

Former Taylor Colliery



Taylor Borough, in the heart of Lackawanna County's Anthracite Region, like so many small Pennsylvania communities, once thrived on coal mining and heavy industry. The 150-acre former Taylor Colliery site hosted both of these activities, providing nearly 700 jobs for the community. Shut down in the 1960s, the colliery sat idle, leaving behind an environmental legacy of acid mine drainage and dangerous subsidence.

Since Taylor Borough is land-locked with little other ground available for new development, a determined group of community leaders, local businesses and government representatives focused on redeveloping the existing colliery site.

Since 2003, Taylor's Planning Commission has secured several federal brownfields grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to assess the redevelopment potential of the abandoned colliery. The borough has also secured several other state grants to support the project.

In 2010, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation completed a \$1.4 million reclamation of an 85-acre portion of the site, eliminating such public health and safety hazards as dangerous mine spoil piles and embankments, vertical mine shafts, hazardous mining equipment and structural debris left from former coal mining operations at the colliery site.

In addition, a portion of the Keyser Creek channel affected by heavy amounts of sedimentation from red ash materials has been reconstructed and stabilized, improving not only water quality but alleviating some stormwater problems as well.

After several years of planning and public input, the site will consist of 54 single family homes, 224 townhouses, and 116 condominiums. The rest of the land will be used as open space by the community. The borough estimates that redevelopment of the entire site could generate annual revenue of up to \$3 million, and more than 250 jobs for the region, serving as a national model for future brownfield/grayfield projects.

The Taylor Colliery redevelopment effort, which has benefited from strong and productive partnerships, cooperation and support, has emphasized the importance of early assessment and data collection and the use of this information to stimulate community involvement.

