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process for its proposed Foundation Mine in Holbrook, although Alpha, now in bankruptcy, said Friday that doesn't mean a new mine will ever be constructed.

nothing further has developed.

Alpha Natural Resources' closed Emerald Mine in Waynesburg.

Foundation Mining LLC published a public notice Friday in the Observer-Reporter indicating it has applied to the state Department of Environmental Protection for a permit for the new mine and associated shaft site. The company had first submitted an application for the Foundation Mine in early 2008 and held two public meetings on the plan, the last in February 2011. However, since then,

WAYNESBURG – An Alpha Natural Resources subsidiary is continuing through the permitting

An Alpha spokesman said Friday that Foundation was continuing through a permitting process it began in 2008 and publication of the notice was a requirement of that process. The fact the company is continuing with the permit process doesn't necessarily mean it will

ever proceed with plans to construct the mine, the company said.

natural gas holding in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

make higher bids. The auction will be conducted March 31.

Alpha Natural Resources, which owns the Cumberland Mine in Kirby and the closed Emerald Mine in Waynesburg, filed for bankruptcy in August. Last week, it announced it received a \$500 million offer from existing lenders for the

potential sale of its core assets, which include the Emerald and Cumberland properties and

The offer from its lenders will set the floor for an auction process that will let competitors

Ed Yankovich, international vice president for District 2 of the United Mine Workers, said he doubted the company would ever proceed with opening a new mine, especially now that its core assets are up for sale.

"They're in bankruptcy, and at this time it's hard to imagine any new mine being opened by

Alpha," he said. The union represents employees at both the Cumberland and Emerald

Union members attended the earlier public hearings on the Foundation Mine and indicated they believed the new mine should be opened as a UMW mine. Company officials said then the mine would open non-represented, but employees could later decided whether to

According to the public notice published Friday, the company is seeking to permit 9,438

acres of coal in Center, Jackson and Richhill townships. The shaft site will be on the west

side of Route 18, south of the intersection with Bristoria Road. The 25.4-acre shaft site

would include a shaft, utility boreholes, a bathhouse, diesel storage tank and parking area. Under plans presented by Foundation earlier, the surface area of the mine also included a shaft, slope, preparation plant, rail spur and coal-loading facility and water supply facility.

Bob Niedbala

Bob Niedbala is a staff writer for the Observer-Reporter. He has worked as a general assignment reporter for the newspaper for 27 years in the Greene County bureau. He received a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Pittsburgh.



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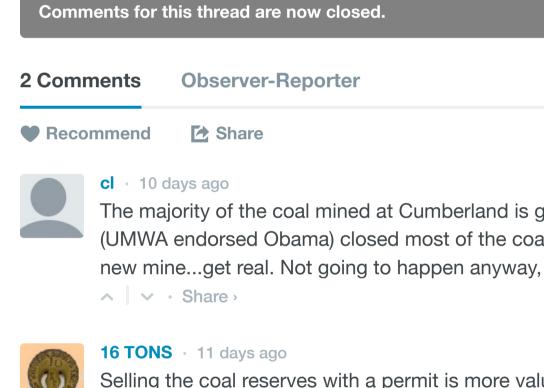
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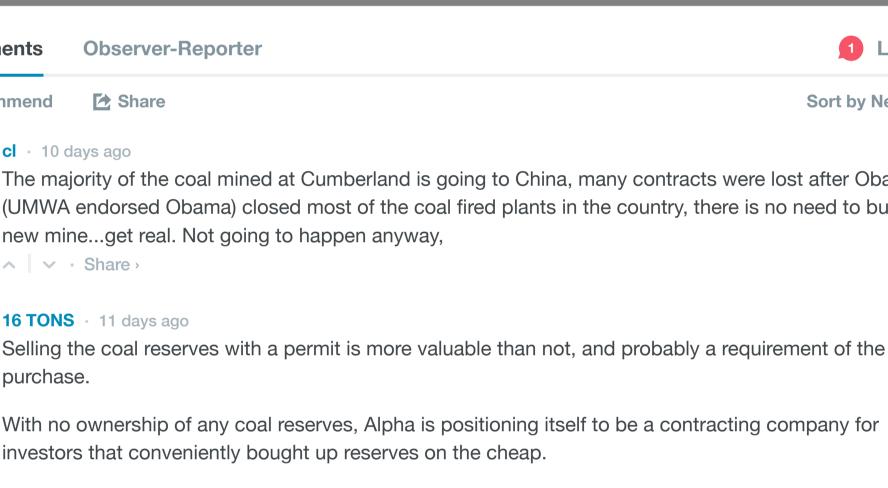


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This forces their capital reserves to a low enough position to secure their equipment assets while

likely will be non-union positions due to the abundance of out-of-work miners they help create.

It also positions them to take on the billions of dollars in remediation work in the region, which more than

What some corporate tacticians would call a WIN WIN, all the while, Greene County sits idly by waiting to

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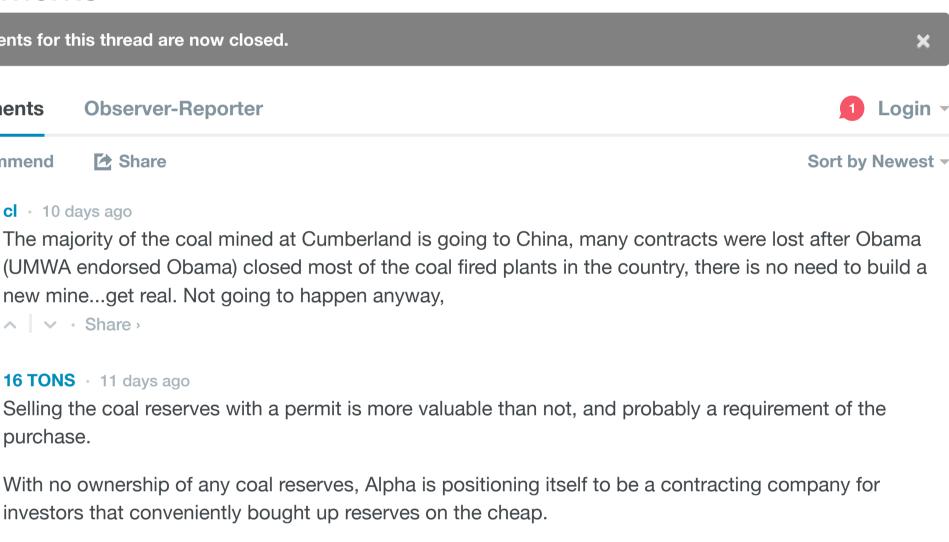
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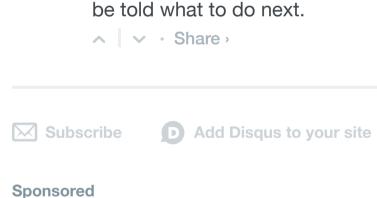
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