

Russell No. 1 (Bob Ciminel ©2012)

Russell No. 1 Mine was a stripping operation on the west side of Route 980 south of the Champion coal washer. The Pittsburgh coal seam was at elevation 1180 feet and the highest point on the surface where the mine was located was 1200 feet, leaving only 20 feet of overburden that had to be removed to reach the coal.

The tipple for Russell No. 1 was located east of Route 980 on the Montour right-of-way with a conveyor built across the highway from the haul truck dump site.

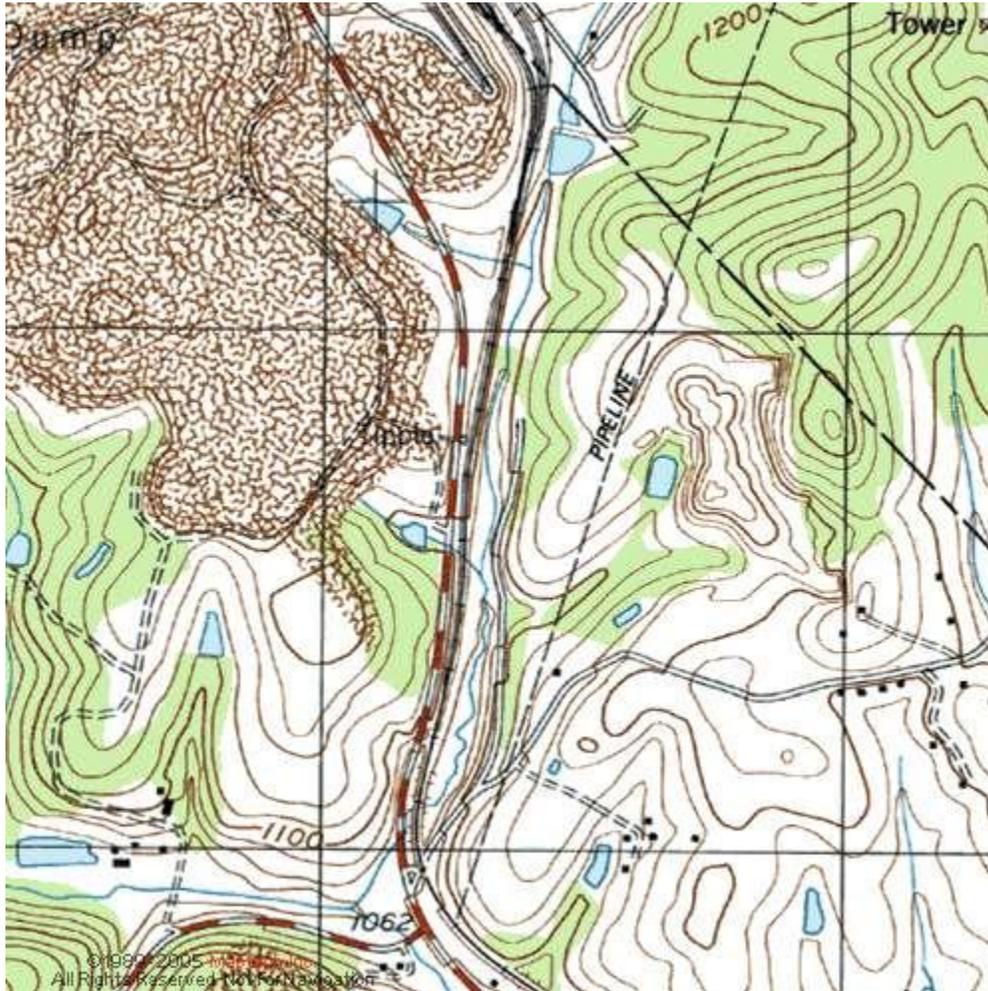
A search of records revealed no information on the Russell No. 1 mine, but it only appears as a customer in the 1947 Montour Railroad employee timetable, which would indicate that it did not operate for very long.

The photos and images below provided the best description we have of the mine.

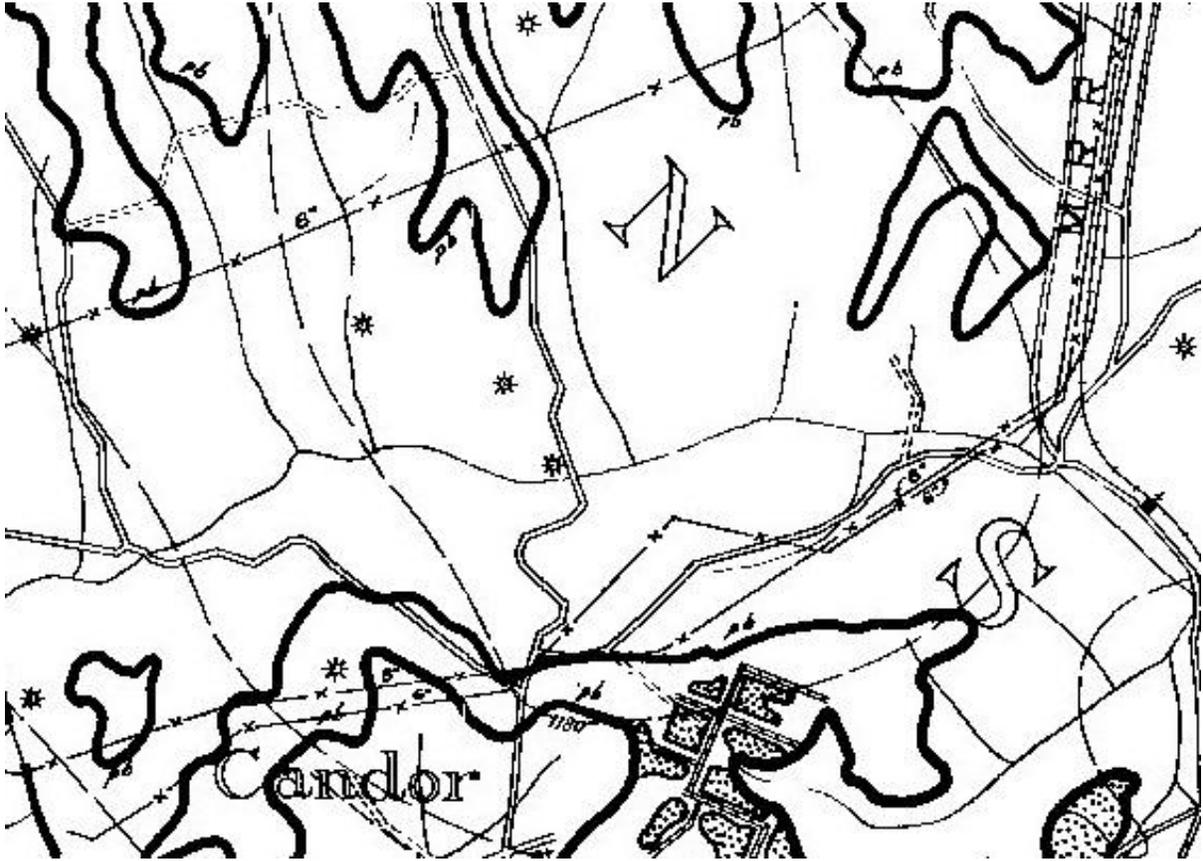
This 2010 Google Earth image shows the remnants of the Russell No. 1 mine south of the Champion waste dump. The tibble was located approximately where the dirt road intersects with Rte. 980. The straight line running from the northeast to the southwest is a pipeline that shows up on the topographic map below, as does the small pond to the east of the pipeline.



The topographic map shows the tipple and extent of the mining operation. The pipeline and small pond provide a reference to the tipple site mentioned above.



This excerpt from the 1930s WPA mine map shows the Pittsburgh seam in bold. The Russell No. 1 Mine was located across from the "M.R.R." label.



In 1939, the future site of Russell No. 1 was farmland. The land was obviously more valuable for the coal that lay beneath it than for what could be grown or grazed on it.



By 1958, Russell No. 1 had pretty much torn the places to pieces. It appears the mine was abandoned by this time based on the eroded condition of the spoil piles.



This 1967 aerial seems to show that the Champion coal washer was dumping its waste in the old Russell No. 1 pits. The tipple is gone, but it appears as though the Montour was storing hopper cars on the old Russell siding.

