

MP 30.7 Greer Tunnel 235' Concrete Curved Bore

Mile 29.7 Trail MP 28.7

Bored 1913 Built with wooden liner – concrete liner added 1922

Steel liner and new portals added 2023-24

View on left is from 1979 at the east portal. The date stamped in the concrete portal on the right reads 1922. The tunnel was bored in 1913 as part of the Montour Railroad extension from North Star, near Imperial, to Mifflin Junction. It was originally built with a wooden liner and the concrete liner and portals were added in 1922.



Gene P. Schaeffer photo



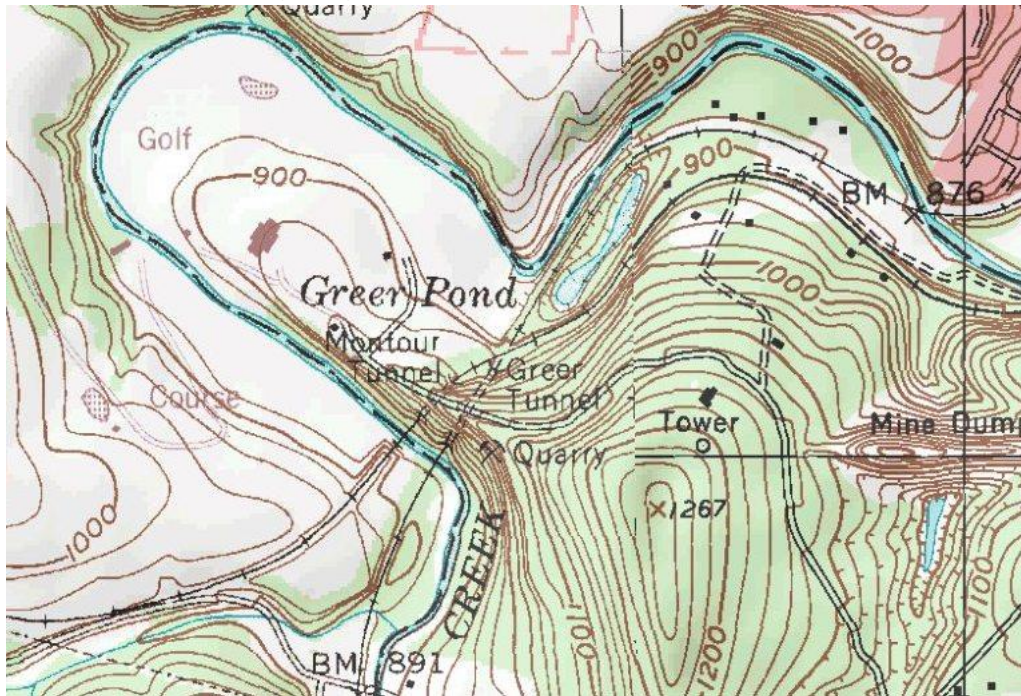
Bryan Seip photo

The last railroad operations were at the end of 1980. This section of the line was abandoned and lay dormant for 25 years. This view of the west portal is from 2008, before Trail construction. Guide rails are still evident, with main rails removed. Rocks, dirt and debris littering the tunnel entrance were removed during Trail construction.



Bryan Seip photo

Topo map shows the tunnel near center, labeled “Montour Tunnel”. It was bored through the narrow ridge above Chartiers Creek. An adjacent tunnel is labeled “Greer”, and is called Greer by Pittsburgh & Ohio Central RR employees, but it was named Bells Tunnel, for the land owners when it was built earlier. Another land owner in this area was named Greer, giving this Montour Railroad tunnel its name.



Courtesy Bob Ciminell / USGS

Two views of the west portal from across Chartiers Creek bridge during a re-decking project on the bridge in 1974.



Tim Sposato photos

On the left, a doubleheaded coal train makes a run for the upcoming hill, headed out of the west portal in 1950. On the right is a 2010 view after Trail reconstruction of the tunnel and Chartiers Creek bridge.

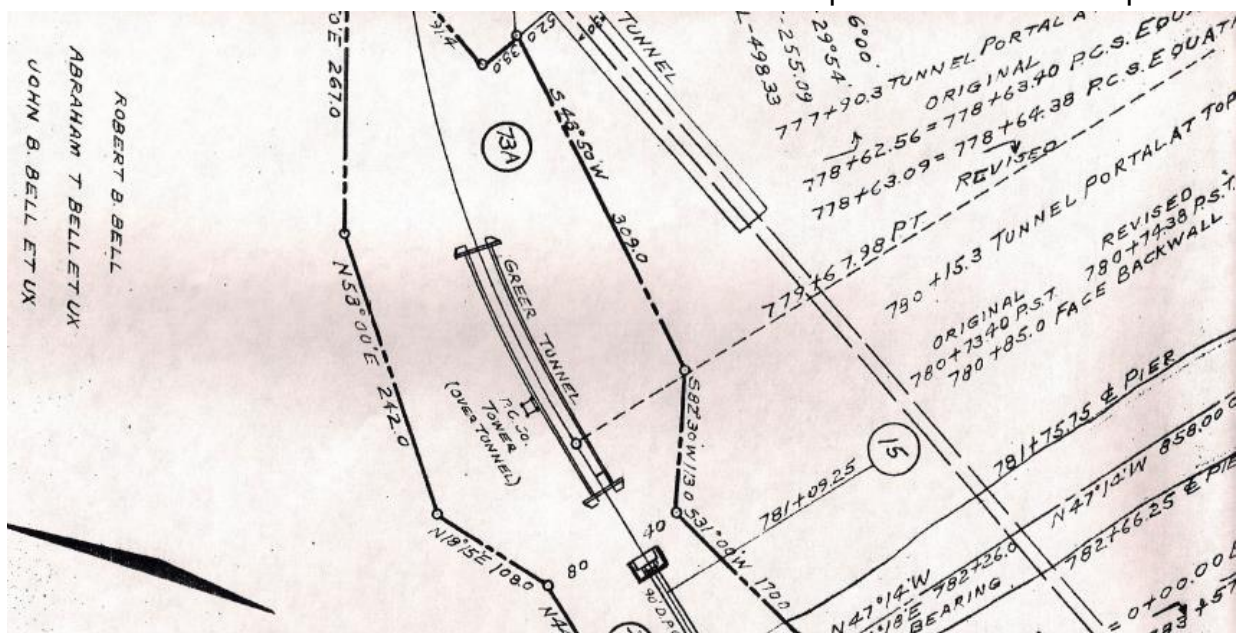


William N. Poellot, Jr. photo



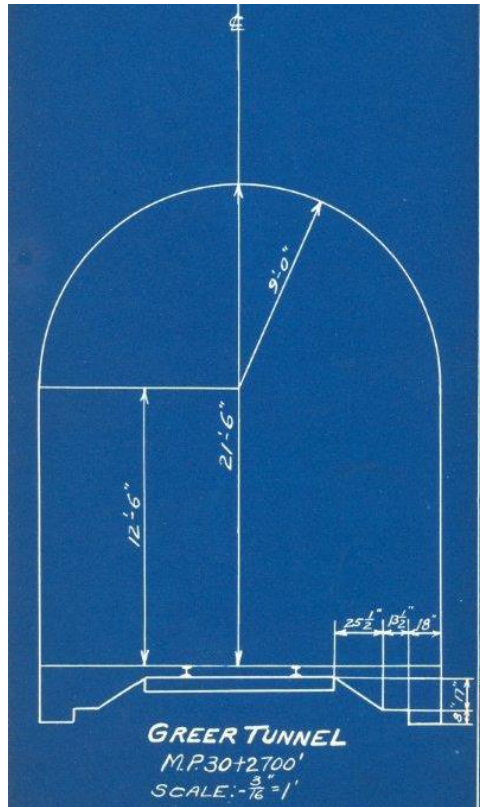
Bryan Seip photo

Valuation plan shows the curvature of the tunnel, with Chartiers Creek bridge at bottom center and adjacent Bells Tunnel on PRR/Conrail/now-Pittsburgh & Ohio Central tracks at top center. Note the Bell family landowners listed on the left side, which gave the earlier lower tunnel bored through the ridge its name. The Pittsburgh Coal Co. power line tower indicated over Greer Tunnel can be seen in the previous steam train photo.



Courtesy Greg Corcoran

Tunnel profile diagram.



Courtesy Tim Sposato

A train emerges from the east portal.



Gene P. Schaeffer photo

Aerial view from 1938 shows the tunnel in lower left quadrant, with Montour Railroad crossing over PRR near adjacent Bells Tunnel. PRR (now Pittsburgh & Ohio Central) runs top right to bottom left and Montour snakes from lower right to lower left. Hills Station (Lawrence) is at top center and Montour Mine #4 is at lower right.



Courtesy Penn Pilot

Westbound coal enters the east portal, headed for Champion Coal plant.



Gene P. Schaeffer photos

29 years after the steam locomotive scene, diesel power makes the same run.



A steel liner was added in 2023 to eliminate falling brick & rock hazard.



New concrete portals were poured in 2023-24 to stabilize cracks in original structures.



Bryan Seip Photos