



ANALYSIS CENTER

October 22, 2012

DigitalGlobe

North Korea's Camp No. 22



THE COMMITTEE FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA
북한인권위원회

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DigitalGlobe Analysis

This report covers activity at North Korea's Camp 22. This is a joint undertaking by DigitalGlobe's Analysis Center and the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea to shed light on human suffering in North Korea and is part of DigitalGlobe's corporate goal of "Seeing a Better World."

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Introduction

During late September 2012, the North Korean activist community began reporting that the notorious political penal labor facility Camp 22 had been closed in early 2012. On September 27, in a Korean-language report, Radio Free Asia correspondent Sung-hui Moon reported,

A large number of prisoners have starved to death since 2010 in Hoeryong concentration camp (Kwan-li-so) No. 22 where the North Korean authorities have been working in extreme secrecy to close the site since mid-March of last year.

A source from North Hamgyong Province that was contacted recently said “Hoeryong and five Ri: Secheon-ri, Kulsan-ri, Haengyong-ri, Bangwon-ri, Guhakpo-ri, were included in the camp 22,” and mentioned that farms and coal mines were also in operation in addition in Hoeryong, Bangwon-ri and Secheon-ri.

According to the source, along with nine farming sections, there were repair, construction, and stock breeding sections in Maegae-ri which is inside the camp, and each section was surrounded by electric fence and outer barbed wire fence to watch the prisoners.

Meanwhile, another source from North Hamgyong Province said, “Some guards from the Camp 22 were left behind until the end of August to destroy all the traces of monitoring and detention facilities.” “Since early September, they are transferring one selected section of people from co-operative farms in North Hamgyong Province to the camp site,” the source explained.

“The authorities are organizing a new cooperative farm at the site with the newly transferred people and they are now busy building regular family houses,” he said. “I understand that the authorities will provide food only for those transferred people for a year.”¹

The following day, on September 28, the *DailyNK* reported,

A source from North Hamkyung Province informed Daily NK on the 27th, “Camp 22 in Hoiryeong was totally shut down in June. It was decided that it should be closed down after the warden who ran it and another officer ran away to China.

“At the start of March they started transferring the sick and malnourished, and then in April they moved all the healthiest ones,” he explained, adding that the camp officers and then their families moved in May, and that the camp was completely empty by the start of June.

“Although it is true that nobody knows where they went,” he went on, “given that people saw the families of officers in the local market selling quite a lot of corn before they left, the guess is that they left the province. The land Camp 22 was on and all the buildings have been transferred to the ownership of Hoiryeong City.”²

On October 1, 2012, in response to these reports and in partnership with the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, DigitalGlobe’s Analysis Center initiated an imagery analysis of Camp 22.

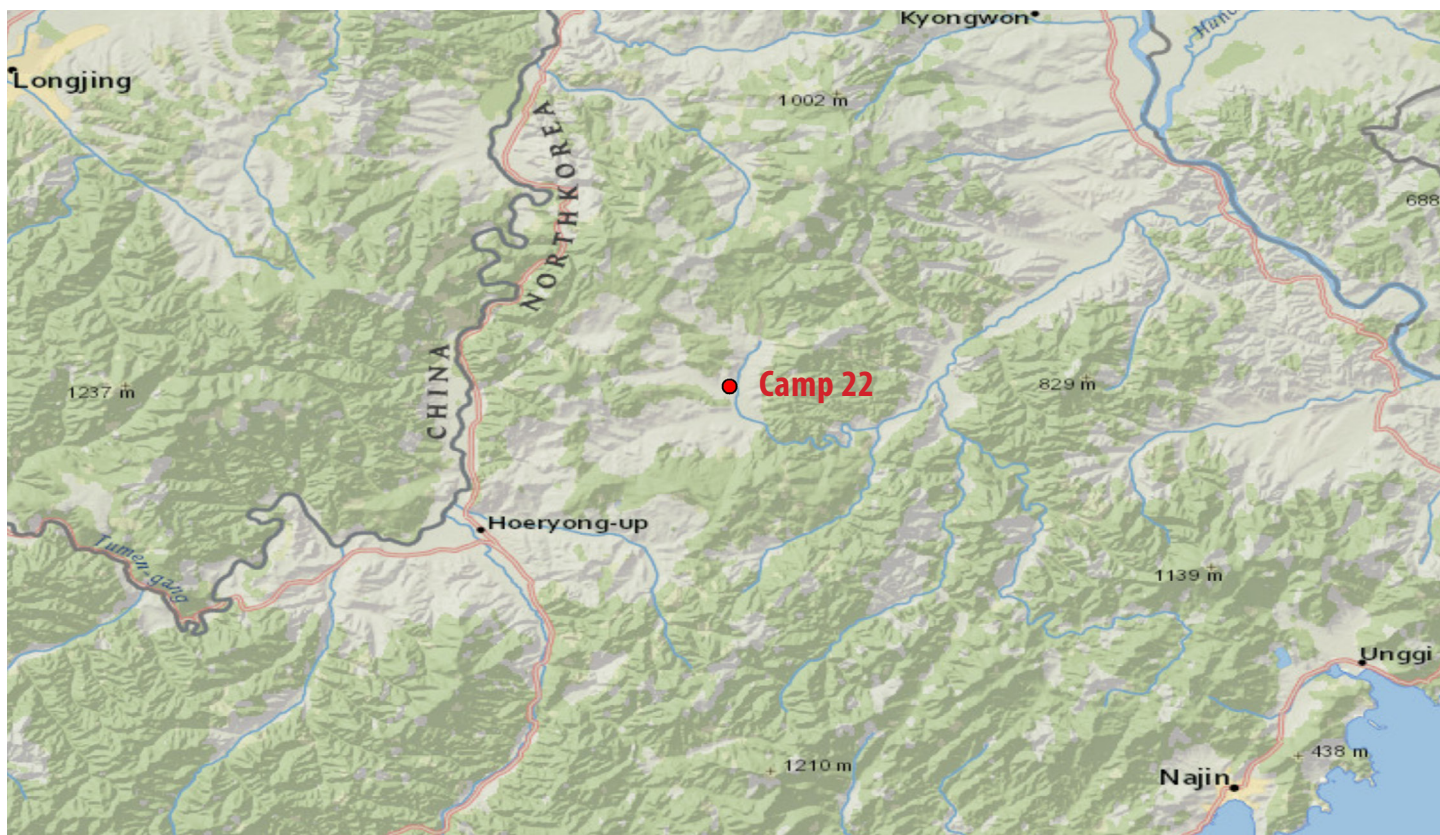
Analysis

Analysis of these two areas was performed using DigitalGlobe images from [November 5, 2010](#), [May 21, 2011](#), and [October 11, 2012](#).

Camp 22 (*Kwan-li-so* No. 22, Korean People’s Security Guard Unit 2209) is located within Hoeryŏng-si, Hamgyŏng-bukto (i.e., Hoeryŏng City, North Hamgyŏng Province) in the northeastern corner of the country. Sources attribute the camp to covering approximately 225 square kilometers, but most activities are clustered within two smaller areas. The first area is situated 20 kilometers north-northeast of Hoeryŏng among the villages of Chungbong-dong, Chungbong-ni, Sŏwŏnpŏ and I-dong. It encompasses approximately 8.5 square kilometers and is associated with the location’s coal mining operations. The second area is 6.6 kilometers to the southeast and 19 kilometers to the northeast of Hoeryŏng. The area is centered around the town of Haengyŏng-ni, on either side of the Haengyŏng-chŏn (i.e., Haengyŏng stream), and encompasses approximately 1.5 square kilometers. Defectors report this area functions as Camp 22’s headquarters, administration and main prisoner housing area.

The village of Haengyŏng-ni appears occupied and well-maintained by North Korean standards. In comparison to the 2010 and 2011 images, the 2012 image shows only minor differences in the number, type and status of buildings and support structures. These minor differences can reasonably be attributed to normal life in rural North Korea. A notable exception is that one building, identified by defectors as used for detention and interrogation, has been razed during 2011. In the images, road activity is minimal. The surrounding fields are well-tended, and it appears this year’s harvest will be nominal given the recent heavy rains within the province. In the 2012 image, grain is present in the courtyard of the camp’s reported thrashing houses. Grain is also present at several other buildings in the Haengyŏng-ni area, indicating recent harvesting.

The villages of Chungbong-dong, Chungbong-ni, Sŏwŏnpŏ and I-dong appear occupied and well-maintained. As with Haengyŏng-ni, these four villages show only minor differences in the number, type and status of buildings and



Map courtesy of ESRI, *National Geographic*

support structures. These minor differences can, once again, be reasonably attributed to normal life in rural North Korea. In all three images, road activity is minimal. The Hoeryŏng-Sechŏn-Chungbong rail line appears to have a consistent level of activity across all three images. The primary activity of the Chungbong-dong area is coal mining, and there are several active and inactive coal mine entrances in the area. The active mines appear to be operating at relatively consistent levels during 2010 to 2012 based upon the size of the coal pile at the coal loading facility, the increasing size of the tailings piles and the presence of numerous small, mine tunnel ore cars at various locations along the light rail network supporting the mines.

Conclusion

DigitalGlobe's analysis of the October 11, 2012, image, in comparison with the November 5, 2010, and May 21, 2011 imagery, reveals typical fall activity (i.e., harvesting, drying of crops, thrashing, etc.) in and around the Haengyŏng-ni and Chungbong-dong areas of interest. Aside from a notable increase in the coal stockpile at the Chungbong-dong loading facility—suggesting a consistent or increasing level of production—the only significant change at Camp 22 during the last year has been the razing of several small buildings,

one of which in Haengyŏng-ni has been reported by defectors as a detention and interrogation facility. Nothing in the examined imagery supports the Radio Free Asia and *DailyNK* reports that Camp 22 was shut down or abandoned during 2012. To the contrary, the level of activity and the state of the agricultural, industrial and civil infrastructure in the area strongly suggests that the camp remains operational.

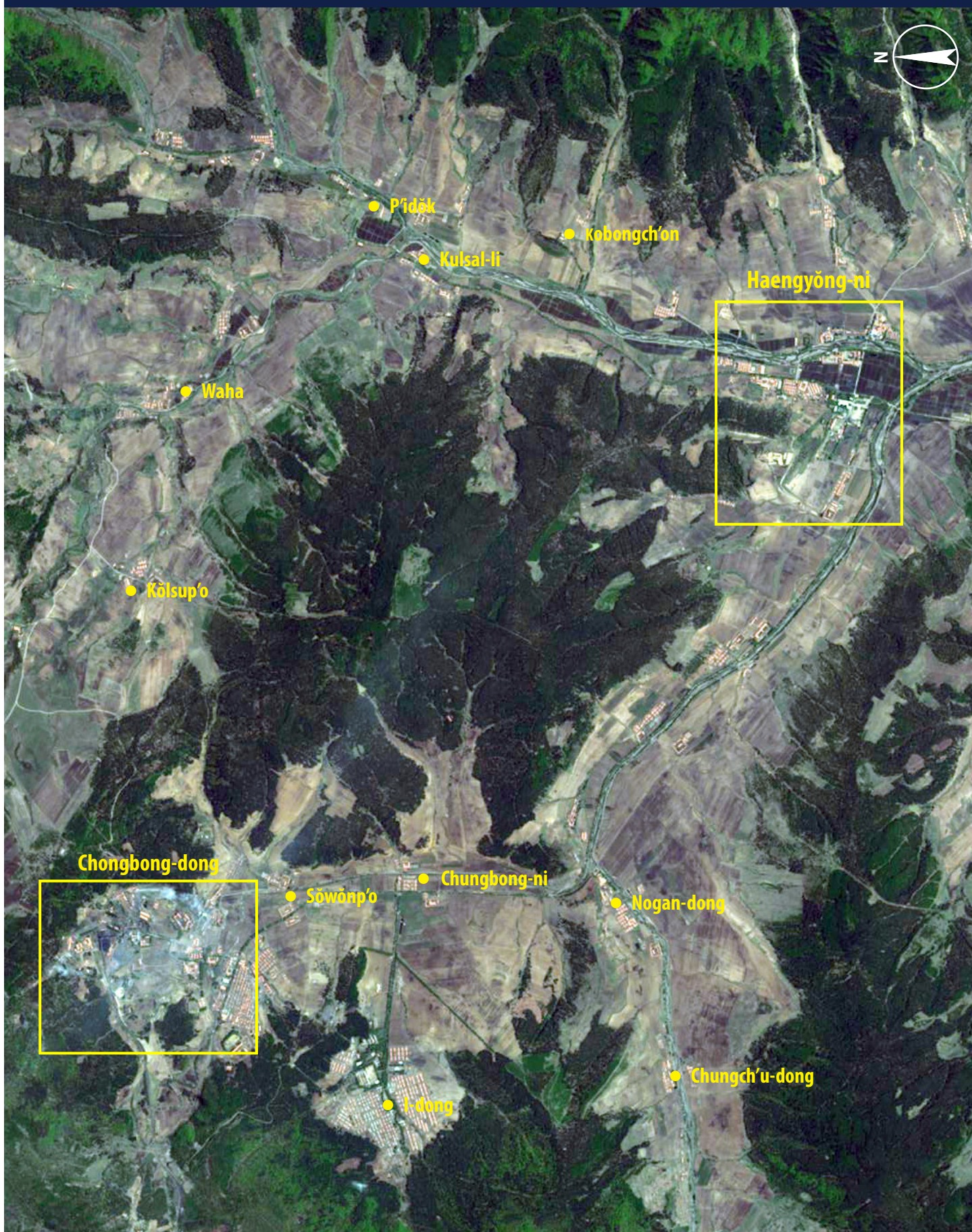
However, with that said, it is essential to understand that North Korean officials, especially those within the Korean People's Army and the internal security organizations, clearly understand the importance of implementing camouflage, concealment and deception (CCD) procedures. It would not be unreasonable to assume that they have done so here. If this is true, it would lend credence to the Radio Free Asia and *DailyNK* reports that indicate North Korean authorities have been slowly transferring small sections of prisoners out of Camp 22 (i.e., Haengyŏng-ni and Chungbong-dong areas) and replacing them with farmers and laborers from other locations within Hamgyŏng-bukto. Such activity would not be readily discernible on satellite imagery.

Therefore, neither scenario can be ruled out at this time. DigitalGlobe and HRNK will remain apprised of the matter.

1. Moon, Sung-hui, "Why Did North Korea Shut Down Camp 22?," Korean Service, Radio Free Asia, September 27, 2012, http://www.rfa.org/korean/in_focus/prison-camp-09272012101637.html?searchterm=22, accessed October 22, 2012.

2. Kim, Kwang Jin, "Camp 22 Disbanded on Defection Fear," *DailyNK*, September 28, 2012, <http://www.dailynk.com/english/read.php?catald=nk01500&num=9865>, accessed September 29, 2012.

Overview



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea

Haengyŏng-ni, Overview



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea

A. North prisoner housing area

On the north side of Haengyong-ni, there are a number of housing areas that defectors report are for prisoners and their families; within North Korea, political prisoners are often placed into detention with their families. The housing units remain essentially unchanged from 2010 to 2012. A small furniture factory is also located in the housing area. This factory has considerably less raw wood stockpiled in 2012 than in the 2011 image. Approximately 150 meters northeast of the furniture factory, there is a courtyard next to another reported prisoner housing area. A new structure is under construction in this courtyard in 2012. The image from 2011 shows only a small pad in the middle of the courtyard, but the 2012 image shows a partially completed frame structure over 50 percent of the pad. A number of grain piles are visible on the east side of the courtyard in the 2012 image. Approximately 175 meters to the northwest, three small farming buildings have been razed from 2011 to 2012.



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, November 5, 2010, Camp 22, North Korea



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea

October 2012



Site of three razed farm buildings

Prisoner housing

Building under construction

Piles of grain

Furniture factory

Haengyong-ch'on

DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, October 11, 2012, Camp 22, North Korea

B. South prisoner housing area



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, November 5, 2010, Camp 22, North Korea



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea

October 2012



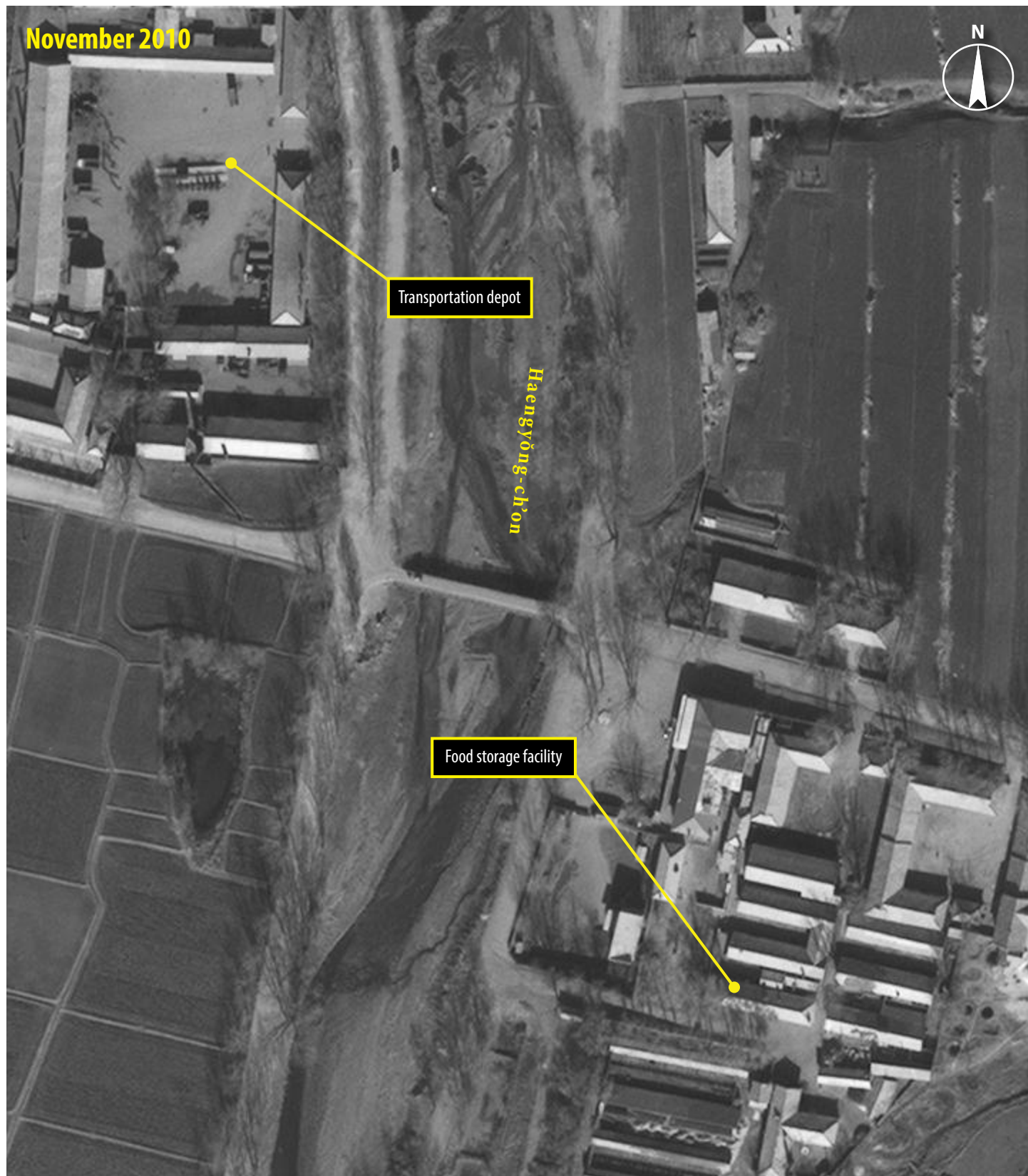
Prisoner housing

Prisoner housing

DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, October 11, 2012, Camp 22, North Korea

C. Transportation depot and food storage facility

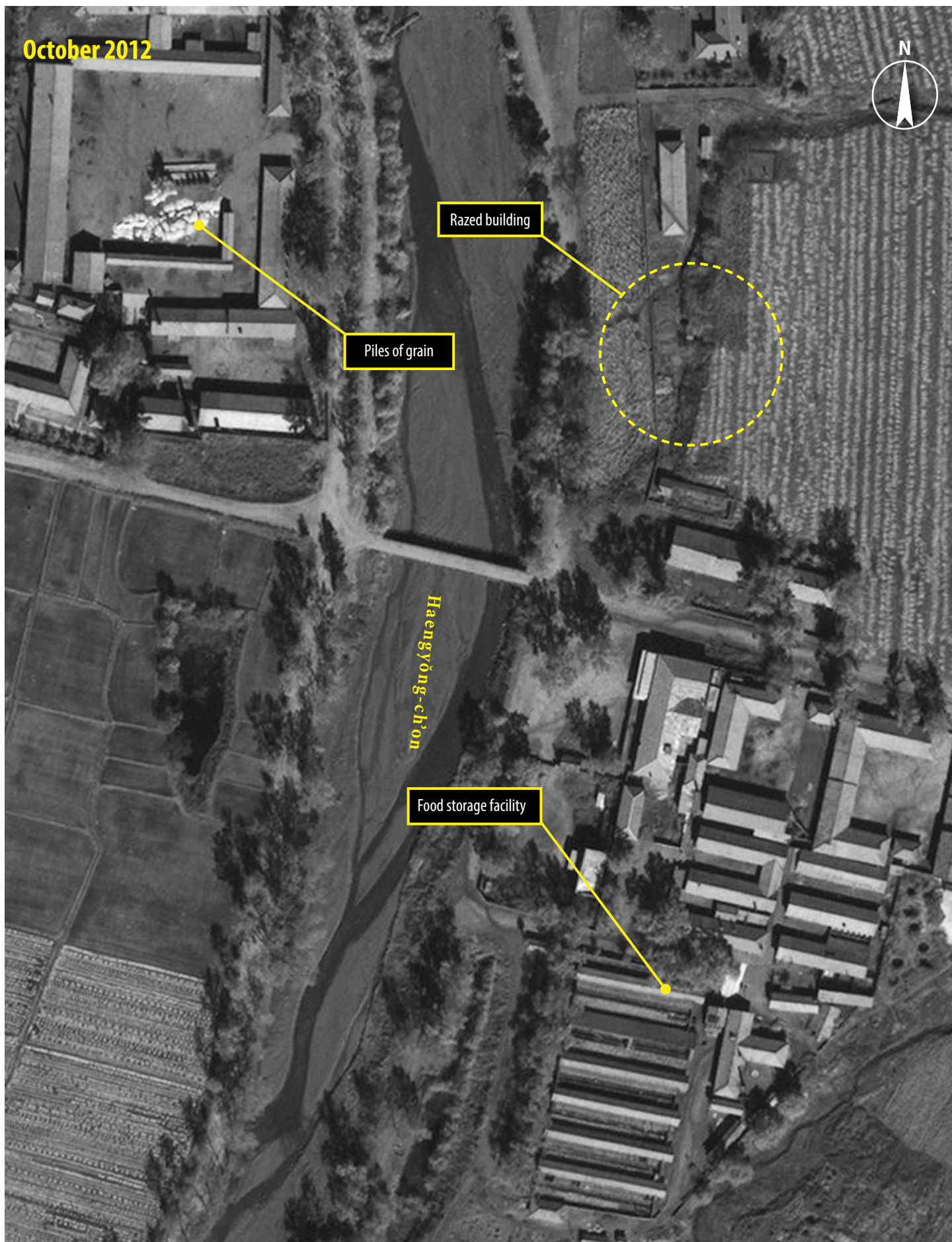
Approximately 400 meters to the east-northeast of the headquarters building is the camp's reported transportation depot (e.g., motor pool). There are no vehicles visible in the courtyard, however, some might be stored in the sheds around the central yard. The stains within the yard are typical of transportation facilities. Piles of grain are noted in the yard of the transportation depot in 2012, which is consistent with the harvesting activities seen in the surrounding fields. A smaller yard 120 meters to the north has vehicles and equipment present. A reported food storage facility is 300 meters to the southeast on the opposite bank of the Haengyŏng-ch'ŏn. This remains unchanged across all three images and appears to be in normal operating condition. Approximately 100 meters to the north of this a small building has been razed from 2011 to 2012.



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, November 5, 2010, Camp 22, North Korea



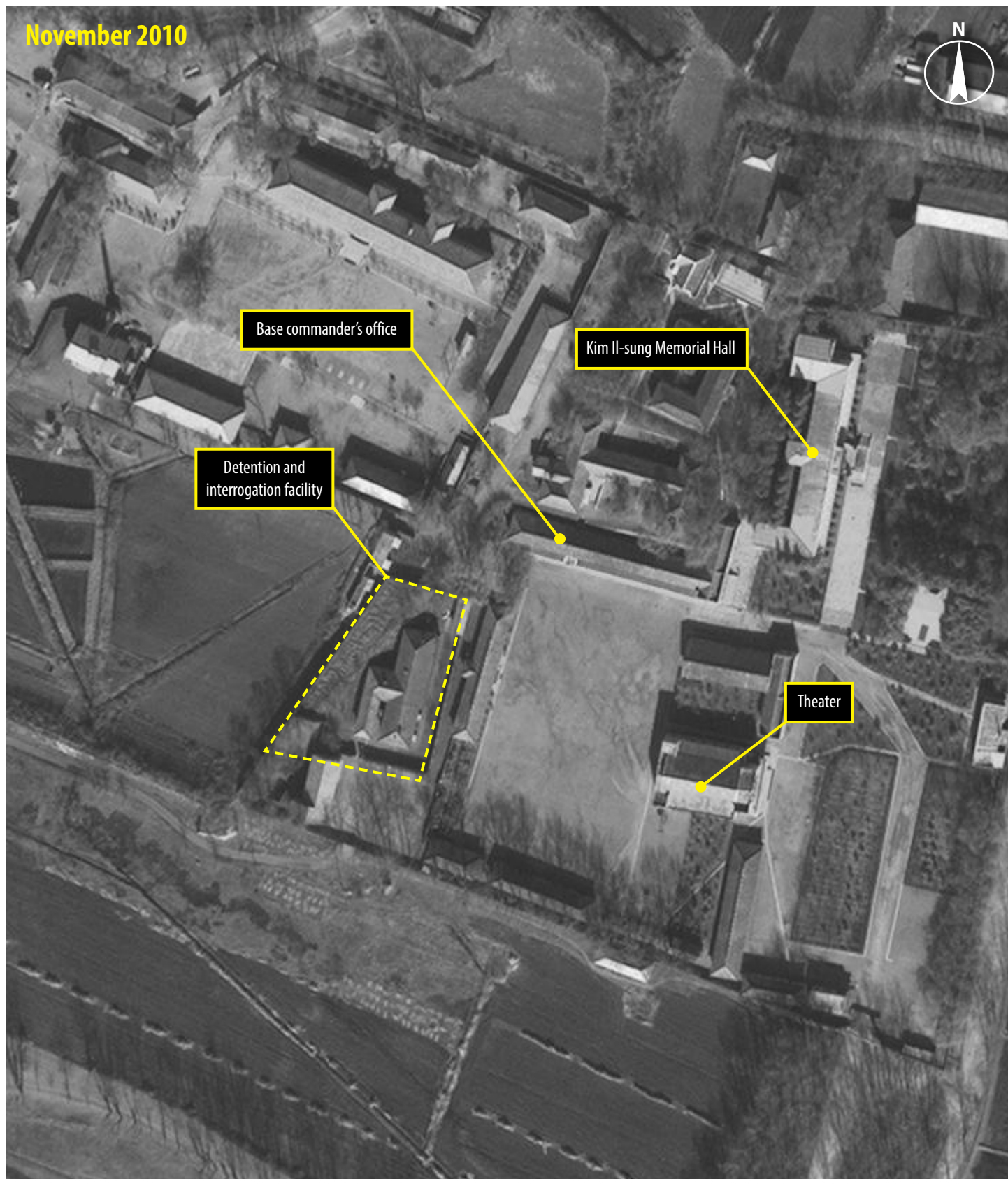
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, October 11, 2012, Camp 22, North Korea

D. Camp headquarters

The reported main headquarters area (e.g., base commander's office, administration offices, armory, theater, etc.) has remained generally unchanged from 2010 to 2012. Likewise, the Kim Il-sung Memorial Hall and surrounding offices on the north side of the headquarters' main square remain unchanged. In 2012, there is a vehicle, probably a small truck, parked in front of the building on the west side of the square. The notable exception to this appearance of normalcy is a 37-meter-long building to the west side of the headquarters square, identified by defectors as used for prisoner detention and interrogation, that has been razed during 2011 to 2012.



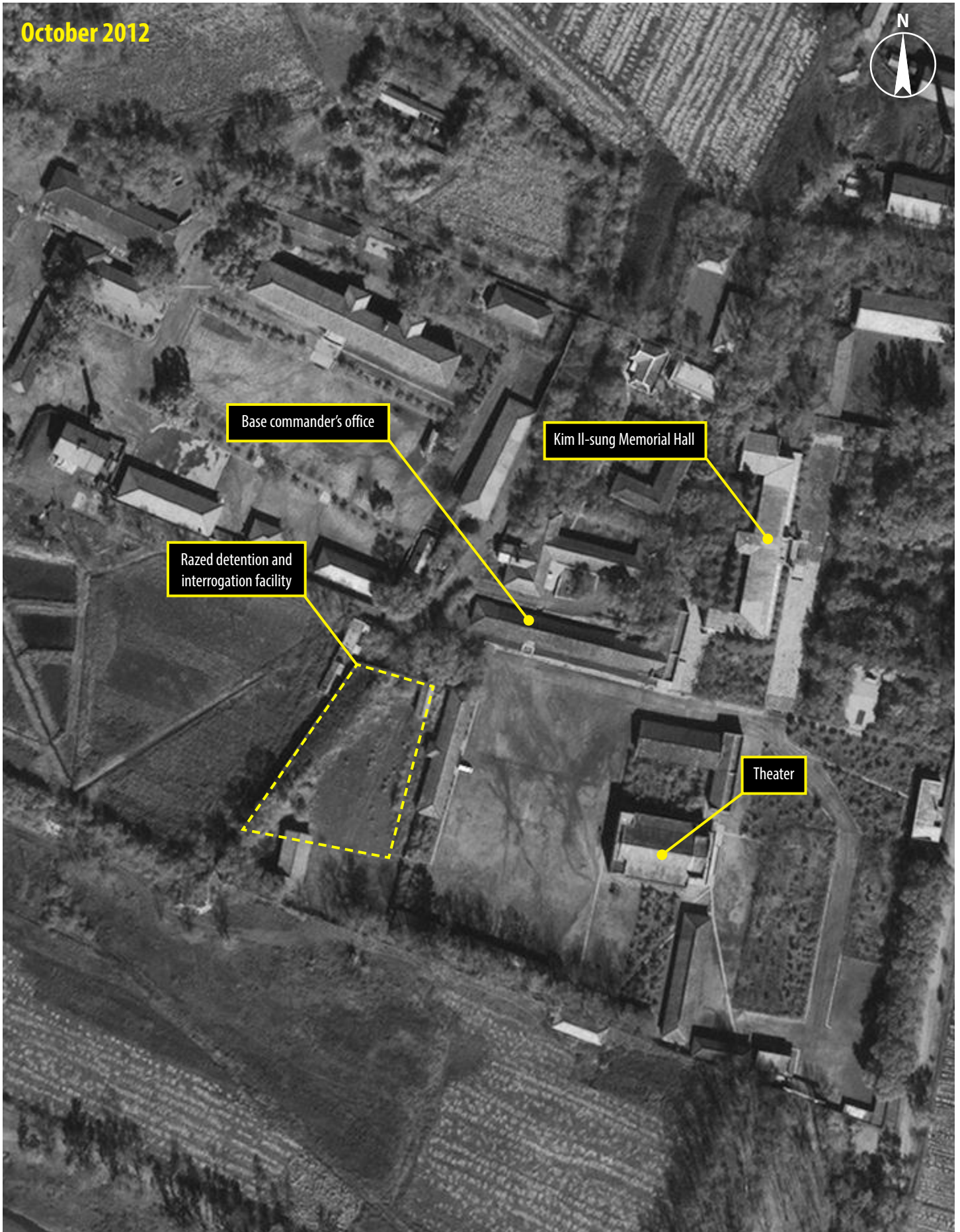
DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, November 5, 2010, Camp 22, North Korea

May 2011



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea

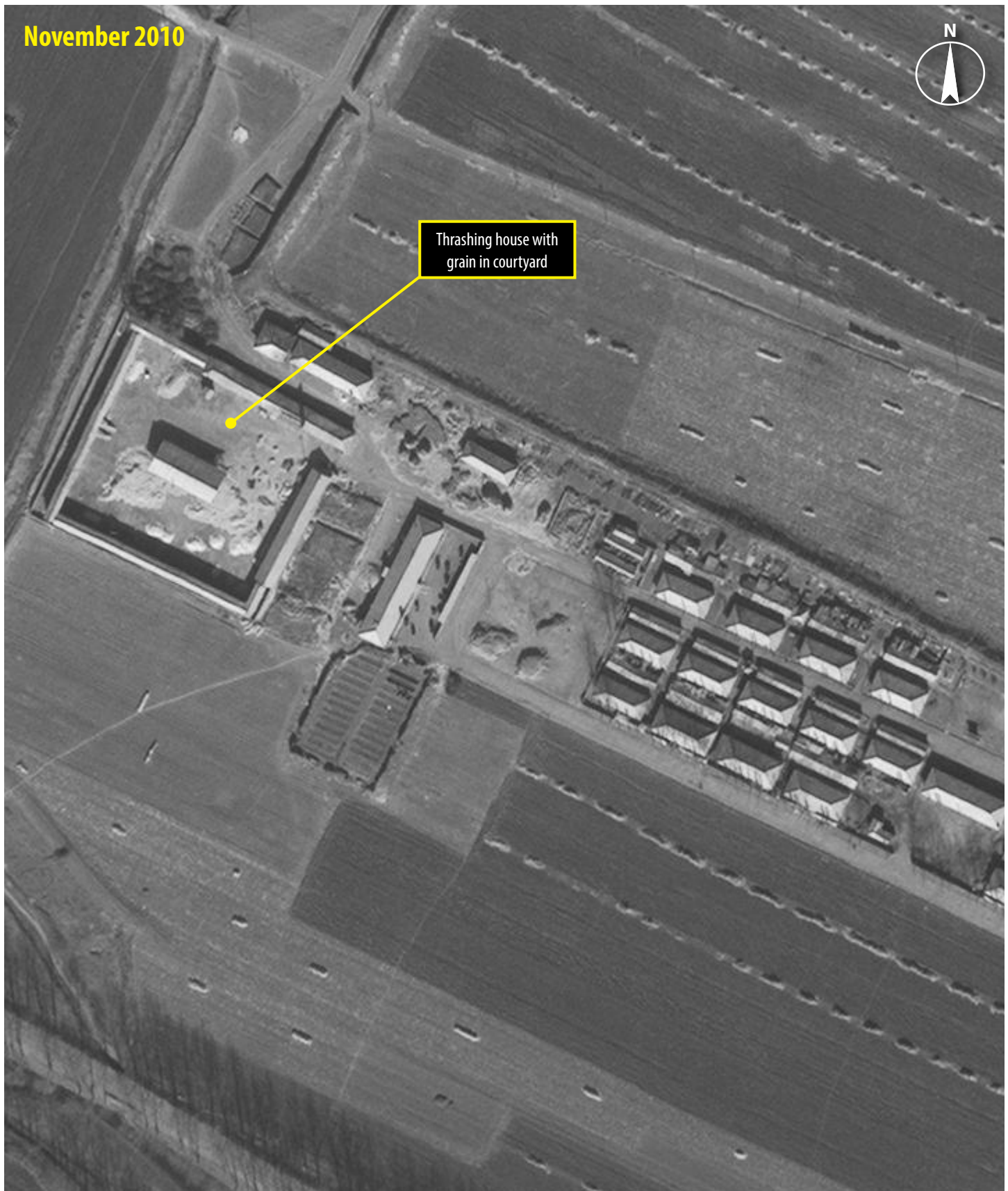
October 2012



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, October 11, 2012, Camp 22, North Korea

E. West thrashing house

In the 2012 image, harvesting is well underway in the fields surrounding the thrashing building on the west side of Haengyong-ni. Some of the fields have been harvested and others are in various stages of harvesting. Several piles of grain are visible within the main yard of the reported thrashing house, which is consistent with the ongoing harvesting activities. A perimeter fence was added to one small building 75 meters east of the thrashing house from 2011 to 2012.



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, November 5, 2010, Camp 22, North Korea



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea

October 2012



Thrashing house with
grain in courtyard

Building with new fence

DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, October 11, 2012, Camp 22, North Korea

Chungbong-dong, Overview

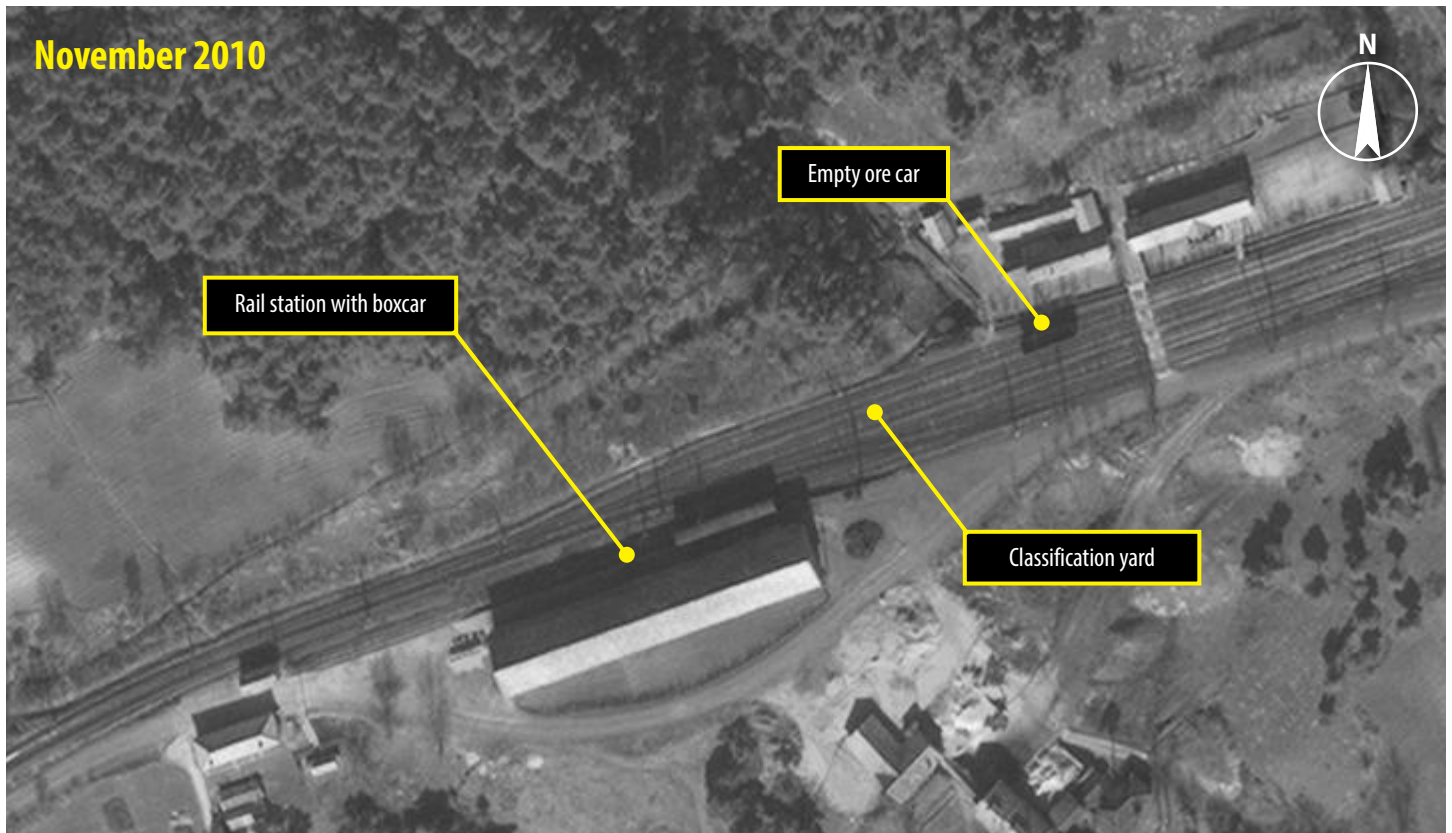


- A. Rail station and classification yard
- B. Upper coal mine
- C. Coal loading facility
- D. Lumber yard
- E. Lower coal mine

DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea

A. Rail station and classification yard

The Chungbong-dong rail station and classification yard, with four tracks, appear intact and in normal operating condition. Imagery from the past three years shows that the rail station and rail yard usually contain a small number of general freight boxcars and ore hoppers (i.e., coal cars) at various levels of loading.



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, November 5, 2010, Camp 22, North Korea



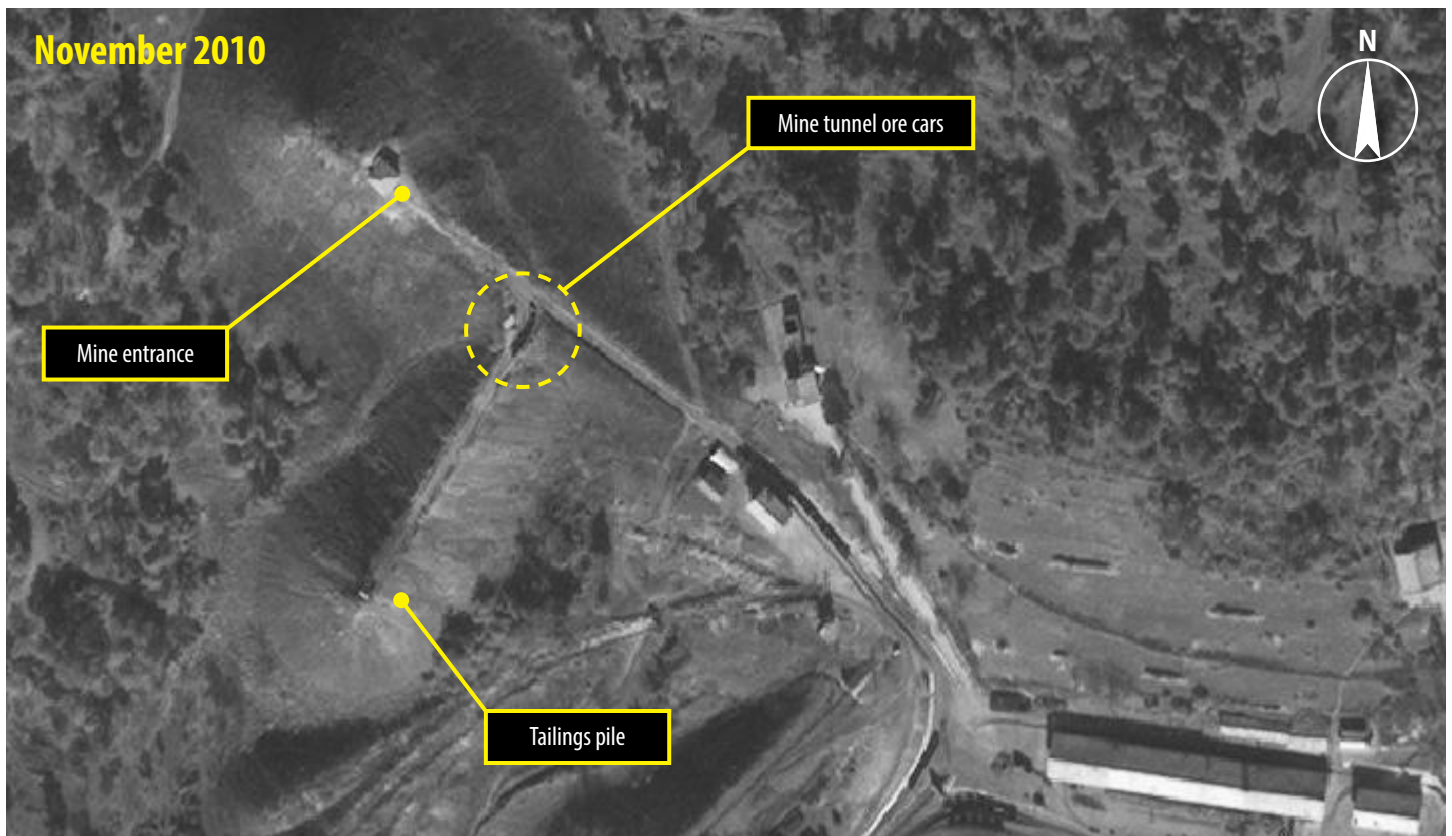
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, October 11, 2012, Camp 22, North Korea

B. Upper coal mine

A coal mine entrance is located 500 meters northeast of the Chungbong-dong rail station. No significant changes are noted in the size or level of activity at this coal mine from 2010 to 2012. The 2012 image shows a small group of five mine tunnel ore cars visible on the tailings rail spur 45 meters south of the mine entrance.



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, November 5, 2010, Camp 22, North Korea



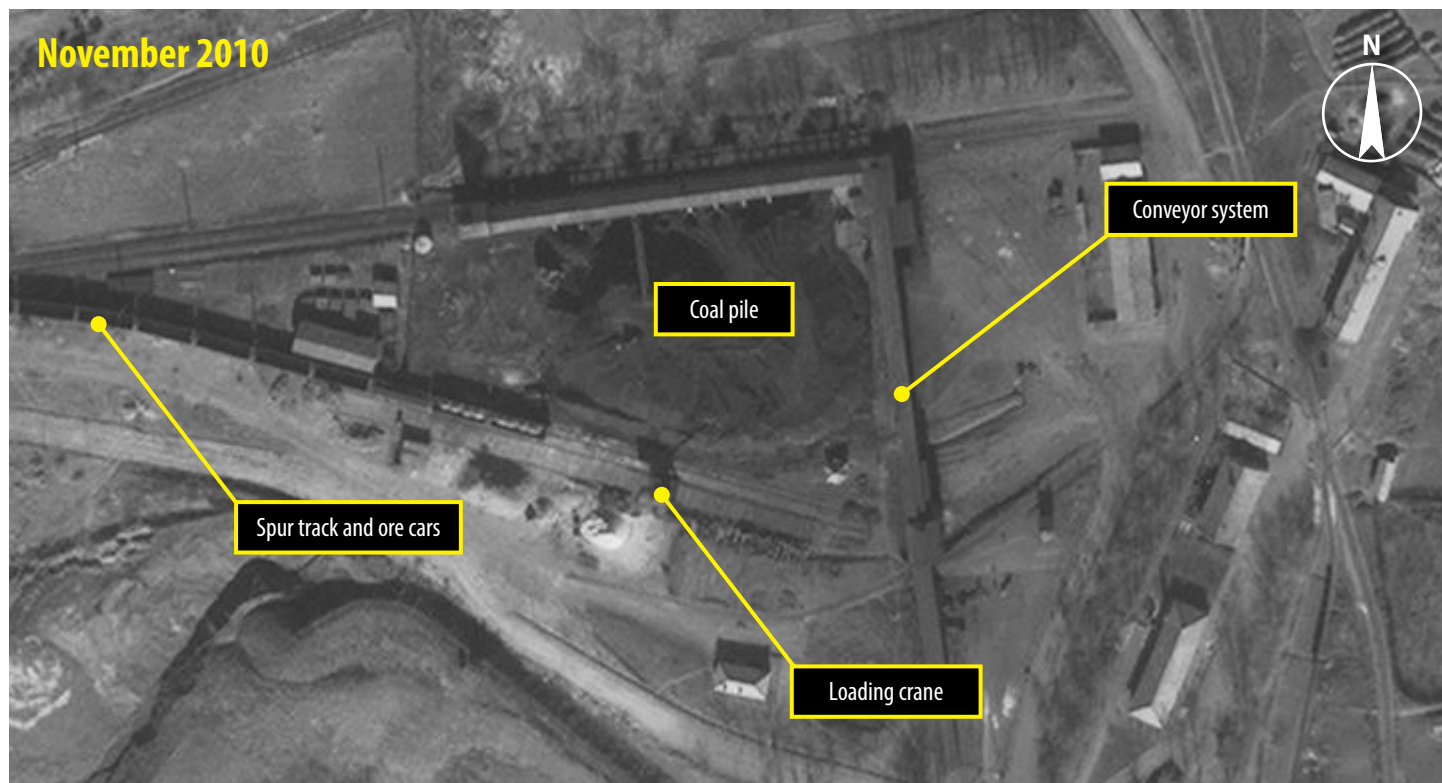
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea



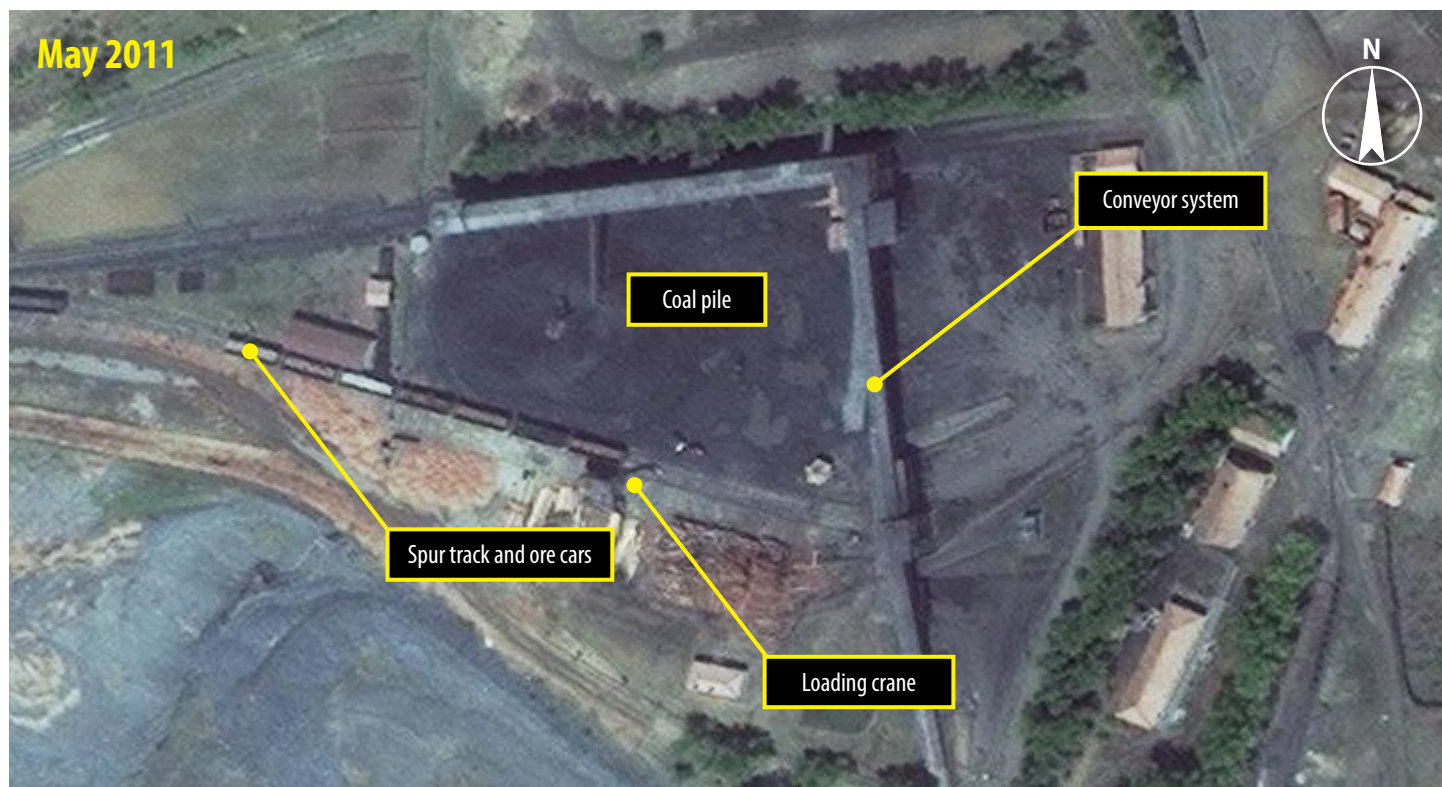
DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, October 11, 2012, Camp 22, North Korea

C. Coal loading facility

The coal loading facility at Chungbong-dong is located approximately 400 meters east of the rail station and consists of two rail spurs, a coal conveyor system and a coal pile. Imagery acquired from 2010 to 2012 shows that there are usually six to 10 ore hoppers (i.e., coal cars) at various levels of loading on the rail spur and in the classification yard. Four coal hoppers, a bulldozer and other equipment are present in the 2012 image compared to eight hoppers in 2011 and 10 hoppers in 2010. Two hoppers are full and the bulldozer is at work in the 2012 image, which is consistent with coal loading activity at this facility. The quantity of coal waiting to be loaded is significantly greater in the 2012 image than in previous years.

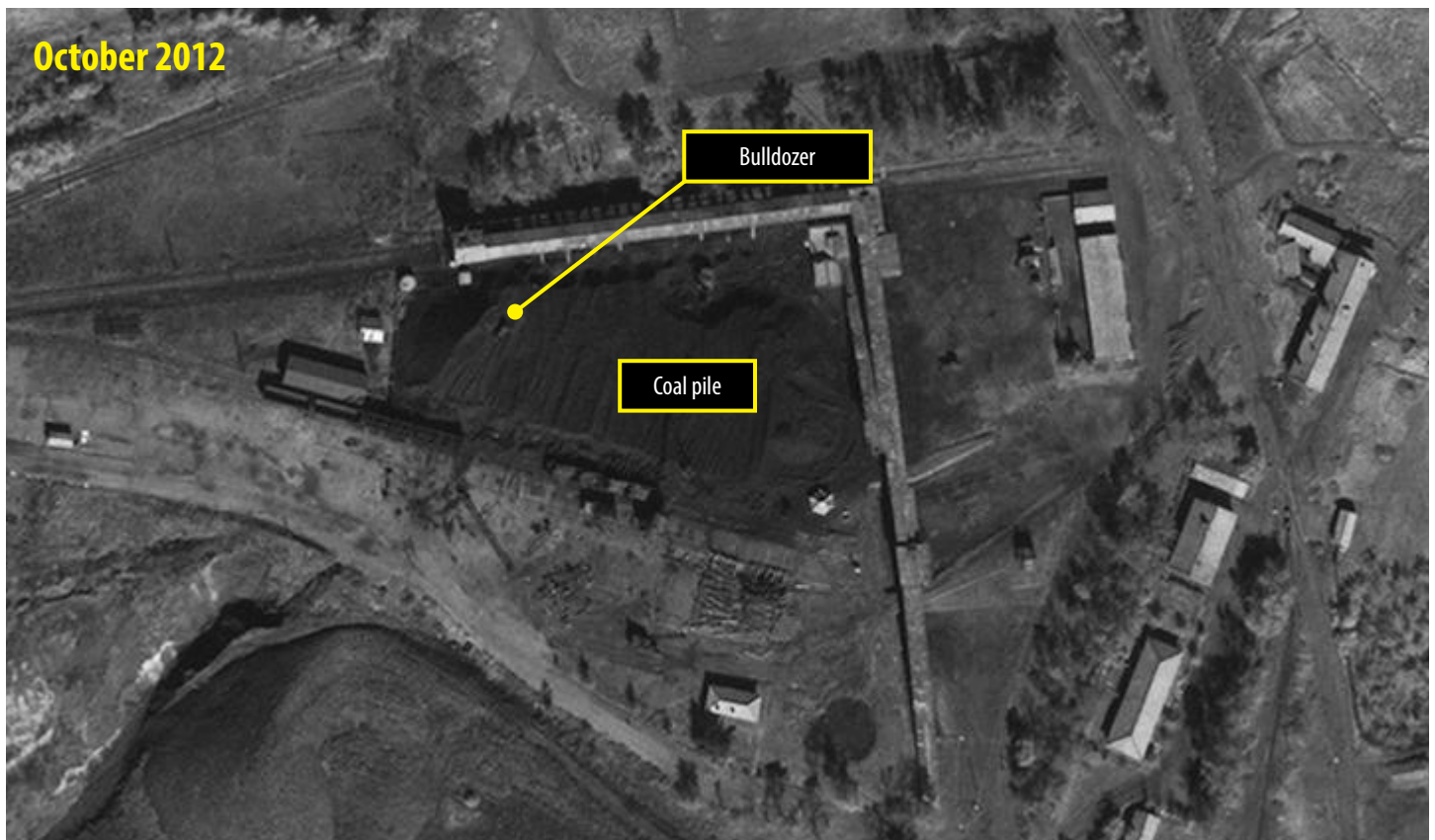


DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, November 5, 2010, Camp 22, North Korea



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea

October 2012

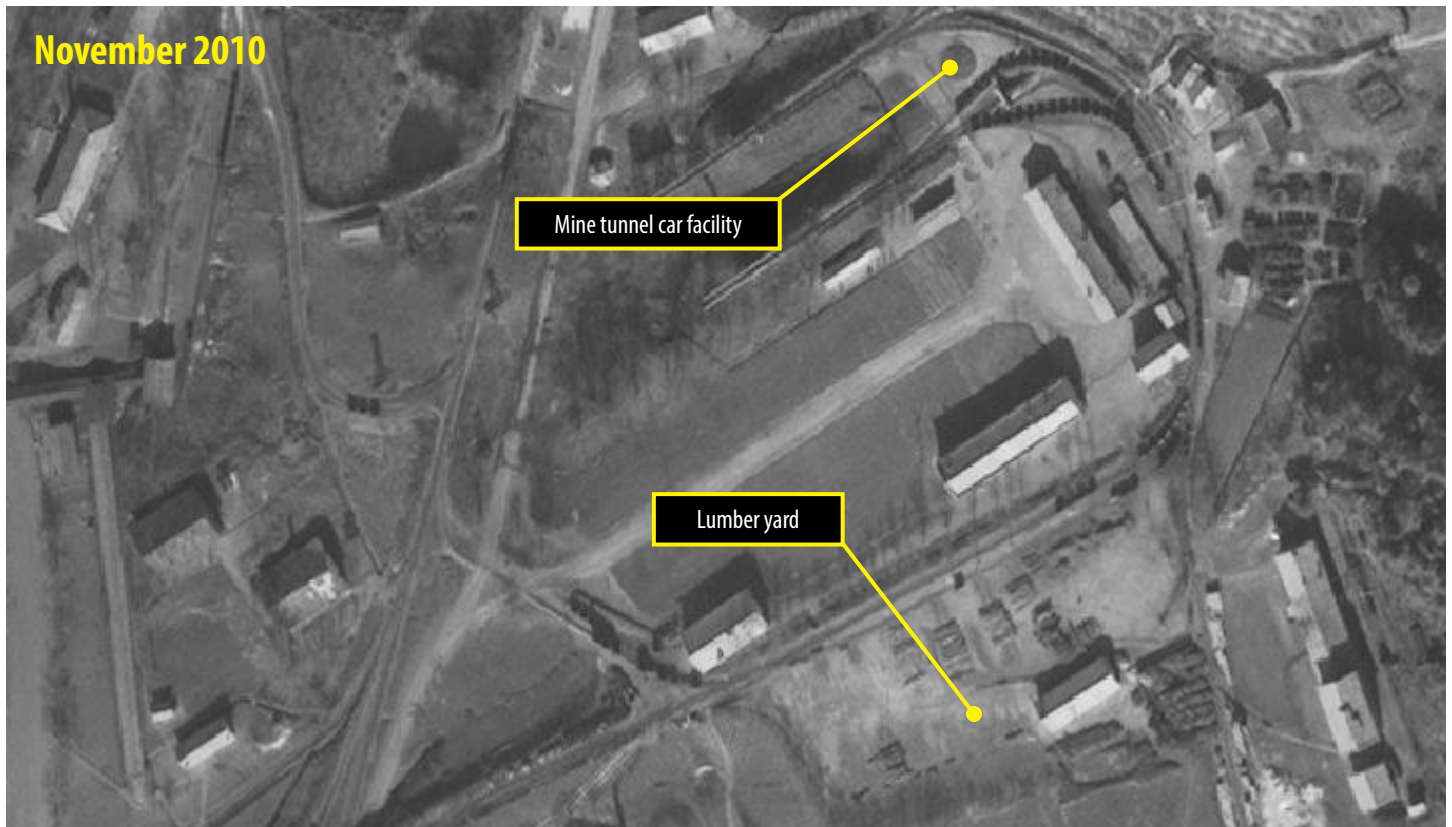


DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, October 11, 2012, Camp 22, North Korea

D. Lumber yard

The lumber yard, consisting of a single shed-type building and large yard, is intact and appears to be in normal condition with the stocks of raw lumber increasing across all three images. Activity at the mine tunnel car facility, 130 meters to the north, appears normal, and there are approximately 35 coal mine tunnel ore cars visible.

November 2010



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, November 5, 2010, Camp 22, North Korea



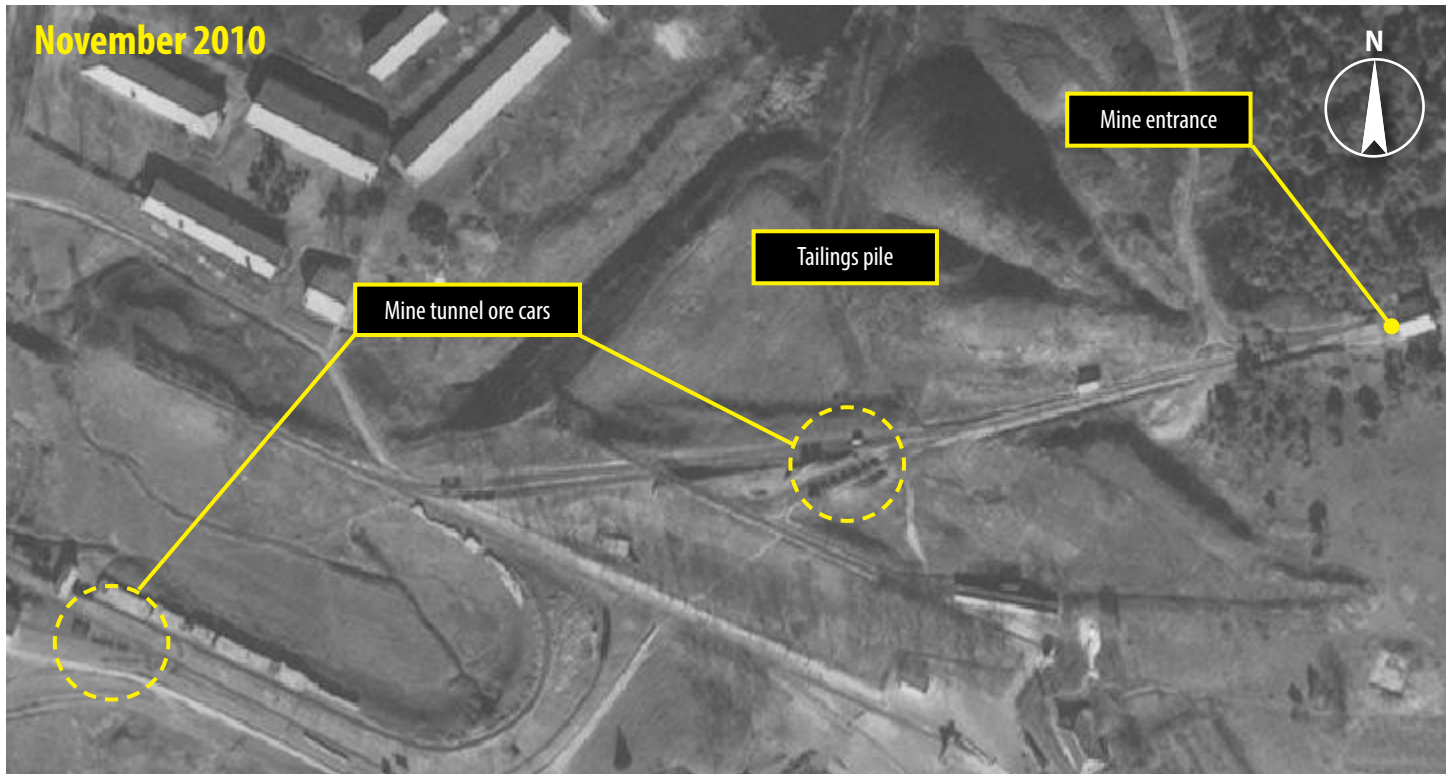
DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, October 11, 2012, Camp 22, North Korea

E. Lower coal mine

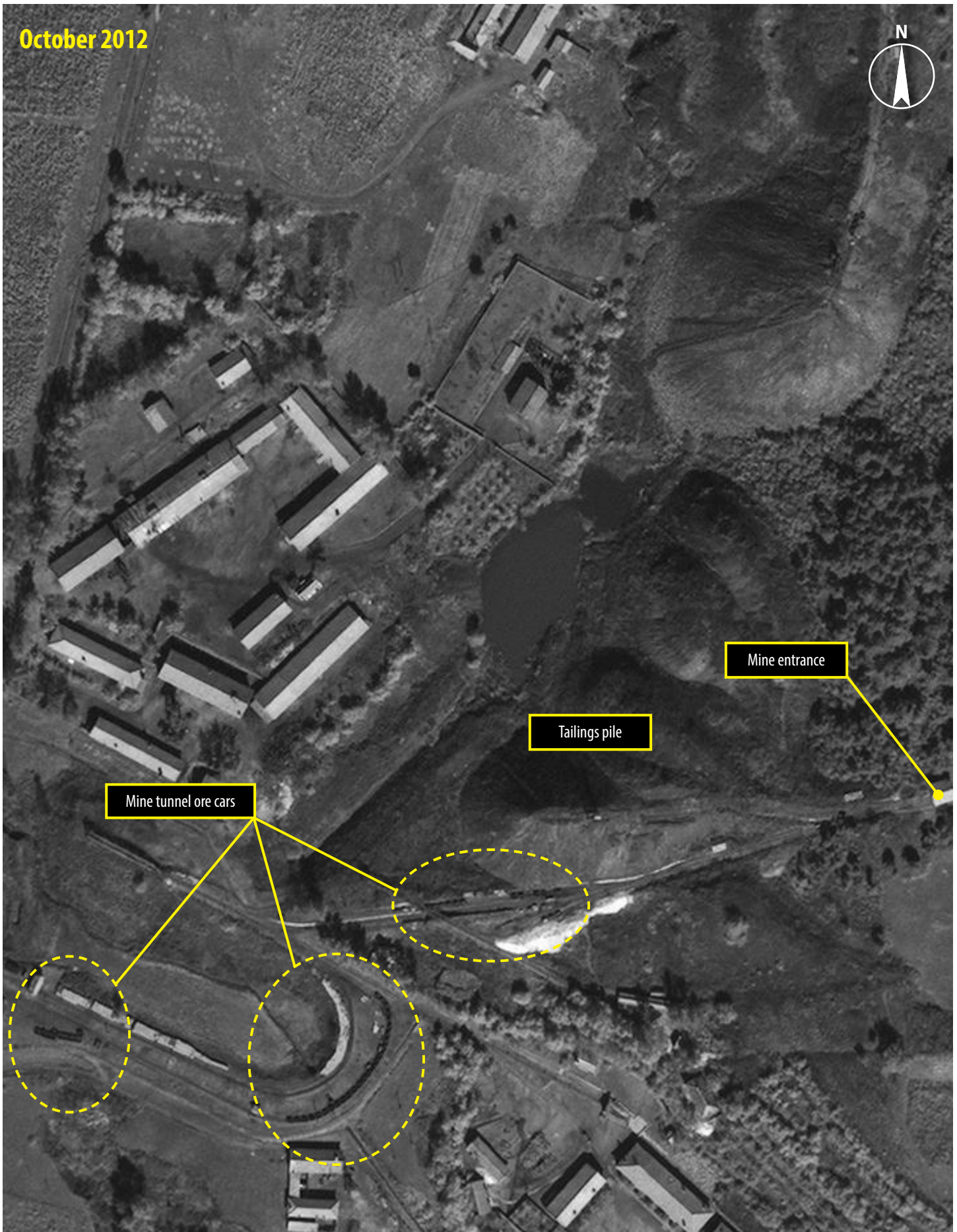
A second coal mine entrance, located 950 meters southeast of the Chungbong-dong rail station, has a tailings pile immediately outside the entrance. The size of the pile has increased by approximately 50 percent during 2011 to 2012. There are approximately 12 mine tunnel ore cars present on the light rail spur serving the tunnel, as well as approximately 30 within the associated ore car servicing facility to the southwest.



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, November 5, 2010, Camp 22, North Korea



DigitalGlobe Natural Color Image, May 21, 2011, Camp 22, North Korea



DigitalGlobe Panchromatic Image, October 11, 2012, Camp 22, North Korea

Gazetteer

Chungbong-dong	42° 34' 36" N	129° 53' 05" E
Chungbong-ni	42° 33' 57" N	129° 53' 39" E
Chungch'u-dong	42° 32' 54" N	129° 52' 24" E
Haengyŏng-ni	42° 32' 14" N	129° 56' 10" E
Hoeryŏng	42° 26' 43" N	129° 44' 32" E
I-dong	42° 34' 02" N	129° 52' 30" E
Kobongch'on	42° 33' 19" N	129° 57' 03" E
Kŏlsup'o	42° 34' 58" N	129° 55' 14" E
Kulsal-li	42° 33' 55" N	129° 56' 52" E
Naksaeng-ni	42° 31' 15" N	129° 55' 01" E
Nogan-dong	42° 33' 10" N	129° 53' 32" E
P'idŏk	42° 34' 07" N	129° 57' 16" E
Sech'ŏn	42° 34' 51" N	129° 49' 27" E
Sŏwŏnp'o	42° 34' 25" N	129° 53' 36" E
Waha	42° 34' 50" N	129° 56' 08" E

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