



# UP Environment

*UPEC: THE UP'S OLDEST GRASSROOTS ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP*

**Late Winter 2016**

The Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition  
Presents

## **Celebrate the U.P.!**

**March 18-19, 2016**

**See inside for details!**

## **Happy 40th Birthday UPEC!**

**By Gregg Bruff**

The landscape is covered in fresh, wet snow. It clings to everything as the wind hasn't yet risen to blow it from the trees. Looking toward Lake Michigan frozen in the distance I think about the condition of our world – ecological, social, financial, and wonder about the future of our landscape and species.

The snow will soon be washed away by April showers and we will once again celebrate Earth Day which began on April 22, 1970, 46 years ago. That landmark event was only six years before the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition was founded on January 24, 1976.

This year therefore, marks our fortieth anniversary – Happy Birthday UPEC! Over the past forty years, considerable progress has been made here in the U.P. in terms of safeguarding our natural and cultural heritage through environmental awareness and action.

Since I am a relative newcomer to UPEC, I thought I should obtain perspective on this organization by talking with two long time activists – Jon Saari and Doug Welker. Jon has a long history with UPEC as past president and board member, while Doug has served on the board for decades. Both have been active on numerous committees and through collaboration with other groups.

Jon mentioned that UPEC was the first grassroots group that focused solely on environmental issues across all of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, and that

UPEC board members came from the entire U.P. while members and volunteers are from all over the country. He feels UPEC has been an ongoing experiment in how to organize for effective action across a far-flung region. Moving from a confrontational crisis mode to a more non-confrontational prevention and educational approach has spelled success for the group over time.



Jon Saari

Since its beginning, UPEC's purpose has remained 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.

Doug has been a strong behind-the-scenes supporter and advocate for UPEC from the mid-1980's on. He feels UPEC has been an effective voice for the environment on a variety of issues. In the late 1970s and early 1980s UPEC members helped form development and management plans for Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore and advised against an intrusive shoreline drive. We worked to get more stringent leasing rules

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The Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition

Presents

## Celebrate the U.P.!

March 18-19, 2016



**ALL EVENTS ARE FREE & OPEN  
TO THE PUBLIC**

Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College  
111 Beartown Road, Baraga MI

### Friday, March 18

6:00 pm - UPEC Annual Meeting, Meet the Board, Happy 40th Anniversary to UPEC followed by a film by Mike Loukinen "Ojibwe Drum Songs" (7 pm)

### Saturday, March 19

9:00 am - Opening Ceremony with KBIC Tribal President Chris Swartz

9:30 am - 3:00 pm - Presentations: 3 per time slot:  
9:30, 10:30, 1 & 2

11:30 - 1:00 pm - Lunch on your own (meal tickets for Indian tacos and salads available for purchase in the morning on site \$8)

1:00 - 3:00 pm - Activities for Children

3:30 pm - Plenary Session: Featured speaker Trevor Thomas, a blind hiker who has hiked nearly 20,000 miles including the PCT and the AT

5:00 - 7:00 pm - Reception

Full Schedule of Events & Presentation Details at  
[www.upenvironment.org](http://www.upenvironment.org)



**Celebrate the UP!** is held at the Ojibwa Community College in Baraga off M-38, just west of the Casino on Beartown Road. When you enter the beautiful OCC lobby with carved totem poles, stop at the UPEC table to pick up the days schedule and an evaluation sheet that we hope you will complete.

**UP Environment**

## Join us in Baraga for this year's Celebrate the UP!

Here are some of the presentations, see [UPenvironment.org](http://UPenvironment.org) for complete list and details!

Bill Rose, MTU geologist - ***Keweenaw Geohistory and Geoheritage***

Dr. Rolf Peterson, MTU Isle Royale Wolf/Moose Research Professor, will introduce and discuss the video "***Counting Wolves***" done by film maker and photographer George Desort

Joseph Youngman, expert birder - ***Birds of the Keweenaw – Migrants and Breeders***

Joe Bouchard, Baraga County Trails in Motion - ***Happy Birthday Baraga Trails!***

Gary Loonsfoot, KBIC Historic Preservation Office - ***L'Anse-Lac Vieux Desert Historic Native American Trail***

Chris Burnett, Forester and UP Land Conservancy - ***Walking the Talk and Talking the Walk***

Maria Janowiak, US Forest Service - ***Climate Change and Upper Michigan's Forests: Risks, Opportunities, and Ways to Adapt***

Carolyn Peterson, Isle Royale Wolf/Moose Study and Community Volunteer - ***Reaching Over the Fence (to people who are different from us)***

Jerry Jondreau, KBIC Tribal Forester - ***Mending an Ancient Relationship: The Story of the Anishinaabeg From Wiikwedong. A History That Shaped the Present Landscape and a New Way Forward***

Nancy Langston, Social Sciences Professor, MTU - ***Sustaining Lake Superior (and what we can learn from the past)***

Evan McDonald and Whitey Soli, ***Two Faces of Land Conservancy Acquisitions: The Importance of Land Conservation for the Future and its Unintended Consequences in the Present***

Gene Mensch, KBIC Fisheries Department, - ***KBIC Fisheries Management Overview***

Nancy Mannikko, Baraga County Historical Society - ***From Crosscut Saw to Feller-Bunchers: The Pettibone Cary-Lift and the History of Industrialized Forestry***

Be sure to check out Trevor Thomas' website [www.blindhikertrevorthomas.com](http://www.blindhikertrevorthomas.com) to learn more about our fascinating featured speaker.

# Keynote Speaker Trevor Thomas at 2016 CELEBRATE the U.P!

Our featured keynote speaker is **Trevor Thomas**, aka *Zero/Zero*, an accomplished long distance hiker. Trevor became the first blind person in history to complete an unassisted, solo end-to-end thru-hike of the entire 2,175 mile Appalachian Trail from Springer Mountain, GA to Katahdin, ME (2008). During that trek he received his trail name, *Zero/Zero* -- given to him by people he met along the way. In keeping with tradition, he has kept his trail name, which refers to his blindness.

Since then, he has gone on to hike nearly 20,000 miles on many of the most rugged, remote trails in North America. In 2010, he completed a thru hike of the Pacific Crest Trail, a 2,654 mile trek from Mexico to Canada and a thru hike of the John Muir Trail along with members of his hiking team, Team FarSight. He has climbed to the summit of Mt. Whitney, the tallest mountain in the contiguous US and in doing so, became the first blind person to stand on top. We anticipate a thought-provoking talk by this talented motivational speaker. A reception will follow Trevor's presentation.



Trevor Thomas - aka Zero/Zero long distance hiker

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## Thank You to Our Major Sponsors

From Mark and Christine Troudt:

“We are pleased to be able to support the UPEC Celebrate the UP! event again this year. The UP is a very special place to us and the Celebrate event is a perfect opportunity to meet with like-minded nature lovers who share our passion for the UP and all it offers. The UP is such a special place with so much to do and so many places to visit and we look forward to spending more time in the area seeing new places and meeting new people. The positive setting of the Celebrate event is refreshing and there will always be a need to continue to educate people on the unique attributes of the area. This will hopefully lead to an even greater love for the UP and a continued desire to keep the area pristine. We remain committed to do whatever we can to keep the UP a special place for this and future generations.”



Event sponsors Mark and Christine Troudt in front of their property in the Huron Mountains which they purchased with the intention of preserving.

**Baraga County Chamber of Commerce**  
**Baraga County Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
**North Country Trail Association**  
**Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College**

*Thank You!*



# UPEC Awards 2016 Education Grants

by Constance Sherry

At the January UPEC Board of Directors (BOD) meeting in Iron Mountain more than \$4,000 was awarded to ten environmental ed grant applicants.

Starting on January 4, the application deadline, committee members Constance Sherry (committee chair and board member), Doug Welker (UPEC board), and Linda Rulison (educator and president of Friends of the Land of Keweenaw) evaluated the applications and then presented recommendations to the BOD for funding.

UPEC's goal of supporting environmental education has taken diverse forms over the years. A special grant – the Bonnie Miljour Grant – goes to support education through the Arts. This year's Bonnie Miljour Grant was awarded to the Marquette Earth Angels.



The 2016 grant recipients are:

**Marquette "Earth Angels".** Earth Angels is a performing arts program that UPEC will again support as it presents "Solar Power To The People" June 19 – 26 this summer.

**Michigan Tech Center for Science & Environmental Outreach.** This new program – Copper Country School Recycling Initiative – will work with local schools to reduce waste in classrooms. The UPEC grant will be used to provide recycling bins.

**Calumet High School.** UPEC will support a new program at this school that enables students to travel by bus to Brockway Mountain to learn about the spring raptor migration. This is a multi-faceted program with a strong scientific and experimental foundation and includes art on location with students painting and sketching as raptors fly both above and below their viewpoint.



**Barkell Elementary, Hancock.** Rainbow Kids Pre-school will learn about our rich Ojibwa culture with help from Keweenaw Bay College students and staff through demonstrations, books and storytelling.

**Ontonagon Area Schools.** Students and volunteers will reclaim a forty acre site that the school building stands on. Motorized access will be reduced to allow snowshoeing, walking and skiing. Gravel will be hauled in, small bridges will be established and a small waterway will be used for biology classes.

**Discovery School/Glad Tidings, Hancock.** This school has a strong commitment to the youth of our area. Here, UPEC's grant will be used for an outdoor exploration area and organic garden as well as to develop an interpretive nature trail on adjacent property.

**Escanaba 4th Grade Afield.** Organized by the Bonifas Fine Arts Center, all Escanaba 4th graders will go afield to learn about the scientific method and local wildlife at a waterside location. Field work will be supplemented by classroom study.

**UPEC's Mission - "As the longest serving environmental organization in Michigan's U.P., the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition (UPEC) strives to preserve the unique cultural and natural resources of the Upper Peninsula through public education, the promotion of sound land stewardship, and reasoned dialogue with communities, governments, industries and others with whom we share this land."**

# Inaugural Community Conservation Grants Awarded

by **Gregg Bruff**

The UPEC Board is excited to announce approval of three Community Conservation Grants during their January meeting in Iron Mountain. This is the first year of a long term program to promote community supported conservation involvement.

Of seven applicants, three finalists are being awarded \$10,000 each to further significant conservation goals. They are:

The **Chocolay Bayou Nature Preserve** (photo right) is a project of the Upper Peninsula Land Conservancy; it will include the purchase of 14 acres near Lake Superior in Harvey to develop public access and a modest trail system. Interpretive signs will illuminate natural features, conservation values, and the human history of the surrounding lands and waters. This project will protect, in perpetuity, a high profile recreational asset located in a unique ecosystem that is at risk of commercial development. Long term plans are to use the site for interpretive and educational programs about the natural and cultural history - an important feature of this landscape gem adjacent to the largest city in the UP.



The **Point Abbaye Project** on Huron Bay is a conservation initiative by Keweenaw Land Trust to protect Point Abbaye on Huron Bay, a conservation initiative to protect 1500 acres of critical coastal habitats and nearly a mile of Lake Superior shoreline. This initiative will benefit migratory birds and waterfowl, nearshore aquatic habitats, and native plants, fish and wildlife by permanently protecting habitat and enhancing wildlife migratory corridors. The initiative will protect

wetlands, uplands and near-shore ecological communities that play a critical role in maintaining the ecological integrity of greater Huron Bay, its rich and economically important fishery, and other aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. The project will expand access to the Lake Superior shoreline and provide new

opportunities for low-impact public recreation, including hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, paddle sports, swimming, berry and mushroom gathering, stargazing, and more. The initiative includes goals for expansion of both water and land trails to connect state, local government and conservancy lands and to protect the dark night sky and wild character of the Abbaye Peninsula that are valued by the community and are assets for eco-tourism.

community and are assets for eco-tourism.

## **Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve Community Forest**

The Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve will receive \$10,000 to aid in the establishment of the Yellow Dog River Community Forest. The 695 acre project area at the east end of the Michigamme Highlands provides the community with recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat, an outdoor educational setting, and potential for economic incentives associated with protected areas. The Highlands contain some of the highest elevations in Michigan and are known for unique geological features like granite knobs and exposed bedrock. Within the forest are 4 major sets of waterfalls that are valued for aesthetic reasons and for recreation and are popular for whitewater kayaking. The river features many smaller sets of falls as well as riffles, pools, and a variety of in-stream habitats that are critical for trout.

## **About UPEC...**

The Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition has a five-decade track record of protecting and seeking to enhance the unique environmental qualities of the UP through public education and monitoring of industry and government. UPEC seeks common ground with diverse individuals and organizations to promote sound planning and management decisions for all the region's natural resources.

UP Environment is published quarterly and available online to share with family & friends. Send comments or contributions to UPEC by standard mail at P.O. Box 673, Houghton, MI 49931. E-mail us at:

[upec@upenvironment.org](mailto:upec@upenvironment.org).

Website: [www.upenvironment.org](http://www.upenvironment.org) and [Facebook](#).

## ***UPEC Officers, Board and Staff***

Acting President: Nancy Warren

Secretary: Connie Julien

Treasurer: Jon Saari

Board Members:

Dave Aho          David Allen          Nick Baumgart

Grant Fenner      Robert Evans      Horst Schmidt

Margaret Scheffer      Connie Sherry      Doug Welker

Connie Julien, webmaster

Staff: Gregg Bruff, Communication & Business  
Manager

# HOUGHTON COUNTY RECYCLING INITIATIVE UNDER WAY

by Horst Schmidt

With Michigan having one of the lowest recycling levels, about 15%, in the country, Governor Snyder launched a campaign to raise it statewide. Of the Great Lakes states, Michigan has increased its recycling fund to \$1,000,000 which still keeps it at the bottom compared to states such as Wisconsin and Minnesota which spent respectively \$15,000,000 and \$24,000,000 last year.

Houghton County has had recycling programs run by the cities of Houghton and Hancock as well as a cardboard recycling program in Chassell. The two cities contract with Waste Management for their recycling programs while Chassell's is run by the community. Houghton County did not have any recycling facilities at its transfer station. The county is in a bind because it built its own facility for single stream waste collection. It borrowed the money to build the facility with the revenue from the collection fees expected to pay the loan. The county has a conflict of interest because, if there is more recycling, they will collect less waste, thereby collect less fees, to pay off their loan unless they raise the fee for waste. Therefore, recycling is not in the best interest of the county as long as it has this financial liability. On the other hand, the County Commissioners have supported the initiative.



Under the leadership of Evan McDonald, Houghton County Planning Commission Chair, a team of citizens, Copper Country Recycling Initiative (CCRI), was formed to learn about the business of recycling in order to find a way of initiating a program. The investigation found cardboard to be a high volume product that was salable to recycling companies which allows the program to be self-sustaining.

The state set up a one million dollar fund of competitive grants for our communities. The CCRI wrote a grant for \$92,000 to set up a cardboard collection facility on the grounds of the county's waste transfer station. Houghton County is the official recipient of the grant from the Department of Environmental Quality. The facility was built in 2015, opening on January 4th, 2016. Residents can drop off their cardboard for free while businesses pay a fee.

There is also an educational component in the grant which requires citizens and schools receive information on recycling, hopefully making them aware of the program and encouraging cardboard recycling. Part of the educational program were a number of community meetings during 2015 which were well attended with stimulating questions from the audience. *Sources: The article draws upon the author's attendance at recycling meetings held in Houghton during the past year. Other material is from Waste and "Recycling Programs in Hancock and Houghton, Michigan and Michigan Technological University" of the Sociology of the Environment Class Graduate Program in Environmental and Energy Policy, Michigan Technological University, Fall 2015.*

## Baraga County's Hospitality Industry Welcomes UPEC's Celebrate the U.P. Attendees

### RESTAURANTS

Carla's Restaurant - full service restaurant serving lunch and supper - Hwy 41 north of Baraga

Hilltop - full service restaurant serving breakfast, lunch and supper - Hwy 41 L'Anse

Java by the Bay - coffee shop/Internet cafe serving breakfast and lunch - Main St in downtown L'Anse

Irene's Pizza - on Hwy 41 in Baraga

Night Owl - classic diner serving breakfast, lunch and supper - Main St in downtown L'Anse

Ojibwa Casino (two restaurants) - located adjacent to the Celebrate Event in Baraga at the Ojibwa Community College

Pizza Shack - on Broad St in L'Anse

Skippers Bar and Grill - Italian dining for lunch and supper - Front St on the waterfront in L'Anse

Subway Restaurant - Hwy 41 in L'Anse

Burger King - L'Anse Ave., L'Anse

### LODGING

Baraga Lakeside Inn - Hwy 41 Baraga - 353-7123

Carla's Lakeshore Motel - Hwy 41 Baraga - 353-6256

Hilltop Motel - Hwy 41 L'Anse - 524-6321

L'Anse Motel and Suites - Hwy 41 L'Anse - 524-7820

Ojibwa Casino Resort Hotel - located adjacent to the Celebrate Event in Baraga at Ojibwa Community College

Waterstone Suites - Hwy 41 L'Anse - 524-2323

### GAS

Fill up your gas tank at any number of gas stations in L'Anse or Baraga and drive the savings home!





# Book Review - Paul Rossi's "Birds of the Eastern UP"

edited by Gregg Bruff



Blackburnian Warbler - Paul Rossi

Paul Rossi is a nature photographer living in Michigan's Eastern Upper Peninsula. He specializes in bird photography, and his new book "Birds of the Eastern UP" is in support of the North Huron Birding Trail. His work reflects a unique understanding of bird behavior which is born from a passion for wilderness and spending countless hours in nature.

His talent for finding and capturing images of rare composition, with fleeting subjects, shines throughout his work. He is also known for capturing the character of his subjects in their natural environment. Paul has a unique awareness of the level of trust of his subjects in his presence, and the relaxed look of the subjects of many of his photographs reflect this.

Paul reflects, "The book, **Beautiful Birds of Michigan's Eastern Upper Peninsula**, has my best images from the past 15 years." The limited edition book is the culmination of rare opportunities. It is a hard bound museum quality "coffee table" book (11" x 11") with approximately 120 pages and 105 photographs. Accompanying each photograph is a narrative about how the photograph was taken, and/or the behavior of the subject(s), and/or the environmental circumstances which led to the photograph. This makes the book more than a collection of beautiful photographs, as the reader will learn, be entertained, and feel the excitement of adventure that Paul felt while making the images.

The pages of this book are printed on thick satin paper made from recyclable non-toxic materials. For more information, see:

<https://beautifulbirdseup.wordpress.com/order-form>, or Paul's Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/beautifulbirdseup>.

## *The North Huron Birding Trail*

The northern shoreline of Lake Huron in Michigan's Eastern Upper Peninsula has long been known as one of the most beautiful and pristine areas in all of the Midwest. The Nature Conservancy has recognized this area as one of "The Last Great Places" in the Northern Hemisphere. Its rocky shorelines and protected bays create excellent habitat for many species of sport fish, a multitude of rare orchids and ferns, and a diverse collection of bird species.

Researchers have documented the North Huron area for its frequency and distribution of various bird species and have found that the shoreline and areas inland from Lake Huron are critical migratory and breeding grounds for a large number of songbirds, waterfowl, and birds of prey.

As a result of this research and recognition of Michigan's Northern Lake Huron shoreline as a pristine gem, many local non-profits and government agencies have protected large amounts of shoreline and surrounding areas through conservation easements and the creation of nature preserves. The passion of these organizations, along with large amounts of publicly accessible land and the impressive diversity of bird species that utilize the area, make the North Huron Birding Trail one of the most enjoyable birding trails in Michigan.



Rough-legged Hawk - Paul Rossi

Aldo Leopold, one of America's most influential naturalists, spent summers as a youth in the Les Cheneaux area of Michigan's UP, near the center of the Trail. Leopold developed holistic environmental and wildlife conservation strategies that emphasize biodiversity, and founded the science of wildlife management. He planted the first seeds of "a land ethic" and a nascent conservation philosophy at a time when the resources of the United States seemed endless to many. His ideas have guided the environmental movement to this day.

# Teaching Youth to Be Still

by Nick Baumgart

*“There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm. One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and the other that heat comes from the furnace.”*

Aldo Leopold

A Sand County Almanac



Leopold cautioned us long ago about this danger. We all should be aware of the origin of our resources. Youth, too, should have an understanding of where our basic materials come from in our everyday life. Not only should they be aware of the source, but also the entire “cradle to the grave” of the things we use.

Teaching youth to be still is a beginning point in this learning process. There are many distractions and commitments that divert youth’s (and adult’s) attention. Between electronic devices and their involvement in multiple events, youth can be as busy as adults. It is important youth learn to be still, become more aware of their surroundings and create a connection to the outdoors.

Being still can be taught and learned. Michigan State University Extension suggests asking your children to guess how much time per week they spend on electronic devices. Record that amount for a week. Then ask them what else they might do with that time. How much good could be done with those hours spent on a screen? Challenge the young people in your life. Try turning off the television and all other electronic devices one day per week. Start slowly; try one hour and then two. Have some planned activities to keep busy. Take a walk, go

star gazing, climb a tree, throw stones in a lake or river or explore a new area. Other options can be to read a book out loud, tell a story, have a campfire or play a simple game.

A very meaningful way for youth to learn to be still is providing quiet time. Find a comfortable spot, preferably outside, to sit and relax. Did you have an outside quiet spot when you were a child? Avoid having any props or devices along that might cause distractions. Ask youth to lie down and relax. Have them feel the earth around them and welcome its comfort. Have youth close their eyes and listen for sounds they might not have otherwise heard. Look for something otherwise not noticed or seen. Above all, be very still and allow the environment to come to you. Be a part of it rather than a visitor.

Another way to develop this in youth is through nature play. This is an unstructured connection to outdoor play that serves to enhance values, attitudes and appreciation for the natural environment. There was a time when youth played outdoors regularly without structured programming and adult intervention. New worlds were discovered, inventions created and adventures taken that otherwise would not have been known. Now, much of what youth know about the outdoors is from a virtual tour online or from an app. Youth need to be outside exploring first hand, getting dirty and creating their own excitement!

Famed author and environmentalist Sigurd Olson had a spot called *Listening Point* where he would retreat to reflect and gain inspiration. He wrote that everyone has their own “listening point.” This spot can be anywhere that provides respite from everyday chores and challenges. Adults have these locales and youth should be encouraged to find their own.

Learning to be still leads to a better understanding of our surroundings. It also can entice us to ask questions and seek a greater purpose. Getting youth to learn this skill early will provide them a head start to developing environmental literacy and to one day function as environmentally responsible citizens. Take some time with youth to be still and enjoy the time.

[http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/teaching\\_youth\\_to\\_be\\_still](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/teaching_youth_to_be_still)



## Happy 40th Birthday! - continued from page 1

in the mid-1980s.

At the same time UPEC fought the Navy's Extremely Low Frequency electromagnetic radiation (ELF) submarine guidance system. The group successfully fought a proposal to put a high-level nuclear waste dump in the U.P. Later, in concert with others, UPEC worked to establish ten federally-designated wilderness areas in Michigan, nine of which are in Upper Michigan, along with the more recent Beaver Basin Wilderness within Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. Welker is proud of his contribution to add additional acreage to the Sturgeon Gorge Wilderness where he once worked as a wilderness ranger. Doug and other UPEC members have worked on numerous projects on the North Country National Scenic Trail.

Jon mentioned how UPEC worked to stop proposals to build a large pulp and paper mill within Lake Superior's watershed, to push for zero discharge of toxins into the Great Lakes, and to encourage citizen action in protecting lakeshores from inappropriate development.

UPEC is proudly a charter member of the Michigan Environmental Council, a statewide network of environmental groups. Through past membership in Great Lakes United and the Lake Superior Alliance, UPEC stays abreast of developments related to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Through our membership in the Timber Wolf Alliance we have supported the return of wolves, now estimated to number over 600, into the U.P.'s ecosystem. As a member of HONOR, we affirm Native American treaty rights and the important contributions Native Americans have made and continue to make to the environmental quality of the Upper Great Lakes.

In its decades of citizen activism, UPEC has organized numerous educational forums on everything from recycling to State and National Forest management plans to conservation easements. Officers, directors, and members have testified at Congressional and state-level hearings. UPEC has sometimes gone to court, most notably a long struggle supporting an amicus brief with the U.S. Forest Service in their right to



Doug Welker

regulate motorized boat traffic in the Sylvania Wilderness area of the Western U.P. UPEC has penned many policy statements on U.P. environmental issues, including preparing a handbook on U.P. forestry practices.

In retrospect, Doug misses the times when a group of UPEC folks would go on a hike or canoe together. It was there, he feels, that real connections are made between people – paddling a canoe or skiing a trail together, enjoying an evening campfire with friends. He also voiced concerns over students today who are perhaps not as idealistic as they once were – who don't seem to have time to be activists. It's difficult to get young people to spend time with “old geezers and geezerettes” who have led the environmental charge for decades.

Jon and Doug feel UPEC's new Community Conservation Grants program is “the way to go” in terms of action; where real dollars spent on the ground count substantially for long term conservation goals. The grant program which is in its inaugural year, was the brainchild of Saari, who has effectively forged the program with the input of other regional environmental organizations.

Both Doug and Jon are also very supportive of events such as “Celebrate the UP” which provides us all with an opportunity to get with like-minded people and enjoy our collective accomplishments.



Photo by Karen Kautto

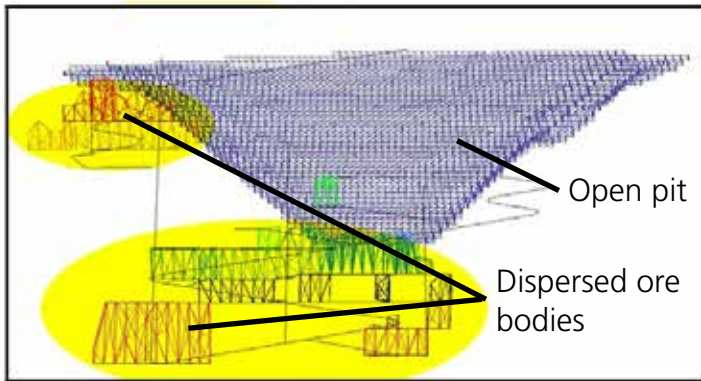
Current UPEC initiatives include a newly revised brochure, a “State of the UP” report card, continued Environmental Educational and Community Conservation Grants, assessing whether to hire an Executive Director, and other efforts which spell a bright future for UPEC. With some luck, forty years hence we will be looking forward to the 2056 version of “Celebrate the UP” and remembering newer accomplishments.

# UPEC Members Attend DEQ Stakeholder Meeting

edited by Gregg Bruff

In early February, several UPEC members along with representatives of Friends of the Land of Keweenaw (FOLK), The Sierra Club, Front Forty, and the Keweenaw Land Trust attended a stakeholders meeting facilitated by Save the Wild UP and the Department of Environmental Quality. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss concerns and share perspectives on the proposed “Back Forty” mine on the Menominee River in Menominee County.

The controversial mine is slated to produce gold, silver, and other heavy metals in a combination open pit and shaft mine. It is proposed as a flotation process using cyanide and smelting, with waste being dumped on the banks of the Menominee River.



Several major discrepancies exist in the 37,500 page permit document, now being reviewed by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Save the Wild UP has noted that there are two disparate estimates on the lifespan of the mine, ranging from seven to sixteen years which significantly affects important impacts including the size of waste rock storage area, tailings capacity, the total amount of limestone needed to neutralize waste rock, and the total area required for handling cyanide and other chemicals used to process the ore.

There is also concern over whether the mine will be an open pit mine or expanded to include shafts to recover dispersed ore bodies. This raises questions surrounding the volumes of crushing and processing, milling equipment capacity, water treatment plant capacity, dewatering and aquifer draw-down estimates, potential air pollution, noise, open pit backfilling estimates, remediation plans, post-closure timelines, and more.



The proposed mine raises many questions regarding the natural environment which includes oak savannas, and a recovering sturgeon fishery in the Menominee River where approximately half of the Green Bay spawning adults run. The Menominee River is a major tributary to Lake Michigan and historically one of the largest spawning and rearing areas for lake sturgeon. Perhaps of greatest concern is the fact that sulfide mines are known to pollute indefinitely, raising serious concerns about long term groundwater pollution.

From a cultural standpoint, there are also important treaty-protected natural resources and Native American archaeological sites that will be threatened or destroyed by the mine. For more information see:

[savethewildup.org](http://savethewildup.org)

[facebook.com/savethewildup](https://facebook.com/savethewildup)

or on Twitter [@savethewildup](https://twitter.com/savethewildup)

## Ways to Support UPEC

Consider contributing to UPEC in honor or memory of a special friend or loved one.

When you make a gift on behalf of another person, we will send an acknowledgment of the gift to that person or his/her family, so enclose mailing information. When you contribute on behalf of someone else, encourage them to become a UPEC member through your gift.

Do you or someone you know have a wedding or other special celebration in the future? Consider making it a “green occasion” by designating UPEC as a recipient of honor gifts. UPEC has a JustGive link at its website that can help you to do this. Thank You!



## Yes! I Want to Partner with UPEC in Making a Difference!

Please complete, attach a check, and give to a UPEC board member or mail to UPEC: PO Box 673, Houghton, MI 49931

Or you can contribute on-line through justgive on UPEC's website: [www.upenvironment.org/join-donate/](http://www.upenvironment.org/join-donate/)

### I'd like to support UPEC's goals by enclosing a contribution for (please check one):

- Regular Membership (\$25)
- Supporting or Organizational Membership (\$50)
- Student/Low Income Membership (\$15)
- Lifetime Membership (\$500)
- Contact me - I want to volunteer!
- Gift Membership (please provide person's name and mailing address on reverse side of this form)
- In Honor or Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

- \* I would like to contribute to these UPEC funds (please indicate amount of donation):
- Environmental Education
  - Land Acquisition/Protection
  - Community Outreach
  - Unrestricted
  - Marquette County Community Foundation Fund
- (Make check to MCCC with UPEC in memo line)

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*Check your newsletter's mailing label for your membership status. Phone and E-mail information is optional - UPEC does not share members' contact information with any other organizations. Thank You for your support!*

## Don't forget those slips!

Thanks to you and Econo Foods, UPEC recently earned several hundred dollars from grocery receipts. 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 if more of us save our slips and send them in! Either save receipts throughout the year and mail them to us, or give them to a UPEC board member—whichever is more convenient. It's one of the easier low-cost ways you can offer your support. Thanks!



Nature Panorama - Phil Bellfy



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

**How to Contact Your State Legislators**

**37th District Senator Wayne Schmidt**  
571-373-2413 [SenWSchmidt@senate.mi.gov](mailto:SenWSchmidt@senate.mi.gov)  
**38th District Senator Tom Casperson**  
517-373-7840; [SenTCasperson@senate.mi.gov](mailto:SenTCasperson@senate.mi.gov)  
**107th District Rep. Lee Chatfield**  
517-373-2629; [LeeChatfield@house.mi.gov](mailto:LeeChatfield@house.mi.gov)  
**108th District Rep. Ed McBroom**  
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For more info: [www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov)

**Please review your membership status**

*Check your mailing label above for your membership status with UPEC. When you renew, please consider an additional level of support as part of UPEC's efforts to safeguard public lands, wildlife habitat, and prudent environmental policies.*



Piers Gorge - Gregg Bruff