here was saying that
16 Schuylkill County, well, come on, let's, this is going
17 to create a lot of work. You know that's looking at
18 the short term.

19 What about the long term when like that
20 young lady said. I mean there's generations coming
21 up here when you're going to be dead and buried. And
22 what about the young people and the unborn babies that
23 aren't even in the future yet or are going to be one
24 day. I mean it's just like -- it's money. It's all
25 money. And I'm sure that if people would just sit down

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1 and think of other jobs that they can have like
2 cleaning up the sludge that Pennsylvania is so
3 wonderful that they bring in all the sludge; and all
4 the agriculture, what are we eating. We're eating
5 people's waste material.

6 I mean I think they should do what they
7 did in California. They had a way. They built this
8 refinery where they took the sludge and they made
9 bricks out of it believe it or not. And I know that
10 this probably a fixed deal. Unfortunately, it's
11 probably going to go through. I'm really sad to say
12 it, but I think it will. But I just want to let you
13 know, people, that the people that are against it, I'm
14 for you, and I'm for the unborn children. And thank
15 you, young lady. You're a wonderful person.

16 (Applause.)

17 MS. BELL: Okay. Thank you. Right now
18 I'd like to recap on what will happen next in the EIS
19 process. Oh, I'm sorry.

20 MR. YODIS: I'd like to speak.

21 MS. BELL: Okay.

22 MR. YODIS: My name is Ronald Yodis.

23 MS. BELL: Ronald Yodis.

24 MR. YODIS: Good evening, ladies and
25 gentlemen. My name is Ronald Yodis. I'm from

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1 Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, and I'm actually afraid to
2 speak up.

3 But I'm an ex-veteran. I seen a lot of
4 different things happen. And I'm all for giving people
5 work; but once the plant is built, are the fumes going
6 to go away? No. I live approximately two miles from
7 the plant in Maizeville -- no, in Yatesville. And at
8 night, especially on a foggy night, they open up the
9 stack, and you can see red ash coming out of it at
10 night.

11 They used to do it at daytime, but they
12 stopped that. They do it at night now, and I can see
13 it out the back bedroom of my window. I don't see any
14 of our elected representatives here. Rendell isn't
15 here, is he? No. Is Dick Holden here, or what's his
16 name? Holden. He's not here. Rhoades?

17 AUDIENCE: He's here.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. YODIS: Now, when they arrive at
20 these here levels of pollution that are allowable they
21 say, well, every one of us is different. Some people
22 in this audience might be allergic to peanuts. It will
23 kill them. I myself cannot take sulfur drugs, or I
24 can't take nitroglycerin tablets because they'll kill
25 me.

—Nanette Ketrick, RPR—

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1 But need I remind you -- well, I will.
2 60 Minutes had a program on a couple years ago, and
3 Schuylkill County is the fifth most corrupt county in
4 the 50 states.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. YODIS: Now, if you don't believe
7 that, you could write to CBS --

8 (Audience outburst.)

9 MS. BELL: Let Mr. Yodis finish.

10 MR. YODIS: -- and they'll probably
11 give you a rerun if enough of us write in. And from my
12 experience, money talks and BS walks, and that's what's
13 going to happen. No matter what we say, no matter what
14 the common person says, Mr. Rich is going to get his
15 plant bar none. Where is he going to live? Anywhere
16 he wants to because he can afford to. Bet you dollars
17 to doughnuts he don't live around here once the plant
18 is built.

19 It's -- after all these years of living
20 here and seeing this area deteriorate, it's disgusting.
21 When I got discharged from the service, I had my duffle
22 bag and \$1200, and I was in Santa Maria, California. I
23 should have stayed there because this is disgusting to
24 see what's happening here.

25 Maybe somebody might say, well, why

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1 didn't you stay there. That's okay. It's a free
 2 country. It is. That's all I have to say.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Yodis.
 5 Anyone else?

6 MR. SKIBIEL: Can I state something?

7 MS. BELL: Yeah. Mike, he's going to
 8 go again, and then you can go again. You have three
 9 minutes.

10 UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: Sit down.

11 MR. EWALL: I don't appreciate that
 12 sit-down comment. I want to say just one more thing.

13 One of the things that this ought to
 14 look at when it looks to alternatives is alternatives
 15 for cleaning up waste coal piles. According to SMCRA
 16 Law, Surface Mining Control Reclamation Act, waste coal
 17 ought to be returned to the mines so that it's not
 18 exposed to air, water, and sunlight so we don't end up
 19 with the acid drainage problems that we have, and
 20 that's the cleanest way to really solve the waste coal
 21 problem is not try to turn it into fuel, not try to
 22 turn it into electricity and produce all these waste
 23 products that lead to more than the waste coal does in
 24 the first place, damaging groundwater far more than it
 25 ever happened with the raw waste coal piles.

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—Nanette Ketrick, RPR—

1 And if they're looking for
2 alternatives, they should look at that alternative and
3 also the alternative of planting beach grass which
4 other federal researchers with USDA found that you can
5 take the grass that grows on sandy beaches and plant it
6 in these areas, and it can survive hot shifting
7 surfaces and actually establish a root structure and
8 reclaim these piles so that native species can then
9 take over a few years later and start recovering on
10 that environment and reducing the amount of leaching
11 from it. And that would be an environmentally sound
12 way of reclaiming these piles. It could be done for
13 only 6 to 10 percent of the costs of traditional
14 remediation and doesn't have any of the environmental
15 toxic consequences of burning the stuff. Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MS. BELL: Thank you, Mike. John
18 Dyszel, you have exactly three more minutes.

19 MR. DYSZEL: Like I said, I'm not
20 really here for or against the plant. If you want to
21 build it, build it, but do it on your time with your
22 dimes, not mine.

23 (A section of audience members left.)

24 MS. BELL: Okay. Why don't you just
25 stop. Wait until they leave.

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1 MR. DYSZEL: Okay.

2 MS. BELL: Do you want to continue?

3 MR. DYSZEL: What I want to say, like I
4 said, if you want to do something in life, get your own
5 money and do it. If you want to buy a home, you don't
6 go running to the governor or the government to get
7 money to buy it and have somebody subsidize the loans.
8 If you can't pay for it, that's your problem. You lose
9 it.

10 But I want to say something about the
11 project that was done in the '50s. There was a coal
12 company named Consolidated Coal Corp. They were
13 banking on this being the future for coal in America.
14 Well, it failed. It didn't work. So they had to make
15 a decision, and they did. They now are known today as
16 Conso Energy, C-o-n-s-o-l. They are the fourth
17 largest coal producer in the United States. They are
18 stationed right here in Pennsylvania. Two of the most
19 productive long wall deep mines in the world sit right
20 here in Pennsylvania. They both produce about 24
21 million tons annually a year.

22 The largest coal preparation plant, or
23 coal breakers we call it, is right here. It's the most
24 productive, most efficient, most highest tech breaker
25 in the world. It cost 350 million dollars to build,

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1 and they did all this on their time with their dimes,
2 not our money. They took their company public. They
3 had to. It's either that or die.

4 I know other coal companies that sat
5 there for years and years waiting for the government to
6 subsidize them, went out of business. And like I said,
7 if you're going to build a plant, coal oil, whatever
8 the project is, the thing is this, if you can't produce
9 a ton of coal, what good is it. We have never mined a
10 ton more in this Commonwealth in anthracite since 1918.
11 Nobody, there is nobody here that has the money even to
12 capitalize a mining operation that would require, just
13 to stay in business today; and that's the whole problem
14 for the Department of Energy, and you probably know
15 this is the costs of mining just keep going up. The
16 costs, we're consuming more and more every year.

17 we're not using less coal. We're using
18 more of it. The world is using more of it. China, for
19 example, five years ago they were consuming less coal
20 than we were. They were doing about 800 million tons a
21 year. Now, they have surpassed 2 billion tons. They
22 blew us off. We are at 1 billion 148 million tons
23 annually now, consumption in this Country in
24 production. They have surpassed us by double. They
25 want to do a coal-to-oil project in their country using

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1 a billion tons, but they can't produce it. They're
2 going to take it from the world market.

3 Now, in the past year and a half if you
4 think the cost of gasoline went up, it only went up,
5 what, about 20, 30 percent. The cost of coal in this
6 Country went up 300 percent. It was \$18 a ton a year
7 and a half ago. Now, it's on the open market for \$60 a
8 ton. You are not going to win here. There is no win
9 win situation like the politicians think there is. If
10 you're going to win here, you're going to take a
11 massive loss somewhere else. That's -- they said I'm
12 running out of time. I can go on for hours with this.
13 It doesn't matter.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. BELL: Thank you. Okay. Anyone
16 else? Okay. I just want to recap on what will happen
17 next. DOE has conducted its two public hearings to
18 solicit comments for the Draft EIS. At the same time
19 during the 62-day comment period, federal, state, and
20 local agencies as well as local citizens and
21 stakeholders have an opportunity to review and comment
22 on the document.

23 DOE will collect and respond to all
24 comments received or postmarked by February 8th. DOE
25 will then prepare the final EIS and record a decision

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1 based on all the comments received. And as a reminder,
2 every comment received must be acknowledged and
3 responded to in the Draft EIS.

4 The Assistant Secretary from Fossil
5 Energy will then sign and record a record of decision
6 based on the final EIS.

7 okay. If you have any -- if you didn't
8 speak this evening and you would still like to provide
9 comments, there are plenty of comment cards still
10 available with addressed envelopes, put your comments,
11 send them to me. You can fax them to me at the numbers
12 that are on the comment cards. You can call the toll-
13 free number and leave a message. All those messages
14 are being transcribed and will be part of the public
15 comment process.

16 Let it be recorded that the meeting
17 ended at 8:28, and let us adjourn.

18 (At 8:28 p.m. the hearing was
19 adjourned.)

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25

—Nanette Ketrick, RPR—

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TRANSCRIPT CERTIFIED

I hereby certify that the evidence and proceedings are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me on the hearing of the within cause and that this transcript of such notes is true and correct.

1/18/06

Nanette M. Ketrick RPR

Nanette M. Ketrick
Registered Professional Reporter

Nanette Ketrick, RPR

Responses to Comments from the
January 10, 2006, Pottsville, Pennsylvania, Public Hearing on the
Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed
Gilberton Coal-to-Clear Fuels Project

NOTE: For the purpose of coding comments and ease of cross-referencing between documents and other comments, the Pottsville transcript has been coded as P_-. The first number identifies the chronological order of the speaker. The second number, if used, identifies the chronological order of the speaker's comments.

Comment P1-1:

There are too many if's, and's, likely, maybe, could possibly, will likely in this draft. There are no definites as to what is going to happen to us.

Response:

See response to Comment S2-1.

Comment P1-2:

Toward the back of the impact statement – in the front it says we won't have any problem with sulfur oxide. Toward the back of the impact statement it talks about the plant in Africa receiving at least three complaints a month about the rotten egg smell from the hydrogen sulfate, which occurs at the lowest emission of the plant running.

Response:

As explained in Section 4.1.2.2, odorous emissions of hydrogen sulfide from the proposed facilities should not be perceptible under routine operating conditions. Implementation of an EPA-approved Risk Management Plan for the proposed facilities would be developed to protect offside populations from potential accidental releases of sulfur dioxide and hydrogen sulfide (Section 4.1.9.1).

Comment P1-3:

...facility, potential health impacts could result from the fugitive dust emissions into the atmosphere. However, it states, these impacts would occur only a short period of time.

Response:

The temporary impacts of fugitive dust from construction activities on offsite particulate concentrations would be localized because of the relatively rapid settling of larger-size fugitive dust particles (see Section 4.1.2.1 Construction). Water spray trucks would be used to dampen exposed soil with water as necessary.

In addition, the PA DEP has installed a PM-10 sampler at the Mahanoy State Correctional Institute and TSP samplers at the Mahanoy State Correction Institute, the Mahanoy City Sewage Treatment Plant, and the Frackville State Prison. If the monitors indicate ambient air quality standards are being exceeded during construction, WMPI has agreed to lessen the intensity of the heavy earthwork to prevent future exceedances (Suresh Chandran, Phillips Services Corporation, email to Robert Miller, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, April 11, 2006).

Comment P1-4:

This plant will be built 1,000 feet from Morea's well.

Response:

The potential effects of the proposed project on the Morea Citizens Water Company's supply source are analyzed in Section 4.1.4.2. The analysis in that section indicates that the residents of Morea would not experience any disruption in water service as result of the proposed project. The nearest boundary of the site for the new facilities is now planned to be about 1,500 feet from Morea's well. Thus, the analysis of potential impacts to Morea's water supply in Section 4.1.4.2 is conservative because it assumes that the distance would be just 1,000 feet.

Section 4.1.4.2 discusses the potential for the proposed facilities to affect water availability for Morea by reducing groundwater recharge over a portion of the aquifer that supplies Morea's well. The calculations provided in that section indicate that the remaining groundwater recharge would be more than sufficient to meet Morea's needs. Thus, the 350 residents of Morea would not experience any disruption in water service as result of the proposed project. However, Section 3.4.4 includes information about a report from a Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection consultant (PDEP 2002b) that stated that the Morea water utility has experienced difficulties maintaining water pressure through its distribution system. These difficulties, which the report indicates result from inadequacies in the distribution system, could lead to service disruptions unrelated to the proposed project.

There is little chance that the proposed project would cause contamination of the Morea well. As explained in Section 4.1.4.2, most potential impacts to groundwater on Broad Mountain would be avoided by standard engineering practices such as collection of potentially contaminated runoff and cleaning up accidental spills. Project wastewater effluents would be discharged in Mahanoy Valley and, therefore, could not affect groundwater on Broad Mountain. The proposed septic system for sanitary wastewater disposal, which would only receive wastewaters similar to those generated by households, would discharge effluents to the aquifer, but these should not adversely affect groundwater quality. Also see the response to comment 83-1.

Comment P1-5:

I'm more concerned that the Morea Community Park is closer to this project than the state prison. I'm concerned with the Mahanoy City Little League team that comes to that field to practice and the children that go to that park to play. They will be closer to this project than the state prison.

Response:

See response to comment S17-4.

Comment P1-6:

This is also being built in the fog capital of Pennsylvania. Everyone in here knows how bad the fog gets on Interstate 81 from Pine Grove to McAdoo. There will be six big smoke stacks, five 200 feet one, one 300 feet one, and there will be more emissions in this fog area. And we talked to EMS last night; and we did tell them how many accidents and

fatalities we have on that road, and the emissions here will increase the fog in the Frackville area.

Response:

Section 4.1.2.2 concludes that any fog created by operation of the proposed facilities is not likely to affect Interstate 81 because of the distance from the facilities to Interstate 81 (see response to Comment S17-5). The EIS does not include mitigation recommendations for the impacts of fog on any local roadways because: (1) the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has not raised the issue of additional fog on Interstate 81 or any other roadways and has not recommended mitigation for such impacts; and (2) the project proponents have not agreed to provide any mitigation for any fog impacts.

Comment P2-1:

As time goes by, we're not going to have any of these culm and silt banks. As a matter of fact, there's a lot less now and there's a lot less coal dust in the air, and we can't stop the wind. And no one is going to take our coal banks away from us, all these culm banks and silt banks...

Response:

The comment has been noted.

Comment P2-2:

This project will bring them home; also what will immediately help our economy after it's built. Many high paying jobs will be created for us and future generations...

Response:

See responses to comments S4-4 and S11.

Comment P3-1:

Should not there be great concern when an environmental impact statement states that currently there is not even an estimate of hazardous air emissions from the proposed coal to oil plant, especially when some of those, these emissions include mercury, beryllium, sulfuric acid, hydro, hydrochloric acid, hydrofluoric acid, benzene, arsenic, and various heavy metals. These trace emissions are not quantified in the report, but the DEP has issued an annual limit to ensure the proposed project would be a minor new source of these pollutants.

Response:

Because this is a new process, there is uncertainty about the amounts of air pollutants and trace elements that would be emitted from the emission control technologies. As stated in Section 4.1.2.2, the synthesis gas would be cleaned extensively using wet scrubbing followed by acid gas removal using a Rectisol unit, prior to sending the gas to the F-T synthesis facilities and the combined-cycle power plant. Therefore, a high percentage of hazardous air pollutants and trace elements in the synthesis gas would be removed.

Comment P3-2:

In this statement two of the most dangerous problems to this proposal, odor and explosions, were disposed with a few sentences. Nearly is not sufficient guarantee the

removal of hydrogen sulfide. Odorous emissions of hydrogen sulfide should not be deemed perceptible to settle a problem that plagues coal to oil plants. The words nearly complete and barely perceptible should be refined and qualified.

Response:

As discussed in Section 4.1.2.2, remaining concentrations of hydrogen sulfide downstream of the Rectisol unit would be as low as 1 to 5 ppm. Section 4.1.9.1 has been revised to provide additional information on measures to control the risk and consequences of explosions. These include implementation of an EPA-approved Risk Management Plan for the proposed facilities would protect offside populations from accidental releases of hydrogen sulfide.

Comment P3-3:

Another adverse impact treated too lightly is traffic. The number of trucks to be used by the plant was discussed; however, in the interest of public safety, consideration must be given to the traffic congestion already on Route 61, 309, Interstate 81, and the Morea Road. In each of these routes has sections that have had multiple accidents that cause fatalities and tied up traffic for hours. All routes have fog and snow squalls. To add to the danger, some of the plant trucks would be carrying hazardous material.

Response:

Section 4.1.7.8 acknowledges that the additional traffic generated by construction and operation of the proposed facilities would have adverse impacts on traffic flow and safety on the local road network. The project proponents have committed to contacting the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to discuss potential mitigation options, including signaling, road widening, and scheduling work hours and/or deliveries to avoid periods of peak traffic.

Section 4.1.2.2 concludes that any fog created by operation of the proposed facilities is not likely to affect Interstate 81 because of the distance from the facilities to Interstate 81 (see response to Comment S17-5). However, it is not clear whether fog from the proposed facilities would affect the other roads mentioned in this comment. The EIS does not include mitigation recommendations for the impacts of fog on any local roadways because: (1) the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has not raised the issue of additional fog on Interstate 81 or any other roadways and has not recommended mitigation for such impacts; and (2) the project proponents have not agreed to provide any mitigation for any fog impacts.

With regard to trucks carrying hazardous materials, neither construction nor operation of the facilities as proposed would entail the transportation of hazardous materials by truck. If hazardous materials were transported by truck during operations, such shipments would be regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

See responses to comments S4-4 and S11.

Comment P3-4:

The plant's waste products are all lumped to and left to the requirements of DEP to be designated for land reclamation, which means designated as beneficial. For the sake of Pennsylvanians who do not agree that beneficial means safe. The environmental statement should do their own testing and determine.

Response:

WMPI has not completed the detailed engineering and process testing necessary to allow complete physical and chemical characterization of process solid wastes. Accordingly, assessment of impacts in the EIS is based on estimated waste characteristics. All determinations on the management of solid wastes and byproducts from the proposed facilities would be subject to review and approval by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection under the state's residual waste regulations. The Department of Environmental Protection would require comprehensive characterization data as a basis for its environmental evaluations under the regulations. Not all facility solid wastes and byproducts are proposed for use in land reclamation. See Sections 2.1.6.3, 4.1.8.2, and 7.2 for more information.

Comment P3-5:

Since there is no wind data available, shouldn't the study be conducted to obtain wind data? It is vital to determine what area will receive the heaviest dispersions. The winds on Broad Mountain and its valleys are unpredictable. Please try to do more than estimate and assuming. Would there be rushes of concentrated pollutants as happened at Joliett. That was not just fog that closed the interstate.

Response:

As stated in Section 3.2.1, no quality-assured wind data have been archived from a location near enough to be representative of the proposed site. As discussed in Section 4.1.2.2, an examination of wind data from surrounding locations (i.e., Harrisburg, Scranton) about 50 miles away suggests that prevailing winds are likely to be from the west-southwest, paralleling the ridge and valley orientation. However, to provide conservative results (forming an upper bound), maximum concentrations from operation of the proposed facilities were calculated for a full range of 54 potential meteorological conditions (i.e., conditions representing different combinations of atmospheric stabilities and wind speeds) for each of 360 wind directions (at 1° compass intervals). Concentrations were modeled at over 30,000 locations (receptors) along or outside the WMPI property boundaries at a spacing of 650 ft and 1° compass intervals at distances of up to 12 miles from the main plant area, as well as for specified receptors along nearby public roads. Topography was included in the modeling. For all pollutants, the location with the maximum concentrations would be the top of Locust Mountain, an undeveloped forested area slightly over 3 miles north of the main plant area and immediately northeast of Shenandoah. Concentrations at other locations, including the nearby Mahanoy State Correctional Institution, would be less.

Comment P3-6:

When asking permission to operate a plant whose hazardous air pollutants has no currently available data, should not the environmental statement collect data at all, of all the air pollutants from existing facilities and total them in order to obtain the true impact many facilities has on this single area.

Response:

Section 6 has been revised to estimate the cumulative impact to Schuylkill County of hazardous air pollutants from existing facilities. The revised text incorporates work

conducted under EPA's National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment, which has used nationwide emissions inventories and air dispersion modeling to estimate cumulative impacts based on ambient concentrations of each of the hazardous air pollutants emitted from multiple sources within 31 miles of each ambient location. For 28 hazardous air pollutants with nonzero background concentrations (attributable to long-range transport, unidentified emission sources, and natural emission sources), the EPA assessment summed each pollutant's modeled concentration with its corresponding background concentration to obtain a total estimated concentration. For the remaining pollutants, the total concentration was assumed to equal the modeled concentration. Section 6 presents a summary of this information for Schuylkill County for mercury, beryllium, and arsenic.

Comment P3-7:

Residents have asked for accumulative pollution data for years. St. Clair Borough is located in the valley at the south end of a gap on Broad Mountain, where a finger can prove the wind usually blows south from the cogeneration facilities with the added pollution of huge strip mine and is subject to severe air inversions. DEP's red pollen proves St. Clair receives pollution from the cogen on Broad Mountain and receive additional pollution from the proposed plant.

Response:

See response to Comment P3-5. St. Clair was included among the 30,000 locations (receptors) that were modeled.

Comment P4-1:

I, along with the membership of the Building Trades Council, believe in this project...

Response:

The comment has been noted.

Comment P4-2:

When you drive by places like High Ridge Industrial Park and see all construction done in KOZ zones by work forces from all over the country and even Mexico, with your tax money and ours, that's where the betrayal comes in, and I never heard anyone protesting at public meetings about that.

This is the first time since the building of the McAdoo cogen plant in the late 1980's that a Schuylkill County businessman has committed to using only local building trades workers. That's 20 years since anyone has cared enough about local labor to actually do something about it.

Response:

See response to comment S11-1.

Comment P4-3:

We wholeheartedly support this project.

Response:

The comment has been noted.

Comment P5-1:

In my scoping comments two years ago one of the things that I asked is that issues on dioxin and furan production be addressed. I've read every word of this document, and the words dioxin and furans don't seem to appear here at all. So that needs to be addressed whether this facility is going to put out those type of pollutants or not and why.

Response:

Polychlorinated dibenzo(p)dioxin and polychlorinated dibenzofuran compounds (that is, dioxins and furans) are not expected to be present in the syngas from the gasification system. The potential emission of dioxins and furans is addressed in Section 4.1.2.2, under the discussion of Hazardous Air Pollutants. See also the response to comment 41-41 for further details.

Comment P5-2:

Also it talks about hazardous air pollutants and how there's a permit in it for them, so we don't have to worry that it's going to go over that permit limit because the state said no. Well, nowhere in here does it mention the fact that they're not going to be monitoring --.

Response:

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has recently installed high-volume particulate samplers to measure ambient concentrations of metals (i.e., arsenic, cadmium, chrome, nickel, and lead) have recently been installed by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection at the Mahanoy State Correctional Institution, Mahanoy City, and Frackville. All samplers began running on the same day (May 9, 2006) on a 6-day cycle. The text discussing hazardous air pollutants has been expanded in Section 4.1.2.2.

Comment P5-3:

There's not going to be any actual real monitoring of hazardous air pollutant releases from any of the stacks of this facility, so there's no way to actually know whether they'll be meeting the limits that are being set.

Response:

A discussion of hazardous air pollutants can be found in Section 4.1.2.2. After the facility is built and operating, regulations require that continuous emission monitors (CEMs) be used to monitor SO₂, NO_x, and CO. In addition, Pennsylvania DEP plans to require stack testing for PM₁₀ (particulate matter) and mercury. The facility would be required to comply with the recently promulgated Clean Air Mercury Rule, as it is an applicable regulation.

Comment P5-4:

Also this document relies on non-attainment designations which say basically that the air quality in this county is acceptable. They rely on that conclusion based on testing that was done 35 miles away in a different air shed with air monitors around Reading. That makes no

sense to use as a way of founding a claim that somehow this won't affect the air quality here in this area.

Response:

As discussed in Section 3.2.2, attainment status for NAAQS is determined primarily by evaluating data from ambient air quality monitoring stations. The nearest SO₂ and CO monitoring stations are located in Shenandoah, about 2 miles north of Gilberton. The closest NO₂, PM-2.5, and O₃ monitoring stations are located in Reading, about 35 miles south-southeast of Gilberton. A Pb monitoring station is located in Laureldale, immediately north of Reading. Until recently, the closest PM-10 monitoring station was located in Reading. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has recently installed a PM-10 monitor at the Mahanoy State Correctional Institution adjacent to the proposed facilities to measure ambient PM-10 concentrations. In addition, high-volume particulate samplers to measure ambient concentrations of metals (i.e., arsenic, cadmium, chrome, nickel, and lead) and total suspended particles have recently been installed by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection at the Mahanoy State Correctional Institution, the Mahanoy City Sewage Treatment Plant, and the Frackville State Correctional Institution. All samplers began running on the same day (May 9, 2006) on a 6-day cycle (i.e., operating for one 24-hour period every sixth day).

Comment P5-5:

Now, one of most amusing parts of this document I find here it talks about noise pollution. It says no long-term impacts on the hearing ability of wildlife species would be expected from construction generated noise. How do you know that?

Response:

The last sentence of paragraph 3 of Section 4.1.6.1 has been revised to explain why no long-term impacts would be expected for larger wildlife species. It now reads: Because larger and more mobile species would tend to avoid construction areas due to associated noise, no long-term impacts on the hearing ability of these species would be expected from construction-generated noise.

Comment P5-6:

On red ash you mentioned in response to comments from two years ago on 4-12, you tried to address the concern that was raised in transportation section about that; and that, you completely missed the point. The comment when it was made, was not by me, but by others, was that there's this red ash that's being dumped from the cogen plants as anti-skid material on the roads. And the construction vehicles and other vehicles driving on the roads kicks up dust from that ash, so the toxins in that ash are contributing to air pollution. The comments in this document are answering some other claim but not the actual claim that was raised.

Response:

See revised EIS Section 4.1.2.2, which addresses scoping concerns. Also, as discussed in Section 4.1.7.8, the 1,000 additional daily vehicle trips for workers during the peak construction period would represent increases of 10% and 22% over existing traffic on State Route 61 and State Route 1008, respectively. Traffic increases from current traffic levels would be smaller during construction periods other than the peak construction period.

During the demonstration and long-term project operations, traffic increases from current levels would also be smaller but would be more long lasting.

The red anti-skid material applied to roads is bottom ash from the existing Gilberton Power Plant. It is applied to alleviate treacherous road conditions during the winter. Because more vehicles would use the roads during construction and operation of the proposed facilities, this would contribute to the breakup of the bottom ash from the existing plant. However, the increases in airborne emissions of this material would not be strictly related to increased traffic volume, but rather to the occurrence of treacherous road conditions that call for the application of anti-skid material.

Comment P5-7:

As far as permits, there's also a section here that talks about what other permits are needed, but doesn't list all the permits that are needed at the state level. There are two permits that they still don't have from the state DEP, one is the water quality permit, and the other is a site specific installation permit for the storage tanks for the chemicals and fuels. So those permits need to be listed.

Response:

The EIS has been revised to include additional information about permitting requirements. See Section 7.2.

Comment P5-8:

It should also mention that the air permit that they've already received is under appeal and so is not legally settled.

Response:

The comment has been noted.

Comment P5-9:

And, finally, the one permit that they do have that's settled is the water withdrawal permit for 7 million gallons a day of water withdrawal from mine pools in the area. That's a permit from the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, and nowhere in this document does it talk about the fact that that permit has a lot of caveats in it. It mentions that if they aren't able to withdraw the amount that they fuel, that they want to withdraw from that mine pool, if it's actually not recharging as much as it should, then they may have to come back for another permit; and that they may have to find other ways to get the water supply that they hope to get.

Response:

Although the Susquehanna River Basin Commission decision document (SRBC 2005) that authorizes withdrawal and consumptive use of mine-pool water for the proposed project was issued in October 2005 and the Draft EIS shows a publication date of November 2005, the water use permit was not available to DOE in time to be discussed in the Draft EIS. Sections 3.4, 4.1.3.3, and 4.1.4 have been revised to include information about the Commission's analysis and the conditions contained in the water withdrawal permit.

Comment P5-10:

Yet, in this document makes the claim that somehow they won't be impacted because they're not breathing the same air that people outdoors do, which is pretty ludicrous. As far as I know, there's no pipeline of fresh air from another county coming into that prison. So those comments need to be fixed and be realistic.

Response:

Modeling results indicated that the maximum concentrations of pollutants are predicted to be less than their corresponding significant impact levels. In addition, because of the use of conservative assumptions used in the modeling analysis, actual degradation of air quality should be even less than the small amounts predicted. There is much debate on defining safe levels of PM and continues to be an active research area.

Comment P5-11:

On the labor issues, 4-34 talks about how many injuries and deaths, actually on the following page, talks about how during just the construction period they expect 79 injuries and a 20 percent chance that one of the workers will die on construction. But they also mention that some studies need to be done; and the studies aren't done yet, but this document they hope to complete even though there's going to be a hazard in operability review and a process hazardous analysis basically discussing the workplace hazards. These studies have not been done yet, and I would argue that this document should not be considered complete until those studies are done.

Response:

DOE will require WMPI to provide appropriate documentation to ensure compliance of all environmental, health and safety standards (e.g., hearing conservation, emergency response plans, process hazards analysis, risk management plan, etc.) before operation.

Because Federal dollars may not be used for detailed design before completion of the NEPA process, a Hazard Operability Review and/or a Process Hazardous Analysis for the proposed facility were not available for review. However, according to CFR 1910.119 Process Safety Management of Highly Hazardous Chemicals, OSHA requires:

“The employer shall perform an initial process hazard analysis (hazard evaluation) on processes covered by this standard. The process hazard analysis shall be appropriate to the complexity of the process and shall identify, evaluate, and control the hazards involved in the process. Employers shall determine and document the priority order for conducting process hazard analyses based on a rationale which includes such considerations as extent of the process hazards, number of potentially affected employees, age of the process, and operating history of the process.”

In addition, the employer is required to use one of more of the following methodologies to determine and evaluate the hazards of the process being analyzed:

- What-If
- Checklist
- What-If/Checklist
- Hazard and Operability Study

- Failure Mode and Effects Analysis
- Fault Tree Analysis; or
- An appropriate equivalent methodology

Comment P5-12:

And, finally, on labor and the alternatives to oil issues, there are cleaner, safer, and cheaper options that would even produce more jobs than this facility. One of the examples of this type of facility that will be a clean way of getting off of foreign oil – this is my last comment, so I'll keep it short -- is the biodiesel plant they're trying to build not far from here. In Delano there's a proposal for a biodiesel plant that would use soy, which is not the best environmentally friendly way of doing things; but they produce diesel from algae at a cost of production that's cheaper than the fuel that they'll be selling to the state, and they produce enough of that to meet all of our diesel needs in the whole country and not have to worry about the pollution impacts that this type of refinery would involve.

Response:

See response to Comment S10-9.

Comment P6-1:

According to the Impact Statement, the highest sound level of the proposed facility is projected at 55 decibels. The same as the highest sound level at the Gilberton Power Plant. Because I live near the Morea cogeneration plant, I know that when the plant is firing up, the noise is unbearable, and my home is at the opposite end of Morea, away from the power plant. The noise is loud enough to wake me when it occurs at night. If it occurs when I'm in the yard, I go in the house to escape it. If it occurs when I'm in the house with windows shut, we stop talking until the noise passes because you just can't you just can't carry on a conversation it's that loud.

Fortunately, this firing up noise occurs only very occasionally, less often than weekly and lasts for only a couple of minutes. So my question is how frequent and how long in duration will this same level of noise be at the proposed facility? Will it be as infrequent and short as at the cogeneration plant, or could it perhaps be a daily level of noise that we will have to adjust to. Because if it will be a daily occurrence, it could seriously impact the quality of life.

Response:

The highest sound level at the proposed site was measured to be 55 dB(A) in March 2003. Most of this noise could be reasonably attributed to the operation of the existing Gilberton Power Plant Station operated by WMPI. For the sound level at the proposed site to be as low as 55 dB(A) adjacent to an operating power station, the equipment within the power station would necessarily have to be acoustically isolated with some form of enclosure or acoustic treatment. The proposed facility includes the enclosure and acoustic insulation of sound sources that include the combustion/turbine generator, steam turbine/generator, heat recovery systems, turbine air inlets, exhaust stacks, cooling towers, pumps, and compressors. The existing power station and the proposed power station are of similar size. Consequently, the noise generated by the proposed facility can be reasonably assumed to be about 55 dB(A). Combining the existing sources of noise and the estimated noise generated by the

proposed facility gives the estimate of 58 dB(A). This estimate would be applicable for the facility under normal, continuous operations. Also see the response to comment S17-2.

The commenter expressed concern about transient noise generated by the cogeneration plant operated by Wheelabrator Frackville Energy Co. Inc. in the vicinity of Morea. The commenter attributed the noise to the plant being fired up. The source of this transient noise was not identified, but the noise can certainly be attributed to equipment that is not enclosed or subjected to acoustic treatment. Since the equipment in the proposed facility that has been associated with the generation loud noise levels, is to be enclosed and subjected to acoustic treatment, the likelihood of high levels of noise either transient or continuous is not anticipated.

Comment P6-2:

According to the Environmental Impact Statement, the facility will reduce groundwater recharged to the aquifers on Broad Mountain and may disrupt water service to Morea. According to the DOE, if the water supply were affected, the facility's owners would address the situation by establishing a connection with one of the public water suppliers. That's unacceptable. We're happy with our water right now. We have very high quality water at a very low cost. More importantly, we control our own water, an essential resource, the most essential next to air. The Morea Citizens Water Company controls our own water, and that my friends is priceless. It's unacceptable to ask us to give that up. Thank you.

Response:

Potential impacts to Morea's water supply are discussed in Section 4.1.4.2. The analysis presented there supports a conclusion that the residents of Morea would not experience any disruption in water service as result of the proposed project. WMPI has made no commitments to address the situation if a problem should occur. The statement in the Draft EIS referred to by the commenter was related to the Gilberton Power Plant, not Morea. Also see the response to comment P1-4.

Comment P7-1:

"...Our government after World War II was over had fully funded coal gasification and liquefaction in this country..." (See transcript for the remainder of the comment.)

Response:

The comments have been noted.

Comment P8-1:

Let me tell you something. We need this job because it's good paying jobs, and good paying jobs bring taxes.

Response:

See responses to comments S11, S4-4, and S11.

Comment P9-1:

So I say my vote is for it.

Response:

The comment has been noted.

Comment P10-1:

“...They’re going to be taking money, or water from the wells and putting it back into the mining wells...” (See transcript for the remainder of the comment.)

Response:

The comments have been noted.

Comment P11-1:

...increased, and in the impact statement it says that there will be an increase in the fog that we already have there. But their solution is by putting flashing lights along the highway. I don’t really think that’s acceptable. I don’t think any of the fatalities, any of the big truck wrecks that we have are worth it.

Response:

See responses to comments S17-5 and P3-3.

Comment P11-2:

We did not think enough when the five cogens were being built in our area, and now all of that air is compromised. And we have those five cogens putting out this pollution, and now we’re going to put another big plant with six smoke stacks in the middle of all that to the people. That is the part that is a concern.

Response:

See response to Comment S3-3.

Comment P11-3:

Also even with talking tonight, there’s been too many likely, possibly, maybe, what if. I think there should really be a new impact statement done because there’s not enough definites. When it gets to be definite, then write an impact statement. It’s not acceptable when you have too many guessing in the impact statement.

Response:

See response to Comment S2-1.

Comment P11-4:

The old time miners said Mahanoy City is sitting on a bed of coal, and the coal is floating in a sea of water. If the new plant, the coal to gas plant, is going to pump water out of the Gilberton 7 million gallons a day, what affect will this have on the Mahanoy Valley? Will the town drop or settle and cause considerable damage to the properties in Mahanoy City? Once that water level is pulled out that’s supporting that ground, will that ground collapse?

Response:

EIS Section 3.3.5.1 discusses ground surface subsidence over underground mines in the project area and Section 4.1.3.3 addresses the potential for the proposed project to increase the risk of ground surface subsidence. As discussed in Section 3.3.5.1, because Gilberton and other Mahanoy Valley communities are located over underground mine workings, the communities are subject to sudden collapse or gradual subsidence. Dewatering of mine pools is one process that can contribute to surface subsidence by draining voids and other pore spaces (in effect, the presence of water in voids helps to maintain the stability of the rock). Also, cycling between wet and dry conditions in mined openings may contribute to subsidence by promoting weathering of underground rock and degradation of timber used for mine roof support. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection currently pumps water from the Gilberton mine pool in order to lower the water table to prevent surface flooding in Gilberton (see Section 3.4.3). On average, the state pumps almost 7 million gallons a day from the mine pool. New pumping to provide water for the proposed facilities would not exceed this level, and almost half of the pumped water would be discharged back to the mine pool system by way of the Boston Run mine pool. Pumping from the Gilberton mine pool for the proposed project could increase the likelihood of ground surface subsidence due to collapse of abandoned underground mine workings, but the potential for such an impact would be small because (as explained in Section 4.1.3.3) water levels in the mine pool would remain within their current range and the state of Pennsylvania has not observed any mine roof collapses or other subsidence from several decades of pumping from the mine pools at Gilberton and other locations in the region. The discussion in Section 4.1.3.3 has been revised to acknowledge uncertainty about the potential for subsidence.

Mahanoy City, which is more than two miles east of the Gilberton mine pool, is unlikely to be affected by pumping from the Gilberton mine pool to supply water for the proposed facilities. As discussed in Section 3.4.3., the Tunnel Ridge mine pool below Mahanoy City is reported to be connected with the Boston Run and St. Nicholas mine pools, which are reported to be connected to the Gilberton mine pool, but a pumping test did not demonstrate direct connections. Pumping of water from the Gilberton mine pool might affect the water level in the Tunnel Ridge mine pool, but because of the distance and the limited interconnection between the mine pools, any change in water level in the Tunnel Ridge mine pool would be much smaller than in the Gilberton mine pool.

Comment P11-5:

This could cause considerable damage to the properties. Do all the property owners need to buy mine settlement insurance, and what is the cutoff date for this type of insurance with this plant going in?

Response:

Construction and operation of the proposed facilities should not affect property owners' eligibility to purchase insurance from the state of Pennsylvania's Mine Subsidence Insurance Fund (Title 25, Section 401, Pennsylvania Code). Mine subsidence insurance is made available to property owners in the anthracite region and other Pennsylvania coal and clay mining regions. Title 25, Section 401.11(e) of the Pennsylvania Code states, however, that coverage may be denied for a structure that has unrepaired damage from mine

subsidence or another cause. For more information, contact the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection at 1-800-922-1678.

Comment P11-6:

Also talking about tax dollars, this plant is going up in Mahanoy Township because there's a KOZ; and I'll have you to know, I was no part of that KOZ. So we will not be getting, looking at tax dollars from this.

Response:

See response to comment S1-1.

Comment P12-1:

"...I'm going to move out of this area, and this place is going to get worse than it already is..." (See transcript for the remainder of the comment.)

Response:

The comments have been noted.

Comment P13-1:

"...People don't look at the long term. They look at the short term..." (See transcript for the remainder of the comment.)

Response:

The comments are noted.

Comment P14-1:

I'm an ex-veteran. I seen a lot of different things happen. And I'm all for giving people work; but once the plant is built, are the fumes going to go away? No.

I live approximately two miles from the plant in Maizeville -- no, in Yatesville. And at night, especially on a foggy night, they open up the stack, and you can see red ash coming out of it at night. They used to do it at daytime, but they stopped that. They do it at night now, and I can see it out the back bedroom of my window.

Now, when they arrive at these here levels of pollution that are allowable they say, well, every one of us is different. Some people in this audience might be allergic to peanuts. It will kill them. I myself cannot take sulfur drugs, or I can't take nitroglycerin tablets because they'll kill me.

But need I remind you -- well, I will. 60 Minutes had a program on a couple years ago, and Schuylkill County is the fifth most corrupt county in the 50 states. Now, if you don't believe that, you could write to CBS -- and they'll probably give you a rerun if enough of us write in. And from my experience, money talks and BS walks, and that's what's going to happen. No matter what we say, no matter what the common person says, Mr. Rich is going to get his plant bar none. Where is he going to live? Anywhere he wants to because he can afford to. Bet you dollars to doughnuts he don't live around here once the plant is built.

It's -- after all these years of living here and seeing this area deteriorate, it's disgusting. When I got discharged from the service, I had my duffle bag and \$1200, and I was in Santa Maria, California. I should have stayed there because this is disgusting to see what's happening here.

Response:

The comments have been noted.

Comment P15-1:

One of the things that this ought to look at when it looks to alternatives is alternatives for cleaning up waste coal piles. According to SMCRA Law, Surface Mining Control Reclamation Act, waste coal ought to be returned to the mines so that it's not exposed to air, water, and sunlight so we don't end up with the acid drainage problems that we have, and that's the cleanest way to really solve the waste coal problem is not try to turn it into fuel, not try to...

Response:

The EIS does not consider alternative methods of managing waste coal piles because these would not address DOE's purpose and need, which are related to the Congressional mandate to demonstrate advanced coal-based technologies that can generate clean, reliable and affordable electricity in the United States (see Sections 1.4 and 2.2). Specifically, the proposed project would demonstrate the integration of coal gasification and F-T synthesis to produce electricity, steam, and liquid fuels from anthracite coal waste. Furthermore, DOE believes that the proposed action would support the statutory purposes of the Surface Mining and Control Act (SMCRA) by promoting the reclamation of mined areas left without adequate reclamation prior to the passage of the act. Note that the 1992 amendments to SMCRA specifically encourage the on-site reprocessing, or the removal, of abandoned coal refuse in order to encourage reclamation.

Comment P15-2:

And if they're looking for alternatives, they should look at that alternative and also the alternative of planting beach grass which other federal researches with USDA found that you can take the grass that grows on sandy beaches and plant it in these areas, and it can survive hot shifting surfaces and actually establish a root structure and reclaim these piles so that native species can then take over a few years later and start recovering on that environment and reducing the amount of leaching from it. And that would be an environmentally sound way of reclaiming these piles. It could be done for only 6 to 10 percent of the costs of traditional remediation and doesn't have any of the environmental toxic consequences of burning the stuff.

Response:

See responses to comments S2-1 and P15-1.

Comment P16-1:

"I'm not really here for or against the plant. If you want to build it, build it, but do it on your own time with your dimes, not mine...." (See transcript for the remainder of the comment.)

Response:

The comments have been noted.