

National No. 2 (Bob Ciminel ©2012)

Coming timetable east out of Muse Junction, we begin ascending the 1% grade to National Tunnel at MP 27. After passing through the tunnel's 823-foot bore we begin our descent down another 1% grade to the National No. 2 Mine at "National" station, MP 27.8.

Details about National No. 2 are sketchy, to say the least. The National Mine complex consisted of three named mines, National No. 1 on the Panhandle's Bridgeville & McDonald Branch, National No. 2 on the Montour main track west of Hendersonville, and National No. 3 on the Muse Spur. National No. 1 was operating in 1905, and although National No. 2 is shown as operating as early as 1905, the tipple on the Montour Railroad was not built until at least 1914 when the Mifflin Extension was completed. The coal reserves allocated to the National complex extended from the south bank of Millers Run at Morgan, PA to Route 980, southwest of Muse. As the mine advance westward, the National Mining Company opened National No. 2 and National No. 3 to reduce the distance the coal had to be hauled before it could be brought to the surface for shipping. The National No. 2 tipple was closer to where the coal was being mined and shipping via the Montour Railroad made economic sense too.

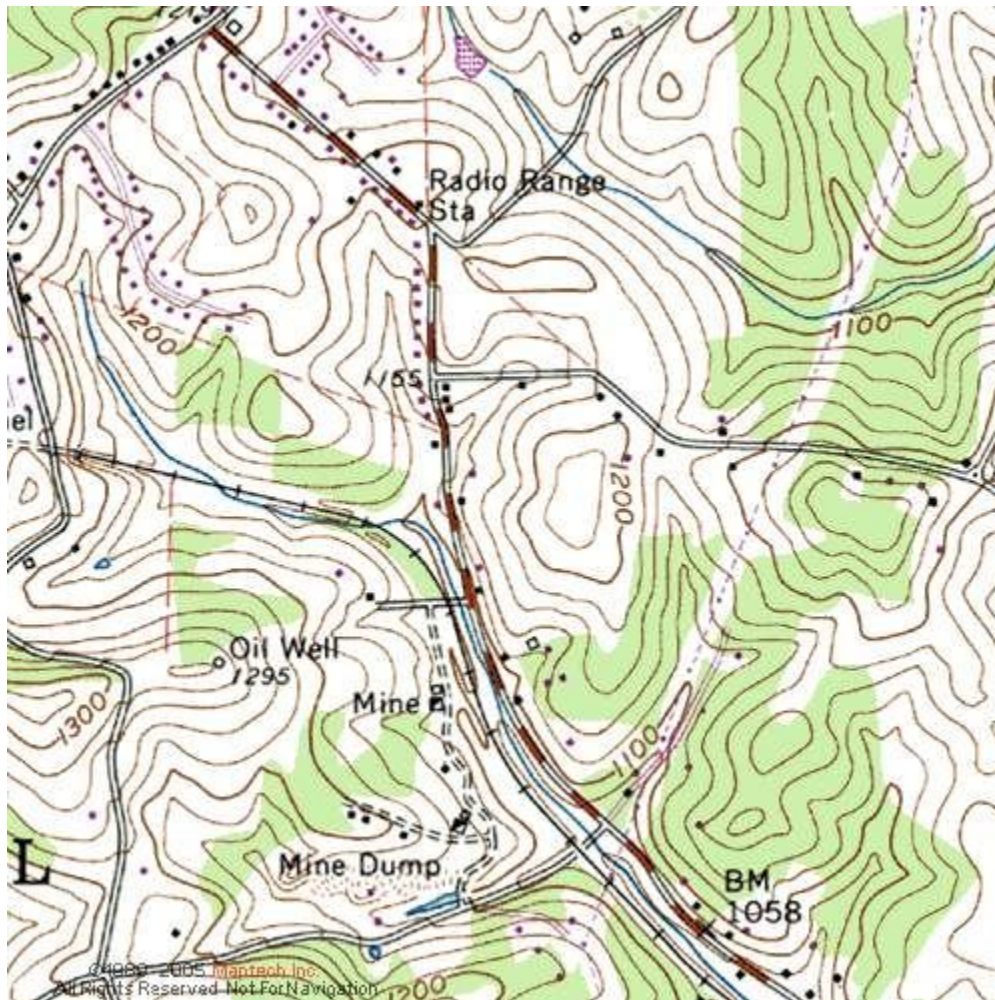
Few miners lived at No. 2 tipple, but evidence shows there were some homes at that location. The engineers who ran the hoist and ventilation fan would have lived there, as well as employees who operated the tipple and handle the loads and empties at the mine. There would have been homes for the supervisors and foremen too.

The following maps and images provide additional details on the National No. 2 Mine.

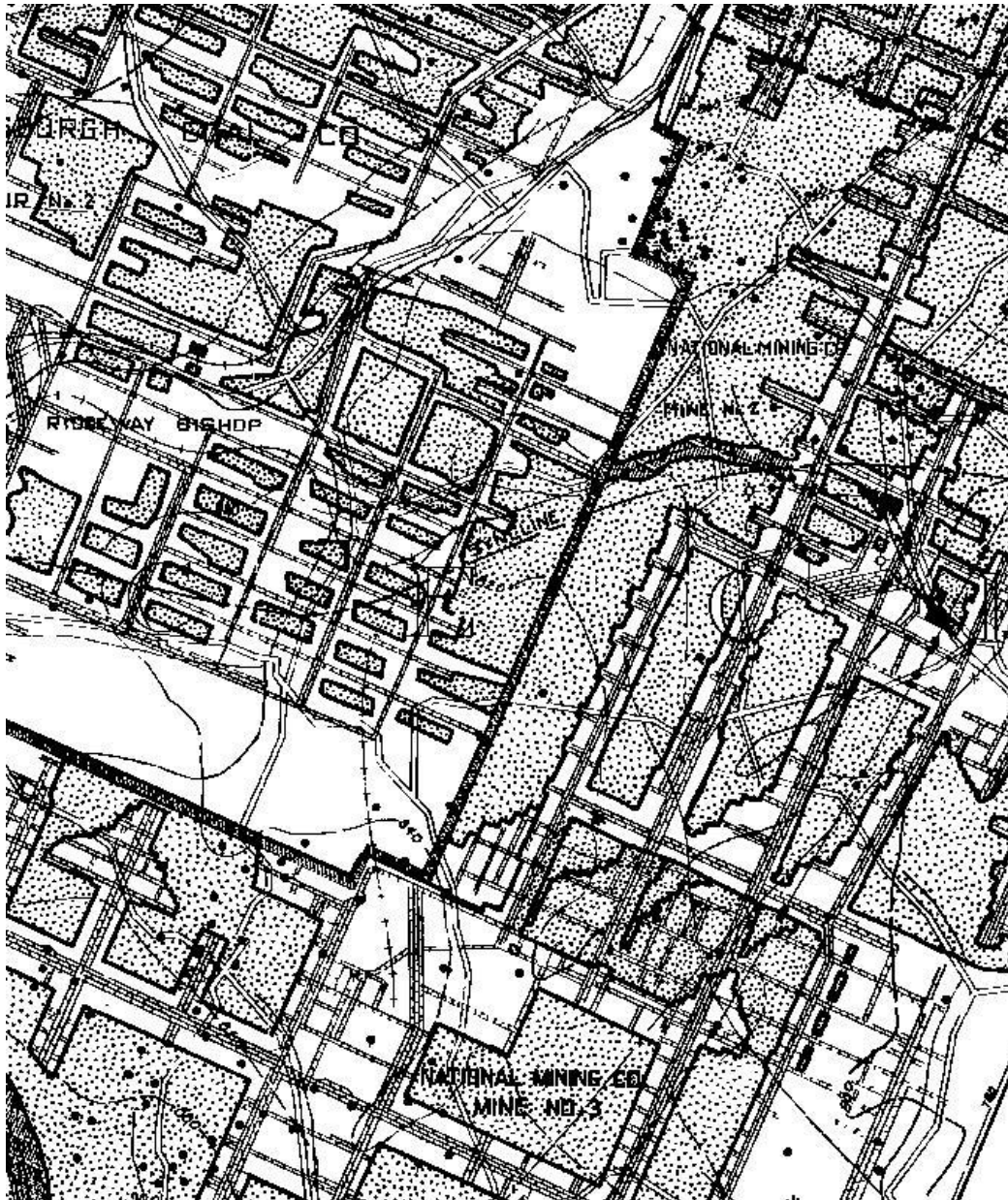
This is a recent view of the National No. 2 site from Google Earth. Note that the short road leading off of Papp Road is called National Drive.



This topographic map shows the location of the two shafts at National No. 2. The shaft next to the word “Mine” was the production shaft and the shaft above the mine dump would have been for ventilation, supplies, and probably an escape shaft.



This WPA map shows the underground workings at National No. 2. The section of unmined coal was the location of the Montour Railroad's National Tunnel. The coal seam at the shaft was about 200 feet below the surface.



This 1938 aerial view shows the National No. 2 tipple at the top, with the auxiliary shaft at lower center. Note the small number of miners' homes above the waste dump and the larger homes below the tipple.



This is a wider view from the 1938 photo and shows National Tunnel at the upper left.



By 1958 there was little evidence remaining of National No. 2, except for the waste dumps and one or two houses.



This 1967 photo illustrates why uninformed people would never know that National No. 2 ever existed.



Dennis Sims made this image to show where remnants of National No. 2 are located today along the Montour Trail. Dennis also provided the following photographs of some of the ruins.



This appears to be the ruins of the auxiliary shaft that has been filled in with trash.



These footings may have been associated with the tipple.



The following blueprints show the Montour tracks at National No. 2. They were provided by Gene P. Schaeffer from his vast collection of Montour Railroad paperwork.

This print shows the Montour main track exiting the east portal of National Tunnel with the west switch at National Siding connected to the north side of the main track. This siding was used primarily by westbound trains pulling coal out of both the Henderson No. 1 and National No. 2 mines. The switch into the mine's empty yard connects to the south side of the main track just above MP 28, which is incorrectly marked as 18 on the print.

