

Resolution Calling for a Detailed Hydrological Analysis of the Proposed Penokee Mine on the Bad River Watershed, the Kakagon Sloughs and Lake Superior

Whereas, the Wisconsin Legislature has substantially reduced protection for streams, lakes and wetlands that might be affected by iron mining in the state;

Whereas, an iron mine, the first phase of which is projected to be 4.5 miles long, one-half to three-quarters mile wide and 1000 feet deep has been proposed in the Penokee Hills in Ashland and Iron counties;

Whereas, the later phases of the Penokee Hills mine may extend to 22 miles in length;

Whereas, the projected Penokee Hills mine location is an environmentally sensitive area with a large number of streams, lakes and wetlands which constitute a valuable portion of the Bad River watershed upstream of Copper Falls State Park, the Bad River Indian Reservation, the internationally recognized Kakagon Slough wetland complex and the high quality waters of Lake Superior;

Whereas, the size and location of the Penokee Hills mine, has the potential to have very serious negative environmental impacts, including fish and wildlife habitat, on the high quality water resources of the Penokee Hills and the valuable downstream natural resources;

Whereas, detailed and accurate hydrologic studies of the surface and ground water of the Penokee Hills and their relationship with downstream water resources is fundamental to determine the environmental impacts of the proposed Penokee Hills mine and to determine whether state, federal and tribal environmental standards will be met.

Now therefore be it resolved that that the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation at its 2013 Annual Meeting on April 12th -14th, 2013 held in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, calls on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Geological Survey and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to complete a thorough and accurate hydrologic analysis of the surface and groundwater resources of the Penokee Hills in order to provide the base knowledge needed to complete an accurate assessment of any future iron mining project in the Penokee Hills, such study to be completed prior to any detailed environmental analysis of a proposed mining project affecting the area;

Now therefore be it further resolved that this resolution be sent to the U.S Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Governor, the State Legislature, the Natural Resources Board and the Bad River Tribe.

Submitted by Russ Hitz, Chair
WWF Environment Committee

