



Mike Philipps <philipps7550@gmail.com>

Back 40 mine

1 message

Robert Harrison <rharrison822@yahoo.com>

Fri, Dec 22, 2017 at 2:38 PM

To: Mike Philipps <philipps7550@gmail.com>

Cc: Tom Smith <t.e.smith@charter.net>, Lynn Langenfeld <lynn.langenfeld52@gmail.com>, Gene Knutson <geneknutson@ymail.com>, Walter Stevenson <wrs@plantpath.wisc.edu>, Mike Philips <philipps7550@gmail.com>, Bill Engber <Engber@ortho.wisc.edu>, David Flanders <Flandoc@charter.net>, Robert Harrison <rharrison822@yahoo.com>, Paul Ladell <pgladell@gmail.com>, Tom Pellett <tompellet@gmail.com>

Mike,

Can you link this on our website? Thanks.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kathleen Heideman <gadmin@savethewildup.org>**Subject:** Concerned Citizens Fight to Protect Menominee River Wetlands from Sulfide Mine**Date:** December 22, 2017 at 12:41:57 PM CST**To:** Mining Action Group <miningactiongroupupec@gmail.com>

Mining Action Group

Attn: Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition
P. O. Box 673 | Houghton MI 49931
savethewildup.org | (906) 662-0037

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACTS

Kathleen Heideman, Mining Action Group, info@savethewildup.org (906) 662-0037Nathan Frischkorn, Mining Action Group, frischkornnathan@gmail.com (906) 251-0113Gregg Bruff, UPEC Coordinator, gregg.upec@gmail.com (906) 201-1949

Concerned Citizens Fight to Protect Menominee River Wetlands from Sulfide Mine

The Mining Action Group of the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition (UPEC), in collaboration with regional environmental allies and fishing organizations, has secured independent, third party reviews of Aquila Resources' Back Forty Wetland permit application. If granted, this permit would authorize the destruction and impairment of wetlands caused by the Back Forty mine.

"Aquila proposes to destroy wetlands in order to build a sulfide mine on the bank of the Menominee River. Is this a good idea? We don't think so, given the proximity of wetlands to the river, and concerns about the company's plan to follow the orebody deeper underground. This site is quite complex, hydrologically, with wetlands surrounding the facility. We believe that wetland impacts may be significantly underestimated, since additional years of underground mining would greatly increase the groundwater drawdown. To help

protect the Menominee River watershed, we have secured two independent reviews of this permit,” said Kathleen Heideman, UPEC board member and a member of the Mining Action Group (MAG).

The Wetland permit was public noticed on December 8th, and the Public Comment is now open. A Public Hearing has been scheduled for January 23, 2018 at 6:00 P.M. The hearing will take place in the small gym at the Stephenson High School, [W526 Division Street, Stephenson, MI 49887](#).

A red flag review will be conducted by Dr. Kendra Zamzow of the Center for Science in Public Participation (CSP2), which analyzes mining applications and provides objective research and technical advice to communities impacted by mining. The permit will also be reviewed by Dr. Tom Myers, a hydrologic consultant who works with conservation organizations and others on mining, natural gas, and water rights development, with specific interests in contaminants and mine dewatering.

“These technical reviews will help us identify whether there are any errors or inconsistencies between groundwater data and Aquila’s predicted impacts to wetlands, and assist our grassroots effort to ensure that concerned citizens, stakeholders and regulators are fully informed as to the true impacts of this permit,” said Nathan Frischkorn, a Fellow with the Mining Action Group.

A broad coalition of fishing groups, local residents, tribal members and environmental groups are united in their opposition to the Aquila Back Forty project.

Downstream communities and residents are concerned about the potential impacts to drinking water and tourism, and have passed resolutions against the project. Marinette County unanimously passed a resolution opposing the Back Forty; additional resolutions of opposition have been passed by the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, the Oneida Nation, the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes, the towns of Porterfield, Wagner and Peshtigo, and the city of Marinette. On the Wisconsin side of the river, counties opposed to the project include Door County, Oconto County, Shawano County, Menominee County, and Brown County, which includes the city of Green Bay. After concerned citizens levied significant pressure on local officials, Menominee County became the first county in Michigan to pass a resolution opposed to the Back Forty mine. Of deep concern are downstream impacts to fisheries and water quality, since the Menominee River flows into Lake Michigan.

“The Menominee River is my friend. Since my brother and I were first introduced to the river’s terrific bass fishing by my friend Dave, I’ve taken multiple two and three day fishing trips on the Menominee every summer. It gives me and my fishing friends a lot of excitement when those bass, especially the big ones, are seen and when they strike at our flies. The Menominee is a valuable resource that shouldn’t be damaged or destroyed, which is why I’m working to protect it from the problems the proposed Back Forty mine would cause. I don’t want to lose the river to a polluting metallic sulfide mine,” said Dick Dragiewicz, an avid fisherman.

If fully permitted by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Back Forty will be an 83 acre, 800 feet deep, open-pit sulfide mine. The mine site is located on the bank of the Menominee River, the largest watershed in the wild Upper Peninsula of Michigan, only 100 feet from the water. Milling will take place on site – using cyanide and other chemicals – and waste will be stored on site, with some tailings waste remaining permanently. When mining is complete, the pit will be backfilled with waste rock and tailings, most of which is considered “reactive”, capable of producing acid mine drainage (AMD) when exposed to air and water. AMD devastates watersheds. It is difficult and expensive to remediate, and may continue leaching from the tailings for hundreds or thousands of years. In light of the extreme risk posed by this sulfide mining project, American Rivers included the Menominee River in their 2017 list of “America’s Most Endangered Rivers.”

The destruction of wetlands threatens not only the Menominee River, but Michigan and the Great Lakes. Michigan has lost about 4 million acres of wetlands since the early 1800s, or 40% of the total wetlands that covered the state before European colonization. According to a 2014 report by the DEQ, the state lost 41,000 acres between 1978 and 2005, or more than 1,000 acres per year on average. Wetlands are important ecosystems that provide many benefits, including water filtration, erosion and flood control, and essential habitat for a diverse array of species. Any damage to wetlands along the Menominee River would have a negative effect on not only the river, but on downstream communities as well.

Independent technical reviews of the Aquila Back Forty Wetland permit are made possible by the generous support of numerous groups and individuals concerned about the future health of the Menominee River. Working collaboratively, the [Mining Action Group](#) of the [Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition](#) and the [Front 40](#) secured small grants and donations from [Freshwater Future](#), [Superior Watershed Partnership](#), the [Western Mining Action Network](#), [DuPage Rivers Fly Tyers \(DRiFT\)](#), [Northern Illinois Fly Tyers \(NIFT\)](#), [Badger Fly Fishers](#), [M&M Great Lakes Sport Fisherman](#), [Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance](#), [Fly Fishers](#)

[International](#), [Great Lakes Council of Fly Fishers International](#), the Emerick Family Fund, and individual fishing enthusiasts throughout the Great Lakes area.

The Wetland Permit application materials are available for download and review:

<https://miwaters.deq.state.mi.us/miwaters/#/external/publicnotice/info/3338938032851742207/documents>

Concerned citizens may submit written comments to the DEQ through February 2, 2018:

<https://miwaters.deq.state.mi.us/miwaters/#/external/publicnotice/info/3338938032851742207/comments>

####

Founded in 1976, the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition's purpose remains unchanged: to protect and maintain the unique environmental qualities of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan by educating the public and acting as a watchdog to industry and government. UPEC is a nonprofit, registered 501(c)(3) organization. For more information, call [906-201-1949](tel:906-201-1949), see UPenvironment.org, visit our Facebook page, or contact: upec@upenvironment.org.

The UPEC Mining Action Group (MAG) is a grassroots effort to defend the clean water and wild places of Michigan's Upper Peninsula from the dangers of sulfide mining. Contact the Mining Action Group at info@savethewildup.org or call [\(906\) 662-9987](tel:906-662-9987). Learn more about the Mining Action Group at miningactiongroup.org or follow MAG's work on Facebook or Twitter.

More information: <http://bit.ly/SaveMenominee>

[Click to view this email in a browser](#)

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

Mining Action Group
PO Box 673
Houghton, Michigan 49931
US



--

"Let difficulties know that you, too, are difficult." — Dr. Abdul Kalam

"Pay attention. It's all about paying attention. Attention is vitality. It connects you with others. It makes you eager. Stay eager." – Susan Sontag

Kathleen Heideman
miningactiongroupUPEC@gmail.com

Mining Action Group

Follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)

1-906-662-0037 | miningactiongroupUPEC@gmail.com

Note: the Mining Action Group was previously known as Save the Wild U.P., which merged to become part of the [Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition](#) (UPEC). P.O. Box 673 Houghton MI 49931

12/23/2017

Gmail - Back 40 mine

[1-906-201-1949](tel:1-906-201-1949) | UPEC@upenvironment.org