

Create a plan for Mather coal site

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Last week, we reported the Greene County Industrial Development Authority is in the discussion stages of developing a strategy to determine possible uses for the Mather coal refuse dump once reclamation work at the site is completed.

Of course, implementing any possible uses is going to take quite a while, considering the reclamation process, which in part entails hauling 250,000 cubic yards of soil from the now-dry Duke Lake at Ryerson Station State Park, has just begun.

It was announced last August the project would begin in October, but then it was pushed into this year to allow for some preparation work at the 70-acre Mather site. Considering the Mather dump was in existence for more than 95 years, and taking into account the property was abandoned about 50 years ago, what's another year of waiting?

We understand the residents of Mather have grown accustomed to having this eyesore in their backyards, but now this project is tied into the restoration of Duke Lake, and this gives us pause.

If the Mather project is not yet able to accept the soil from Duke Lake, then the centerpiece of Ryerson Park will remain dry even longer.

Removing soil does not mean water will begin flowing into the lake. Much work is needed to be done on that project.

The GCIDA's discussions are perhaps premature, but we liked what was offered, including an idea to partner with an individual or company to use part of the site for a commercial agricultural operation, such as a hydroponic farm, that could also serve as an educational center.

Keep the discussions going, because as one GCIDA member said, "I'd hate to see them get done (with the reclamation), and there is no plan in place."