

Making the Land Safe

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Surface Mining (OSM) works cooperatively with states, Native American tribes, and local agencies such as the East Bay Regional Park District to protect the environment and the safety of citizens at both active and abandoned coal mines throughout the United States.



An abandoned coal mine before closure, 1986
Photograph by John Waters, EBRPD



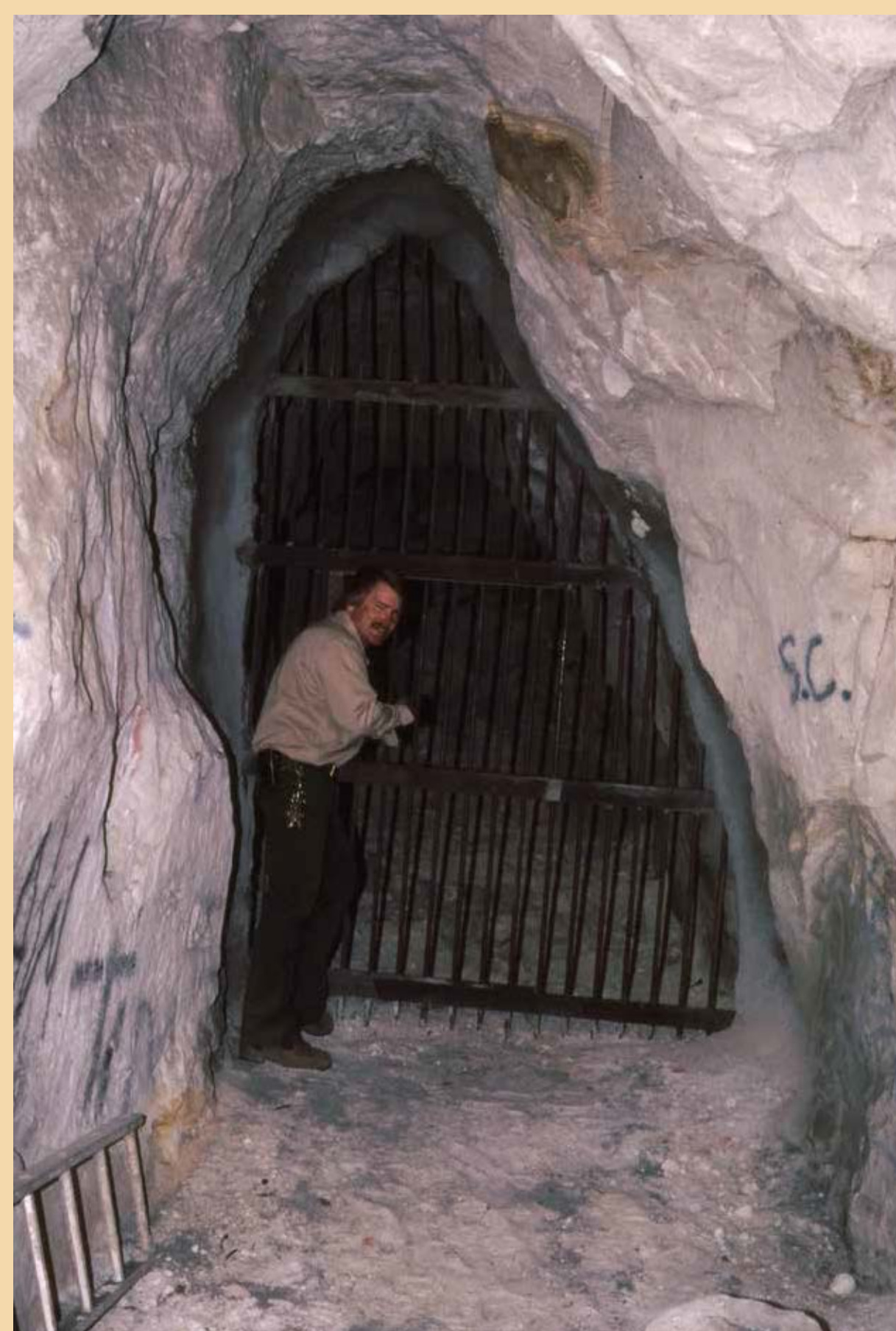
Office of Surface Mining Website

Between 1982 and 2011, OSM funded the closure of over 80 dangerous mine openings at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve at a cost of nearly three million dollars. Each opening was evaluated to determine the appropriate closure method to be used. Thanks to the OSM funding the land has been made safe once again.



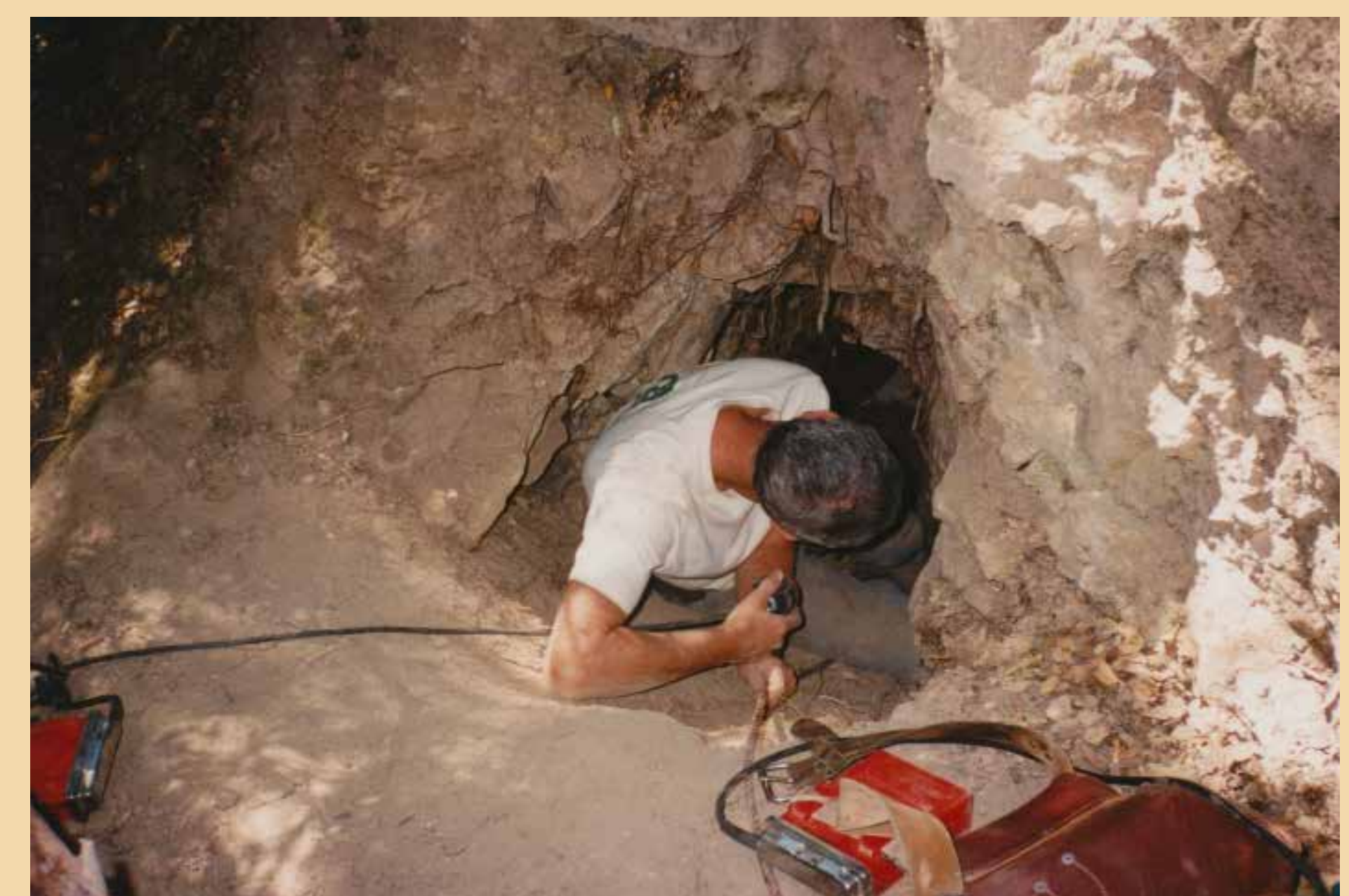
In remote and environmentally sensitive areas, polyurethane foam (PUF) is used to seal mine openings. It is a safe and effective way to isolate sections of tunnels that are then backfilled to prevent collapse.

Photograph by John Waters, EBRPD



Park Ranger Steve Quick stands next to a gated mine opening in the 1980s. Gated closures provide access for geological and historical research.

Photograph by Rick Yarborough, EBRPD



Former Black Diamond Mine Manager John Waters examines an abandoned mine in 1995. The mine reclamation projects were designed to eliminate hazards and protect natural and historic resources.

Photograph by Rick Yarborough, EBRPD