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IWU Environmental Studies Program Hosts Presentation

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IWU Environmental Studies Program Hosts Presentation

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—Kentucky native Dave Cooper and West Virginia coalfield resident Winter Ross will give a multi-media presentation entitled, “The Hidden Destruction of the Appalachian Mountains” on Tuesday, Sept. 23 at 7 p.m. in the Center for Natural Sciences, C102, 201 Beecher St., Bloomington.

The presentation is hosted by Illinois Wesleyan University’s Environmental Studies Program and is free and open to the public.

Cooper will present a slide show of the beauty and the destruction of the mountains, and Ross will discuss what residential life is like near removal mines.

In West Virginia and eastern Kentucky, coal companies blast as much as 600 feet off the top of the mountains, then dump the rock and debris into mountain streams. Over 300,000 acres of the most beautiful and productive hardwood forests in America have already been turned into barren grasslands. According to an article written by Cooper, “Virtually nothing except a species of grass imported from China can survive on these alien mountaintop savannahs.”

In addition to the destruction of the mountains, more than 600 coal slurry waste impoundments—lakes filled with black toxic sludge—bury thousands of miles of streams and threaten communities below the earthen dams.

The presentation is an effort to arouse public interest in the social and ecological devastation of the Appalachian Mountains.

For more information, contact Abigail Jahiel, director of IWU’s Environmental Studies Program and associate professor of environmental and international studies, at (309) 556-3923 or ajahiel@iwu.edu.