



INNOVATIVE LEARNING TOOLKIT

PROJECT TITLE: Appalachian Mountain Top Removal

Tags: Online networking, Mapping

Overview:

In America's Appalachian mountains, there is growing concern over the practice of mountaintop removal coal mining. This is a form of coal mining where the miners literally remove (blow up) a large area of a mountain, to expose the seam of coal underneath. The surface 'overburden' is often scraped or dumped into adjacent valleys. Because of its destructive nature, MTR is controversial and is protested by environmentalists, local residents, and others.

A powerful form of this protest is being conducted on the [I love mountains](#) website using [Google Earth](#). (where you can see a 3D, high definition, satellite image of a country, town or city, zoom in and out and scroll around).

The website allows people (who live in America) to enter their zipcode or click on where they live, and see a visual connection between their house and the source of their coal. If you then click on the coal power plant supplying energy to your house, it shows which mountains were cleared to provide that coal.

This provides a visually powerful and easy to understand connection between a household and the impacts of their power supply choices on the environment.

Why is it relevant to PTS?

Although this specific example is concerned with the environmental impact of mountaintop coal mining, visually mapping the connections between someone's house and the source of their energy / water / food is an interesting and potentially powerful concept for PTS

Ideas and tips for PTS:

A similar concept could be used to link a person's house to their nearest stream or creek, and/or link that stream or creek to other waterways in the catchment, and the harbour. It could be used to show where the drain outside your house actually drains to and where a cigarette butt would go if it went down the drain.

It could be used to link people strongly with their water supply, their energy supply, even their food supply, and what happens to their waste - waste water, rubbish and recycling waste etc

Contact and further information:



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Most information is available on the [I love mountains](#) website

Also see the [Appalachian voices](#) website

Also a write up on the project on [Google Earth](#)