

Floyd R. Mansberger

January 22, 2003

Harold Hassen
Cultural Resource Coordinator
Office of Realty and Environmental Planning
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271

re: New Salem Coal Mine

Dear Hal:

The Lincoln Coal Mine was located on land now owned by the State Of Illinois and operated as the New Salem State Historic Site. This mine, which operated from 1922 through 1944, extracted coal from the No. 5 Springfield coal seam, which was 6-feet thick and approximately 140 feet below the surface. This site is in a timbered area bordering the Rocky Branch (which flows into the Sangamon River). I visited the site with Tom Nelson in late December 2002. A distinctive sinkhole (presumably representing the main shaft) was present, as were two rectangular depressions. Both of the depressions were associated with clay building tile, presumably representing the location of badly disturbed buildings (neither of which warrant any further investigation). A small over bank pile of mine tailings was present. We also walked the area associated with a second shaft (located across the creek to the north). Although no evidence of this second shaft was encountered, a large steel boiler was sitting in the bottom along the creek (and may have been associated with the coal mine). An abandoned roadbed lead from the main shaft to the creek below, where a makeshift concrete ford had been constructed.

It is our recommendation that this abandoned mine site has no archaeological potential, is not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and warrants no further work. Should you have any questions, please give me a call.

Sincerely,

Floyd Mansberger