

Fall 2007



"Lake Superior Beauties"
Watercolor by
Peg Sandin

Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition

U.P. Environment

In this Edition...

Water.

Its impact on the U.P. is so pervasive, it defines those of us who live here as surely as it carves out the physical characteristics of the land.

It could even be argued that the omni-presence of Lake Superior (not to mention all the inland lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands and ponds) trumps economic status, educational level, religious upbringing – even ethnic heritage – on its ability to shape our everyday lives. Water is the link which serves to unite us.



Munising Falls
Photo courtesy of Kristy Gollakner

In this edition of the newsletter, you would be hard pressed to miss that connection. From a description of the various works in our traveling art show, to reporting on the ongoing fight to protect our watershed from the devastation of metallic sulfide mining, to the story and pictures of teenagers learning just how beautiful and fragile our ecosystem is, water emerges as the unifying theme.

This was entirely accidental. When I started putting together this issue, no thought was given to creating an edition devoted to water. It was only after the stories and suggestions for seemingly disparate pieces started coming in that the tie-in became obvious.

So sit back and marvel as I did at how lovely, crucial and deeply threatened our precious U.P. watersheds are. And then, for all of our sakes, use the addresses on page 6 to turn that knowledge into action.

FACT: Each Lake Superior watershed is a particular region where all the lakes, streams, ponds, wetlands, etc. drain into a single river which then flows into Lake Superior.

- Editor

Don't forget those Econo Foods Slips!

Thanks to you and Econo Foods, UPEC has earned several hundred dollars over the past few years by submitting grocery receipts from the store collected by UPEC members. That amount represents 1% of total gross receipts from all the slips.

That may not seem like a lot, but when you're a non-profit organization every little bit helps. Of course, that amount could be even higher this year if more of you were to save your slips and send them to us!

Either save them throughout the year and mail them off to us before the end of May, or simply hand them to a UPEC board member when you attend a meeting—whichever is most convenient. It's one of the easier ways you can offer your support.

About UPEC...

The Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition has a 30-year track record of protecting and seeking to maintain the unique environmental qualities of the U.P. through public education and watchful monitoring of industry and government.

UPEC seeks common ground with diverse individuals and organizations in order to promote sound planning and management decisions for all the region's natural resources.

Our newsletter, the *U.P. Environment*, is published four times a year.

You can send your comments or contributions to UPEC by standard mail at P.O. Box 673, Houghton, MI 49931, or e-mail us at srasch@up.net.



**Earth Share
OF MICHIGAN**

Earth Share of Michigan allows working people to donate to environmental organizations through workplace giving campaigns.

Each year Earth Share provides UPEC with critically-needed funding for environmental education and program operation.

If you would like to help us earn more funding for UPEC, consider letting your employer know you want the Earth Share of Michigan giving option at your workplace and give to the annual payroll deduction plan.

For more information, please call:
1 (800) 386-3326 or view the website at:
www.earthsharemichigan.org



UPEC Officers, Board and Staff

President: Jon Saari

Vice President: Bill Malmsten

Board Members:

David Allen

Connie Julien

Joyce Koskenmaki

Patrick St. Germain

Doug Welker

Karen Bacula

Susan Rasch: Newsletter Editor/ Business Manager

Home Office Phone and Fax #:
(906) 524- 7899

Website: www.upenvironment.org

“Home” on the Road

UPEC’s traveling art show, A Celebration of the Upper Peninsula as Home, has completed it’s the Escanaba leg of its journey and is currently residing in Marquette.

Nearly 350 people visited the show while it resided at the Bonifas Fine Arts Center in Escanaba, including Gov. Jennifer Granholm. One artist in particular seemed to catch the governor’s eye. According to Bonifas Director, Pasqua Warstler , Ron Lukey was advised to contact the governor’s office about the possibility of creating a display. Lukey is a Canadian photographer turned Yooper who finds endless inspiration around his adopted home.



UPEC President Jon Saari greets Governor Granholm at the Bonifas Fine Arts Center artists' reception in Escanaba
(Photo courtesy of Craig Woerpel and the Bonifas website, bonifasarts.org)

“You can travel 50 feet and find a world of photographic opportunities,” he notes in the artist statement that accompanies his work. “The interesting stuff is right here...I keep the camera with me at all times, but I don’t shoot from the hip. I use a tripod and approach each shot deliberately as if it were portrait.” Warstler stands in front of one of Lukey’s portrait, a triptych of the Carp River that he calls “Riverbend,” on the right.

Like nearly all the artists in the show, at least some of Lukey’s work references water. Artist Christine Saari, co-coordinator and participant in the show, says the influence of water “wasn’t a coincidence.” None of the artists were given instructions about possible themes, she pointed out, but were only told



Photo courtesy of Craig Woerpel and the Bonifa Fine Arts Center website

“to create work that expresses their feeling about... the place where they live.” However, she said the prevalence of water in the form of Lake Superior, the rivers, inland lakes, ponds and streams made it almost an inevitability that water

Fact: Of the 30 major watersheds recognized by the MDEQ in the U.P., only 14 have completed protection plans in place at this time.

would ← play a significant role in the artists’ idea of home.

(Continued on page 10)



Protect Public Lands Access In The Upper Peninsula

Picture: Eagle Rock, Yellow Dog Plains, Marquette County, Michigan

Owner: State of Michigan Citizens

Threat: Takeover by foreign mining company for more than 2 generations

Kennecott wants to fence off over 100 acres of beautiful UP Public Land for their own exclusive use for 35 years with a huge KEEP OUT sign. Tell the Natural Resources Commission and the DNR that Fencing off Public Access for Exclusive Use of a Foreign Company for 35 Years isn't Good for Michigan Citizens.

Kennecott Eagle Minerals Company wants to mine nickel and copper in the Yellow Dog Plains, one of Michigan's most beautiful wild areas in northern Marquette County. They want to dig their mine shaft into publicly-owned Eagle Rock, and fence the area off from the public for 35 years or more. ***We think the DNR should tell Kennecott NO – they cannot fence off 100 acres of beautiful Upper Peninsula Public Land from public access.***

If you hunt, fish, hike, berry-pick, snowshoe, snowmobile, canoe, kayak, or camp on public lands, a yes-decision on this land-use permit could be a terrible precedent for your future access to public lands.

Fact: The DNR has never considered a comparable permit request for exclusive use, especially for such an extremely long time. Granting this permit would set a dangerous precedent. The NRC advises the DNR on land-use decisions – and they need to hear from you ASAP. They will consider your comments when they advise DNR director Rebecca Humphries whether this land use permit should be granted. Contact the NRC members and Director Humphries - tell them granting this permit for exclusive use for 35 years by a foreign-owned company would be a bad precedent and a poor use of our state's public lands.

Kennecott should have to use their own land for their mine, not state land! Tell them this decision could harm citizens and businesses of Big Bay and Marquette County, who rely on tourism for jobs.

(For more information, go to Michigan.sierraclub.org/mining.shtml. Addresses and talking points for denying the permit can be found on the next page.)

-Rita Jack, Water Sentinels Project Director, Sierra Club

U.P. Environment

What can you do to stop this potential environmental catastrophe on *our* land? Michigan Department of Natural Resources is accepting written and e-mail comments through **October 17, 2007**. Please contact the Governor Granholm, Natural Resources Council Members and DNR Director Humphries at the addresses listed below:

1

Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

Rebecca Humphries, Director
Dept. Of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 30028
Lansing, MI 48909
humphrir@michigan.gov

DEQ/DNR Kennecott Comments
Office of Geological Survey
P.O. Box 30256
Lansing, MI 48909-7756
DEQ-Kennecott-comments@michigan.gov (use
"Kennecott Eagle Project" in subject line)

Commissioner Keith Charters (Chair)
126 Spring Hill Rd.
Traverse City, MI 49686

Commissioner Mary Brown
1624 Grand Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49006

Commissioner Darnell Earley
P.O. Box 70141
Lansing, MI 48908

Commissioner John Madigan
831 W. Munising Ave.
Munising, MI 49862

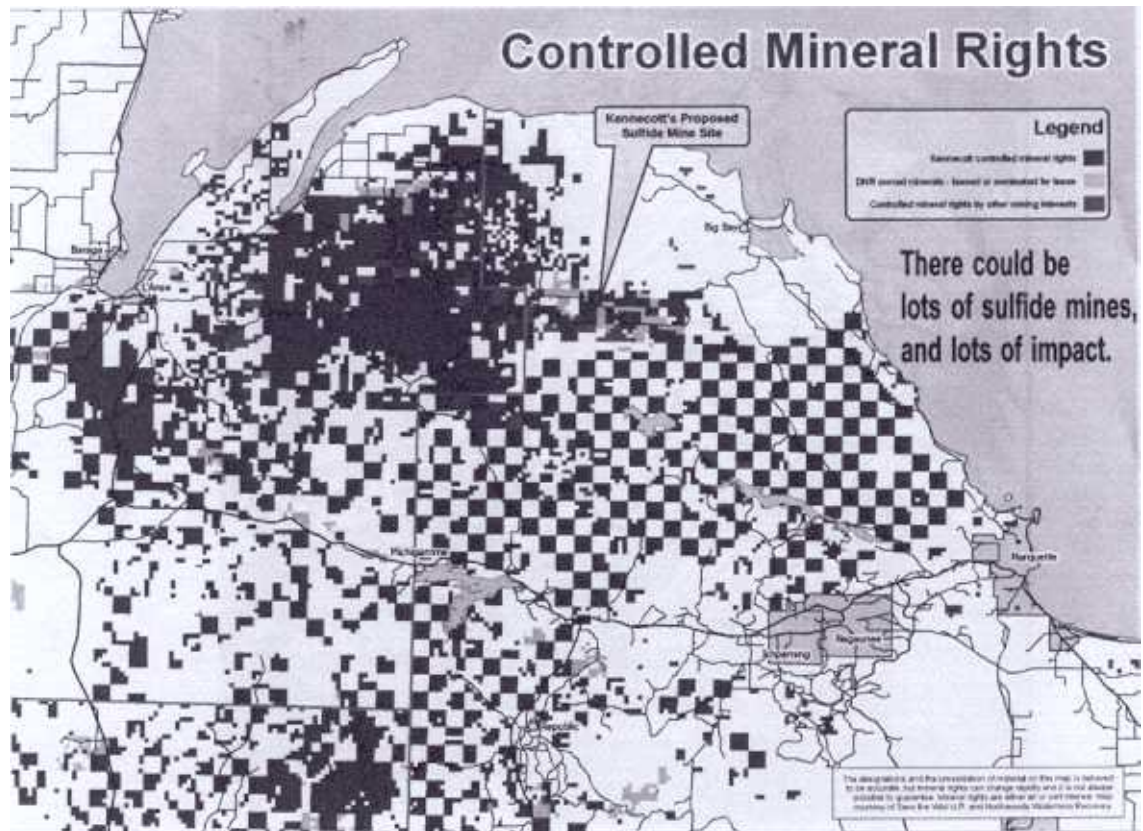
Commissioner Hurley J. Coleman, Jr.
2405 Bay Rd.
Saginaw, MI 48602

Commissioner Frank C. Wheatlake
Reed City Power Line Supply
P.O. Box 147
Reed City, MI 49677

Some Talking Points for Denying Kennecott's Mining Application (With thanks to the Sierra Club)

Kennecott:

1. submitted no additional information though DEQ requested "tables and maps clearly describing the impacts to hydrology in the area around the ore body"
2. provided no additional information about acid generation for their rock storage facilities
3. has not provided complete plans for mitigating or preventing impacts to endangered species
4. has not provided an accurate description of the affected area, impacts to natural resources that would result from their operations, and remediation options for repairing those impacts
5. provided no information on monitoring for nitrates from blasting migrating into the groundwater
6. made unsubstantiated claims about ability to identify and control 100% of acid-releasing sulfides
7. failed to ensure protection from acid rock drainage (ARD) in backfilled underground mine workings
8. is relying on unproven alkaline (limestone) additives to neutralize ARD in backfill material
9. failed to account for water movement in backfilled mine (Sulfides+Water=ARD)
10. failed to account for Land Subsidence Potential
11. application fails to demonstrate that financial assurance will cover all required costs—leaving Michigan taxpayers with the bill in the event of catastrophe



The Fight Below the Surface

This issue isn't only about Kennecott filing for a permit to create a metallic sulfide mine in the U.P. As you can see from the above Mineral Rights map of the western U.P. put together by Save the Wild U.P. and Northwoods Wilderness Recovery, the area in question is only one segment of the problem. Huge chunks of underground areas in the western U.P. are also available for future exploitation.

Besides Kennecott, three other Canadian-based companies have begun exploring options for mining in the U.P.: Prime Meridian Resources Ltd, Aquila Resources Corp., and Bitterroot Resources Ltd.

According to their website, Prime Meridian has acquired a total of 30,000 mineral acres in two Minnesota counties, plus Iron, Baraga, Dickinson, Marquette and Gogebic Counties in the U.P. Aquila has been looking into the possibilities in the Shakey Lakes area of Menominee County while Bitterroot has been exploring the Echo Lake and Jacobsville Basin area in Houghton County. All of these companies, not surprisingly, have a vested interest in how successful Kennecott is in its efforts to gain the final go-ahead from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

(Continued on page 7)



The Hurricane River
Photo courtesy of Jeannine
McKenzie

(*Fight* continued from page 6)

A study conducted by some of countrymen of These companies, the Environmental Mining Council of British Columbia (EMCBC), found that, in the U.S. alone, acid mine drainage has polluted 180,000 acres of enclosed water bodies, such as lakes, ponds, and wetlands, as well as 12,000 miles of running water in rivers and streams.

Of course, not all acid rock drainage (ARD) can Be attributed to mining. Some of it occurs Naturally when erosion exposes sulfide-bearing minerals to the elements. However, mining greatly exacerbates the process by uncovering massive amounts of sulfide mineral rock. Once uncovered, exposure to air and water causes these minerals to undergo a chemical change. The sulfide sulfur turns into sulfuric acid, a corrosive agent that unleashes heavy metals in the rocks it encounters, lacing runoff with lead, arsenic and mercury, which then feeds the surrounding ground and surface water.

And once the genie is out of the bottle, so to speak, there's no putting it back in. On their website, EMCBC cites several places where people are desperately trying. The Equity Silver mine near Houston, they say, will need to be treated for ARD for "at least the next 500 years." They go on to note that there are 2,000-year-old Roman mines in Great Britain which are still contributing acid mine drainage.

The length of time a mine is in operation cannot be taken as a reliable indicator of its potential to do harm. The mining watchdog writes that on Vancouver Island, ARD from the Mt. Washington Mine - in operation for only three short years - still managed to destroy the \$2 million annual fishery of the neighboring Tsolum River.

So, I guess the question to the people of Michigan has to be - to paraphrase an old Clint Eastwood movie - Tell me, are you a gambling man (woman or child)? Are you willing to risk years, perhaps even centuries, of devastating environmental damage for the promise of several years of jobs and a brief boost to the state economy? Well, are you?

Ed.

Gwinn Middle School Students Learn About Fundraising and Protecting the Environment



(Gwinn students on a hike at Pictured Rocks
Photo Courtesy of Kristy Gollakner)

(Last spring UPEC awarded more than \$1000 in scholarship money to help students from several U.P. schools attend the 2006 Lake Superior Youth Symposium held in Big Bay. Here a teacher recounts her students' experience with the program. Pictures from their adventure can be found throughout the newsletter. -Ed.)

I was overjoyed to offer an exciting adventure to my eighth grade class at Gwinn Middle School when I learned that the Lake Superior Youth Symposium was to be held in Big Bay this year. The purpose of the symposium is to educate students in grades 8-12 living within Lake Superior's watershed about how delicate an ecosystem it is and how we must be stewards of the

environment to ensure its beauty can be enjoyed for generations to come. This symposium brings together students from the entire watershed, which means there were schools from Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Ontario, Canada!

A group of my students were very enthusiastic about this opportunity—our only hurdle was the \$125 tuition that each of them needed to pay! However, as I always tell my students, one shouldn't let a lack of money prevent them from doing something they really want to pursue. If one is willing to work at raising money and searching for sponsors, goals can be met with the right amount of perseverance. Eight of my middle school students said they were up to such a challenge! We ran the concession stand during numerous sporting events at our school and organized a competitive returnable can/bottle drive among the first four classes. We had to cook and serve breakfast to the winning class of the can drive. After all this work, we were still in need of about \$500 so that all the students could attend the symposium free of charge. (That was when) their work putting together the UPEC mini-grant paid off! These kids can now say they have successfully written a grant!

All the anticipation for the symposium was well worth it. My students had an absolutely fabulous time as they attended between four and six different classes that they previously expressed interest in. Among their favorite sessions was tracking and tagging carnivores; investigating wolves; canoeing the Au Train River; biking Grand Island; cliff hiking along Pictured Rocks; quilling on birch bark/creating birch bark art; learning native vs. invasive species; and hiking to see waterfalls. Students made many new friends from around Lake Superior. My students returned home with a better understanding of how our massive Lake Superior really is a very fragile ecosystem that we need to take care of for future generations! The 2007 Lake Superior Youth Symposium was wonderfully organized, and my crew is excited to look into the details for the 2009 symposium!

As part of the symposium, students were encouraged to bring what they learned back to their community to do something positive for Lake Superior through educating others.

U.P. Environment

(Continued on page 9) 8

(Gwinn Students at Symposium continued from page 8)

We held our 3rd annual Trash Bash (an event sponsored by UPEC when I first began the project three years ago) shortly after returning from the Youth Symposium. During this year's Trash Bash, the 8th graders of Gwinn Middle School removed 7,031 pounds of garbage from the woods around our community. As a follow-up, my symposium crew chose to make brochures combining information they learned while at the symposium with information they learned while cleaning up local illegal dumpsites. These brochures were then distributed to area businesses to put on display in hopes that community members would take and read them so they too would understand how to be better stewards of the environment.

-Kristy Gollakner, Gwinn Middle School Teacher



(Miner's Falls, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
Photo courtesy of Kristy Gollakner)

(*"Home"* continued from page 3)

Most artists' statements echoed that sentiment.

"Clean waters, untarnished, nonstructured landscapes of rocks and trees, these are the treasures of the area I choose to call home," Vicki Allison Phillips wrote. Another artist, Peg Sandin, whose watercolor "Lake Superior Beauties" graces the cover and page of this newsletter, agreed.

"For me," she wrote, "living in the Upper Peninsula is intimately connected to living on Lake Superior...(As a child) my summers were spent picking rocks along the beach and swimming in the cold waters of Lake Superior....Every day I look at the mood and colors of the lake. Whether storms approach or the sun promised to shine in a clear blue sky, the lake always serves as inspiration."

Following its month in Escanaba, "Home" has taken up residence in the Community Arts Center on the lower floor of the Peter White Library in Marquette. By the last week of September, Nikke Mason, the Arts and Culture Coordinator for the City of Marquette, estimated that about 300 people had been in to view the exhibit. Most were residents from the central U.P. But, she noted, a number of visitors had been from downstate and even out of state. During the first week of October alone, Mason said they anticipated 500 visitors would visit the gallery during the City of Marquette's annual October Arts Stroll.

When asked about people's reactions to the work so far, Mason thought for a second, then said that "the quality of the show overall seemed to be the predominant theme," of people's remarks. Comments in the visitors' sign-in book ranged from "Gorgeous!" and "Impressive variety," to "A wonderful gift of UPEC to us all."

-Ed

Remaining Exhibit Schedule:
Marquette, MI, until October 11

Nicolet College, Rhinelander, WI,
October 19 to November 19
(Reception Oct. 20, 7-9 p.m.)

Finlandia University, Hancock, MI,
December 20-January 31, 2008
(Reception Dec. 20, 7-9 p.m.)

Alberta House Gallery, Sault Ste.
Marie, MI, February 9-28, 2008
(Reception Feb. 9, 2-4 p.m.)



"Passage Island," Ink and watercolor on paper
by Joyce Koskenmaki



Yes! I Want to Help UPEC Make a Difference!

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

I'm already a member, but I'd
like to make an additional contribution to:

UPEC Land Acquisition/Protection
Fund

UPEC Environmental Education Fund
UPEC Endowment Fund*

I would like to support the goals of UPEC
by enclosing a contribution for (please check
one):

Regular Membership (\$20)
Supporting Membership (\$50)
Student/Low-Income (\$15)
Other (\$)

*If you make your check out to the Mar-
quette Community Foundation (MCF)
and put UPEC FUND on the memo line,
you can take a 50% tax credit on your
Michigan State Income Tax (up to \$200.
for individuals, \$400 for couples).
OR you can make a contribution directly
to UPEC. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organi-
zation, dues and contributions are tax
deductible.

Please send all contributions to: UPEC, Box 673, Houghton, MI 49931
UPEC is grateful for your timely and generous response!

**Upper Peninsula
Environmental Coalition**

Return Service Requested

**Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 35
Houghton, MI 49931**

P.O. Box 673
Houghton, MI 49931

Phone and Fax number: (906) 524-7899
www.upenvironment.org



*Protecting and maintaining the unique
environmental qualities of the Upper Peninsula
of Michigan by educating the public and
acting as a watchdog to industry and government*



Looking down at Lake Superior from the heights of Pictured Rocks
Photo courtesy of Kristy Gollakner