

Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

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Residents Call for New Environmental Secretary to Protect New River

Today, in a letter to North Carolina Environmental Secretary Michael Regan, the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League called for enforcement of pollution laws on the New River near Glendale Springs. Photographs taken by League members revealed ongoing silt and sedimentation pollution washing into the South Fork of the river in an apparent violation of state mining and water quality regulations.

Harry Corpening, a member of the League's local chapter Protect Our Fresh Air, who obtained aerial photos of the damage to the river, said "It is easy to identify the ever-growing peninsula being formed in the river caused by the dirt and gravel that has been swept into the river." Other photos show mud and silt coming from a nearby rock quarry.

In the letter to the secretary, Lou Zeller, Executive Director of the League, pointed to a Notice of Deficiency issued to Radford Quarries citing corrective actions for sediment basins and slope stabilization. Zeller pointed to the photos and asked DEQ to "determine whether the deficiencies identified by the Department in October 2015 have been properly addressed and have not reoccurred."

Corpening added, "We will continue to post on our website photographic evidence of the negative impacts of this quarry on the second oldest river in the world."

The New River is designated as a National Scenic River and an American Heritage River. The New River in North Carolina is also classified by the state as a Natural and Scenic River and an Outstanding Resource Water. The middle reach of the South Fork is designated as High Quality Waters. The New River is a public drinking water supply source.

Protect Our Fresh Air became part of the League in 2015 in response to a proposed asphalt plant in Glendale Springs. The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League was founded in North Carolina in 1984 and today has chapters in six states.

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Photos available at <http://www.helpglendalesprings.com>