



Commonwealth of Kentucky
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**State, Federal and Coal Company Officials working
jointly to rescue trapped Bell County miners**
Heavy rains cause flooding at mine entrance

FRANKFORT, Ky. – (June 20, 2011) – Rescuers in Bell County are working to place pumps at the entrance of an underground mine where three miners are trapped due to high water from heavy overnight rains. The Kentucky office of Mine Safety and Licensing, the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration and officials from Bell County Coal Corporation, which operates the Jellico Number 1 mine near Middlesboro, say the miners are safe and communicating with officials as they await rescue.

The water collected in a dip or swag about 180 feet inside the mine's entrance preventing the miners from exiting. The miners are in an area 600 feet from the mine's entrance on a high elevation point and communicating by phone to the joint command center.

The flooding of the mine is believed to have been caused by the failure of a diversion ditch at the top of a box cut allowing water to flood the mine. There is no estimated time for the rescue to be completed, but officials are very optimistic that the rescue will be successful.

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