

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Sandlick Sportman's Club
other name/site number: Miracle Mountain

2. Location

street & number: county route 13 not for publication: n/a
city/town: Filbert vicinity: x
state: West Virginia code: WV county: McDowell code: 047 zip code: 24835

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination X request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally.
(See continuation sheet.)

William G. Luman
Signature of Certifying Official

2.16.93
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Sandlick Sportsman's Club
property name

McDowell, WV
county and state

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action
_____ entered in the National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.		
_____ determined eligible for the	_____	_____
_____ National Register		
_____ See continuation sheet.		
_____ determined not eligible for the	_____	_____
_____ National Register		
_____ removed from the National Register	_____	_____
_____ other (explain): _____	_____	_____

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5. Classification

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ownership of property: (check as many boxes as apply)	category of property (check only one box)
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site
<input type="checkbox"/> public-federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure
	<input type="checkbox"/> object

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITH PROPERTY

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>		buildings
		sites
<u>2</u>		structures
		objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	TOTAL

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING n/a

(enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER. 0

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6. Function or Use

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HISTORIC FUNCTIONS

(enter categories from instructions)

CURRENT FUNCTIONS

(enter categories from instructions)

social/clubhouse
recreation & culture/outdoor re-
creation

social/clubhouse
recreation & culture/outdoor re-
creation

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7. Description

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ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:

(enter categories from instructions)

MATERIALS

(enter categories from instructions)

other:rustic

foundation stone

walls log

roof tin

other

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

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APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS

(mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ B removed from its original location.

☐ C a birthplace or grave.

☐ D a cemetery.

☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ F a commemorative property.

☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past
50 years.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

(enter categories from instructions)

architecture

entertainment/recreation

industry

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

1938-1943

SIGNIFICANT DATES

n/a

SIGNIFICANT PERSON

(complete if criterion B is marked above)

n/a

CULTURAL AFFILIATION

n/a

ARCHITECT/BUILDER

coal company volunteers

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation
sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): n/a

- _ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- _ previously listed in the National Register
- _ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- _ designated a National Historic Landmark
- _ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- _ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- _ State Historic Preservation Office
- _ other state agency
- _ federal agency
- _ local government
- _ university
- ☒ other - repository: Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Bluefield, WV

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 2 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1	<u>17</u>	<u>453390</u>	<u>4128860</u>	2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	D	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing See

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheets.)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheets.)

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11. Form Prepared By

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name/title: Stacy Sone, structural historian

organization: WV SHPO

date: December 21, 1992

street & number: Cultural Center

telephone: 304-558-0220

city or town: Charleston

state: WV ZIP: 25305

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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS

- USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources

PHOTOGRAPHS

- representative black and white photographs of the property

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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PROPERTY OWNER

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(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name: Pocahontas Land Company

street & number: P.O. Box 1517 telephone: 304-325-7472

city or town: Bluefield, state: WV ZIP: 24701

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Sandlick Sportman's Club
McDowell County, WV

The Sandlick Sportsman's Club, located south of Gary, McDowell County, is an intact log building that U.S. Coal and Coke Company volunteers constructed in 1938 for a rustic recreational facility. It is typical of the kind of log construction that the Civilian Conservation Corps popularized in parks across the country during the 1930's. Although it was vacant for several years, careful repair work has restored it to its original appearance. The building retains its architectural integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and association.

The log building is located high on a mountain by itself in the southern part of a remote county. It stands on a stone pier foundation and has a metal roof. The rectangular plan has an extension across most of the rear that is one room deep. The main roof is a low-pitched gable with shed roofs over the porch and rear wing. The poplar logs are rough with unfinished ends giving the building a characteristically primitive look.

The facade holds a vertical plank door in the center with flanking paired windows. A shed porch with rough cedar supports and a wooden floor extends across most of the facade. A random stone chimney stands in the center of the wall at each end of the building. Single windows are located on each side of both chimneys. An early addition that matches the construction of the main part of the building covers most of the back wall. A door opens directly outside from the addition.

A second contributing building, which was originally the caretaker's house, is located directly behind the larger building. Although it is substantially smaller, it shows the same type of log construction. This building has a concrete block and vertical log post foundation. An early log addition on the side nearly doubles the size of the caretaker's house.

The buildings stand at the top of a mountain on a winding mine-access road that, at one time, lead several miles into Bishop, Virginia. A gravel road circles around the larger log building. The level area surrounding the Sportman's Club has been cleared of brush but many trees remain. Contributing features of the landscape include two free-standing stone fireplaces constructed in 1941.

Minor alterations have hardly changed the buildings' original appearance. Just months ago they were badly deteriorated but the original quality construction stood up to years of neglect and vandalism. Dedicated volunteers replaced the metal roof, rebuilt the porch, added new windows to replace the broken originals, repaired the concrete chinking, and painted the logs. Aside from the replacement windows being slightly smaller than the original, volunteers agree that the buildings retain their 1938 appearance.

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Sandlick Sportman's Club
McDowell County, WV

The Sandlick Sportsman's Club is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for its historical association with the U.S. Coal and Coke Company and under criterion C for its architectural significance. Constructed in 1938, the building served as a recreational retreat for company employees of the nation's leading coal producer. The Sportsman's Club is significant architecturally as an intact log structure in an area of the state where few buildings of its type ever stood. It is representative of other log buildings built across the United States that the federal government's Civilian Conservation Corps popularized during the 1930's. The Sportsman's Club's period of significance ranges from its construction date to 1943, the fifty-year limit established by the Secretary of the Interior.

Before northern businessmen discovered the value of southern West Virginia's coal, the area was sparsely settled and contained only a few scattered farms. As the nation became more industrial minded, capitalists from Pennsylvania explored ways to access the rich coal hidden beneath the rugged terrain. Ambitious and farsighted businessmen began to acquire huge tracts of coal land in the great Pocahontas field, organized land holding companies, and constructed railroads into the isolated mountains. After the completion of a rail tunnel through Flat Top Mountain from Mercer County, large scale development of McDowell County forged ahead. Mines quickly sprang up all along the N & W line in the narrow valleys.

The tiny native population quickly proved inadequate for such a labor intensive industry. In order to satisfy labor requirements, operators recruited workers from the older coalfields of Pennsylvania and then from Europe and the American South. The population grew phenomenally at the turn of the century as immigrants from Eastern Europe and blacks poured into the remote county.

To accommodate these new arrivals, coal companies built entire self-sufficient communities. Good roads in southern West Virginia were scarce and the rugged terrain made the daily transportation of miners impossible. In response to these obstacles, companies had to establish their own communities to house their workers. The company town was the most logical solution because it provided efficient and inexpensive housing for a large labor force. Standard buildings in every company community included a store, churches, schools, and health and recreational facilities.

The U.S. Coal and Coke Company town of Gary was one of the largest and most complex of all company communities across the country. In 1900, the area that was later called Gary Hollow was quiet wilderness with almost no

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Sandlick Sportsman's Club
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inhabitants. After brilliant negotiations with the Pocahontas Land Company, Bramwell Banker Isaac T. Mann, with the financial backing of J.P. Morgan, acquired 50,000 acres of this prime coal land for the giant, newly formed U.S. Steel Corporation. The U.S. Coal and Coke Company, a subsidiary of U.S. Steel, was established in 1902 to supply coke to the massive steel industry. Construction of an N & W branch line and 3,000 coke ovens began immediately throughout the hollow.

As the area developed, workers from Pennsylvania, the southern states, and eastern Europe poured into the region creating the kind of ethnic diversity that, until then, was only evident in large cities. Within just a few years' time, the company opened twelve mines, each with its own community. All of these company towns were self-sufficient complete with well-constructed houses, streets, sidewalks, stores, schools, churches, recreational facilities, theaters, and utilities. Paved roads between the communities provided easy access across Gary hollow. The rural landscape had quickly transformed into an urban industrial center that produced millions of tons of coal each year.

Recreational and social events were an important aspect of company-town life throughout the Pocahontas Coalfield. Baseball games, dances, and garden contests were common well-attended events in Gary hollow. Each of the twelve U.S. Coal and Coke Company communities had its own clubhouse that was a popular social gathering point and home to many indoor social gatherings. Most clubhouses held a gameroom, restaurant, and boarding rooms.

One resident, a doctor named L.L. Whitney organized another recreational facility that was farther from the busy mining community. He and a few other company employees established the Sandlick Sportsman's Club with a president and a board of directors. The organization leased land from the coal company which also provided many of the materials for the construction of a building. Its construction was a completely local effort with volunteers from throughout the twelve communities working together to build it. The logs and stone came directly from the site and the only imported materials were metal for the roof, and glass.

According to Elbert resident Mr. Mike Hornick, who helped construct the Sportsman's Club in 1938, employees used the building day and night for various functions. Miners and officials who paid minimal dues gathered there regularly for banquets, retreats, weddings, and reunions. Mine officials often hosted there visiting executives from U.S. Steel Corporation. It provided an ideal social setting for company town

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section 8 page 3 Sandlick Sportsman's Club
McDowell County, WV

residents who wished to escape the bustle of the mining communities. Area residents visited the facility less frequently as mining slowed and access to other areas became easier. The last organized event that occurred at the site was a retirement party in 1985 for Mr. Hornick who had worked over forty years for the company as an electrical engineer.

Members of the Sandlick Sportsman's Club chose a popular construction technique for its facility. During the 1930's, the Civilian Conservation Corps reintroduced rustic log structures in state and federal park systems across the United States. The buildings were to be nonintrusive to the landscape which was accomplished by using natural building materials, a low silhouette, and pronounced horizontal lines. These structures were made with little help from modern machinery which gave them a handmade but well-crafted, rugged appearance. The popularity of this rustic style spread outside the park system as round log houses, lodges, and even churches became common across the nation.

The organization's choice of log construction for a company-owned recreational facility was not without precedent in this area of the Appalachians. The N & W Railroad and Consolidation Coal Companies both built log buildings during the 1930's in Bland County, Virginia as recreational retreats for their employees. In West Virginia, the Pocahontas Operators Association built rustic Camp Merriam Houston in McDowell County for Girl Scouts. Log buildings were not just represented in company retreats and camps or in state parks. The highly respected Bluefield architect, A.B. Mahood, who attended the prestigious Ecole de Beaux Arts in Paris, designed the Bluefield Country Club in the 1930's which was also an impressive log building.

The Sportsman's Club is intact and representative of this popular log construction technique. The large building is characteristically rustic-looking with its hand-hewn logs with uneven ends, stone fireplaces and deep shed porch. Its location at the top of a mountain with nothing else around provides a perfect setting and it would seem unlikely to find any other kind of building in this wilderness setting.

Only a year ago the building stood vacant and deteriorating with its porch collapsed and its windows broken. The Miracle Mountain Corporation, a private, non-profit group, formed a year ago to revive the old building to be used much as it was when the U.S. Coal and Coke Company operated in Gary Hollow. Volunteers and board members who hold fond memories of the Sportsman's Club have enthusiastically assembled to restore the building to its original appearance. It now stands as an intact 1930's log structure that retains all of the characteristics that associate it with the U.S. Coal and Coke Company's recreational retreat.

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McDowell County, WV

9. bibliography

Archer, William. "Gary, West Virginia: U.S. Steel's Experiment in the Coalfields". The Observer (Jan. 13, 1988).

_____. "U.S. Steel: The Gary Connection". The Observer (July 13, 1988).

Eller, Ronald D. Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers. Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1982.

Gary, file. Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Bluefield, WV.

Hornick, Mike. "Gary Celebrates 100 Years of Mining". Welch Daily News (June 3, 1983).

McGehee, Stuart. "Gary. A First Class Operation". Goldenseal (Fall 1988), 28-32.

Redmond, Pamela Ball. Coopers Rock State Forest, multiple property listing, 1991. file, WV SHPO.

"Where Coal is King and the Mountains are Home". U.S. Steel News 43 (Dec. 1978).

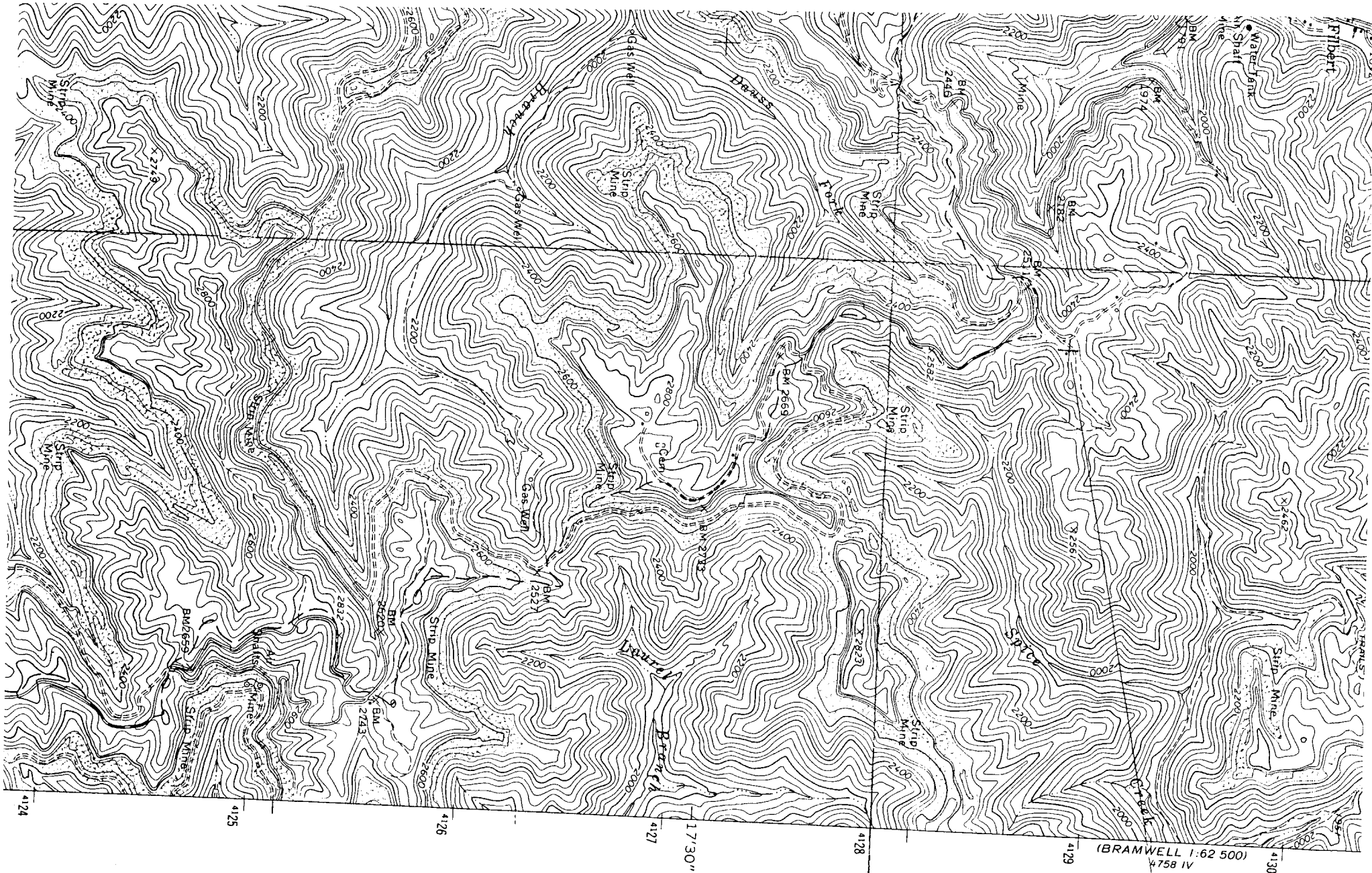
site visit with Miracle Mountain Corporation members, Dec. 1, 1992.

10. verbal boundary description

1,000' northeast of benchmark 2511, the nominated property stands in the center of a rectangle 200' by 400'.

boundary justification

The boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Sandlick Sportsman's Club.



Sandlick Sportsman's Club
Co. route 13
near Filbert, McDowell Co., W
17/453/390/4128860
Gary quad

