

## MINING AND RECLAMATION

**Surface Coal Mining in Old Ben Scout Reservation:** The Springfield Coal was strip mined in most of the reservation during the mid 1900's. A generalized diagram of the mining and reclamation process is shown below. At the left side of the diagram any trees are removed by bulldozers and a large drill rig is used to drill holes for explosives. The explosives fragment the layers of sandstone, shale, and limestone that total 40-feet thick. This fragmented rock, called **overburden**, is removed by large **stripping shovels** and stacked into long hills called **spoil ridges**. The exposed coal seam is then loaded by a smaller shovel into trucks for hauling to either a plant that cleaned the coal or directly to its user. As shown on the right side of the drawing, modern mines use bulldozers to level the spoil ridges and spread topsoil that was saved. The area is then replanted to reestablish the vegetation needed for the use of the land after mining. This was not done in the earlier mines. The ungraded spoil ridges in the reservation were voluntarily replanted with pine trees.

