

On Thu, Jan 21, 2021 at 12:06 PM Allen Johnson <allen@eight-rivers.org> wrote:

A number of days ago I offered to check out the closed former Lake Lynn NIOSH coal safety mine, since I would be up in nearby Morgantown on January 21 (yesterday).

Prior to going, I made a number of phone calls to people in the area, asking them how the people and communities interacted with the NIOSH mine and how they felt about it. I also asked for leads on who to talk to.

I learned that the former mine is closed to the public, and there is little to see anyway other than the barred-off entrance to the mine. I could try to fly a drone over the site if I could get close enough, but Google Earth probably does enough. I was told the buildings are long gone.

I spoke with the fire department chief at Point Marion, Pa., which is just a few miles from the NIOSH mine and in that district. He reported that during the time of operations there were not calls or incidents, and that its presence was not noticed.

Rich Rohrison (spelling?) of Laurel Aggregates (724-564-5099) was helpful. He said that the NIOSH site was fairly close by, "up on a mountain." His company quarries limestone, although not close to the NIOSH site right now. Only one house is nearby, and that still a half-mile away. He says that the underground water in the limestone in the area of the NIOSH site flows away from populated areas. He says he was not working in the area during the operations, but that as far as he has heard, there were no problems.

He said that one could find the abandoned site by going on Google Earth map, and essentially going east (maybe slightly south but mostly east) two or three miles from Laurel Aggregates located at 2480 Springhill Furnace Road, Lake Lynn, Pennsylvania. The Lake Lynn mine is on the West Virginia border. I went on Google Earth map and am not sure I identified it, though.

I called Coastal Timberlands, the owner of the Lake Lynn property. Spoke first with Dan, and then with Nathan who had more knowledge. Very friendly, helpful, patient with my questions. Nathan said that the Obama administration (I presume NIOSH) wanted to buy 400 acres of the Lake Lynn mine, rather than continuing to lease it. Coastal Timberlands did not want to carve out and sell 400 acres in the middle of their holdings. So they could not come to an agreement. The mine was shut down.

The upshot is that the former Lake Lynn mine was not near population, nor a resort, but very isolated with little risk of subterranean water risking well water.

I've sent some links before, but here is one again.

[20140612_164243_31683.pdf \(ymaws.com\)](#) is the Industrial Minerals Association lobbying to keep the Lake Lynn project. I tried to phone them once, but did not get through to what I wanted to know. I can persist, or someone else can call. They want a safety mine. We do not want it at Mace. Can we get them on our side?

--Allen Johnson