Location

I-81 mile marker 138.3, Schuylkill Co., Kline Twp., lat: 40.88838, lon: -76.01923 (no parking); Conyngham 7.5-minute quadrangle

Geology

An excellent cross section of a thrust fault can be seen as you drive through a large roadcut in Spring Mountain on Interstate 81 just north of the McAdoo-Tamaqua exit. The cut is perpendicular through a faulted syncline (downfold) in the rocks. Within the fold, the Spring Mountain thrust fault and minor associated faults are easily seen. The rocks are the Pennsylvanian-age Pottsville Formation, composed of sandstone and conglomerate, and underlying Mississippian-age Mauch Chunk Formation shales and siltstones. A transition zone between the two units can be seen here. At least 50 feet of movement can be measured along the fault, where part of the south limb of the syncline is pushed over the north limb. Faulting occurred beneath thousands of feet of rock during the Alleghanian mountain-building episode, which ended about 270 million years ago. Since then, the overlying rocks have weathered away, exposing the faults.

Recommended Reading


Published by the Pennsylvania Geological Survey.