

## **Foundation Coal plans new mine**

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Foundation Coal is developing plans to construct a new coal mine in Holbrook, Center Township. The company, whose affiliates operate the Cumberland Emerald mines in Greene County, has submitted a permit application for a new mine to the state Department of Environmental Protection.

The application was submitted in several parts in December and January, Joseph Leone, permit chief with DEP's California District Office, said Tuesday.

Many people in the community have been speculating about the company's plans because of its purchases of land in the Holbrook area. The company now owns all but a few parcels in Holbrook.

Foundation is in the preliminary stages of the permit application process, Leone said. Though the application has been submitted to DEP, the department has not yet accepted it for technical review, he said. The application still could be returned to the company for reasons such as insufficient information, Leone said.

Once the application is accepted by DEP, the department will begin its technical review and submit the plans to other agencies for consideration. The process also will include public notice and a public hearing, said Joel Koricich, DEP environmental group manager.

Both Leone and Koricich were attending a meeting Tuesday at the Rogersville fire hall on an application to include additional coal acreage in the Cumberland Mine mining permit and did not have access to plans for the new mine.

Koricich had, at a resident's request, brought along one map showing the new mine's slope and shaft. Other maps that were submitted to DEP showed other mine structures, including a preparation plant, Koricich said.

Information provided by the company to Center Township regarding only plans for the slope and shaft show the new mine being developed on the west side of Route 18 centering on an area between Hoge Run Road and Bristoria Road. The company will be able to transport coal from the mine on the Norfolk Southern railroad that runs along the

eastern side of Route 18 and Garner Run.

Plans have not been submitted to DEP indicating where the company will dispose of coal waste, Koricich said. Foundation is now in the process of selecting a coal refuse site, he said. Company officials could not be reached Tuesday for comment.

The company last year had employed about 950 people at its two Greene County mining operations. Its affiliates operate 13 mines in Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Wyoming and produce about 72 million tons of coal annually.