



Upcoming Events

January 15 - 6:30 PM FOLK steering committee meets at Soldans' home.

UPPCO Submits Revised UP Impoundment SMPs for FERC Approval

On November 30, UPPCO announced it had submitted the Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) for all 5 UP hydroelectric impoundments to the Federal Regulatory Commission (FERC) for approval.

Important changes were made to the draft SMPs that were available during the public comment period:

- All flowages: Prohibits removal of any eastern hemlock den-cavity nesting trees, wolf trees, and fruit- and mast-bearing trees. Eliminates electricity and permanent lights for docks.
Bond Falls: Reduces number of dock slips from 424 to 320. Postpones development at Little Falls, Deadman's Creek, and Twin Lakes to a schedule dependent only upon future need.
Prickett: Eliminates proposed navigational channel. Eliminates enhanced view areas. Reduces the shoreline area eligible for dock placement
Victoria: Designates entire project property for conservation and existing recreational opportunities.

Source, http://www.integrystgroup.com/news/view_article.cfm?companyID=UPPCO&rekey=01508

These concessions by UPPCO address several (but not all) of the concerns raised by attendees at public and private meetings. It appears Victoria Lake is now off the list of flowages to be developed, and proposed changes to Prickett Lake were minimized. Once again, it appears that public involvement has had an effect.

Michigan DEQ Approves Kennecott Mining Permits

On December 14, the Michigan DEQ announced its decision to approve a series of permits to the Kennecott Eagle Minerals Company to conduct mining operations on the Yellowdog Plains. A copy of the press release is available at: http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135--181926--,00.html

- Limiting mining activities to elevations below 327.5 meters from the surface to address concerns about the stability of the mine.
Requiring annual certification that the rock stability is sufficient, and making provisions for work stoppage if stability is in question.
A filter system on the mine shaft ventilation stack.
A comprehensive fugitive dust plan.
Stricter groundwater monitoring requirements.

While it is easy to be frustrated at this turn of events, we need to stop and be grateful about the changes for the better incorporated in this permit. There are still avenues to explore as this situation develops. Thanks once again to all who have participated, and please stay tuned.

Rio Tinto (Kennecott) Focuses on Six Additional Mine Sites on the Yellowdog

Rio Tinto, the parent company of Kennecott, hopes to become a top ten nickel producer in the near future. According to an article posted on the riotinto.com site, the company is looking at six additional sites on the Yellowdog that could significantly extend the life of their mining operation in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

40 Michigan Professors Send Letter Opposing Kennecott Mine

Professors from 12 Michigan Universities sent a letter to Governor Granholm and DNR Director Humphries opposing the Kennecott Eagle Project on the Yellowdog plains. The text of the message and the list of (Continued on back page)



FOLK

FOLK, formed in 1989, was established to oppose the siting of any paper/pulp mill in Keweenaw Bay. FOLK continues to promote a healthy environment in the Keweenaw Peninsula and the Lake Superior Watershed. By joining FOLK, you support this goal.

(Please Print)

Name
Address
City State Zip
Telephone Date

- Individual (Annual Membership) - \$10
Senior Citizen, Unemployed, Student (Annual) - \$5
Organization (Annual) - \$35
Check here if you want an acknowledgement
I would like to contribute to FOLK's Educational Fund.
Additional Contributions:
Total enclosed:

Lawsuits Filed Against Michigan DEQ

According to an article in the Dec. 21, 2007 Mining Journal, The National Wildlife Federation (NWF), Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, Huron Mountain Club and Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve filed a contested case petition and a lawsuit against the DEQ.

Michelle Halley, attorney for the NWF said "The MDEQ has issued permits that are based upon defective, inadequate and incomplete applications and are therefore illegal." Numerous documents have been filed which back up this statement.

More legal action may follow shortly. Kennecott spokesperson Deb Muchmore said the company had been expecting this. "We're reviewing the complaint that was filed Thursday. The opponents have indicated that legal action was going to be part of their effort. Unfortunately, legal action is part of these kinds of projects, pretty much everywhere. And unfortunately, it ends up dividing the community."

It is unclear whether this legal action will delay the beginning of mine construction. According to a pro-mine organization, The Citizens for Responsible Mining, Kennecott will shortly file a notice letter and post bond money to the DEQ. Following a 30 days waiting period, they can begin construction on the property they own. Kennecott will have to wait for a positive ruling from the Michigan DNR before they can begin construction on the state land adjacent to their land. The state land includes the portal to the mine as well as a portion of the underground ore body.

40 Michigan Professors (continued)

signators is located at <http://isleroyalewolf.org/mine/CEGmine/mining.html>

The letter argues that while proponents of the mine claim that the world economy needs more nickel, the world economy should be looking for ways to thrive with less of the metal. An unsustainable mine that dumps more mineral on the market does not help the planet prepare for the day when all the economically minable nickel is gone. We should be figuring out ways to recycle more waste materials, as well as ways to use less in our products, rather than opening a risky mine in the middle of a pristine wilderness.

FERC Publishes Notice of Application for UP Impoundment Projects

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has acknowledged receipt of the Shoreline Management Plans for the UPPCO hydroelectric impoundments in the UP. This notification is available at:

http://elibrary.ferc.gov/idmws/file_list.asp?accession_num=20071228-3022

Comments, protests, and interventions must be filed prior to January 29, 2008.

FOLK hopes to file an intervention before the due date. While an intervention is the most complicated filing, it allows for more flexible future action. The folks at UPPAC (uppac.com) recommend that individuals file either a protest (denotes opposition to the entire project) or a comment (opposition or favor of an aspect of the project.) Either should be filed for a specific impoundment, rather than for all 5 impoundments. Make sure the project number is clearly specified with your comment/protest. The project numbers are: Bond: P-1864-083, Prickett: P-2402-108, Au Train: P-10856-061, Cataract P-10854-080, and Escanaba P-2506-144. These must be mailed to Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, DHAC, PJ-12.1, 888 First Street, N.E. Washington, DC 20426

Environmental Lobbying in Lansing?

We all hear about corporate lobbyists in the news, but do lobbyists work on the environmental side of the isle? The answer to this question is yes and no. Several environmental groups were contacted about lobbying in Michigan, and the most interesting response came from Lana Pollack, President of the Michigan Environmental Council. She said, "MEC has several... registered as lobbyists. In fact this is why MEC was founded in 1980. We also contract for some part time support from a professional multi-client lobbyist... who helps with the environmental health issues.

In addition to MEC, the Sierra Club, Clean Water Action, Environment Michigan, and the Michigan League of Conservation Voters, and more recently the Ecology Center all have people who are registered lobbyists and who spend at least part of their time doing this work. Trout Unlimited also has some presence here. The Conservancies, through an organization called Heart of the Lakes, has recently stepped forward on some of the funding issues.

We've come a long way in the past few years. And believe me, if we weren't here things would be a lot worse. But if we were to double our investment in lobbying work, we'd still not have enough forces to push back against the lobbying from those who are fighting us every step of the way."

Marvin Roberson pointed out that in Lansing, Kennecott Minerals has 4 lobbyists, the bottled water industry has 10, and the timber industry around 4. While the environmental lobbyists speak for the people, the corporate members carry huge financial clout as well.