Mountaintop Removal in Wise County, VA
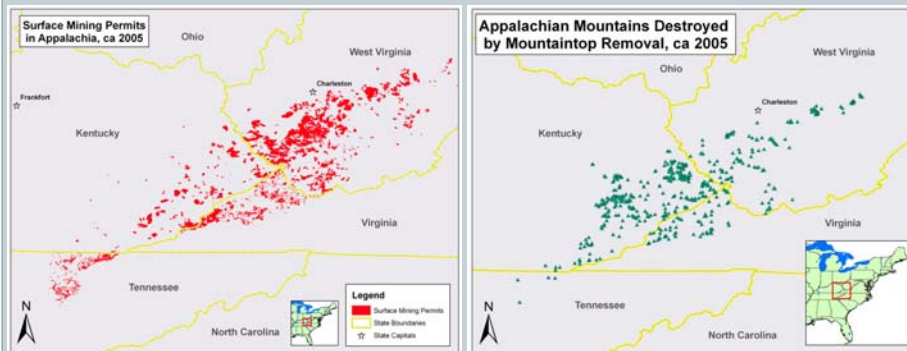

What is Mountaintop Removal?

- Form of surface mining that involves removing coal seams through removing the land above them

Where is it?

- Appalachia- VA, WV, TN, KY

Why is it a problem?

- Water Quality Problems
- Forest/Regrowth Problems
- Decreased Biodiversity
- Socio-economic Problems

Wise County, VA

- ~400 square miles
- 41,565 people
- Median household income (2006-2010): $33,608
  - Half the average in VA
- 11% of county industry is mining
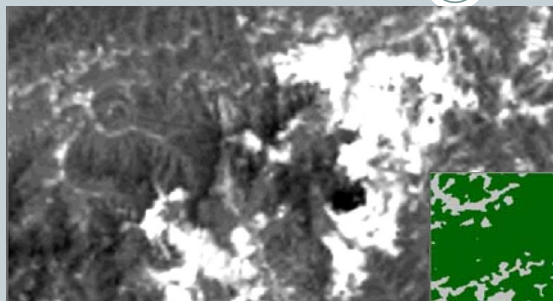- Unemployment rate: 7.7% as of Nov 1, 2012
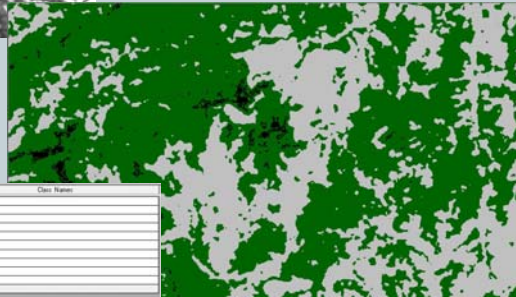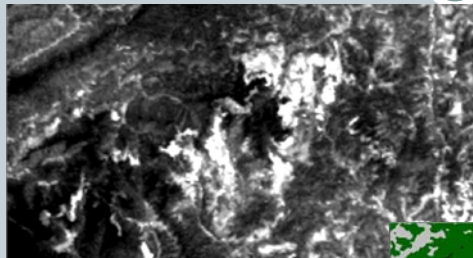
Indian Mountain

Project Objective: to utilize ERDAS Imagine for the purpose of coming up with a classification system for MTR in the Indian Mountain area.
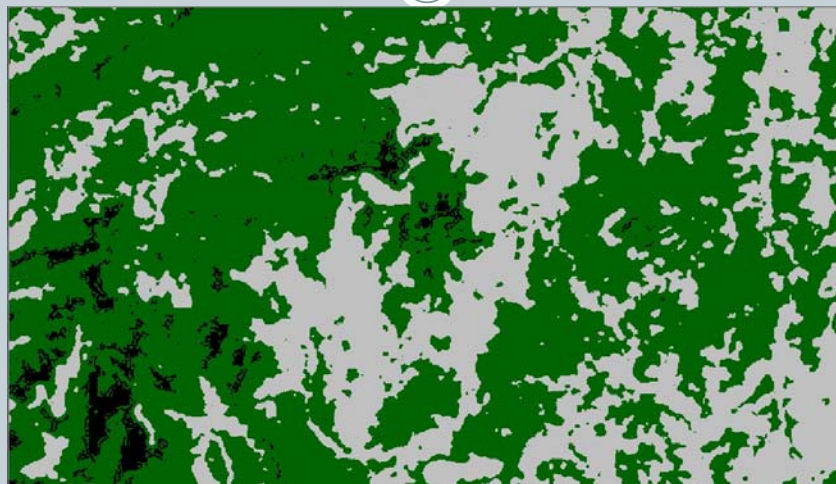
2000
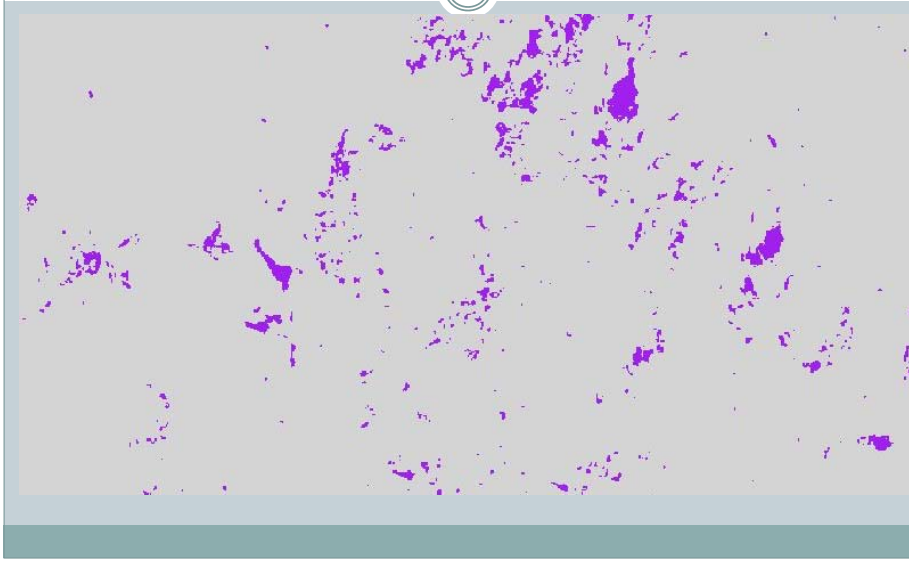
2003

Changes

Conclusions

- Classification scheme is not all inclusive
- We'll probably never be able to get the same level of accuracy for classification using these tools versus using more detailed methods (which would be more costly/time consuming)

References

- Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Unemployment rates by county in virginia, september 2012.* (2012, November 01). Retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/ro3/valaus.htm
- Pond, G. J., Passmore, M. E., Borsuk, F. A., Reynolds, L., & Rose, C. J. (2008). Downstream effects of mountaintop coal mining: Comparing biological conditions using family- and genus-level macroinvertebrate bioassessment tools. *Journal of North American Benthological Society*, *23*(3), 717-737. Retrieved from http://www.epa.gov/region3/mtntop/pdf/downstreameffects.pdf
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