

Mine closing viewed as 'rallying point'

By PEARL PORATH
Special to the Tribune

5 1983

LA CROSSE TRIB

BLACK RIVER FALLS, Wis. — The permanent closing of the Jackson County Iron Co. should become the starting point for rebuilding the county's economy, a Green Bay consultant said Friday.

James M. Murray, of Murray & Associates, told members of the county's Industrial Development Commission that the decision last Saturday by Inland Steel Co. to close the mine — shut down since April 1982 — "creates a rallying point" that should be exploited.

"In all of this, there is a need to maintain a sense of urgency and cooperation with the larger community of Jackson County," Murray said. "It is much easier to catch an economy before it slips than to pick it up after it falls."

Murray made his comments while delivering a report requested by the commission several months ago: "The Economy of Jackson County: The Impact of Mining and Development Alternatives."

In his report, Murray and his associates said:

- The city of Black River Falls would be harder hit by the closing than the entire county. About 90 percent of the 290 workers once employed at the mine live in the county, but 63 percent of those live in Black River Falls.

About 870 people will leave Black River Falls because of the permanent closing of the mine by the parent company from East Chicago, Ind.

- Hardest hit by the loss of the \$7 million yearly payroll would be grocery stores, eating and drinking establishments and other service businesses such as barber shops.

- The 50 former employees who have found jobs and

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will stay in the area will not likely earn wages equal to the \$25,000 yearly salaries earned in the mine. In addition, they are taking jobs that could have gone to other unemployed persons.

- The county should seek funding to hire a consultant to determine what can be done with the materials, buildings and site of the \$20 million, 14-year-old plant which was closed due to low demands for steel.

Suggestions included making a recreation site out of the mine, turning it into a fossil fuel power plant since it has rail service and a deep lake or developing it so an existing manufacturer can expand into it.

The county was recently awarded \$9,500 by the state's Mining Impact Board for such a feasibility study.

- The county should try to develop its other resources, such as wood and agriculture.

Suggestions included increasing the value of products before they leave the county, such as having a cheese plant to get more revenue out of dairy products, or a cranberry processing plant, to get more money out of that product.

Murray told the commission that he wanted to revise some of his conclusions now that the mine has been closed permanently.

Michael Anderson, chairman of the commission, asked members to be prepared to discuss the report at a noon meeting Friday, Nov. 18, in the Pines Supper Club. He asked especially that the group be prepared to act on the suggestion of hiring someone to coordinate efforts on the future of the mine, perhaps the Green Bay firm.

Others attending Friday's meeting included two members of the state's Mining Impact Board, Elizabeth Cole of Madison and Leland Cheneweth of Blair; State Sen. Rodney Moen, D-Whitehall; David Holcomb, Jackson County agricultural agent; Gilbert Homstad, president of Jackson County Bank; Vern Metzger, manager of the plant; and James Rowe, county development counselor.

Jackson County mine is closed

By JIM PICKETT
And TERRY BURT
Of the Tribune staff

LA CROSSE TRIB

BLACK RIVER FALLS, Wis. — The Jackson County Iron Co. mine was officially closed Saturday by its parent company, Inland Steel, ending the last thread of hope for 258 laid-off union workers.

The mine near Black River Falls was the only taconite mining operation in Wisconsin. It began shipping iron ore pellets in 1969 and had a peak employment of 290.

The \$20 million plant has been on temporary shutdown since April of 1982 due to low levels of steel demand, said a company spokesman.

When built, Inland said it expected the mine to have a life expectancy of 20 years, which would have kept it open into 1989.

The closing is part of a restructuring of Inland Steel mining, according to S.A. Reibas, vice-president of operations. Also involved in the restructuring are the Virginia, Minn., headquarters of Inland Steel Mining and the Minorcra Mine, near Virginia, according to Reibas.

Richard "Arnie" Palmer, of Hixton, president of United Steelworkers of America, Local 7613, said the company was required to meet with union leaders within 30 days to discuss whether there was any possibility of the mine resuming operations. But Palmer said, "That meeting is an exercise in futility because the iron ore industry is dead."

Palmer said he and other union members met Friday afternoon with company officials and were shown the news release announcing the plant's permanent closing.

"It was nothing we didn't expect," he

said, adding that the steel industry's problems are so mammoth that it's forced to deal "in dollars and cents, rather than in human terms."

In 90 days, Union Local 7613 will become defunct.

Vern Metzger, manager of the mine, said he would remain in Black River Falls for about a year supervising the dismantling and removal of equipment. He said there would be a few people working during the shutdown, "but at this time we don't know how many. It still is in the planning process."

In an interview last month, Metzger said 24 salaried employees were still at the mine, which is located about four miles southeast of Black River Falls.

Black River Falls Mayor Louis Perry said Saturday he "got half sick" when he heard of Inland's decision to permanently close the mine. "It's going to hurt until we can get something else rolling around here," said Perry, who, until his retirement in September 1982, was general pit foreman at the mine.

Perry said city officials hope other industries will locate in the area now occupied by the mine. Or, he said, "it could be a pretty good recreation area."

Of the dashed hopes of the laid-off miners, Perry said, "It was the consensus that it wouldn't open, but he had hopes it would." He went on to say that while there is some local work available "they won't get the wages they got out at the mine."

Jerry Bares, a Jackson County Board supervisor, agreed with Perry that the permanent closing will be a financial blow to the area. "I want to be optimistic," he said,

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OVER

"but it's going to take a lot of work from all of us."

Bares, a member of the board's Industrial Development Committee, said he believes there is enough community spirit to overcome the closing. "I believe we have it," he said. "I think we can do it."

Reibas said the restructuring was designed to make Inland's iron ore mining operation more cost-effective. He said the Jackson County mine was Inland's smallest mining operation with 8,500 tons of annual pellet capacity. That represented 10 percent of Inland's pellet capacity.

Metzger and Reibas said the company would be working with the Wisconsin departments of development and natural resources in an effort to find alternate uses for the site.

"We very much regret the necessity of this decision because the mine's workforce has been productive and loyal," said Reibas. "We are providing assistance to help find jobs for as many of the displaced

workers as possible and are offering an enhanced early retirement provision for those who qualify."

Reibas said the Department of Natural Resources was helpful in efforts to maintain the operation, but that support wasn't enough to make the facility competitive in the face of a worldwide iron ore surplus.

Perry said widespread use of foreign steel has crippled the domestic steel industry. "If we don't stop that," he said, "we'll all be in bad shape."

Inland Steel Co. has suffered financial losses since the fourth quarter of 1981. On Oct. 20, the company reported a loss of \$21,247,000 for the third quarter and a nine-month loss of \$70,971,000 for 1983.

The company said there still was a high demand for sheet metal products, but a continued low demand for bar, structural and plate products and the accompanying price weakness for all products contributed to the losses.

Forest County mine seen as asset for the entire state

By BONNIE SCOTT
Capital Times Correspondent

RHINELANDER — The development of a proposed Forest County copper zinc mine would boost the economy in northern Wisconsin and the state, according to a report released by Exxon Minerals company Monday.

The 400-page report, entitled "Forecast of Future Conditions," was prepared for Exxon by Research Planning Consultants of Austin, Texas, and contains Socio-Economic projections based on the firm's studies in northern Wisconsin.

Exxon officials said in an accompanying statement that the report "will aid local jurisdictions in planning so that they can obtain the maximum benefits from the Crandon mine and minimize any adverse effect."

Key predictions include:

- About 1,000 construction workers will be needed "at the peak of mine building activities", with 700 workers to be added during the mine's operating phase;
- More than \$400 million may be spent by Exxon Minerals on the purchase of Wisconsin goods and services while the mine is being built, with an average of \$57 million expected to be spent every year the mine is operating;
- Increased mine-related business activity will create more than 2,700 additional jobs within Wisconsin, including about 400 non-mining jobs in northern Wisconsin.

A summary of the report, also released by Exxon Monday, shows that significant population growth will probably occur in the Forest County towns of Lincoln and Nash-

ville, where the proposed mine will be located, the nearby city of Crandon and five Oneida County towns.

The city of Antigo in Langlade County "is projected to receive nearly 900 new residents . . . at the peak of construction," the summary states.

According to the report, population growth and accompanying increases in demand for services will be readily absorbed because "adequate infrastructures — roads, service centers and schools" already exist in the area surrounding the proposed mine.

Demands that are not easily absorbed will be offset by projected economic gains, the report states.

The report's release comes on the eve of a State Department of Natural Resources briefing on mine impacts set for today in Nashville.

The report released by Exxon will be available to the public at libraries throughout the state.

DNR studying Exxon data in mining project

MIL SEN

NOV 9 1983
By Bonnie Stowers
Special to The Sentinel

Crandon — Many questions remain about possible negative effects from a proposed Exxon copper-zinc mine, State Department of Natural Resources officials said at briefings in the Forest County Town of Nashville Tuesday.

The DNR has retained consultants to help the agency evaluate socioeconomic and water-quality data submitted by Exxon, according to Ken Wade, a DNR ground-water specialist, and Betsy David, a DNR economist.

David said the DNR believed "there will be important impacts" if Exxon proceeds with the mine development because of the rural nature of the surrounding area and "the cyclical nature of mining."

Unlike a metropolitan area, northern Wisconsin may have trouble absorbing additional population, David said.

An Exxon report released Monday predicted significant population increases in Forest County, five Oneida County towns and the City of Antigo in Langlade County.

Layoffs, production cutbacks and temporary mine closures because of changes in company plans or metal market fluctuations may cause problems for mine employes and their families "as they have elsewhere in similar circumstances," David said.

Ground-water problems and concern about the possibility that lake levels may be "drained down" or lowered were cited by Wade.

"I don't believe Exxon has determined where the ground water is going to flow. We are not that comfortable with their data," Wade said.

Mary Anderson, a University of Wisconsin — Madison computer expert, has been retained "to see if the hydrological information submitted by Exxon is correct."

Robert Ramharter, the DNR's Exxon project coordinator, said the department had been under "no pressure" from Gov. Earl's office "to hurry studies along, cut corners or do a half-way job."

Earl said Sept. 15 that he hoped state agencies would swiftly process non-controversial permits necessary as a "ministerial function" during the next few years, even though major policy permits on Exxon's mining project would take time.

He pointed out that the DNR must process the major policy permits but a number of other agencies must issue dozens of relatively minor permits.

Some state environmentalists were angered by his remarks.

Ramharter said he believed Earl was only referring to paper work that could be completed more quickly."

DNR-Exxon Begin To Spar

APR 13 1984

MADISON (AP) — The Department of Natural Resources told Exxon Minerals Co. Thursday to improve plans for waste disposal at its proposed Crandon zinc and copper mine.

An Exxon spokesman responded that the firm has already designed a system good for hundreds of years at preventing potentially damaging acidic runoff from the huge piles of finely ground rock particles left over after ore is milled.

In a letter to Barry J. Hansen, permitting manager for Exxon, the DNR raised questions about the company's proposal to make sure those millions of tons of wastes, or tailings, do not pollute ground water supplies.

It was the first salvo in what could be a protracted dispute over

the adequacy of Exxon's plans to protect the environment from adverse effects of its proposed \$1 billion mine.

"Department staff not only have reservations about detailed design of segments of the MWDF (mine waste disposal facility), but have a differing opinion from Exxon's designers as to the fundamental conceptual design of the disposal system as a whole," Richard G. Schuff of the DNR's solid waste section wrote in the 12-page letter.

He said the DNR "strongly suggests that it would be in Exxon's best interests to redesign the site."

Many of the DNR's concerns focus on a six-inch layer of bentonite clay that Exxon wants to carefully lay down between thicker layers of soil and gravel at the bottom of a 500-acre tailings pond that will

A plastic liner such as the DNR suggested would only be good for 30 or 40 years, he said.

Exxon officials have repeatedly emphasized that the six-inch layer of bentonite — which was chosen because it expands dramatically when wet, plugging potential leaks — is just one aspect of an environmental protection system.

receive the ground mill waste in a watery slurry.

Schuff questioned the feasibility of building a uniform six-inch liner 500 acres in area, and whether it would protect the environment as well as the compacted clay liners required at conventional landfills.

He suggested several alternatives to the clay liner proposed by Exxon.

The DNR also questioned Exxon's plan to cover the tailings pond when it is filled with layers of bentonite, rocks, gravel and top soil to ensure that water runs off rather than through the tailings.

"We feel the proposal is viable," Exxon spokesman Blaine Townsend said in Rhineland. "It is designed to remain viable for hundreds of years."

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DNR tells Exxon to prepare new plan for mine tailings

By Neil H. Shively
Sentinel Madison Bureau

Madison — An Exxon Minerals Co. plan for disposing of mine tailings at its prospective operations near Crandon is not good enough, the State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) said Thursday.

APR 13 1984
The DNR, in essence, rejected the Exxon plan and called for "alternative designs which would ensure environmentally sound mining tailings disposal."

Exxon said it was "surprised and disappointed" by the DNR's position. Blaine Townsend, of Exxon's Rhinelander office, said the letter rejecting the tailings disposal plan was the first communication with the DNR on this aspect of the permit process, which began in 1982.

The DNR said Exxon could make a better plan for disposing of tailings.

"With adequate engineering, design and construction, it is technically possible to build a tailings disposal site which would protect the environment," said Richard Schuff, chief

of DNR's residuals management and land disposal section. **MIL SEN**

Exxon plans to mine zinc, copper and lead at a site near Crandon, starting about 1990. If it does, the DNR said, 31 million cubic yards of finely ground rock residue (tailings) will be disposed of in impoundments.

Townsend said the firm had qualified experts approve the plan.

"We are convinced that it will provide ample protection of Forest County groundwater," Townsend said. "A lot of conclusions are based

on data that have been before DNR staff at least two years.

"Our proposal for disposal facility was based on judgments of a group of highly qualified consultants."

Schuff questioned the feasibility of constructing uniform 6-inch liners on four tailings disposal sites over 500 acres.

To isolate the tailings, he explained, Exxon proposed building impoundments consisting of four W-shaped pits. Each pit would be lined with a mixture of soil and bentonite clay.

Exxon said the design would compact the mixture of soil and clay into a uniform 6-inch-thick, water-resistant barrier.

Schuff said it would be "extremely difficult to guarantee a consistent soil-bentonite mixture."

"The DNR is not convinced the proposed design would protect the environment as well as compacted clay liners required at conventional landfills," it said.

Townsend, communications officer for Exxon Minerals, said he hoped

the delay in approving the tailings disposal plan would not impede Exxon's planning for the mine operations.

"We're still planning on the master permit in 1986," he said. With four years needed to construct the mine, start-up could occur about 1990, he added.

The Crandon mineral find contains about 5% zinc, about 1% copper and 0.5% copper, with traces of silver and gold, Townsend said

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Protest: Exxon mining favored, says resident

By Larry Van Goethem
Special to the Press-Gazette

CRANDON — Are some Wisconsin politicians and officials working to remove obstacles to approval of Exxon USA's mining of the Forest County zinc-copper ore deposit?

At least one resident of the town of Lincoln, where most of Exxon's deposit is located, thinks so.

Peter Davison recently resigned in protest at the removal of two members of Lincoln's Mining Impact Committee.

Davison sent a letter to Gov.

Anthony Earl protesting shelving of a planned newsletter on mining issues by the University of Wisconsin-Extension intended for members of local mining impact committees.

Davison is a member of the Wisconsin Mining Impact and Investment Board that oversees distribution and spending of mine impact funds by local government in areas affected by mining exploration and site development.

So far, the only site development under way in the north woods is Exxon's proposal to mine its huge deposit in Lincoln and the

adjoining town of Nashville.

Davison said "intense political pressure" is being exerted in some cases.

Davison was angered when Lincoln's town board failed to appoint Ronald Krueger and Robert Stillings.

"I resigned (then) in protest and frustration because the town chairman (Michael Hobbs) arbitrarily reorganized the committee and in doing so he did not reappoint two of its most experienced, dedicated members," Davison said.

Stillings is a retired chemist

and engineering executive of Kimberly Clark Corp. who lives in Appleton and has a home on Ground Hemlock Lake. Krueger is an aquatic biologist who runs Northern Lake Service, a consulting firm.

"I think the push is on and there seems to be a movement to limit any questioning or challenging of Exxon's environmental impact plan," Davison said.

In a related action, Krueger resigned from the town zoning committee to protest, his being dropped from the Mine Impact Committee. Krueger said Lincoln

enacted a zoning ordinance but the town board is setting itself up as a board of adjustment rather than appointing a separate board.

"Everything seems so anti-zoning," Krueger said. "The present board was elected on an anti-zoning position. I guess nobody likes the restrictions."

The extension newsletter was to have been a summary of local concerns and activities expressed by mine impact committee members

and assembled by UW writers. It was held up in Madison after high-level contacts with university officials by Sen. Lloyd C. Kincaid, D-Crandon, who complained that the letter would duplicate work.

Kincaid also complained the letter would have represented extreme views of some people and would have been "propaganda." He said he protested after several members of mine impact committees told him the letter was unnecessary.

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Legislator's pressure on newsletter investigated

MAY 10 1984 WIS ST JR

CRANDON (AP) — Gov. Anthony Earl's office is investigating whether a legislator placed unwarranted pressure on the University of Wisconsin Extension to cancel a newsletter on northwoods mining issues, an aide to Earl said Wednesday.

Sen. Lloyd C. Kincaid, D-Crandon, said he had authority as chairman of the Legislative Council Committee on Mining to advise the UW Extension that its planned newsletter "was an unwise and foolish way to spend money."

"Right now we have a host of government agencies reviewing all various aspects of mining," Kincaid said. "They're doing a commendable job."

He also suggested that the newsletter could have been slanted and used to propagandize.

Ayse Somersan, an Extension program leader, confirmed that research work and writing of the newsletter was canceled after Kincaid raised his objections.

He said the newsletter would have been issued in about six weeks and sent to members of local mining-impact committees, as a joint effort of resource agents and Forest, Langlade, Oneida and Vilas counties to outline and clarify key issues.

Peter Davison, a member of the Wisconsin Mining Impact and Investment Board, complained about Kincaid's action in a letter to Governor Earl last week.



Sen. Lloyd Kincaid

Davison, a resident of the Town of Lincoln, said political pressure threatened to undercut the process of reviewing the plans of Exxon USA for a major copper and zinc mine in the Crandon area.

The UW Extension's educational role includes providing public services to residents throughout the state. Davison told Earl it has been an excellent source of information about mining.

"Perhaps the most serious repercussions of this assault on the information-sharing newsletter is the appearance of limiting the available resources of the community regarding potential mining," he wrote.

Robert Bartlett, Senate liaison for Earl, said he was looking into the situation to determine whether there

might have been unwarranted pressure on the UW Extension.

Bartlett said he considered it inappropriate to interfere with the Extension's educational processes.

Davison said the cancellation looked like part of an effort by state officials to remove obstacles to Exxon's mine project.

Kincaid said he raised the issue with UW President Robert O'Neil, who reportedly passed the word to Extension Chancellor Patrick Boyle.

Harvey Breuscher, UW System communications director, said he received a telephone call from James Klausner, a Madison attorney and lobbyist for Exxon, telling of Kincaid's objections.

Kincaid claimed that the request for the newsletter came from a small group of county-level officials described by him as being "unwilling to follow mining policy." He did not identify them.

He claimed that Elizabeth Cole, executive secretary of the state Mining Impact Board, exceeded her authority by promoting the newsletter.

"To me, it's irresponsible to start out, a year before mining permits are issued, to rehash the issues," Kincaid complained. "No good would be served by it."

The Department of Natural Resources is reviewing the Exxon proposal. That review is expected to be completed early next year.

Crandon residents worry about mine's impact

JUL 25 1984

CRANDON (AP) — About 150 potential neighbors of an immense zinc and copper mine gathered to see if social scientists could tell them what a mine would do to their lives, and how it could change their communities.

No one in the audience Wednesday at the Nashville Town Hall claimed the proposed Exxon Minerals Co. mine would affect him or her more than Mollie Chappy.

"What happens to people who live within two blocks of the mining area? I happen to be one of them," she told representatives of the Department of Natural Resources and Denver Research Institute, hired by the DNR to evaluate the social and economic effects of the proposed Exxon mine.

John S. Gilmore, a member of the team performing the \$300,000 study, said he could offer no solutions to Mrs. Chappy, but by year's end would have more general an-

swers to the question of how the mine could affect the people of the Crandon area and their pocketbooks.

Mrs. Chappy said her only choice to being Exxon's closest neighbor if it decides to mine was to move away, but she and her retired husband would not know where to move.

The Denver-based researchers are trying to determine how those kinds of individual decisions — coupled with the influx of new people a mine would bring — could affect the dozen or so communities most likely to be affected if Exxon mines.

The answer to that question depends largely on how many local residents Exxon hires to construct and operate its mine and how many workers are brought in from beyond Forest, Langlade and Oneida counties, Gilmore said.

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"We know the mine will bring increased economic activity. We don't know how much of that will be carried on by people already in the area," Gilmore said.

Exxon has pledged to hire as many local residents as possible to fill the 1,500 jobs the project will require at its peak.

According to Exxon's consultants, during construction Antigo would gain up to 900 new residents, Crandon 200 to 300 and surrounding towns from 125 to 700 each.

But members of the audience in the Town of Nashville were looking beyond the mine's opening.

"The first five years are going to look good to some people and bad to others. The last five years will look bad to everybody," said Robert Roth of Minneapolis, who owns property near Laona and sat in the first row in the town hall.

"What happens when mining ceases? We

don't want to end up a ghost town area and worse yet have our environment disturbed," said Nancy Johnson, a member of the town zoning committee and attorney who practices in Crandon.

She said the town is drafting a zoning ordinance that will try to minimize the effects of such things as a temporary shut-down of mining operations.

"While we aren't adverse to mining coming in, we want to be careful it doesn't ruin what we have," Johnson said.

Blaine Townsend, an Exxon spokesman, told the townspeople his firm must have its permits in hand — which is not expected before 1986 or 1987 — and evaluate mineral prices and the economy before Exxon's board of directors decides whether or not to go ahead with the mine.

The potential social and economic effects

55
OVER

of a mine are being considered by the DNR as one part of the process of drafting an environmental impact statement on the project —but an important part, the townspeople were told.

Gilmore said state law requires the DNR to reject a mining permit if it finds a mine would have substantial adverse effects on a local economy, but he added that that provision of the law has never been interpreted.

Further public meetings on the DNR's review of Exxon's social and economic forecasts will be Thursday in Rhinelander's city council chambers and Friday at the Langlade County Safety Building in Antigo. All the sessions begin at 7 p.m.

Exxon now estimates the mine would be in operation 20 years, but Gilmore said mines frequently operate longer than expected.

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Exxon mine concerns northwoods

Green Bay Fr. Gaz. JUL 25 1984

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She said the town is drafting a zoning ordinance that will try to minimize the effects of such things as a temporary shutdown of mining operations.

DNR says Exxon mine would have little effect on area's lakes, wells

NASHVILLE, Wis. (PG) — The state Department of Natural Resources does not expect a proposed Exxon copper and zinc mine to lower lake levels or affect private wells in Forest County, Ken Bradbury, a DNR hydrogeologist, said Friday.

Bradbury told 80 Forest County residents and cottage owners meeting in the Town Hall here that the proposed mines' effect on water levels is "the single most important impact" DNR groundwater studies have identified.

But lakes and wells will be affected very little, Bradbury said, because they are some distance from the mine.

Bradbury also said the "water table is below Oak Lake," which is adjacent to the mine, making it almost impossible for mining activities to lower the lake level.

Very little seepage is predicted from Little Sand Lake, and both Little Sand and Oak lakes are protected by "thick layers of muck and clay" beneath them which will further reduce seepage, Bradbury said.

Bradbury said Exxon will use an estimated 1,500 to 2,000 gallons of water per minute when the mine is operating, causing water levels in the immediate vicinity to

drop as much as 70 feet.

The DNR predicts that the activity will cause no more than a 3-foot drop in water levels in private wells and nearby lakes, he said.

The department also believes it will take about 400 years for mine waste materials to seep into the groundwater system, Bradbury said.

Those estimates are under study by consultants hired by the town of Nashville, said Tom Vollmar, chairman of the town's mine committee.

Vollmar said the town hired two University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh professors to verify the reliability of the DNR's and Exxon's data.

Their fees are being paid out of a \$100,000 grant from the state's Mining Impact and Investment Fund Board, Vollmar said.

Bradbury said Exxon is expected to send the DNR more data on water levels that should answer questions raised by the consultants for the town.

The DNR-sponsored informational meeting focused on the agency's review of Exxon data on the proposed mine.

A similar meeting will be held here starting at 9 a.m. today.

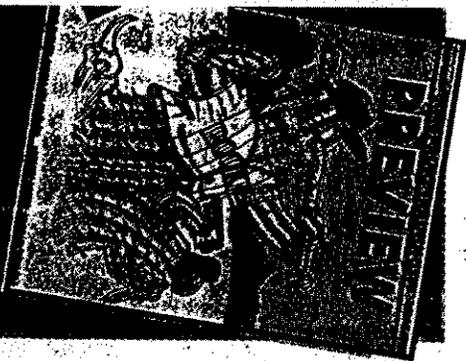
SUNDAY DENVER POST

Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

Feb 21, 1993

Final Edition / 75 cents
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Mine disaster worsens to tune of \$33,000 a day



By Mark Ohmascik
Denver Post Environment Writer

IO GRANDE COUNTY —

RWhen the Summitville gold mine killed 17 miles of streams, polluted farm water supplies and converted a southern Colorado mountain into a toxic stew of cyanide and heavy metals, government regulators consoled themselves with a simple belief:

Summitville, they thought, couldn't get any worse. It just did.

Instead of serving as a mere environmental disaster, Summitville

is becoming a full-blown financial nightmare. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been forced to hire 55 full-time workers — and spend \$33,000 a day — to prevent the bankrupt mine from spilling 160 million gallons of cyanide solution into the headwaters of the Rio Grande River.

In less than three months, the government's emergency response at Summitville has drained \$2.3 million of taxpayers' money. And the cash hemorrhaging shows no sign of easing.

The ultimate cleanup of Summitville, EPA says, is expected to

cost at least \$60 million.

What's remarkable about the extent of Summitville's environmental destruction is that it took so little time to create. The mine, constructed near the Continental Divide along the western rim of the San Luis Valley, didn't even open until 1986; it filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy protection in December 1992.

During those seven years of operations, Summitville became the classic slow-motion accident, witnessed by many but stopped by no one. It was a scandal that resulted from botched construction, reck-

less mining, brutal weather, failed state government regulation and budget-slashing politics at the Colorado Legislature.

"Everything that could go wrong at Summitville did go wrong," said Mike Long, director of the Colorado Division of Minerals.

The fiasco prompted Ken Salazar, director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, to call this month for a moratorium on state approval of all new chemical mining operations. And in

Please see SUMMITVILLE on 14A

THE HORROR OF HAUNT

Congress could trip

Mine becomes bottomless money pit

SUMMITVILLE from Page 1A

Washington, where Congress already was considering a sweeping overhaul of the nation's mining laws, conservation groups are citing Summitville as proof that the 1972 Mining Act needs environmental reforms.

All the political fallout worries industry executives, who fear the Summitville horror story will be used by mining critics to cripple their business with more government regulation. Other mine companies headquartered in Denver are trying to make the best of a bad situation by donating more than 1,000 hours of engineering work at the Summitville site.

But there's still one interested party that hasn't been heard from yet about the mess. That's Summitville Consolidated Mining Co. executives themselves. Peter Guest, director of the firm, owned by the bankrupt Galactic Resources of Vancouver, Canada, didn't respond to repeated requests for interviews.

The Summitville operation was a product of the gold rush that swept through the West in the 1980s. At that time, the price of the precious metal had soared to as high as \$800 per ounce — more than double the current market rate.

Galactic Resources tried to ride that wave of high gold prices by acquiring the Summitville site, a world-class ore body in the San Juan Mountains that had been featured for years in geology textbooks. Summitville was home to relatively small-scale mineral operations since the 1870s.

To extract gold from Summitville, Galactic proposed to use a cyanide heap-leach technology. The idea was to excavate a 127-foot-deep valley, fill it with 12 million tons of crushed ore and then sprinkle a cyanide solution over it to chemically remove the gold and other precious metals. Cyanide heap-leach technology allowed companies to recover as little as 0.04 ounces of gold from every 2,000 pounds of rock.

The 1,231-acre mine site was one of the biggest and most complicated hard-rock mineral operations ever proposed in Colorado. But when Galactic formally delivered its Summitville plans to the Colorado Mined Land



'AN ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARD': The Summitville mine looms above the San Luis Valley in this photo taken in autumn.

Special to The Denver Post / U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

literally overflowed with cyanide, the engineering firm said. The pad and protective liner were discovered to be leaking cyanide solution in June 1988.

"The leakage was aggravated by the incorrect decision by (Galactic) to rush the commencement of leaching operations in disregard for the causes or consequences of the leakage," the Kloba Leonoff engineers said in court documents. "In their haste to complete the liner, the (Summitville managers) disregarded the quality of its construction."

The Summitville contractor that was hired to install the protective liner, Gaudin Lining Systems, agreed with criticisms of Galactic in 1988 court documents. Summitville has conspired with its parent companies, Galactic and Galactic Ltd., to terminate the contract and agreement with Gaudin in order to conceal its own

Further tests showed that the entire 17-mile stretch of the Alamosa River downstream from Summitville was devoid of fish, officials said.

"The flows out of Summitville decimated the fishery," said John Alvey, a division of wildlife biologist in Monté Vista. "Before Summitville, we did have a small but viable fishery. After Summitville, the acidity, zinc and copper levels got high enough to kill fish."

Meanwhile, in the San Luis Valley, where 43,000 acres are irrigated by Alamosa River flows, farmers began reporting water quality problems.

Alan Miller said his new steel irrigation structures, which cost \$40,000 and normally are expected to last 20 years, now are covered with rust after just four years of exposure to the newly acidic water in the Alamosa River. And cattle rancher Jim Braden said one of his steel irrigation pipes, which usually lasts at least 20 years, sprouted a 2-inch rust hole after being exposed to just seven years of acidic Alamosa River flows. Braden also suspects the mine's acid discharges may be responsible for killing a 12-acre alfalfa field.

By March 1992, after extracting 280,000 ounces of gold from Summitville, Galactic stopped mining. Company executives assumed state regulators that they planned to clean up the site.

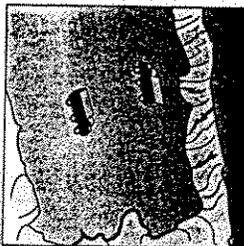
The problem was that state regulators only had required Galactic to deposit a \$4.7 million reclamation bond for cleanup. If they forced Galactic to put more money into a higher bond, state officials said, the extra requirement might bankrupt the company and leave state government with the whole mess.

However, regulators did manage to force Galactic to conduct a new study detailing needed cleanup projects and required cleanup costs.

On Nov. 30, 1992, Galactic gave the state a report saying that the Summitville mine site would take at least \$20 million to clean up. Three days later, Galactic announced it was filing for bankruptcy. Regulators were stumped. A \$15 million gap existed between what Galactic had posted for bond and what was needed for cleanup.

HOW SUMMITVILLE WORKED

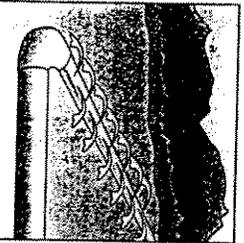
A look at how prospectors are mining for gold today.



1 A pit 127 feet deep and 48 acres wide was blasted into the ground of Rio Grande County. Trucks hauled out tons of rock.



2 Some 12 million tons of crushed ore were piled into the pit, creating a heap 60 feet high.



3 A solution of cyanide and water was sprayed onto the heap during a lengthy period.

formally delivered its Summitville permit to the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Division in August 1984, state regulators didn't have enough time to give the operation a full independent review.

A 1976 state law, which regulates all hard-rock mining, forces state regulators to approve or reject all proposed new mines — regardless of size and complexity — within four months.

"Under the law, if we don't give the mine operator a decision within 120 days, they get a freebie — automatic approval," said Jim Peterson, the reclamation division's chief. The approval process was further complicated by the fact that the legislature gave the board enough money in 1984 to hire just 15 workers. They had to track the Summitville application as well as 2,000 other mining operations across the state.

Short starting meant the state had to rely largely on the integrity and judgments of the Summitville operator and its consulting engineers during the approval and construction process. That turned out to be a colossal mistake.

Galeatic got its state permit in the fall of 1984. Construction of the vast cyanide heap-leach pad began less than a year later.

The Summitville operation soon ran into trouble. According to a 1987 document, Galeatic was under heavy pressure from a financier, Bank of America, to complete construction of the cyanide heap-leach pad quickly. As a result, Summitville managers decided to build the pad in the dead of winter — despite the warnings of the mine's design engineers.

In March and April 1986, a series of avalanches blasted through the cyanide pad's protective liner, which was supposed to prevent toxic chemicals from leaking and polluting several creeks that feed the Rio Grande. The avalanches, Galeatic lawyers admitted in court records, tore and shifted the protective liner.

Summitville's design engineers, Klein Leonoff, accused the mine company of a negligent rush to build the anti-cyanide liner. In court documents filed in Vancouver, the engineers said Galeatic "thoroughly laid out large areas" of the protective liner, "did not fill in" and "compacted" soil in trenches around the liner, allowed "poor operation of construction equipment" that ripped the protective liner and was "reporting proper practice for seam repairs."

Despite those problems, the Summitville operators proceeded to fill the 45-acre mining pad until

contract and agreement with Galeatic in order to conceal its own violation of the applicable laws governing environmental safety," the records said.

In another legal memo, the lawyer for the lining pad company wrote, "Numerous actions have been taken which at the Summitville mine place may create an environmental hazard, and which may endanger the safety of the public."

The problem was, no state regulator even knew about these actions. In 1986, the year that Summitville began operations, the Colorado Legislature cut the state hard-rock mining inspection budget from \$61,000 to \$250,000. The number of government mine inspectors, who had to monitor Summitville and 2,000 other state mine operations, was slashed from 15 to six.

Those stiff budget cuts prevented state regulators from conducting regular inspections of the Summitville site during construction.

In the spring of 1986, a surge of snowmelt caused clay and sand around the protective liner to "severely erode" by water, Galeatic attorneys said.

State mine regulators responded by slapping Summitville with a series of government penalties. Another major design flaw became apparent in the mine's first year of operations. Although executives originally estimated that more water would evaporate from the mine than would seep in from rainfall and snowmelt, the opposite proved to be true.

It turned out that Summitville actually gets more snowfall — an annual total of more than 35 feet — than the nearby Wolf Creek ski area, which gets more snow than any other Colorado resort. Summitville engineers miscalculated the site's water balance by 14 inches of water a year, state officials said. To give an idea of the magnitude of that error, that's the same amount of total precipitation in an entire year.

At Summitville, the mistake was staggering. Instead of having the level of cyanide-contaminated flood pad inside the 127-foot-deep leach pad every year, the fluid level actually rose by 10 or so feet per year, state regulators said.

From an economic standpoint, the water level error was a serious blow. To compensate for it, increasing water level inside the gold ore heap, Summitville was forced to pour in more cyanide to achieve the same chemical reaction. That requirement increased

the mine's operating costs, reduced its profitability and made less money available for company cleanup projects.

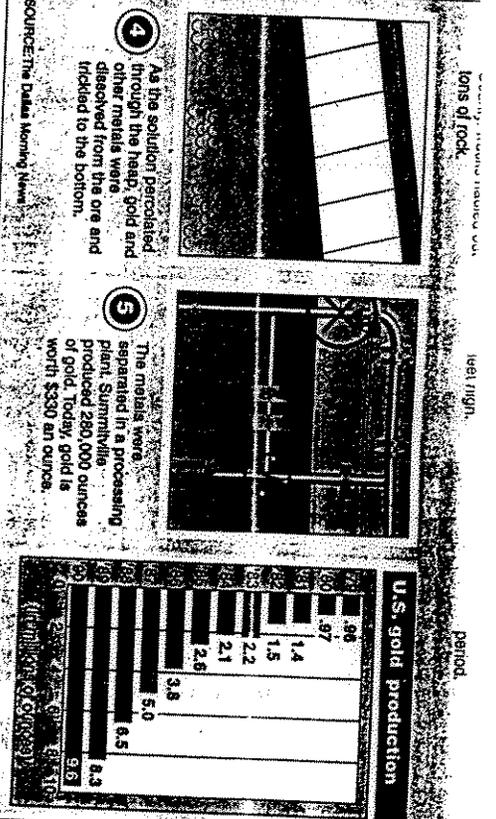
But from an environmental standpoint, the water level error proved disastrous. From June to October 1987, Summitville suffered nine separate spills totaling 85,000 gallons of cyanide-tainted fluid into Coyote Creek, a tributary of the Rio Grande.

The Colorado Health Department responded in 1988 by levying a \$27,000 penalty against Summitville.

In its original state mining permit, Summitville was banned from discharging any chemicals from mine operations. But mine executives later argued that this requirement was impossible to meet because of the water-level miscalculation.

So the health department in May 1989 agreed to issue Summitville a new permit allowing the mine to discharge treated liquids into Rio Grande tributaries.

Summitville tried to handle its waste problem by "land application," which called for combusting liquid wastes to be pumped into perforated hoses that would gradually let the fluid seep into the



million gap existed between what Galeatic had posted for bond and what was needed for cleanup.

Summitville, the level of cyanide-contaminated liquid in Summitville's leach pond stood at 122 feet — 5 feet from overflow.

EPA dispatched an emergency response team to Summitville on Dec. 8. The crew found a disaster in the making.

Summitville was discharging 3,000 gallons per minute of contaminated fluid from at least six different places. Many of the discharges were a foul color, one light blue stream was called "red zinger" because it looked like tea.

With winter winds blasting away at Summitville, EPA faced a tough decision. If the agency didn't do anything, the 160 million gallons of cyanide waste in the heap-leach pile, laden with toxic levels of copper and zinc, could spill into creeks that feed the Alamosa River, which in turn feeds the Rio Grande.

"If we let everything alone, it could go over any time. The whole pond would overflow," said Hays Griswold, who is directing EPA's effort. "The pipes would freeze. The pumps would fail. All the equipment would have to be replaced at very high expense in the spring. We didn't want to let that happen. So we took over the site."

The EPA had to hire 55 people to prevent Summitville from spilling. The site, 17 miles up a dirt road, requires a 24-hour-a-day snow removal crew. Wind-exposed walls of some mine buildings are buried under 40-foot snow drifts. Hundreds of gallons of chemicals must be transported weekly to the mine, through blizzards and white-outs, to reduce the toxic effect of the liquids being released from Summitville.

ground for natural filtration.

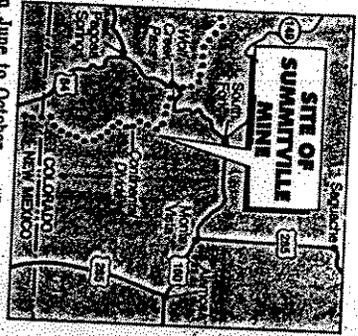
When David Holm, director of the health department's division of water control, personally inspected Summitville in 1990, he found a mess.

"It was apparent that the distribution system was failing all the time," Holm said. "The hoses would clog with particles and blow apart. The liquid would rush down into the creek. I saw it happen when I was just standing there at the site."

Nevertheless, the health department didn't take immediate action. The water quality division just had been subjected to a bruising political fight with state Sen. Tom Norton, now the Senate president, over the health department's jurisdiction in water quality issues.

Norton's 1989 bill transferred much enforcement power for mining water quality from the health department to the Mined Land Reclamation Board, which already was understaffed.

Holm said that political brawl in the legislature made it unclear whether the health department had any remaining legal authority to take enforcement action against Summitville. "Politics can never be far from my mind," Holm said.



"You have to be sensitive to what's going on in the legislature."

But the state's inaction angered others. The Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund made noises about filing a citizen's lawsuit against Summitville, and the EPA in November 1990 vowed to penalize Summitville if the state didn't.

The outside pressure worked. From February to June 1991, the health department and Mined Land Reclamation Division notified Summitville that the mine once again was violating state environmental standards. In July, Summitville agreed to pay \$100,000 of fines for repeated environmental law-breaking.

But the penalty didn't stop the problems. The next month, in August, Summitville suffered two more cyanide leaks. And in September, the mine spilled another 1,000 gallons of cyanide-tainted fluid.

By this time, all the leaks and spills had excited a heavy toll on the Alamosa River. Three different San Luis Valley landowners reported that all the trout in their farm ponds were killed after they took in Alamosa River water that flowed from Summitville. A chemist, Mary Mueller, blamed the fish kills on Summitville's discharges of highly acidic water and excessive levels of copper and zinc.

In June 1990, the Colorado Division of Wildlife stocked 15,000 fingerling trout in Terrace Reservoir, 17 miles downstream from Summitville. But when state biologists took a fish census of the reservoir less than a month later, they found no fish living anywhere in the lake.

"They keep asking me at headquarters: When are you going to get Summitville turned off and shut down?" said EPA's Griswold, who estimates the cleanup cost to be at least \$60 million. "I tell them: You need to come out here and look at what we're up against. It's not pretty."

READER'S MAILBAG



WISCONSIN OUTDOOR NEWS

Friday, March 29, 1996

COMMENTARY

Views expressed in the Commentary are those of the writer.

What is clean water worth?

By Mike Monte

A lifelong resident of Forest County, Mike Monte worked for 17 years as a professional logger in and around the Nicolet National Forest. He has owned and operated a local newspaper for the last 8^{1/2} years.

Remember the popular movie, "A River Runs Through It?" Based on a book by Norman MacLean, it was the story of a man's life and the influence that fly-fishing Montana's Big Blackfoot River played in giving his life quality, contentment and meaning.

If MacLean had lived in Forest County in or near the Nicolet National Forest, he might have more aptly titled his book "A River Starts In It." This is a headwaters area: when you look at a map of the Nicolet, you see that rivers don't run through it, they start here. The Wolf, Pine, Popple, Peshtigo, Oconto, just to name a few, have their birth within the boundaries of the Nicolet.

Maps tell us more than where we are or where we might be going. The Nicolet map, showing the lands selected to form the national forest, is also a testament to the good common sense of the early land managers charged with restoring a logging industry to the economically devastated northern counties and providing recreational opportunities for society to boot.

Few programs operated by our federal government can boast of their success like the Nicolet and other Lakes States national forests. A combination of fire suppression, the Civilian Conservation Corps, sus-

tained-yield logging practices and nature's healing powers have turned the Nicolet into a productive source of timber, a prime recreation area and a huge water-purification system.

Northern Wisconsin is truly blessed with clean, potable water. But northern Wisconsin doesn't keep her water, she sends it downstate, 24 hours a day, and will continue to do so until the next period of glaciation changes the topography. Downstream industries and municipalities don't always take good care of the water, but they are assured the supply will be kept fresh.

Northern Wisconsin, especially the area in and around the Nicolet, could be looking at a huge change in the way the land, and subsequently the water, is managed and used. The relentless hunt for mineral wealth in the northern landscape and the permits sought by the Crandon Mining Company to open a mine on the headwaters of the Wolf River with a potential to pollute water for hundreds of years have opened the question of resource use in the North. This controversy forces the public and its government to establish a value system for the resources in question.

Certainly, mining is essential to a consumer-oriented society. Nobody wants to give up the products we use daily that have their origins in a mine any more than we would want to give up other natural-resources products like paper, lumber or food.

(See Commentary, Page 15)

(From Page 2)

But one resource we take for granted that is absolutely essential for the health and well-being of people and every other living organism is water.

We can easily recognize the dollar value of a bottle of spring water or a ton of zinc ore, but how do you compute the value in dollars of a clean watershed?

Many of the values of a clean watershed can't be quantified. What is it worth, in dollars, to catch a trout from the Wolf or a bass from Rollingsstone Lake, a fish you can feed to your kids with complete confidence that you aren't feeding them a harmful dose of heavy metals like mercury, cadmium or lead? The health costs, once incurred, can be quantified in dollars, lots of dollars.

Every mining company can make an estimate of the total dollar value of an ore body, how many short-term jobs will be added to local economies and what the dollar value of the goods and services purchased by the mining company will add to state and local economies. But what mining companies don't show you is what the loss in quality of life will be, not just to local residents, but to the people who hunt, fish, relax and use the north woods and its water as a stress-relieving safety valve from urban pressures. Who can place a dollar value on that?

Everyone holding a political office can quantify, in dollars, what it will take to get elected. Lobbyists continue to exert tremendous pressure on our elected officials. Many of the laws that would have protected the waters in this state have

been eliminated, as was the public's watchdog, the Public Intervenor.

This was done for those quantifiable values, the real dollars, and not for those more ephemeral values that we can't equate with absolute dollar values. Those of us who think all values should be considered when deciding on a major change in land use view the process of mine permitting with much apprehension. We can only hope that lessons learned in the past and exercised by the land managers who planned the Nicolet National Forest won't be overlooked in the rush for those quantifiable dollars.

As an old Chippewa gentleman asked recently, "If the water is ruined, what will we drink, money?"

'Mr. GOP' raps Thompson

By Matt Pommer

The Capital Times 6/28/96

The retired president of Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce has issued a thinly veiled slap at Gov. Tommy Thompson's style of governing.

"I understand a governor who wants to run everything. If I were governor, maybe I would want to. But it's not in the best interest of Wisconsin's heritage — Wisconsin's tradition of giving the public a chance to be heard," Paul Hassett said Wednesday.

Hassett, known as "Mr. GOP" to an older generation, has become increasingly restless with Thompson's centralization of power. He retired 11 years ago as chief spokesman for state business interests.

On Wednesday, the 78-year-old Hassett appeared as treasurer of a new political action committee fighting two pet ideas of the Thompson administration — opening the door to sulfide mining in northern Wisconsin and muzzling the office of public intervenor.

Former Democratic state Rep. Maxine Hough, now chief executive officer of a recycling company, will chair the PAC. She said it had a modest fund-raising goal of \$20,000 to \$25,000.

On Sunday, the new PAC will hold a fund-raiser to honor Kathleen Falk and Tom Dawson, who were the public intervenors for years. They resigned the positions after the 1995 state budget bill dramatically reduced its funding and independence.

Hough defended the public intervenors' action. She said they usually settled disputes out of court and it was "unacceptable" that the office effectively had been eliminated.

Hassett said the Office of Public Intervenor had been created under Republican Gov. Warren Knowles, whom he served as executive secretary for 5½ years.

He recalled how Knowles operated — never threatening a veto or promising to veto legislation. Knowles would always let critics try to sway him before he acted on legislation, Hassett recalled.

Commentary

Antigo Journal, Thursday, February 22, 1996, Page 4

Water is the basis to life, maintaining the quality is key project

To the Antigo Journal:

The Journal recently published an article stating that water and sewage charges will increase dramatically in the near future due to renovations to the disposal plant. Similar increases have been taking place in cities throughout the United States and this is only the beginning.

Sewage treatment is really the least of our worries. Hardly anyone gives a thought about what is happening to the supply of good drinking water. It is ever more difficult to supply good water for human consumption because water everywhere is becoming polluted. Estimates are that in 30 years or less, drinking water will be one of our greatest concerns as well as our most expensive necessity.

The Environmental Protection Agency has passed regulations which will only allow industry to have one part per million of pollutants in their waste water. Most of these pollutants are carcinogens and cannot be separated from the water once they are added to it. To by-pass these regulations, many industries pump millions of gallons of water which is then mixed with small amounts of their poisonous material, thereby complying with the regulations. But in time, all of the water will be carrying these chemicals, and nature's purifiers such as sand, evaporation, sunshine and air will not separate the chemicals from our drinking water.

To clean it up manually in our purifying plants is extremely expensive and, in some cases, impossible. These chemicals have been detected in Lake Michigan and Lake Superior, which lakes supply us underground with our drinking water.

Here in Antigo we are blessed with a supply of good water, but even now we can smell and taste the small amounts of chlorine added to it to destroy harmful bacteria. In some cities in the United States the water actually tastes and smells so bad one has to hold their nose and swallow quickly.

If our government does not act more decisively to stop this chemical pollution of our waters, the next generation or so will be buying water at a price which will make our present sewage expenses seem like a pittance. Most adults today are contributing a very large part of their incomes toward the welfare of their children, never thinking that these children will have a difficult time staying healthy because this generation is poisoning their life-giving water.

I say, life-giving, because nothing can live without water. Even our rain water contains acids after going through an evaporation process. While it is true that we must have industry, we also need a good quality of air to breathe and water to drink. So when you see smoke stacks belching out clouds of chemicals, or see wastewater running into our rivers from industrial plants, you also see future generations of people needlessly dying. These future generations consist of your children and their offspring. And it isn't just the industries which are responsible for this pollution. It's every one of us. Think twice before you dump that drain-oil behind the shed or garage. Dispose of your left over garden chemicals in the prescribed manner, and do your best to comply with regulations set down by the DNR and other agencies. The life you save may be the life of your grandchildren.

Anthony J. Michael

Who 'bought' the state budget?

In 1995, Wisconsin conservationists fought in vain to oppose codicils in the State Budget Bill (AB 150) that transferred the appointment power over the secretary of the Department of Natural Resources from the Natural Resources Board to the governor and that eliminated for all practical purposes the office of Wisconsin Public Intervenor.

Despite the fact that there was no widespread support for these actions and despite the opposition by tens of thousands of Wisconsin taxpayers to these moves, the Republican-controlled state legislature passed on party-line votes the plans to politicize the DNR and do away with the "citizens' lawyers, i.e., Public Intervenor, within the Department of Justice, with all Republican assemblypersons and state senators approving these plans and all Democrats opposed. If people are wondering how their voices were muted in this debate, Wisconsin's Environmental Decade has some answers.

Late last year, the Decade held a press conference and distributed information on groups that lobbied for and against the budget bill as it was enacted, and how much each of those groups spent on their lobbying efforts. To the surprise of no one, the eight groups with the worst environmental records - and those who stand to gain the most from a politicized DNR and a non-existent Public Intervenor - outright pro-environmental and conservation organizations by over

11-to-1. The chart accompanying this article details those expenditures.

Included among the "Anti-Environmental Eight" as submitted by the Decade was Crandon Mining Company, a partnership of Exxon Minerals Co. and Rio Algom, Ltd., of Ontario, Canada, which is seeking to open a zinc-copper-silver-gold mine near the headwaters of the Wolf River in southern Forest County.

In remarks at the press conference detailing these findings, Decade Executive Director Pam Porter stated, "We ask, who bought the budget and who was working for whom? The people of Wisconsin didn't ask to have the Public Intervenor's office gutted; they didn't ask for our Department of Natural Resources to become politicized; they didn't ask to have drinking water standards weakened."

"This report," Porter noted, "shows why our environment lost so badly in the budget battle, and why the thousands of citizens' letters and phone calls fell on deaf ears. Money talks, and nowhere does it talk louder than in the halls of our state capitol. The analysis of lobbying reports clearly shows a huge discrepancy between those working to protect environmental and health standards and those seeking to weaken them."

The top eight environmental lobbying groups spent a total of \$65,250.17, while the top eight anti-environmental groups spent a total of \$741,500.21.

"The situation is actually worse than what these numbers show," Porter stated. "On the pro-environmental side, the 'top eight' are about the ONLY eight (groups) lobbying for the public's right to clean air and water. But on the other side, only the eight biggest spenders were examined."

"We are entering a new period for Wisconsin," said Porter, "and this report is issued as a 'wake up call' to citizens, because we need their help. Our natural resources, our health and safety and our way of life in Wisconsin are being threatened by special interest

Editor, Wisconsin Trout:

I want to congratulate Wisconsin Trout Unlimited and its newspaper, Wisconsin Trout, for coming forward with much needed information on the environment, especially in the Fall, 1995, issue. Having been involved with the issues - the Public Intervenor, cabinet government for the DNR, Outstanding Resource Waters, DNR reorganization and mine pollution - for many years, I can only say, "Thank God that you called a spade a spade!" if people feel that the articles in the paper are biased, all they have to do is look at the facts and observe the voting records of our elected officials.

Every environmental group in the state supported the Public Intervenor's office. Those of us who worked with it on key environmental issues know how badly that office will be missed.

groups who stand to benefit from weakening Wisconsin's tough laws and standards. This threatens Wisconsin's integrity, our state's profound and deep respect for clean government and our participatory democracy. Wisconsin is quickly becoming a crude and crass state where our future is not shaped by good and thoughtful policy, but by the biggest buck."

For more information on the Decade's report on lobbying efforts over the recently-passed State Budget Bill, contact: Wisconsin's Environmental Decade, 122 State St., Suite 200, Madison, WI 53703. Or, call (608) 251-7020.

Wisconsin has had for many years one of the best run DNRs in the country. That is why we opposed Mr. Thompson's attempts to politicize the position of DNR secretary and eliminate the Natural Resources Board. Those of us who have been fighting to save northern Wisconsin from contamination associated with mining know exactly what you are talking about.

Anyone who feels that these issues - loss of the Public Intervenor and the politicizing of the DNR secretary position - won't have an impact on the future of trout fishing should become more involved; then they may learn the facts. Thanks again for these articles, and keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Wally Cooper
3995 Shepard Lake Road
Rhineclander, WI 54501

VALDEZ, ALASKA

The Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989 destroyed the economies of Indian and non-Indian fishing villages. Populations of salmon, herring, and other sealife have not recovered. Crandon Mining PR man Wiley Bragg had the same job for Exxon in Alaska.

ARCTIC NWR, ALASKA

Exxon is among the oil firms wanting to drill for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. A movement of Gwich'in Indians and environmentalists has so far prevented large-scale drilling in the refuge.

CRANDON, WISCONSIN

Exxon and Rio Algom want to open a huge copper-zinc shaft mine next to the Mole Lake Chippewa Reservation, upstream from its wild rice beds, and in the headwaters of the Wolf River.

ELLIOT LAKE, ONTARIO

Rio Algom ran the Elliot Lake uranium mines in the 1950s-70s. Over 80 miners died of lung cancer. The Serpent River Ojibwe curtailed fishing due to radioactivity and sulphuric acids. Rates of many diseases were twice those of other reserves.

HIGHLAND, WYOMING

Exxon's uranium tailings pond contaminated groundwater and a creek, according to a state agency in 1982. A truck spilled five tons of uranium concentrate from the mine in a 1977 crash in Colorado (the largest spill ever of radioactive 'yellowcake').

NOVA SCOTIA

An Exxon subsidiary closed the Gay Mills lead-zinc shaft mine in 1981 due to flooding, a problem it knew about when the mine opened in 1979. Rio Algom's East Kemptonville mine tailings pond leaked toxic chemicals and heavy metals into the Tusket River, threatening the nearby lobster fishery. The tin mine, closed in 1991, is still not cleaned up.

COLONY, COLORADO

Exxon withdrew from this expensive oil shale project in 1982. Over 2000 workers heard they were laid off from the news. New workers then arrived to find out they didn't have the jobs they'd been promised two weeks before.

BAYTOWN, N.J.

An Exxon pipeline ruptured in 1988, spilling a half-million gallons of oil into New Jersey's Arthur Kill waterway. The EPA fined Exxon in 1992 for not reporting chemical releases.

NEW MEXICO

Both Exxon and Rio Algom were among the companies that bought up a third of Indian and public land in the Four Corners. Exxon was the primary coal and uranium lease holder on Navajo and Pueblo lands.

HIGHLANDS, TEXAS

Exxon's Liberty Waste chemical dumpsite caused cancers and other illnesses. The company settled with residents for \$11 million in 1987.

MEXICO / GUATEMALA

Exxon has drilled or explored for oil through the Petén region of northern Guatemala and the Chiapas state of southern Mexico. Both forested regions have been the bases of indigenous rebel groups.

Exxon

Exxon came out of the oil empire founded by John D. Rockefeller in 1863. Its former names are Esso and Standard Oil of N.J. It is today the world's biggest oil giant, with a budget larger than that of many countries. It is also a major producer of minerals. Among oil firms, it is the largest holder of coal reserves, and the 2nd largest holder of uranium reserves. (It has explored for uranium in Arizona, Saskatchewan, Alaska, New Jersey, Minnesota, Michigan, Australia, and elsewhere.) In 1989, Exxon had the worst mine safety record among the top 20 U.S. underground mining firms. In 1992, Survival International put Exxon on its list of the Top Ten corporate violators of Native people's rights, because of its practices in Colombia. Exxon says it withdrew from the Crandon project in 1986 because of low metal prices, but the price of zinc is about the same today.

GUAJIRA, COLOMBIA

Exxon has since 1986 run South America's largest coal mine, El Cerrejón, on this peninsula. It is on the land of Wayuu Indians, who have suffered forced relocations, coal dust, and depleted water. Over 30 mineworkers have died on the job. Crandon Mining Co. Pres. Jerry Goodrich was V.P. of Operations here.

LA DISPUTADA, CHILE

Exxon entered the copper business in 1978 by purchasing this complex. The deal was the first of its kind since a coup overthrew an elected government five years before. The deal was widely condemned, since the military junta was a major human rights violator.

AMAZONIA, ECUADOR

Exxon is among the firms drilling for oil on the lands of Huaorani Indians in the north-eastern lowlands, disrupting Native cultures and land rights.

Rio Algom

Rio Algom is formerly owned by the UK firm Rio Tinto Zinc (which runs the Ladysmith mine). RTZ tried to sell the company in 1993, but could not find a single buyer due to liabilities from the Elliot Lake disaster. The Highland Valley copper-molybdenum mine in British Columbia keeps Rio Algom financially afloat, but the company has often operated with a large deficit.

Where They're From

Exxon headquarters is in Texas, and its subsidiary Exxon Coal & Minerals is based in Denver. Rio Algom is headquartered in Toronto, Canada. Together the two companies in 1993 formed the "Crandon Mining Co." of Crandon, Wisconsin.

For More Information

Minewatch, 218 Liverpool Road, London N1 1LE, England
Ask for publications *The Gulliver File* (1990) and *Plunder* (1991).
Map prepared by Midwest Treaty Network (731 State St., Madison WI, 53703; tel./fax 608-246-2256)
and the Wisconsin Resources Protection Council (210 Avon St. #9, LaCrosse WI 54603; tel./fax 608-784-4399)

The Track Records of Exxon & Rio Algom

Copper sulfide mining is much more dangerous than iron mining.

There has never been a successfully reclaimed Copper Zinc Sulfide mine anywhere in this country.

It has never been done.

Why on earth is the DNR thinking about permitting a copper zinc sulfide mine at the headwaters of the Wolf Rver? Will Exxon's Crandon project be our Valdez?

UW Center for Geographical Analysis

"Potential for damage [from acid mine drainage] may be so severe as to require perpetual monitoring and maintenance similar to that done by federal authorities with radioactive waste material. Even facing an indeterminate probability of the occurrence of this level of catastrophe, public agencies must explicitly acknowledge its likelihood during land use planning and during budget design" — *Michael McNamara; Metallic Mining in the Lake Superior Region, Center for Geographical Analysis, UW, Madison, Oct. 1976.*

Mineral Policy Center

"High sulfide mine wastes retain the ability to generate acid as long as they exist until either they become part of another permanent rock structure or until the acid is all generated and carried away."

"When we talk about sealing them and capping them, we are talking about doing it for a millennium. If the covering we put over them erodes away or cracks, and water gets in the problem does not go away. It happens. It is different from radioactive wastes, which slowly decay, the problem (of acid leaching) never goes away until the acid reaction takes place. You have to look at capping them for a thousand years" — *Mineral Policy Center, Washington, D.C.*

Minnesota DNR

"The techniques and costs associated with reclamation of high sulfur waste rock are unknown. There are no proven cost effective technologies for the acceptable long-term mitigation of potential impacts." — *Mining, Impact and Mitigation Research, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, 1989*

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

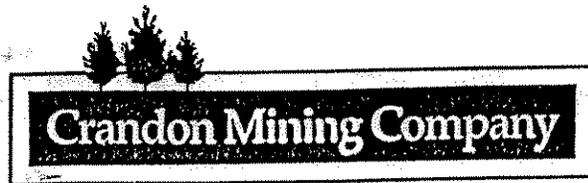
"Collection and treatment of acid mine drainage can be effective in the short term, but may have to continue for generations while acid mine drainage continues." — *Report on Mining Simulation Project, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 1990*

Mining waste will remain toxic for a very long time, if anything goes wrong it may become the taxpayers burden. You have a right to say NO! before the problems begin.

Tell Governor Thompson, your legislators, and the DNR that you don't want a copper-zinc sulfide mine on the Wolf River.

Who should We Believe?

Mine Plan and Environmental Impact Report



Says

- Water levels will not change on Lucerne, Metonga, Ground Hemlock, Mole, St. Johns, Oak, Crane, Pickerel, Post, Kimberly, Walsh and other lakes more than two miles from the mine.
- Effects on Rolling Stone and Rice lakes will be too small to measure.
- Among lakes closest to the mine, there will be minor effects - less than one inch - on Little Sand, Duck and Deep Hole lakes.

State of Wisconsin

Department of Natural Resources

Public Service Commission

Final Environmental Impact Statement

Exxon Coal and Minerals Co. Zinc-Copper Mine

Crandon, Wisconsin

Says

November 1986

LAKE IMPACTS WITHOUT MITIGATION

The groundwater drawdown would affect water levels in lakes near the mine to varying degrees. The extent to which a lake would be impacted by the drawdown depends on its relationship to the groundwater and its proximity to the mine. In drainage lakes near the mine, groundwater discharges directly into the lakes, and the groundwater drawdown would decrease the amount of groundwater inflow. Area drainage lakes which could be affected by the groundwater drawdown include Rice, Rolling Stone, Ground Hemlock, Crane, and Pickerel Lakes.

Without mitigation, mine pumping would significantly affect levels in Little Sand, Deep Hole and Skunk Lakes. Duck Lake also would be impacted but to a lesser degree. Table 3-6 provides expected declines in lake levels from the groundwater drawdown along with the expected and maximum increases in lake seepages. Little Sand Lake would experience the most severe impacts, with an average lake level decline of approximately 6.9 feet and lake seepage increasing between 568 and 710 gpm. Deep Hole and Skunk Lakes would decline approximately 0.6 and 1.9 feet, respectively, while Duck Lake would decline less than 0.2 feet. All lakes would drop below the minimum level necessary to protect public rights, although Duck and Deep Hole Lakes would be expected to regain minimum levels during part of the year. Declines in lake levels would cause a comparable decrease in lake surface areas. Skunk Lake would become small and very shallow most of the time and evolve into a seasonally flooded wetland.

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122 STATE STREET, SUITE 200
MADISON, WISCONSIN 53703
608-257-2424 FAX 608-251-1655
wisrivers@igc.apc.com

Embargoed Until:
April 16, 1997
10:00 a.m.

Contact: Sara Johnson, Executive
Director, or Zev Ross, Conserva-
tion Programs Coordinator
(608) 257-2424

News Release

Wolf River Named One of Most Endangered Rivers in North America

National group's report says proposed Exxon Mine is dangerous threat to the river

Keshena, WI -- The Wolf River today was named the 5th Most Endangered River in North America by American Rivers, the nation's leading river conservation organization. Conservation, environmental and tribal leaders hope this national warning will prompt the Wisconsin Assembly to vote on a bill that would protect the Wolf from unproven mining practices. The legislation, known as the Mining Moratorium Bill, passed the Wisconsin State Senate with overwhelming support earlier this year.

The list of the 10 Most Endangered Rivers, published annually by American Rivers, highlights rivers that face the continent's worst environmental abuse. The Wolf, a National Wild and Scenic River and state-designated Outstanding Resource Water, is endangered because of a proposed metallic sulfide mine in its headwaters area in Wisconsin's Northwoods.

"This listing brings more national attention to the plight of the Wolf River, Wisconsin's most threatened natural resource," said Sara Johnson, Executive Director of the River Alliance of Wisconsin, a state-wide, non-profit river conservation organization. "The experts at American Rivers have seen the devastating effects of sulfide mining in places like Colorado, New Mexico and elsewhere and are sounding this alarm to urge the Wisconsin State Assembly to prevent a similar disaster from destroying the Wolf River."

Texas-based Exxon Coal and Minerals and Canadian-based Rio Algom, both multi-national corporations with notorious polluting records, have proposed to mine a zinc and copper sulfide deposit near Crandon. Mine waste from the project would cover an area the size of 350 football fields and would stand 90 feet high, making the waste heap the largest toxic waste dump in Wisconsin history. Sulfuric acid and heavy metal drainage from the waste dump would threaten the Wolf River, as well as other natural resources, the tourism economy and tribal cultures associated with the river.

(More)



The Mining Moratorium Bill (AB 70, sponsored by Rep. Spencer Black) requires the state Department of Natural Resources to refrain from issuing permits to metallic sulfide mines until companies can point to a similar project that has operated for 10 years and been closed for 10 years without polluting ground or surface waters. Such an example has yet to be found. The State Senate recently passed the bill 29 to 3.

"Not one mine similar to that proposed by Exxon has ever operated and been reclaimed without polluting ground or surface water," said Johnson. "That's like someone wrecking a car every single time they drive, and now they want the keys to your car," said Johnson. "Exxon's asking to take a test drive by mining near the Wolf with unproven technology. But sulfide mining has wrecked too many rivers and Exxon has wrecked too many cars -- the citizens are unwilling to turn over the keys."

The report notes that the Wolf is one of the most pristine rivers in the country, and a primary destination for Midwestern river-based recreation. By harming the Wolf River, the mine threatens to depress the important tourism and recreation-based economy of the area, as well as harm tribal cultures.

"Tens of thousands of people spend millions of dollars each year enjoying a unique outdoor experience on the upper Wolf River, one of the midwest's few remaining large, free-flowing, whitewater, trout rivers. It attracts and supports the local tourism industry," said Herb Buettner, owner of the Wild Wolf Inn, a business that depends on the pristine Wolf River. "The citizens insist that the state must fulfill its trust responsibilities for the Wolf River. The Wolf River has done much for my life and I feel obligated to protect it for future generations."

"Exxon's Wolf River mine would poison our water, kill our fish, destroy our forests and ruin our tourist industry," said Apesanahkwat, Chairman of the Menominee Nation, "It would desecrate and destroy our cultural properties and our burial sites. We can stop this insanity. We can pass a common-sense law that makes Exxon prove they can mine responsibly. Listening to their lies and false promises is over. We will not be Exxon's experiment for unproven mine technology. We will deal with sulfide mining companies with an iron fist."

This national listing is the latest in a groundswell of opposition to this mine. Never before have so many people come forward to protect a natural Wisconsin treasure:

- * More than 35,000 people across this country have sent letters to the Army Corps of Engineers asking them to stop the Exxon mine.

- * Thousands of people across our state have attended dozens of hearings and rallies to voice their concern.

- * Sixty-seven community, environmental and conservation organizations representing hundreds of thousands of citizens in Wisconsin - the largest alliance of groups ever formed in this state to protect a water resource - have joined together to fight this mine.

- * And last month, the Wisconsin State Senate in a nearly unanimous vote of 29-3, passed the common-sense Mining Moratorium Bill.

The Mining Moratorium Bill is now in the Environment Committee of the Assembly. Despite tremendous public and legislative support, the committee has yet to schedule public hearings or a vote. "This designation today of the Wolf as a nationally endangered waterway sends a message loud and clear down river to the members of the Wisconsin State Assembly in Madison -- Pass the Mining Moratorium Bill! Anything short of a vote makes a mockery of our representative form of government," Johnson concluded.

The River Alliance held press conferences today at four locations: Keshena, Madison, Milwaukee & Eau Claire. For more information visit the River Alliance Web page at <http://www.igc.org/wisrivers>.

Wisconsin's Mining Laws: How Tough They Aren't

By M. J. Kewley

City Pages

Wausau's News & Entertainment Weekly Magazine

June 7-13

P.O. Box 942

Wausau, WI 54402

[Reprinted with permission]

Governor Tommy Thompson said it. So did DNR Secretary George Meyer. And we hear it from mining companies all the time.

"Wisconsin has the toughest mining laws in the country."

Meyer proudly used that line three weeks ago to open a public hearing in Tomahawk on a massive zinc and copper mine proposed in Crandon.

Peter Theo, director of government affairs for Crandon Mining Co., echoed Meyer's assessment a few days later during a telephone interview: "Wisconsin has some of the toughest regulations in the country."

Like an overspun Elvis tune, this hit is sung again and again. One can't hang around the mining arena for long without hearing it.

"They (mining companies) say that in every state they're in," state Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, said. "It's just sort of a mantra with them."

"The laws are technical," added state Sen. Russ Decker, D-Schofield. "But not that tough."

Even one of the state's geologists, Tom Evans, calls the "tough on mining" banter a "fruitless characterization."

Funny thing is, it's not only tried, it's untrue. Wisconsin's laws aren't the first toughest, and they're not even second, third, fourth or fifth toughest. As far as toughness goes, Wisconsin mining laws are not even in the top 10.

Playing this broken record is meant to ease public concern about mining's environmental hazards.

But the fact is, Wisconsin is considered about average when it comes to mining regulation, according to a 1990 report from the Mine Waste Task Force of the Western Governor's Association. The study tabulated state regulations in 17 western states that conduct mining, including Wisconsin.

The Sierra Club's Bruce Nilles, Madison, sees no winners when it comes to mining regulations. "There hasn't been any model state, anywhere," he said. "Every state has its strengths, and then has huge gaps."

Wisconsin Resource Protection Council spokesman Al Gedicks said many are lax on enforcement. "Colorado has some of the most strict requirements," Gedicks said. "It hasn't prevented problems."

While the Western Governor's Association report doesn't show the details of each law, it does paint a general picture of Wisconsin's strengths and weaknesses.

On one big issue -- groundwater quality -- Wisconsin lags. Eleven other states maintain non-degradation standards relating to groundwater. A non-degradation standard makes it illegal for a mining operation to change the existing groundwater quality.

In 1981, Wisconsin eliminated its non-degradation standard and moved to a standard that sets the maximum allowable amount of contaminants allowed in groundwater. In essence, the state adopted the federal drinking water quality standard.

"It means the cleaner the groundwater, the more contaminants they can dump into it," Gedicks said.

Evans, geologist with the state Geological and Natural History Survey, said the state is better off with the lower groundwater quality standard. "I know we had a non-degradation policy. But it wasn't a standard," he said, because biologists lacked a specific numerical percentage they could enforce. While the policy was in place, Evans said, "we had all kinds of industries discharge into streams. We had non-degradation at the same time we had paper mills."

Wisconsin law is more stringent when it comes to surface quality. The state is among 15 that maintain a non-degradation standard for surface water. All but one of those states (Arizona) also sets limits on discharge of effluent.

When it comes to closure and reclamation requirements, the Western Governor's Survey showed Wisconsin was about average in the amount of regulations required. Forty-six states, including Wisconsin, have comprehensive closure programs. But there is a big difference here. While many states set specific state-wide limits on waste chemical neutralization, groundwater seepage barriers and waste system-encapsulation, Wisconsin's laws are site specific.

Whether different requirements are better depends on whom you ask. No one interviewed was prepared to make a state-to-state comparison of mining regulations.

BUREAUCRATIC EROSION

So just how has Wisconsin's mining laws evolved over time?

Since its passage in 1978, there have been dozens of modifications of the state's mining codes. Most made the laws more lenient. Very few placed additional requirements on mining companies.

"It's weak, it's inefficient," said Black of the existing code.

"In a way, it's to be expected," Evans said of the dozens of changes made in the past 18 years. He said the mining industry demanded the changes, and the state complied.

"If you look at the regulations in 1978-79, we had this horrendously difficult package of regulations," Evans said. "The [mining] industry perceived it as very tough . . . what's happening is that we are realizing what we need to hold on to."

What Wisconsin hasn't held on to is any regulation that hinders mining development.

And today, as Evans assessed, "they (mining companies) have the political clout to shoot anything down they are opposed to."

Two types of oversight are commonly used to permit mining -- state statutes and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource rules. The state statutes are meant to provide direction of the DNR, while the rules offer the specifics.

Changes started with the shift in the groundwater standard in 1981. Since the early 1980s, the whittling process has continued piece by piece. Many of the changes were tagged onto lengthy budget bills.

"When it's tagged on a budget bill, there's not a public notice made," Decker said, "so people don't have the opportunity to organize opposition."

That's what happened in 1988, when the legislature approved the creation of Local Agreement Committees. The bill specifically allowed these committees to override local zoning ordinances and bans on mining.

The law addressed a fundamental problem holding Kennecott Corp. from opening its copper mine at Ladysmith. Both the town of Grand and Rusk County had enacted local mining regulations, including a mining moratorium in the town of Grant.

"Ninety-nine percent of the Legislature didn't know it was in the budget," said Gedicks. It passed, and in 1991, Kennecott got its permit, even though local laws prohibited it. The open pit copper mine has been in operation since 1993.

In addition to the groundwater quality standards and the local agreement committees, there are numerous examples of changes made to that state's mining regulations.

In 1983, DNR rules exempted mining companies from all groundwater pollution standards within its mining site boundaries. In 1983, the state lifted its 640-acre maximum acre limit on land purchases by foreign corporations interested in mining exploration. And in 1989, the state removed weight and length restrictions on trucks hauling iron ore.

WHAT HAS FAILED

What has failed to pass the legislature is as noteworthy as what has passed.

In 1989, after a talc deposit was discovered at the Mead Wildlife Refuge, the legislature passed a bill to prohibit mining on state forest and park land. Thompson vetoed the measure in 1990, the bill passed again, and Thompson vetoed it a second time.

"I thought that when you set aside a state park for future generations, the last thing you expect to see there is a mine," Black said.

In 1990, Sen. Russ Decker authored a bill ordering the DNR to consider the environmental track record of mining companies seeking to do business in Wisconsin (read Exxon equals Exxon Valdez).

Finally, in 1990, a watered-down version made its way through the Legislature. Decker's assessment: "My intent was to come back in the second session and get some enforcements. But the Republicans got

control of the Senate."

In 1991, the state passed a law allowing the DNR to deny mining permits to any company convicted of a felony for environmental violations in the United States in the past year. But the same law also gave the DNR the authority to grant a waiver, in essence, voiding the intent of the law.

In 1993, Black attempted to make mining operations subject to the same groundwater laws as other industry. It passed the Assembly, but was killed by Senate Republicans. As a result, the mining exemption still exists, but rest assured that your neighbor's attempt to build an outhouse would still be subject to more stringent groundwater laws.

State Rep. Greg Huber, who has consistently supported mining reform, believes the economic benefits have bolstered the trend toward relaxed regulation. "A substantial number of people in areas where there are mines proposed want the jobs and the spin-off that comes from the jobs," Huber said.

ANOTHER SWIPE AT A MORATORIUM

This fall, Black will be back. And he's getting organized early. A petition-driven campaign will begin June 13 in support of his mining moratorium bill, which the Republican-controlled Senate left undone by dismissing its session a week early last month.

"That bill received more public support than any other bill in the Senate," Black said. Decker agreed that calls to his office indicated mining development is one of the top five issues in northern Wisconsin.

Black's bill would, in effect, ban mining on any massive sulfide ore body until, somewhere in the United States, mining companies could show they are operating safely and have reclaimed a site for at least 10 years. Most believe that mining in sulfide ore bodies can't be conducted without environmental consequences, so Black's bill likely would be a yes or no vote on mining per se.

Evans said mining companies have the technology to operate without causing pollution of the environment, but that it would be more expensive to pursue. That's a main gripe environmentalists make against the state: corporations will never voluntarily employ the highest clean-up technology.

Decker agreed: "It will happen only if you force them. They (mining companies) do not exceed the law."

Consider Crandon Mining Co. Its initial proposal to the DNR was to dump wastewater into the Wolf River. Because the nearly pristine Wolf River is protected from pollution discharge, that option would have required Crandon Mining Co. to build what probably would have been the most effective waste water treatment plant in the country. Instead, the company last year proposed building a waste water pipeline to the Wisconsin River, which has much lower standards for industrial discharge. Hence, the water treatment plant for the Wisconsin River option can be less complicated, less expensive and the Crandon Mine would still conform to state rules, company officials have said.

But the pipeline is only part of the picture.

Should the Crandon Mining Co. receive its permit, it will be far more complex an operation than the open pit mine at Ladysmith.

Said Evans: "Flambeau (mining company) is a piece of cake. It's a quarry with a hell of a lot of copper in it."

By contrast, more than 30 million tons of tailings would be processed at the Crandon Site. And how Wisconsin's rules and regulations are tailored to deal with the mine waste is the key to an environmentally safe operation.

It was Crandon Mining's government affairs director, Peter Theo, who made it perfectly clear: "You shouldn't listen to what the company has to say. They shouldn't trust us. The law says, 'here's the process.' Whatever the state says, goes. . . ."

CP

Wisconsin's Mining Laws: How Tough They Aren't

Text of accompanying cover illustration by John Rosemurgy

- 1974: State passes first mining reclamation law
- 1976: Exxon discovers Crandon deposit; Kennecott Corp. finds copper near Ladysmith
- 1977-1978: First comprehensive mining law passed
- 1981: State drops non-degradation water quality standard
- 1983: Mining companies get an exemption from clean groundwater standards
- 1983: Foreign corporations land investment cap is lifted
- 1986: Exxon ends first attempt for a mining permit at Crandon
- 1988: State overrides local mining ordinances
- 1989: State removes restrictions on trucks hauling iron ore
- 1989: Talc deposit found at Mead Wildlife Refuge
- 1990: Legislature fails to pass mining ban on state lands
- 1990: State allows DNR to deny permits to companies convicted of environmental felonies, unless the DNR doesn't feel like it
- 1993: Kennecott opens Ladysmith mine
- 1996: Legislature dismisses a week early, avoids mining moratorium bill

Support tougher state laws regulating metallic sulfide mining in Wisconsin!
Demand that Candidates for the Wisconsin Legislature sign the Mining Moratorium Pledge.

[Note from NoMining WINS editor Alice McCombs: I have not received any response to my request made to Governor Tommy Thompson on June 2, 1996, for a complete copy or copies of research with full bibliographic citations which compares the present Wisconsin laws regulating metallic sulfide mining to laws regulating metallic sulfide mining in all other 49 states in the United States].

Protect Menominee Treaty Rights

Tribe sitting on valuable body of ore

By Rocky Barker

Special to The Journal

Mole Lake, Wis. — The Sokaogon Chippewa community is sitting on an ore body that may be worth \$1 billion, the Bureau of Indian Affairs officials confirmed Wednesday. The tribe, however, may not want to develop the deposit.

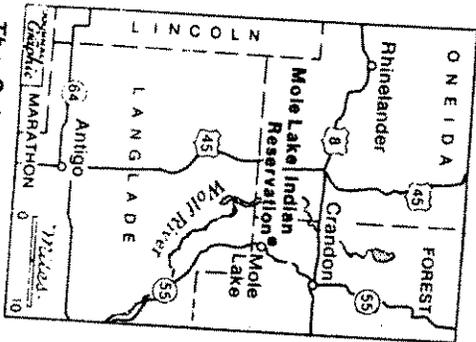
The ore body, made up of at least copper and silver, was discovered for the tribe by the US Geological Survey but had not been announced previously at the tribe's request, said David Baldwin, of the BIA Division of Energy and Minerals, in an article in Forbes magazine, a national business biweekly.

While Baldwin did not specifically say the deposit was at the Mole Lake reservation, located south of Crandon, another BIA mining official confirmed Wednesday that Baldwin had been describing an ore body on the western edge of the six-square-mile reservation.

Tribal chairman Raymond McGeshick confirmed that the 290-member Sokaogon tribe had known about the ore body for about two years after the drilling of seven holes by the Geological Survey.

Near drill site

While the tribal council has not met since the publication of the Forbes article Nov. 9, McGeshick said he doubted whether members of the tribe would change their stance against development of the deposit.



The Sokaogon Chippewa community is sitting on an ore body that may be worth \$1 billion.

"I don't think they want it," McGeshick said of tribal members. "Even if it's under the ground, they say leave it there. But who knows what they will say in five years."

The deposit is only a half mile from the western boundary of the reservation where Exxon Minerals Co. did extensive drilling a few years ago. Exxon is considering development of a huge copper-zinc deposit, which also contains silver, on the eastern boundary of the reservation.

McGeshick said the tribe watched Exxon's exploratory drilling with concern.

"They were very close," he said.

Hard year

This year has been a particularly hard one for the Sokaogon as it has been on most Indian reservations in the country. President Reagan's cuts in federal programs have resulted in unemployment as high as 90%, McGeshick said. But tribal members are still concerned more by political and social changes that could result from mining.

"There is a small tribe in the north, a really small tribe, and they're sitting on a sizable amount of copper," Forbes quoted Baldwin as saying. "When we talked to the tribe, they told us their whole lifestyle for thousands of years had been tied to the wild rice that grew in their lake, and I couldn't tell them if we started mining we would never get any copper sulfide in the lake."

Baldwin said the deposit was first estimated by BIA geologists to be worth about \$250 million, but three months ago, after further testing, geologists said the silver content of the ore was so high it could net the tribe \$1 billion.

Mining company officials have suggested for a couple of years that a deposit existed on the reservation.

The Sokaogon have turned down all mining company requests for exploration on Indian lands.

THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL Thursday
March 10, 1981

Mine ban won't halt tribes, foes say

CAP Times 12-12-97

By David Callender

The Capital Times

Opponents of a proposed moratorium on sulfide mining in Wisconsin say the bill would do nothing to prevent the state's Indian tribes from mining on tribal lands.

"This information is extremely disturbing," said Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, the chairman of the Assembly Environment Committee and a critic of the proposed moratorium.

Duff said if the tribes aren't covered by the bill, "the so-called mining moratorium bill is a sham. We will merely be closing shop for non-Indian mining operations while opening the door on Indian lands for metallic mining completely free from the oversight of our Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources."

But moratorium supporters said Duff's "discovery" of Indian sovereignty is nothing new and is a sign of the opponents' growing desperation over the measure.

"It's an attempt by some politi-

Moratorium bill called 'sham'

cians to drive a wedge between Indians and non-Indians on this issue," said Ken Fish, director of the Menominee Nation's Treaty Rights and Mining Impact Office.

The Menominee hold the most tribal lands in the state, totaling nearly 240,000 acres. Fish said the tribe has no plans to do any mining and the tribe's constitution bars "exploitation" of natural resources.

Duff's comments came in response to a report by the nonpartisan Legislative Council that traced the state's ability to regulate tribal mining. The report is based on a 1986 Wisconsin attorney general's opinion.

Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, the moratorium's author, said the Legislative Council report is "nothing new."

"It's really a non-issue," he said.

Tribes have long been exempt

from all state mining laws, he noted, and, perhaps more importantly, the U.S. Geological Survey has found no mineral deposits sufficient to justify mining on tribal lands.

The U.S. Constitution and federal laws state that Indian tribes are sovereign entities, much like states. As a result, except in certain cases, the tribes set their own laws and operate independently of states, although like states, they are still subject to federal laws. In some cases, they are also subject to state laws.

The Legislative Council memo states that the proposed moratorium and other existing state mining restrictions would not apply to Wisconsin's Indian tribes.

The moratorium is aimed primarily at blocking the proposed Crandon mine in northeastern Wisconsin at the headwaters of the Wolf River. The bill passed the

Senate overwhelmingly last year, the Assembly is scheduled to take it up in January.

The moratorium would bar mining companies from opening a mine unless they can prove that a similar mine has operated pollution-free for at least 10 years, and that another mine using similar technology has been closed for at least 10 years without polluting.

Many northeastern Wisconsin tribes, including the Mole Lake Chippewa and the Menominee, support the moratorium and oppose the Crandon mine.

In recent years, several tribes have asked the federal Environmental Protection Agency for state status, which would allow them to enact their own water-quality standards stricter than state laws. The state has consistently opposed the tribes' efforts.

Duff said Thursday that he would support allowing the tribes to enact tougher standards than existing state laws, but he believes the state must still regulate their mines.

Digging in again

Mining foes are coming out in force

■ They've expanded their ranks and gotten more sophisticated

By Richard Eggleston
Associated Press writer

MADISON — Like dandelions that stubbornly pop up in the lawn every spring, mining is again a hot issue in Wisconsin.

Controversy over the industry has kept two generations of geologists, corporate executives, bureaucrats and opponents busy since the modern era of metallic mining in the state began with the opening of an open pit iron ore mine in Jackson County in 1869.

Mining is an activity that predates statehood. It gave Wisconsin its nickname, the Badger State, because badgers, like the state's miners, burrowed into the ground.

But critics say citizens throughout Wisconsin are becoming more aware of the mess that mining can leave behind, and want public officials to do something about it.

In this month alone, environmentalists asked lawmakers and legislative candidates to pledge to ban mining in northern Wisconsin until the activity can be shown to be pollution free. Also, an appeals court ruled that the DNR cannot ban mining under general state water quality laws, and the Clark County board imposed a moratorium on negotiations with companies interested in metallic mining on

county lands.

In April, the Mining Impact Coalition, a group critical of mining, attracted 1,100 people to 22 meetings up and down the Wolf and Wisconsin rivers, from Sauk City to Rhineland, said David Blouin, a Sierra Club activist who helped organize the two-week blitz.

"We turned a lot of folks into activists," said Blouin, who wasn't around in the 1970s when hundreds of people packed meetings in Crandon and Ladysmith to oppose mining projects by Kennecott Copper and Exxon.

"I'm a second-generation activist," Blouin said.

But unlike the first generation, activist groups like the Wisconsin

WISCONSIN MINING CHRONOLOGY

Important dates in the state's metallic mining history:

- 1828** Nathaniel Morris and partners strike lead ore near what is now Mineral Point.
- 1885** Iron mining begins near Hurley.
- 1968** Kennecott discovers rich copper deposit near Ladysmith.
- 1969** Open-pit iron ore mine opens near Black River Falls.
- 1976** Exxon announces discovery of large medium-grade zinc and copper deposit near Crandon.
- 1977** Kennecott puts project on hold when state dismisses permit application because of zoning problem; Legislature passes tough mining laws.
- 1979** Eagle River mine near Shullsburg closes, ending lead and zinc mining era in southwestern Wisconsin.
- 1983** Iron ore mine near Black River Falls closes, ending iron ore and taconite mining era in Wisconsin.
- 1986** Exxon puts plans for Crandon mine on hold due to low copper prices.
- 1987** Kennecott revives the Ladysmith project.
- 1990** DNR issues environmental statement finding no significant problems with Ladysmith mine plans.
- 1993** First ore shipped from Ladysmith to smelters in Canada; new era begins

Appleton Post-Crescent June 17, 1996

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Appleton Post-Crescent June 17, 1996

be the cleanest mine in the world," Duff said.

The mine on the bank of the Flambeau River near Ladysmith has been exceptionally clean, its waste water cleaner than the river water into which it is dumped, Duff said.

But Blouin said the fact remains that mines, like landfills, are bound to cause some pollution. And he acknowledged that mining opponents are likely only to improve plans for the Exxon mine, not halt it entirely.

Supporters boast of the economic benefits of mining. Not only do the mines themselves create jobs, but mining equipment makers in Wisconsin employ nearly 5,000 people and rack up nearly a billion dollars a year in sales.

Opponents see mining as an economic as well as environmental threat to the north.

"It's an issue of the transformation of northern Wisconsin's economy from a renewable-resource economy based on tourism, agriculture and timber to an extractive resource economy," Gedicks said.

Although Duff disagrees with some of the tactics and conclusions of mining opponents, he welcomes their presence.

"They're serving a good role by ensuring it's done in an environmentally sound way," he said.



"There are some groups out there that are using it as a scare tactic."

REP. MARC DUFF, R-New Berlin
mining proponent

1993. It employs about 60 people and in its first full year of operation mined an estimated \$130 million worth of ore and paid \$6.1 million in taxes.

Exxon, which abandoned plans for its Crandon mine in late 1986, revived them and is now seeking permits to mine 55 million tons of zinc and copper ore. The Department of Natural Resources hopes to have an environmental impact statement on the latest plans for that mine completed early next year.

"Stopping them once is not good enough. You have to make a lifelong commitment," Gedicks said.

State Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, chairman of the Assembly Environment and Utilities Committee, said much of the steam behind the anti-mining movement is just political hot air.

Conservation Congress and chapters of Trout Unlimited this time around are passing resolutions calling for a mining moratorium until environmental questions are resolved.

And American Indian tribes are speaking out more intensely against mining projects they fear could pollute their ancestral lands and destroy their way of life.

"There's a lot more people involved the second time around," said Al Gedicks, executive secretary of the Wisconsin Resources Protection Council. "People who were 5 and 6 years old when the Exxon project first started in 1976 are active now."

"I have never seen the steam that is going now," said Roscoe Churchill, 79, who opposed the Kennecott mine now operating at Ladysmith since the early 1970s. "A lot of people have come and gone, including my dear wife."

Evelyn Churchill, Roscoe's wife of nearly 59 years who fought the mining companies alongside him, died June 7.

Plans to dig the open-pit Flambeau Mine, now co-owned by Kennecott and Rio Tinto Zinc, were abandoned in the 1970s but revived in the 80s. The mine began shipping copper, silver and gold ore in

Assembly passes mine bill with GOP amendment intact

Change means measure must go back to Senate

By AMY RINARD
of the Journal Sentinel staff

Madison — A controversial bill aimed at delaying the proposed Crandon mine was approved by a 75-21 vote in the

Assembly on Thursday and sent to the Senate, where Democrats vowed to peel off a Republican-backed amendment they claimed gutted the measure.

The bill, approved after hours of debate and closed meetings Wednesday and Thursday, would prohibit a company from opening a metal ore mine unless it submits examples of similar mines that have operated for 10

years without harming the environment and shows that such a mine has been closed for 10 years without causing pollution.

But most of the debate in the Assembly centered not on the bill itself, but on the amendment introduced at the request of the state Department of Natural Resources, that sought to de-

Please see MINING page 6

fine pollution and specify what constitutes a violation of environmental law. Opponents of the amendment prefer that violations not be defined so closely.

The amendment would set up the criteria for what kinds of mines a company proposing a mine in Wisconsin may submit to state regulators as proof that mining operation would not harm the environment.

Depending on whom you listened to, the amendment either gutted or strengthened the bill.

"This makes the bill meaningless," said state Rep. Spence Black (D-Madison), the Assembly author of the so-called mining moratorium bill. "This amendment will pave the way for Exxon's Wolf River mine."

Black said he had legal opinions to back up his contention that the amendment would make it easier to provide proof because more mines would be able to meet the standard.

But state Rep. Tom Ourada (R-Antigo), who introduced the amendment, said the language change made it harder for mining companies to meet the proof test. He said he had opinions from DNR and legislative attorneys to back up his view.

Ourada said the amendment, which passed by a 51-44 vote Thursday, narrows the list of mines that could be used as examples of safely operated mines.

The amendment, in fact, strengthens the bill, he said.

In a memo to Ourada that was distributed to all Assembly members Thursday, DNR Secretary George Meyer said the amendment strengthens the bill and does not gut the measure.

But Democrats, clearly planning to make the mining moratorium bill an issue in this year's legislative elections, blasted the amendment — as well as Meyer's endorsement of it — as a sell-out by Republicans to Exxon Coal and Minerals Co.

The Crandon Mining Co., a partnership formed by Exxon and Rio Algom Ltd., of Toronto is seeking federal and state approval to mine 55 million tons of zinc, copper and lead ore from a deposit 5 miles south of Crandon in Forest County, near the Wolf River.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Chvala (D-Madison) made a statement Thursday that the Senate "Democrats will work hard to undo the damage that the Republicans did in the Assembly" by trying to remove the amendment.

"Assembly Republicans have polluted the mining bill so badly that the Senate is going to find it awfully hard to swallow," Chvala said.

The Senate approved the moratorium bill by a 29-3 vote last March and sent it to the As-

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

1-23-98

Citizen Correspondence

To the Editor:

Rep. Robert Goetsch sold out the people of Dodge County on Jan. 21-22 at the State Capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Dodge County's.

You'd be appalled to find out that Rep. Goetsch voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then he voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first.

This situation is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Kerr-McGee, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather the earlier vote to adopt the so-called

"Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original Bill said that a mining

company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Rep. Goetsch's vote is a breach of public trust. I urge you to call him at 1-888-534-0039 and let him know he WILL be held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are NOT citizens of this state. YOU are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

So here we sit with a gutless Bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senator, Scott Fitzgerald, at 920-386-2421. Tell him to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining.

Laura Furtman
Webster, Wis.

Beaver Dam Daily Citizen
February 3, 1998

Fennimore Times
February 5, 1998

Representatives sold out

Editor:

I believe Reps. David Brandemuehl and Stephen Freese sold out the people of Grant County on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Grant County's.

You'd be appalled to find out that Reps. Brandemuehl and Freese voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then they voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way they could come home to their constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this Bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality they had taken the teeth out of it first.

This is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Kerr-McGee, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original Bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

In my opinion, Reps. Brandemuehl (1-888-534-0049) and Freese (1-888-534-0051) have violated the public trust. I urge you to call them and let them know they will be held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are not citizens of this state. You are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

Laura Furtman
Webster

Editor's note: The Wisconsin State Senate passed an amendment to the "Mining Moratorium Bill" Tuesday. The amendment, approved 27-5, closed the loophole under which mines that caused pollution could be cited to satisfy prerequisites for new mines in Wisconsin. The amended bill was to be returned to the State Assembly for final action, where Brandemuehl and Freese would have another vote on the measure.

Disturbed about amendment to Mining Moratorium Bill

VCH 2/5

to the editor:
Rep. DuWayne Johnsrud
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BPH-Utah, Noranda and
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snooping around the area,
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sin resources. There is even
the potential for uranium min-
ing our state.

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contaminating nearby water
supplies.

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gone to court. This means
mines that have caused great
environmental damage but
have not actually gone
through a formal legal pro-

ceeding could be used as
acceptable examples. Many
such mines exist, so we are in
big trouble.

Rep. Johnsrud's vote is a
breach of public trust. I urge
you to call him at 1-888-534-
0096 and let him know he will
be held accountable in the
next election.

So here we sit with a gut-
less bill that's on its way back
to the State Senate for confir-
mation. What do we do? Rea-
son tells me that if the Assem-
bly could add a weakening
amendment, then the Senate
should have equal power to
remove it. Time is short.

Call State Senator Brian
Rude at 608-789-4607. Tell
him to fight to remove the
"Exxon/Rio-Algom Amend-
ment" and give us back a true
moratorium on sulfide mining.
After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom
are NOT citizens of this state.
YOU are the ones who vote
and deserve to be represented.

Laura Furtman
Webster

Vernon County Broadcaster
February 5, 1998

Gutless decision made on Mining Moratorium Bill

Editor:

Reps. David Brandemuehl and Stephen
Freese sold out the people of Grant
County on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state capi-
tol. What am I talking about? The Min-
ing Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I
was there for every minute of the two
days of debate on the floor. And, believe
me, I paid keen attention to what was said
by our state legislators, including Grant
County's.

You'd be appalled to find out that Reps.
Brandemuehl and Freese voted to amend
the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its
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voted for the weakened version. Pretty
clever, isn't it? That way they could come
home to their constituents and say, "Yes,
I voted for this Bill because I knew you
wanted it," when in reality they had taken
the teeth out of it first.

This is particularly worrisome, because
so much exploratory drilling has been
done across Northern Wisconsin that,
according to a former Exxon geologist,
the north woods has the potential to be-
come a "new domestic mining district."
Kerr-McGee, BPH-Utah, Noranda and
Exxon are just a few of the mining gi-
ants who have been snooping around the
area, looking to see if they might be able

to turn a profit from our Wisconsin re-
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so we are in big trouble.

Reps. Brandemuehl (1-888-534-0049)
and Freese (1-888-534-0051) have vio-
lated the public trust. I urge you to call
them and let them know they will be held
accountable in the next election. After all,
Exxon and Rio-Algom are not citizens
of this state. You are the ones who vote
and deserve to be represented.

Laura Furtman
Webster

Grant County Herald
February 5, 1998

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Dodgeville Chronicle - Thursday, February 5, 1998 - Se

Your Opinion

What do we do?

Johnsrud sells out people concerning mining bill

not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Dear Editor:
Rep. DuWayne Johnsrud sold out the people of Vernon County on January 21 and 22 at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The mining moratorium bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Rep. Johnsrud.

Rep. Johnsrud's vote is a breach of public trust. I urge you to call him at 1-888-534-0096 and let him know he WILL be held accountable in the next election.

You'd be appalled to find out that he voted to amend the bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then he voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first.

So here we sit with a gutless bill, that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senator, Brian Rude, at 608-789-4607. Tell him to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are NOT citizens of this state. YOU are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

This is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Western Nuclear, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources. There is even the potential for uranium mining in our state.

Laura Furtman
Webster, Wis.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original bill said that a mining company could

Dear Editor,
Reps. David Brandemuehl and Stephen Freese sold out the people of Iowa County on January 21st and 22nd at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. and, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Iowa County's.

Algom Amendment." The original bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

You'd be appalled to find out that Reps. Brandemuehl and Freese voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then they voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way they could come home to their constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality they had taken the teeth out of it first.

Reps. Brandemuehl (1-888-534-0049) and Freese (1-888-534-0051) have violated the public trust. I urge you to call them and let them know they WILL be held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are NOT citizens of this state. YOU are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

This is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Kerr-McGee, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources.

So here we sit with a gutless bill that's on its way back to the state senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your state senator Dale Schultz, at 1-800-978-8008. Tell him to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-

Laura Furtman, Webster

Epitaph News (La Farge)
February 5, 1998

Dodgeville Chronicle
February 5, 1998

To the Editor;

Rep. Tom Sykora sold out the people of Chippewa County on January 21st and 22nd at the state capitol, and Rep. Chuck Schafer didn't even show up! What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two-days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Chippewa County's.

You'd be appalled to find out that Rep. Sykora voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then he voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this Bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first.

This situation is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." For example, both AMAX and E.K. Lehmann have done exploratory drilling in Chippewa County, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from our Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original Bill said that a mining

company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Rep. Sykora's vote is a breach of public trust. I urge you to call him at 1-888-534-0067 and let him know he WILL be held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are NOT citizens of this state. YOU are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented. Rep. Chuck Schafer did not even cast a vote on this issue. You may want to call him at 1-888-534-0068 and find out why not.

So here we sit with a gutless Bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senator, David Zien, at 715-720-2300. Tell him to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" so we can have a true moratorium on sulfide mining.

Laura Furtman
Webster, WI

The Cadott Sentinel
February 5, 1998

Crucial mining vote was taken before final version of bill

Jan. 30, 1998
Webster, WI

Editor:

Reps. David Brandemuehl and DuWayne Johnsrud sold out the people of Southwest Wisconsin on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators.

You'd be appalled to find out that Reps. Brandemuehl and Johnsrud voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then they voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way they could come home to their constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality they had taken the teeth out of it first.

This is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Kerr-McGee, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio Algom Amendment." The original bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Laura Furtman

Boscobel Dial
February 5, 1998

Put the teeth back in the Mining Moratorium Bill

Reps. Eugene Hahn and Joan Spillner sold out the people of Columbia County on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state Capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Columbia County's.

You'd be appalled to find out that Reps. Hahn and Spillner voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then they voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That

way they could come home to their constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality they had taken the teeth out of it first. Rep. Spillner has the unique distinction of selling out her constituents within the first week of being on the job.

This situation is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Kerr-McGee, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might

be able to turn a profit from our Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio Algom Amendment." The original bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such

mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

And here we sit with a gutless bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it.

Laura Furtman
Webster

Editor's note: Yesterday, the Senate voted to amend the Amendment referred to in this letter. The Mining Moratorium Bill now goes back to the Assembly for consideration.

Portage Daily Register
February 4, 1998

Musser voted to gut mining bill

Rep. Terry Musser sold out the people of Monroe County ... What am I talking about? The mining moratorium bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Rep. Musser.

You'd be appalled to find out that he voted to amend the mining moratorium bill, gutting strong controls on mining. Then he voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first.

This situation is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the northwoods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Western Nuclear, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from our Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to

mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused a great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Rep. Musser's vote is a breach of public trust. I urge you to call him at 1-888-534-0092 and let him know he will be held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are not citizens of this state. You are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

So, here we sit with a gutless bill that's on its way back to the state Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your state Senator, Rodney Moen, at 715-538-4848. Tell him to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" so we can have a true moratorium on sulfide mining.

Laura Furtman
Webster

Tomah Monitor Herald
February 2, 1998

Woman Disagrees With Musser's Stand On Mining Moratorium Bill

Representative Terry Musser sold out the people of Jackson County on January 21st and 22nd at the state capitol, and it's difficult to know what to say about Representative Barbara Gronemus. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the 2 days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Jackson County's.

You'd be appalled to find out that Rep. Musser voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then he voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first. Rep. Gronemus, on the other hand, abstained from voting on the amendment.

This situation is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Western Nuclear, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be

(See Letters, p.28)

July 4, 1998

(Letters from p.2)

able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original Bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove **by example** that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually **gone to court**. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

And here we sit with a gutless Bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senator Rodney Moen, at 715-538-4848. Tell him to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" so we can have a true moratorium on sulfide mining. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are NOT citizens of this state. YOU are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

Laura Furtman
Webster, WI

Melrose Chronicle
February 4, 1998

A gutless bill!

To the Editor:

Rep. Terry Musser sold out the people of Jackson County on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state capitol, and it's difficult to know what to say about Rep. Barbara Gronemus. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Jackson County's.

You'd be appalled to find out that Rep. Musser voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then he voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this Bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first. Rep. Gronemus, on the other hand, abstained from voting on the amendment.

This situation is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Western Nuclear, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin

resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original Bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

And here we sit with a gutless Bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senator, Rodney Moen, at (715) 538-4848. Tell him to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" so we can have a true moratorium on sulfide mining. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are not citizens of this state. You are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

Laura Furtman
Webster, WI

Black River Falls
Banner Journal
February 4, 1998

Mining Moratorium Bill is too weak

Dear Editor:

Reps. Alvin Ott and Clifford Otte sold out the people of Calumet County on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Calumet County's.

You'd be appalled to find out that Reps. Ott and Otte voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then they voted for the weakened version.

Pretty clever, isn't it? That way they could come home to their constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality they had taken the teeth out of it first.

This is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Kerr-McGee, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to

adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Reps. Ott (1-888-534-0003) and Otte (1-888-529-0027) have violated the public trust. I urge you to call them and let them know they WILL be

held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are NOT citizens of this state. YOU are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

So here we sit with a gutless bill that's on its way back to the state senate for conformation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your state senators, Alan Lasee (920-336-8830) and Calvin Potter (920-452-6875). Tell them to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining.

Laura Furtman
Webster, WI

Writer says local politicians 'sold out' on mining vote

To the editor:

Reps. Alvin Ott and Clifford Otte sold out the people of Calumet County on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Calumet County's.

You'd be appalled to find out that Reps. Ott and Otte voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then they voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way they could come home to their constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality they had taken the teeth out of it first.

This is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Kerr-McGee, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original Bill said that a

mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Reps. Ott (1-888-534-0003) and Otte (1-888-529-0027) have violated the public trust. I urge you to call them and let them know they WILL be held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are NOT citizens of this state. YOU are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

So here we sit with a gutless bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your state Senators, Alan Lasee (920-336-8830) and Calvin Potter (920-452-6875). Tell them to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining.

Laura Furtman
Webster, WI

New Holstein Reporter
February 5, 1998

Did Handrick sell out?

EDITOR, The Daily News:

Rep. Joseph Handrick sold out the people of Oneida County on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Rep. Handrick.

First he voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then he voted against the Bill he had just amended. I can only conclude that he did not want these mining controls to pass in any shape or form.

This situation is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the Northwoods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Noranda, Chev-

ron, Cominco, Cyprus, E.K. Lehmann, Mineralco, NL Industries, and Placer Dome have all done exploratory drilling in Oneida County, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from our Wisconsin resources. Potential mining sites include Lynne, Enterprise County Forest, Pelican, and Stockley Creek.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original Bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Rep. Handrick's vote is a breach of public trust. I urge you to call him at 1-888-534-0034 and let him know he will be held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio Algom are not citizens of this state. You are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

So here we sit with a gutless Bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senator Roger Breske, at 715-454-6575. Tell him to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide

~~gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.~~

Laura Furtman

Rhineland Daily News
February 5, 1998

Editor:

Reps. Lorraine Seratti and John Gard sold out the people of Marinette County on Jan. 21 and 22 at the State Capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Seratti and Gard.

They both voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Gard then voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this Bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first. Seratti, on the other hand, voted against the Bill she had just amended. I can only conclude that she did not want these mining controls to pass in any shape or form.

This situation is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Western Nuclear, Amoco, BPH, St. Joseph American and UOP Mineral Science have all done exploratory drilling in Marinette County, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from our Wisconsin resources. Pembine is one of the potential mining sites.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The

original Bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

And here we sit with a gutless Bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senators, Gary Drzewiecki and Roger Breske. Tell them to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are not citizens of this state. You are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

Laura Furtman,
Webster

Peshtigo Times
February 4, 1998

Representatives Sold Out People of County

To the Editor:

Representatives Cloyd Porter and Neal Kedzie sold out the people of Walworth County on January 21 and 22 at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Representatives Porter and Kedzie.

They both voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Representative Kedzie then voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first. Representative Porter, on the other hand, voted against the Bill and had just amended. I can only conclude that he did not want these mining controls to pass in any shape or form.

This is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become "a new domestic mining district." Western Nuclear, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from our Wisconsin Resources. There is even the potential for uranium mining in our a state.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually

gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

And here we sit with a gutless bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senators, Timothy Weeden (608-362-7877) and Robert Wirch (888-769-4724.) Tell them to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are not citizens of this state. You are the ones who vote and deserve to be respected.

Laura Furtman,
Webster

Lake Geneva Regional News
February 12, 1998

Zukowski vote on mining bill a 'breach of public trust'

To the Editor:

Rep. Robert Zukowski sold out the people of Clark County on Jan. 21st and 22nd at the state capitol.

What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Clark County's.

You'd be appalled to find out that Rep. Zukowski voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. He then turned around and voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this Bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first.

This situation is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." For example, both Cominco and Kerr-McGee have drilled in Clark County, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom

Amendment." The original Bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Rep. Zukowski's vote is a breach of public trust. I urge you to call him at 1-888-534-0069 and let him know he WILL be held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are NOT citizens of this state. YOU are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

So here we sit with a gutless Bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senator, David Zien, at 715-720-2300. Tell him to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining.

Laura Furtman
Webster

Clark County Press
February 4, 1998

February 12, 1998

Rep. Steve Nass sold out the people of Walworth and Jefferson counties on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Rep. Nass.

You'd be appalled to find out that he voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then he voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first.

This is particularly worrisome because so much exploratory drilling has been done across northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Western Nuclear, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original

bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Rep. Nass' vote is a breach of public trust. I urge you to call him at 1-888-529-0031 and let him know he WILL be held accountable in the next election.

So here we sit with a gutless bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senator, Joanne Huelsman at 414-521-5010. Tell her to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are NOT citizens of this state. YOU are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

Laura Furtman
Webster

Letters to the editor

Votes for mining bill

Rep. Neal Kedzie sold out the people of Walworth County on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Rep. Kedzie.

You'd be appalled to find out that he voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then he voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this Bill because I knew you wanted," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first.

This is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Western Nuclear, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources. There is even the potential for uranium mining in our state.

The Times
The Bay Times
Sharon Reporter
February 11, 1998

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original Bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Rep. Kedzie's vote is a breach of public trust. I urge you to call him at 1-888-534-0043 and let him know he will be held accountable in the next election.

So here we sit with a gutless Bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senator, Timothy Weeden, at (608) 362-7877. Tell him to fight to remove the "Exxon and

state. You are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.
Laura Furtman
Webster

Letter to the editor

Mining could cause problems

By Laura Furtman
WEBSTER, WIS.

One of Walworth County's state representatives, Neal Kedzie, appears to have made up his mind about the Mining Moratorium Bill, and the implications are quite serious for those who live in his district.

In brief, the bill says that companies like Exxon cannot move into Wisconsin and mine for metals unless they first prove they can do it without polluting our ground and surface waters.

That translates into protecting our drinking water, including Walworth County's. It sure makes sense to me, but apparently not to Rep. Kedzie.

He sits on the Assembly Environment Committee, and recently cast a

preliminary vote AGAINST the bill.

You may wonder why this should be of any concern to you.

I believe that any legislator who opposes the Mining Moratorium Bill is in effect saying, "Yes, I'd be OK with the same sort of mine and toxic waste dump that Exxon proposes for Crandon being located in my HOME district."

Any other conclusion would be hypocritical. After all, if it's OK for Crandon, shouldn't it be OK for the legislator's own backyard?

Exxon's proposed Wolf River mine would produce the state's toxic waste dump, a tailings pond over 90 feet deep and covering the size of at least 200 football fields.

All similar mines have caused acid mine drainage, which consists of a

toxic soup of sulfuric acid and heavy metals like mercury and arsenic that inevitably leaks into water supplies.

Rep. Kedzie may feel comfortable having something like that in Walworth County, but I doubt if most people in the area would agree.

It's time we band together to support the Mining Moratorium Bill and cancel out the negative votes of people like Rep. Kedzie.

Let Rep. Kedzie know that he WILL be held accountable in the next election. His number is 1 (888) 534-0043.

Remember, voting no on the bill or watering it down with amendments will pave the way for Crandon's Exxon nightmare to occur around the state, maybe even in Walworth County.

Sharon Reporter
The Times

February 7, 1998



Did representatives sell out?

To the Editor:

Reps. Stephan Nass, Frank Urban and Daniel Vrakas sold out the people of Waukesha County on Jan. 21 and 22 at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know? I was there for every minute of the two days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Reps. Nass, Urban and Vrakas.

The three of them voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Nass then voted for the weakened version. Pretty clever, isn't it? That way he could come home to his constituents and say, "Yes, I voted for this bill because I knew you wanted it," when in reality he had taken the teeth out of it first. Vrakas, on the other hand, did not even like the weakened version, and voted against that, too. I can only conclude that he did not want these mining controls to pass in any shape or form.

This situation is quite worrisome. So much exploratory drilling has been done across northern Wisconsin that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district." Kerr-McGee, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wisconsin resources. There is even the potential for uranium mining in our state.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather the earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original Bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wisconsin unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had operated without contaminating nearby water supplies. What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court. This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Rep. Urban (1-888-534-0054) has violated the public trust. I urge you to call him and let him know they will be held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are not citizens of this state. You are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

And here we sit with a gutless Bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it. Time is short. Call your State Senators, Joanne Huelsman (414-521-5010), Alberta Darling (414-352-7877) and Margaret Farrow (414-782-1261). Tell her to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are not citizens of this state. You are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

Laura Furtman
Webster

Kettle Moraine Index
February 5, 1998

Letters To The Editor

Writer Says She Will Remember

27426 County Road H
Webster, WI 54893
Tel: 715-635-7928
January 30, 1998

To the Editor:

Rep. Carol Owens sold out the people of Fond du Lac County on Jan. 21st and 22nd at the state capitol. What am I talking about? The Mining Moratorium Bill. How do I know?

I was there for every minute of the 2 days of debate on the floor. And, believe me, I paid keen attention to what was said by our state legislators, including Rep. Owens.

First she voted to amend the Mining Moratorium Bill, gutting its strong controls on mining. Then she voted against the Bill she had just amended. I can only conclude that she did not want these mining controls to pass in any shape or form.

This situation is particularly worrisome, because so much exploratory drilling has been done across Northern Wis. that, according to a former Exxon geologist, the north woods has the potential to become a "new domestic mining district."

Kerr-McGee, BPH-Utah, Noranda and Exxon are just a few of the mining giants who have been snooping around the area, looking to see if they might be able to turn a profit from OUR Wis. resources. There is even the potential for uranium mining in our state.

The most crucial vote was not the final one, but rather an earlier vote to adopt the so-called "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment." The original Bill said that a mining company could not get a permit to mine in Wis. unless it could prove by example that a similar mine had

operated without contaminating nearby water supplies.

What the amendment did was to redefine pollution to mean a violation of environmental law that had actually gone to court.

This means that mines that have caused great environmental damage but have not actually gone through a formal legal proceeding could be used as acceptable examples. Many such mines exist, so we are in big trouble.

Rep. Owens' vote is a breach of public trust. I urge you to call her at 1-888-534-0053 and let her know she WILL be held accountable in the next election. After all, Exxon and Rio-Algom are NOT citizens of this state. YOU are the ones who vote and deserve to be represented.

So here we sit with a gutless Bill that's on its way back to the State Senate for confirmation. What do we do? Reason tells me that if the Assembly could add a weakening amendment, then the Senate should have equal power to remove it.

Time is short.

Call your State Senator, Carol Roessler, at 1-888-736-8720. Tell her to fight to remove the "Exxon/Rio-Algom Amendment" and give us back a true moratorium on sulfide mining.

Laura Furtman
Webster, WI

Campbellsport News
February 5, 1998

Anti-mine candidate gets boost from Black

By TIM RYAN
Leader Reporter

State Rep. Spencer Black Thursday endorsed candidate Becky Wolf in her race against Rep. John Ainsworth for his 6th District Assembly seat.

With the Wolf River in both the physical and political background, Black held a press conference at Huckleberry Harbor Thursday afternoon to make his announcement.

He based his endorsement on Wolf's opposition to a proposed sulfide mining operation at the headwaters of the Wolf River near Crandon.

"I can't think of a better name for a candidate to protect the Wolf River," Black said. "I'm delighted to come here and endorse Becky Wolf."



Rep. Spencer Black (D-Madison) endorsed 6th Assembly District candidate Becky Wolf in her campaign against Rep. John Ainsworth (R-Waukechon) during a press conference at Huckleberry Harbor Thursday. Black hailed Wolf's pledge to support a mining moratorium in the state.

Leader photo/Tim Ryan

She grew up here, she treasures the environment and she has made protecting the environment a centerpiece of her campaign. Wolf has signed a mining moratorium pledge in support of a bill Black said he will reintroduce in the Assembly in the next legislative session.

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◆ Black: Endorses Wolf

The Crandon mine is being proposed by the Exxon Corp. and its Canadian partner Rio Algom. Black said the proposed mine has "galvanized" people in the northwestern and southeastern portions of the state.

"They have made it clear they are very concerned," Black said. Crandon mine opponents contend the operation poses too great a threat of environmental contamination of groundwater and of the Wolf River.

Those concerns stem in part, Black said, from the poor environmental record of both Exxon and Rio Algom, which have yet to operate a mine without causing environmental damage.

Black's bill would ban such mining operations until they can be proven environmentally safe.

Black said Wolf's opponent is a personal friend of his but, "he doesn't deserve to be re-elected." He chastised Ainsworth for votes that helped remove the state public intervenor's office and that, Black said, would allow environmental lawbreakers to get permits from the Department of Natural Resources.

"It's disappointing to our office that Spencer Black, a Madison political insider, is playing poli-

tics," said Sabr Varmilyea, an aide to Ainsworth.

"John hasn't made up his mind on this issue," he said. "If he believes the environment will be hurt, he will vote against (issuing a permit for the mine)."

She added that Ainsworth had concerns about a blanket ban against any type of industry. Varmilyea said there are not yet enough facts to reach a conclusion on the mining issue. "It's irresponsible to sign a pledge without all of the facts being in."

Black said the Legislature's Republican majority has worked to turn the DNR into a "political patronage" agency rather than an agency looking out for the public interest.

He accused Republican lawmakers of creating a political climate in which environmental lawbreakers can pass through loopholes for approval of their projects.

He promised to work to restore the public intervenor's office and remove political patronage from the DNR.

He said the success of those efforts, as well as that of his mining moratorium bill, would depend on electing a Democratic majority to the Legislature in next month's elections.