

I set up a free trial of Carbonite backup so I would've saved every memory.

CARBONITE
Try it Free

BREAKING NEWS» U.P. among areas to receive part of \$40 million for Michigan conservation projects

News

- News
- Sports
- Opinion
- Features
- Sections
- Extras
- Ads
- CU
- Services
- Service Directory
- Online Documents
- Ishpeming / Negaunee Map
- All Access E-Edition

/ News /

« Man shot in family feud

Kiwanis Club backs kids' mus...»

Panel to discuss Eagle Mine permit issues

March 17, 2014

JOHN PEPIN - Journal Staff Writer (jpepin@miningjournal.net) , The Mining Journal

Save |

MARQUETTE - One week before a Michigan Department of Environmental Quality hearing on a groundwater discharge permit for the Eagle Mine, grassroots activist group Save the Wild U.P. is assembling a panel Tuesday to educate the public on numerous instances of state pollution permit levels being exceeded at the mine since 2007.

The SWUP event will be at 6 p.m. on the lower level of the Peter White Public Library, located at Front and Ridge streets in Marquette. The panel will include former federal offshore oil regulator Jeffery Loman, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community geologist Chuck Brumlevel and Marquette attorney Michelle Halley, who has worked on numerous Eagle Mine issues.

"This permit allows water that people drink to be polluted," Halley said. "MDEQ is making the same mistakes over and over. If you're relying on MDEQ or Lundin Mining to keep our drinking water as clean as it has always been, don't."

The DEQ hearing on the Eagle Mine permit will be at 6 p.m. March 25 at Westwood High School in Ishpeming Township. The session will begin with DEQ officials answering questions about the proposed permit. Testimony will then be taken from the public. Public comment is being accepted by the DEQ until April 1.

SWUP is urging citizens to attend the hearing to raise questions and provide comments to the DEQ on the proposed permit.

The DEQ requires the mine's groundwater discharge permit to be renewed every five years.

DEQ officials said they prepared the proposed permit - announced in late November - after an extensive review of the mine's wastewater treatment system and includes minor revisions reflecting water conditions at the site of the nickel and copper mine.

SWUP said data from the Community Environmental Monitoring Program - which monitors mining activity through the Superior Watershed Partnership - shows the mine has exceeded its permits more than 40 times since the 2007 groundwater discharge permit was issued. Included were pH, arsenic, copper, lead, molybdenum, silver and vanadium at levels that exceeded permitted levels, SWUP said.

"The MDEQ's proposed revised groundwater discharge permit is inconsistent with federal law, fails to protect the Yellow Dog Watershed, and the process for issuing this revised permit violates both state and federal administrative procedures act requirements," Loman said. "I intend to hold the Environmental Protection Agency accountable for these failures as they are the trustee for treaty-protected tribal resources threatened by this reckless regulatory fiasco."

Geri Grant, senior planner at the Superior Watershed Partnership, said the monitoring program data confirms there have been about 40 cases of DEQ permit limits being exceeded between 2008 and 2013.

Grant said the DEQ has confirmed there have been no violations of the current permit because the exceedance incidents were related to natural background levels (high pH, et cetera) or a specific event, like a broken well casing.

"CEMP analysis indicates that many of the permit exceedances occurred prior to September 2011, when Eagle Mine's operations began and some occurred prior to site construction activities that began in 2010," Grant said. "This information suggest that in most cases, these values reflect natural groundwater conditions."

Grant said the partnership is watching several monitoring locations closely for trends in parameters, such as vanadium, which could potentially be linked to mining activities. She said the partnership's EPA-approved lab is capable of detecting very small levels of heavy metals and other potential contaminants of concern, well below DEQ permit limits.

"CEMP has further confirmed that the discharge (effluent) from Eagle Mine's wastewater treatment facility has not impacted nearby receiving groundwater since it began operating in 2011," Grant said.

SWUP President Kathleen Heideman said it is factually inaccurate to say that increasing levels of heavy metals and other pollutants reflects previous natural conditions at the Eagle Mine.

"It's a matter of public record that this proposed permit would exponentially increase the pollutants, compared with (former owner) Rio Tinto's own 2004 reported baseline date," Heideman said. "In some cases, it would allow groundwater contamination to exceed the EPA's legal limits for drinking water. Clearly, groundwater quality will be undermined by this permit."

To view the monitoring program's database, visit: reach.northjacksonco.com/ReachCEMP/Benchmark_Monitoring/Benchmark_Monitoring.aspx.

John Pepin can be reached at 906-228-2500, ext. 206.

Save |

Recommend Be the first of your friends to recommend this.

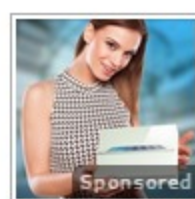
+1 0

Subscribe to Mining Journal

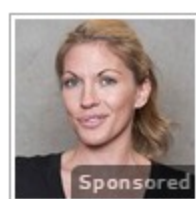
Sponsored From Around the Web



Tricks Car Insurance Agents Don't Want You to Know



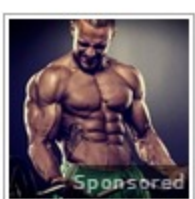
How New iPads Are Selling for Under \$40



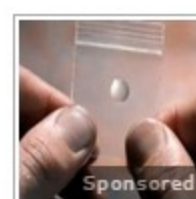
Shocking Website Reveals Anyone's Past Online, Take a Look



The Trick to Shopping Designer Brands for a Steal



Cheats to Boost Testosterone



Secret Brain Pill Billionaires Are Using



Do THIS Before Eating Carbs (Every Time)



Melt Your Fat Like Butter

?

News, Blogs & Events

I am looking for:

in:

News, Blogs & Events Web

title nine

RESOLUTIONS SALE
UP TO 50% OFF
GET DRESSED

SAVE an average of over **\$497** a year

Zip Code

PROGRESSIVE

Holiday Inn Express H...
Official Site. Book Direct & Save With Best Price Guarantee!

Compare Before You Book
Compare Rates From All Major Travel Sites - Find the Lowest Fare!

Mapas y Direcciones
Busque Mapas e Imágenes Satelitales de Forma Automática. ¡App Gratis!

One Tech Stock You Won't Want To Miss