



MOUNTAIN TOP REMOVAL



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“Let me ask you this: What do you hold so close to your own circle of life that you would not put a price on it? What would it be for you?”

For me, it is the mountains and the people of Appalachia. The fight to save Appalachia is not mine alone.”

Larry Gibson - Keepers of the Mountains

<http://www.mountainkeeper.org/>

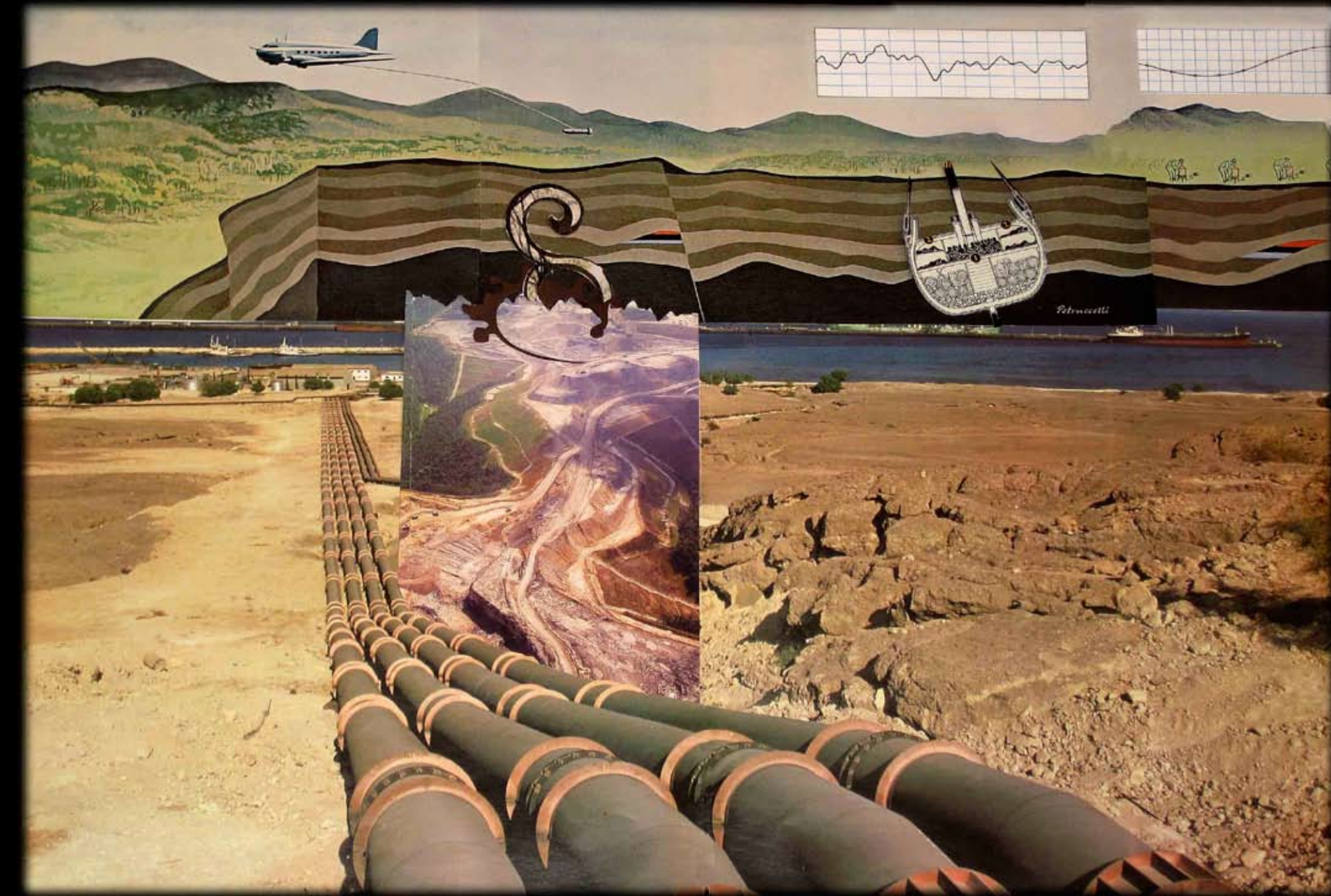




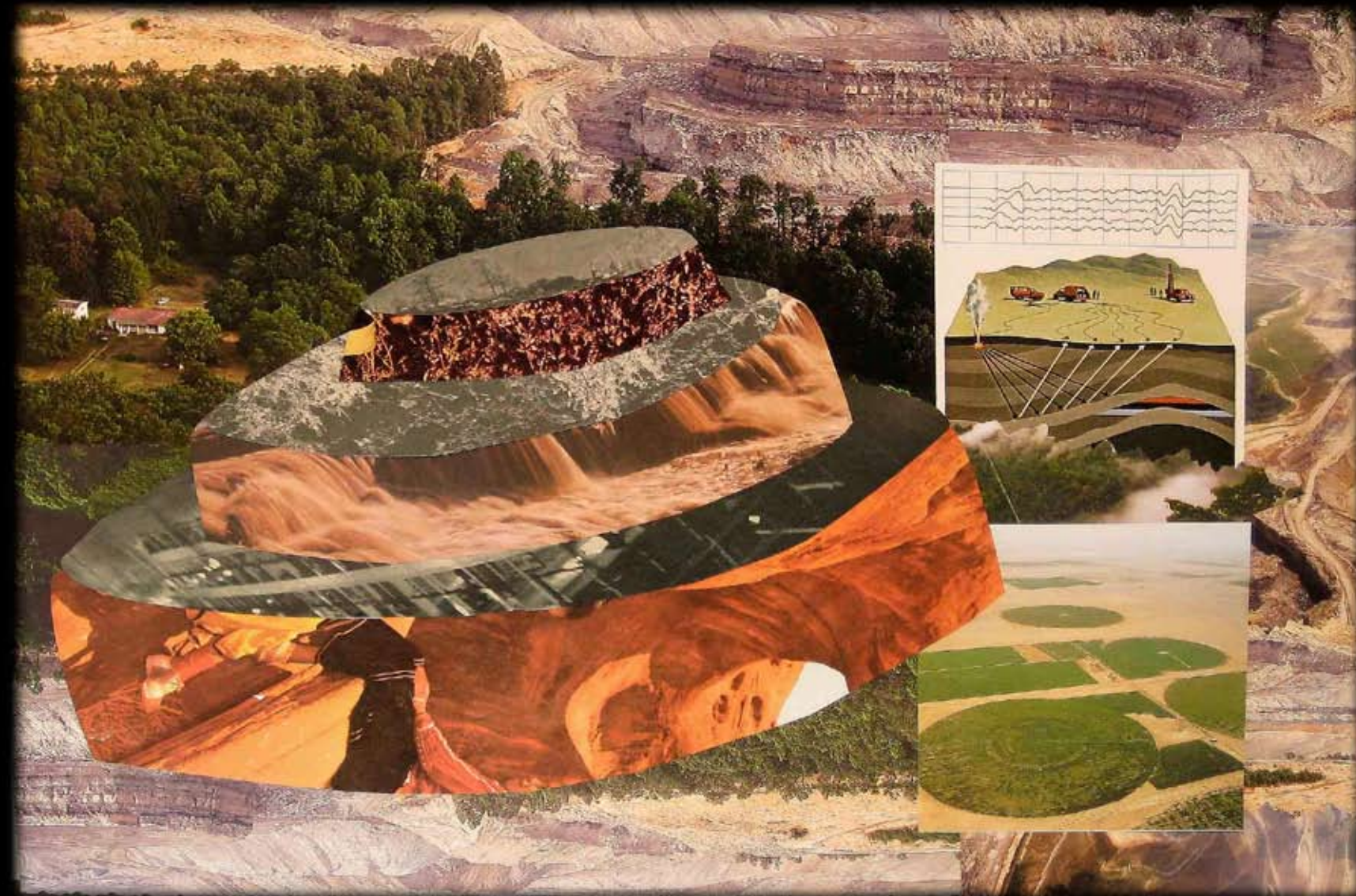
Mountaintop removal mining with valley fills, is widespread throughout eastern Kentucky, West Virginia , and Southwestern Virginia. Upper elevation forests are cleared and stripped of topsoil, and explosives are used to break up rocks to access buried coal. Excess rock is pushed into adjacent valleys, where it buries existing streams. 3 million lbs of dynamite per day make war on the oldest most diverse mountains in the US.



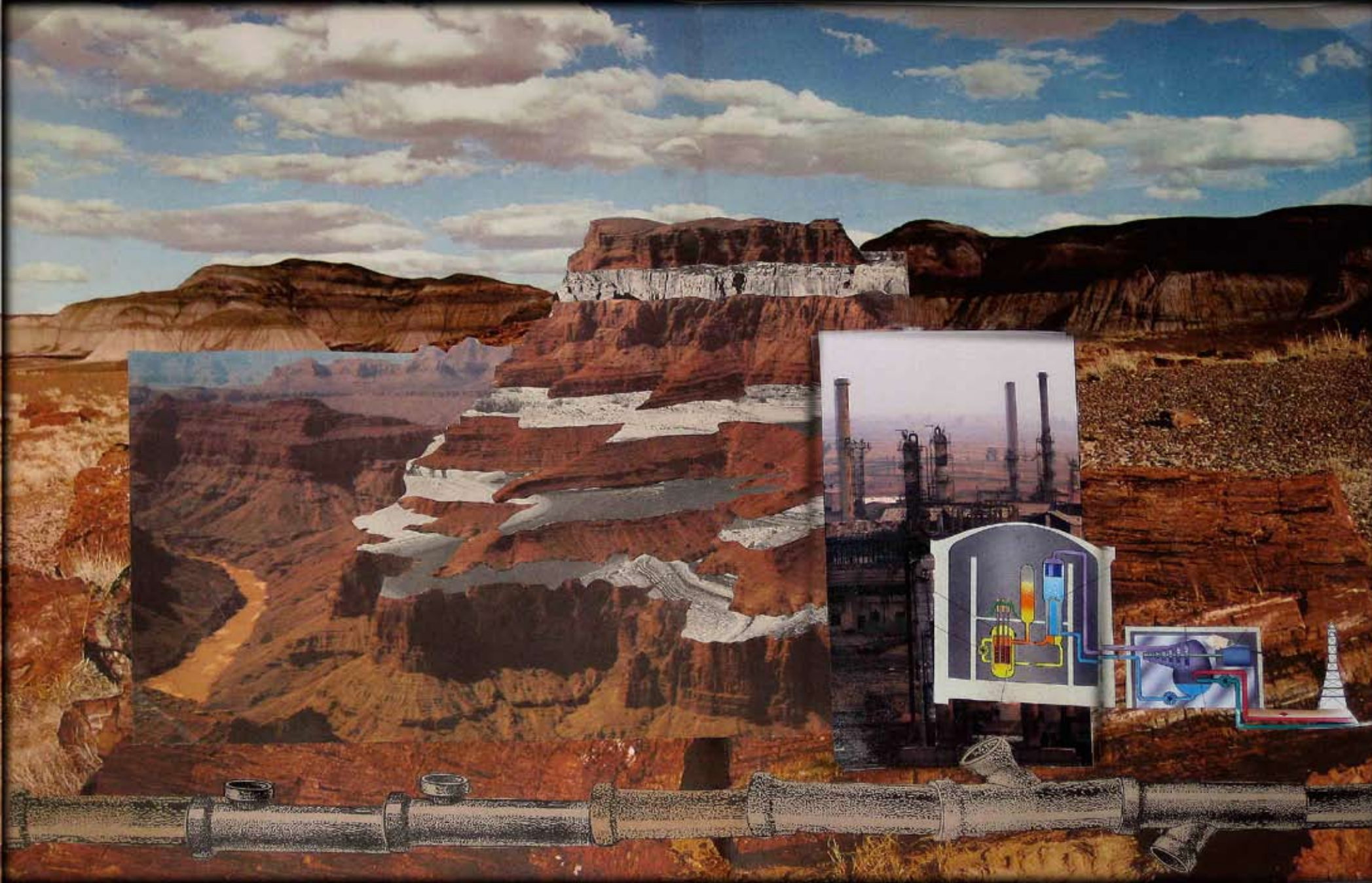
Despite much debate in the United States , surprisingly little attention has been given to the growing scientific evidence of the negative impacts of Mountain Top Removal.



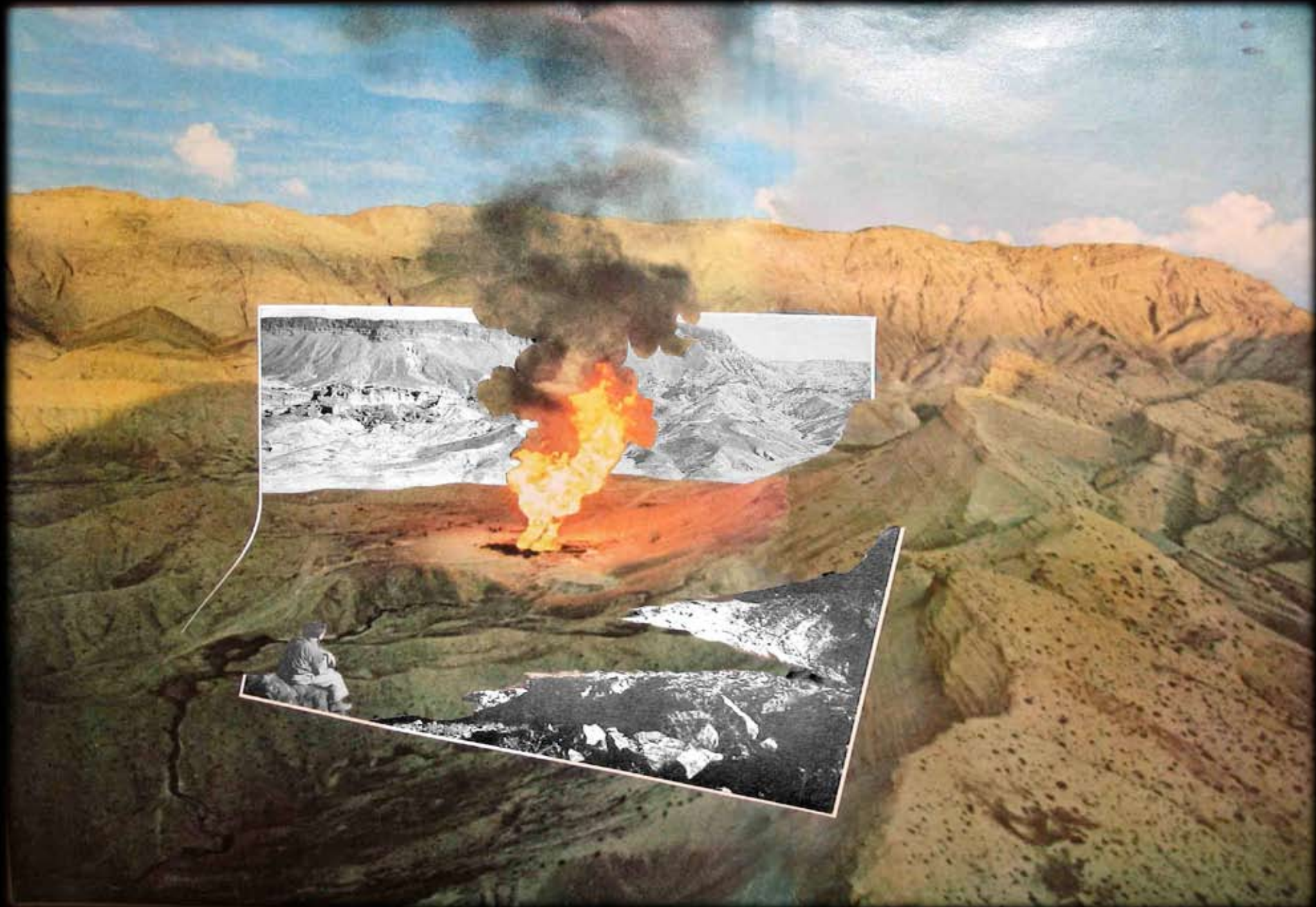
The extensive tracts of deciduous forests destroyed by Mountain Top Removal are home to the highest biodiversity in North America, including several endangered species. Burial of headwater streams by valley fills causes permanent loss of ecosystems that play critical roles in ecological processes for downstream food webs; these small Appalachian streams also support abundant aquatic organisms, including many endemic species.



Water emerges from the base of valley fills containing a variety of solutes toxic or damaging to biota.



POLLUTION IS KNOWN
TO PERSIST LONG AFTER
MINING CEASES.



Water, air and soil are contaminated irreversibly, leaving residents with health problems far in excess of typical American rates of cancer and debilitating illnesses.