



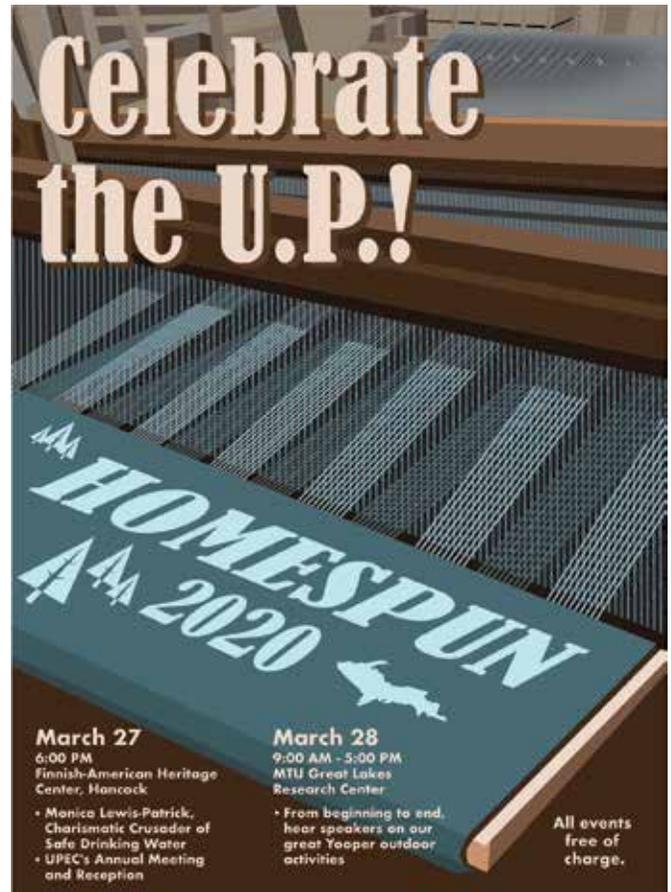
Winter 2020



UPEnvironment

“WATER IS A HUMAN RIGHT”: MONICA LEWIS-PATRICK, ACTIVIST & EDUCATOR, KEYNOTES UPEC’S CELEBRATE THE UP! MARCH 27-28

We are pleased to welcome Monica Lewis-Patrick (aka The Water Warrior), President and CEO of We the People of Detroit (WPD), as our keynote speaker for the 2020 Celebrate the UP! We are inviting Ms. Lewis-Patrick to discuss her work with WPD, which she co-founded in 2008 in response to the state of Michigan’s emergency management declaration on the city of Detroit and its public schools. Six years later, WPD began leading a grassroots response when the Detroit water department started a massive shutoff campaign against city residents with unpaid water bills. Under the leadership of Lewis-Patrick and her team, WPD has worked tenaciously with its network of volunteers to directly provide water to Detroit residents in need, promote equitable payment plans, and advocate for a sustainable future in which access to clean, safe water is a human right.

Celebrate the U.P.!

HOMESPUN
2020

<p>March 27 6:00 PM Finnish-American Heritage Center, Hancock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monica Lewis-Patrick, Charismatic Crusader of Safe Drinking Water • UPEC’s Annual Meeting and Reception 	<p>March 28 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM MTU Great Lakes Research Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From beginning to end, hear speakers on our great Tooper outdoor activities
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All events free of charge.



A compelling communicator of WPD’s vision and values, Ms. Lewis-Patrick impressed listeners at Michigan Tech when she spoke on campus last year as the keynoter for World Water Day. UPEC President Horst Schmidt spoke with her recently as part of our preparations for this year’s Celebrate the UP! event, and he shares these thoughts:

Monica Lewis-Patrick brings a wealth of experience, compassion and hope to Detroit’s residents who live without safe drinking water. Her organization, We the People of Detroit, has led campaigns to not only have water come into people’s homes again, but to empower them. With a third of the city’s residents in poverty, frequently the choice is between eating or paying the water bill. Monica believes in cooperation and community by encouraging

youth to grow and women of color to thrive, drawing upon the strength of black women in their seventies and eighties. When I first met Monica, I was immediately drawn to her smile, her gentle humor, her openness, and, most of all, by her strength. She radiates hope.

She has a willingness to meet people where they are — in Detroit or in rural Michigan. She wants to engage, find commonalities, develop relationships. When she met with farmers in rural Michigan, she wanted to change her

perception of them and theirs of her, being transparent, showing concern, and bringing forth compassion as an opportunity to have an open conversation.

You will have an opportunity to hear her twice at UPEC's 2020 Celebrate the UP! On Friday, March 27th at 6PM she will be at the Finnish-American Heritage Center in Hancock. The next day come and be enchanted by her at 9:30AM at MTU's Great Lakes Research Center in Houghton. You won't be disappointed!

“Homespun” theme for 2020 celebration spotlights what’s special about this place we call home

This year's edition of Celebrate the UP! is woven around the theme of “Homespun” — bringing to mind images of creativity, self-reliance, and joy. Land conservation, outdoor fun, water, and local food are a few of the things we'll celebrate ... and we'd love to have you join us March 27–28! All events are in the twin towns of Houghton and Hancock, and everything is free and open to all. A full schedule of events will be coming in March in a special edition of *UP Environment*, and on our website at upenvironment.org. See you there!

LOCAL LAND CONSERVANCIES MODELING THE SUSTAINABLE LANDS OF THE FUTURE

Jon Saari

Almost half of the land in the U.P. is public land, owned and managed by federal, state, and county governments. On a small scale, the U.P. is close to biologist E.O. Wilson's vision of “Half Earth”: half the lands and waters of the earth being dedicated to the well-being of the natural world, or in other words, not being subordinated to perceived human needs. But we are not yet at the fifty percent marker, and in the U.P. as elsewhere most of the remaining unsubordinated lands and waters of Half Earth must come from the private sector. Can local land conservancies be the seeds for such a transformation in the private sector? Can they work the magic of restraining the human juggernaut and creating the connecting pieces of land and water that will help us towards a more balanced future?

A private-property land ethic favoring protection of nature

Twenty-five years ago local based land trusts did not exist in the Upper Peninsula. They began to appear in the 1990s: North Woods Conservancy (later rebranded as Keweenaw Natural Areas) in 1992, Keweenaw Land Trust in 1996, Upper Peninsula Land Conservancy (UPLC; initially named the Central Lake Superior Land Conservancy) in 1999, the Superior Watershed Partnership (SWP) and Land Trust in 1999, and the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve (YDWP) in 1999. The Northwoods Alliance (in Northern Wisconsin) adopted a Land Conservation Initiative in 2007 and became a supporting partner to local land trusts, including those in the U.P.

The founders of some of these groups thought the conservancy idea would be a hard sell in the U.P. Who would donate land for unselfish purposes? Or give up rights that would diminish the future economic attractiveness of

a property? Private land had traditionally been used for family recreational camps and/or extraction for mining and logging, and it did not seem “wise use” to set it aside for other purposes, like ill-defined “ecological services” of clean air and water, fertile soil, biodiversity.

A tradition of wildlands philanthropy had existed in the U.P. among the well to do, and the Michigan Wilderness bill of 1987 had formalized the wild status of some of these iconic family-owned tracts, like Sylvania and McCormick, as public land. UPEC championed such designations, but this practice was clearly going against the political grain; the argument was “Please give us these rare wild places and we will never ask for any more!”

But the argument did not end there. Was there perhaps a middle class land ethic that was rooted in property rights, but unselfish in intent? Could landowners willingly act in



A drone photograph of the Laughing Whitefish Community Forest Preserve owned by the SWP Land Conservancy.

the interests of nature and subordinate their own economic interests? Could these smaller tracts make a difference? In the 1990s the granddaddy of all land conservancies, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), had already set up an office, first in the Keweenaw and then in Marquette, and was prepared to assist local conservancies by referring small-tract projects to them. The Keweenaw Land Trust and the Central Lake Superior Land Conservancy both received such referrals in their early years.

Who made up this new breed of landowners? The tale of Nancy and Al Warren from Ewen may be taken as representative of many: early bonds with the U.P., disillusionment with crowded urban life elsewhere, move to the U.P. for work/ retirement, purchase of land, restoration of the land, and eventual protection of same through a conservation easement with a land conservancy. Their story is told in Nancy's words on the website of Northwoods Alliance under "completed projects."

The Warrens lived downstate in a rapidly developing

area; the open space around their old farm was disappearing into a new subdivision. Nancy and Al decided to move north to the U.P. for work or retirement; Al had memories of canoeing the Ontonagon River area, while Nancy had grown up in New York City. They realized this dream in 1995, and eventually purchased 280 acres, including a half mile of river frontage. Their goals? "To minimize our footprint, to protect the river corridor, and to manage the land to enhance wildlife." In 2005, they received grant money to restore a wetland in exchange for a conservation easement that guaranteed the parcel would remain a haven for waterfowl, marsh birds, and amphibians forever.

The Warrens eventually put a conservation easement with Keweenaw Land Trust on the entire property, mapping out protective restrictions on different parts. KLT monitors and enforces the agreement, which is also binding on all future landowners of the property. Logging is permitted in some areas, but no mining or communication towers. No new subdivision is permitted; however, 3 1/2 acres were set

aside for a single homestead and associated buildings. The easement did not permit public access, as was the Warrens's choice. As landowners the Warrens found the tools to do exactly what they wanted: land and water protection and stewardship customized to their desires.

How are such new land uses regarded by the local community? Some Yoopers have the attitude that people from downstate come to the U.P. and try to change things. Gates and "no trespassing" signs appear. Old roads may be closed, or old buildings dismantled in new wilderness areas. An old fishing site may no longer have motorized access. Both public and private lands can be affected by these changing land use practices. While battles over access to land have become more contentious in the backwoods, the new land conservancies are clearly on the side of promoting more public access on their lands. Properties with conservation easements on them may or may not restrict access, but the newest tool of Community Forests has public access as a fundamental feature. The bottom line, with or without public access, is always the protection of conservation values.

Stories like the Warrens's could be multiplied many

times over. Each of them results in private land becoming part of the Half Earth domain held by a land conservancy, either as an outright donation (usually called a preserve) or as a conservation easement. By 2016, when historian Bob Archibald calculated the extent of protected lands in the U.P. for UPEC, the small conservancies and TNC had already added three percent to the total (UPEC newsletter, 2016 winter; tinyurl.com/UPECnewsWinter2016).

The Community Forest as the collective ideal

In 2008 another tool, the Community Forest, became available through a new U.S. Forest Service program. This program has had a resonance throughout the U.P. in communities where nearby forests are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses, with potential loss of public access. The program pays a 50 percent match towards the purchase of these private lands by a local government entity or a nongovernmental organization (NGO). Of the 40 projects awarded nation-wide since 2014, fully six of them have been initiated by U.P. local conservancies. The Yellow Dog River Community Forest was the first in 2015 (\$400,000 for 466

A view of a calm section of the Dead River floodplain in the "Bayous" section of the proposed Dead River Community Forest, north of the already-existing Vielmetti-Peters Reserve. With the establishment of the DRCF, this important floodplain will be protected to continue to slow the rush and protect the clean water and community downstream the next time the Dead rises above its banks.



C.D. BURNETT



Dedication of Pilgrim River Community Forest, near Houghton.

acres). In 2019, UPLC was awarded \$90,000 for 186 acres toward the Dead River Community Forest, and Northwoods Alliance was awarded \$147,500 for 160 acres toward the Wildcat Falls Community Forest. In a related program through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, SWP received \$1,200,000 in funding for three coastal sites along the Great Lakes: the Eagle's Nest Community Forest north of Marquette, the Laughing Whitefish Community Forest west of Munising, and the Lake Huron Community Forest in the eastern U.P. A similar holding, the Pilgrim River Community Forest near Houghton, had different funding and the support of two small conservancies, KLT and Northwoods Alliance.

What is so attractive about these Community Forest projects? Access to funding is certainly important, but more so the accompanying requirements: the forest must be publicly accessible for recreation and education; the NGO must create a stakeholder-developed management plan with a 100 year perspective; sustainable forestry may be part of

the plan; the protected conservation values should provide a demonstration model for other private landowners. These Community Forest projects are strategic choices for protection made by maturing conservancies. They require partners, they require wide community support for fundraising, they require being rooted in uses that people really want, and they require bringing conservation values to the forefront. They model a nature-centered, workable, human construct of a forest.

In twenty years, our small U.P. conservancies have come of age and are now competing at high levels for our attention, ideas, and funds. Two of them have achieved national accreditation: KLT and UPLC. Two of them specialize in filling in protections for a single watershed, the YDWP (the Yellow Dog and the Salmon Trout) and Keweenaw Natural Areas (the Gratiot River). The SWP has produced numerous plans for specific watersheds around the U.P. and has specialized in coastal wetlands along the Great Lakes; its Great Lakes Conservation Corps does “real work” — in the phrase

of poet/farmer Gary Snyder — by planting trees, restoring wetlands, uprooting invasive plants, making trails. Northwoods Alliance has a deep store of practical knowledge based on its long partnership with sustainable forestry. Keweenaw Natural Areas has a long history of creative fundraising and networking. They can all learn from each other.

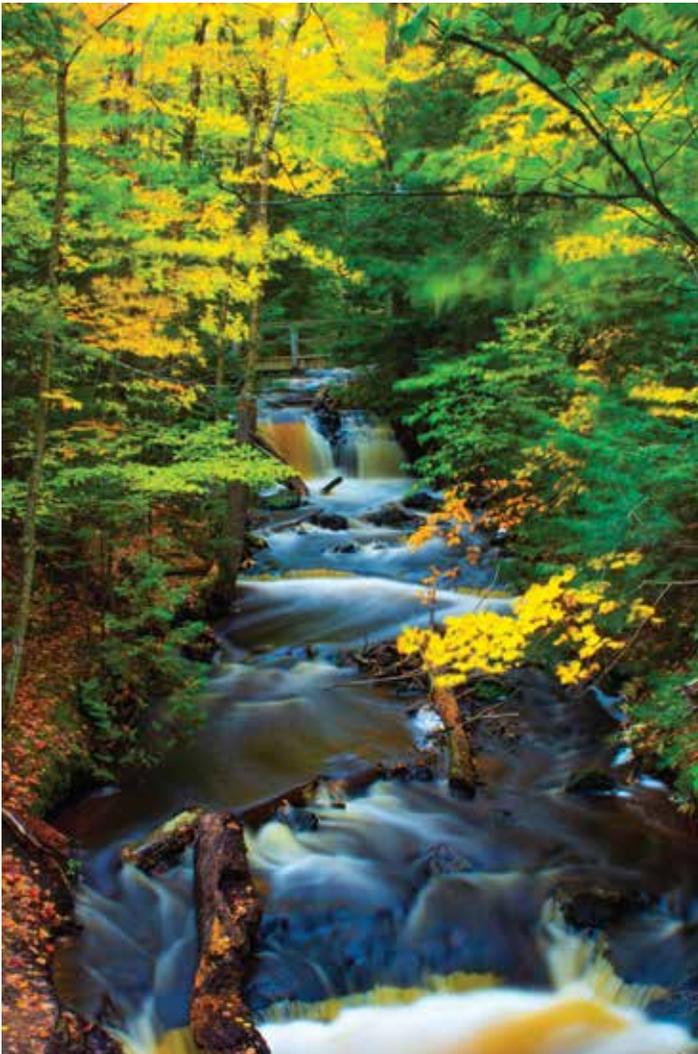
Long gone are the days when we could mainly focus on setting aside rare parcels of wild land. We as environmentalists are required these days to think comprehensively, to be attuned to opportunities for public support and funding, and to factor in increasing threats of climate change, loss of biodiversity, habitat fragmentation. The crisis we find ourselves in with natural forces will only be resolved by deeper human thought. As E.O. Wilson put the logic of evolution so succinctly and well in *Half-Earth: Our Planet's Fight for Life*: “The biosphere gave rise to the human mind, the evolved mind gave rise to culture, and culture will find the way to save the biosphere.”

Jon Saari is a member of the UPEC Board of Directors.

2020 PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS TO BE UNVEILED AT CELEBRATE THE UP! MARCH 27-28

Nearly 100 entries were received in this year's UPEC Photo Contest, making choosing the winners in each of the four categories a challenge for the judges. These four top photos will be unveiled at the Celebrate the UP! event March 27–28, and will appear in the next edition of the newsletter. To whet your visual appetite, here we share the very worthy runners-up in the “Fluid Water” and “Humans Engaged categories”; for the “Hidden Beauty” and “Nature Panorama” categories, see p. 9.

“Hurricane Falls,” Bill Hopper (Fluid Water)



“Summer Day,” Sue Ballreich (Humans Engaged)



SOME ICE IS NEVER SAFE

Bill Ziegler

Ice anglers and outdoor enthusiasts should always be very aware of ice safety, especially on early ice. A number of people and vehicles in Michigan and the Upper Lake States fall through the ice each year. In some cases these incidents end up in fatalities. By exercising some caution and basic ice safety awareness, many of these incidents can be avoided.

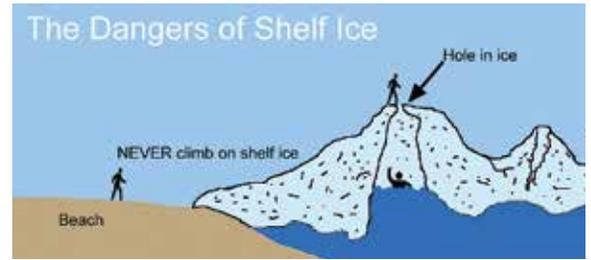
Prior to my retirement from the DNR Fisheries Division I received annual phone calls from the media and anglers asking about ice conditions and ice thickness and recommendations for ice travel. The Michigan DNR does not endorse a specific ice thickness guide for ice travel. However, conventional thinking typically follows that more than two inches of ice are needed for foot travel. On early ice all anglers should carry an ice spud to constantly check ice thickness. That same conventional wisdom has considered a minimum of six inches of ice for light ATVs and snowmobiles. The DNR never recommends driving auto and truck vehicles on the ice.

Many anglers assume that ice thickness is uniform and that six inches of ice means that it is six inches thick everywhere. My fishing buddy lives on the Crystal Falls Impoundment and measured the ice in a previous year. In mid-winter he consistently measured 2.5 feet of ice as he traveled down river, and then he measured only three inches of ice in an area with a current. Extreme caution should be taken on any impoundment or flowage with current. Great care should also be followed on waters with significant spring water input.

If you venture to nearby Great Lakes bays, you should avoid traveling near points and breakwater ends as there are

This truck and the angler driving it fell through just upstream of the Bone Lake access site on the outlet during an extremely cold February a few years ago. The angler almost froze to death walking out of this very remote location in northeastern Iron County. Some ice is never safe.





Above: This graphic demonstrates how a hidden hole in shelf ice mounds can lead of the icy waters of the lake beneath, with little chance of climbing out.

Left: Fishing tents stranded on floes that were created after the ice was broken up by wind on Keweenaw Bay.

often currents that erode the ice in those areas. High winds can break up formerly “safe” ice in some exposed locations, or the wind blows down the bays, stranding ice anglers on broken-up ice flows. Ice travelers on the frozen Great Lakes and connected bays always need to be vigilant for pressure cracks and ice shoves where shifting ice weakens, forms gaps, or pushes up into pressure ridges that can block travel and present other hazards. Mounded-up shelf ice with frozen spray holes along the exposed beaches of the Great Lakes can look very interesting to explore. Extreme caution should be exercised around shelf ice as it often has weak spots or holes or large cavities that you can fall into all the way down to water level. Falling into one of those cavities to the water could be deadly.

Prior to joining the Michigan DNR Fisheries Division I was a Fisheries Biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Ashland, Wisconsin. Many anglers fished for lake trout on Chequamegon Bay of Lake Superior, just as they do on Keweenaw and Munising bays. For a couple trips out of curiosity I ventured out with a small group of anglers that pursued lake trout off Little Girls Point at the Michigan/Wisconsin boundary on Lake Superior near Ironwood. The ice anglers were drawn to that spot because it was just outside of the Wisconsin state lake trout refuge and of course had excellent fishing. The dangerous part was the ice that formed was not locked into place by points and islands as on Chequamegon or Keweenaw bays. If the wind shifted and blew in an offshore direction the ice sheet would start blowing out into the open Lake Superior. These groups of ice anglers would pull small aluminum fishing boats out onto the ice on sleds so they could rescue themselves if the ice blew out. The anglers did this because this spot is a long distance from any Coast Guard Station and they likely were on their own if they needed rescue. Of course if the Coast Guard can reach stranded ice anglers by helicopter or other rescue craft you have to leave any snowmobiles, ice shelters or other ice equipment out there when rescued. Venturing out at Little Girls Point onto frozen Lake Superior was in-

teresting, although I concluded it was not worth the risk for myself.

In addition to all frozen rivers, flowages, and impoundments, here are a few specific lakes to watch out for in this area where springs keep ice open or thin near shore. Springs can be present in any lake although are often more prevalent in lakes that support a trout fishery. Iron County’s Bone Lake and Paint Lake public accesses are up the impounded outlet stream, making both accesses dangerous even in mid-winter. This would likely be the case in other lakes where access is gained by traveling up the outlet. Caution also needs to be followed on large reservoirs where winter drawdowns result in shifting ice. Major hydropower storage reservoirs like Iron County’s 7000-acre Michigamme and 3500-acre Peavy reservoirs are two examples of drawdown reservoirs in the UP. In addition, reservoirs can have open water or extremely thin ice where the streams enter the reservoir. The tail water areas should also be avoided in reservoirs that lead into a downstream reservoir like many of the impoundments. An example of this in the UP is the Menominee River system of dams where one leads into the other over the course of most of the Menominee River. In a few cases in the UP excess mine water is pumped into local lakes making ice in the inflowing water area unsafe. Examples of this are on Lake Antoine near Iron Mountain. Any water body with industrial water, such as power plant cooling water, etc., would have danger areas. This may seem obvious although it is particularly dangerous to out-of-town ice anglers and visitors or during snow whiteouts or fog events. A number of tragedies have occurred on bays of the Great Lakes near power plant outfalls.

All lakes do not freeze over at the same time. The shallower lakes typically freeze over sooner; for deeper lakes, it can be up to two or three weeks later. Large deep-water trout lakes like Chicagon and Ottawa lakes in Iron County are two UP examples of waters with risky spots, and others with similar features would likely have the same unsafe spots. As a result the ice in the deeper areas of Chicagon

A vintage DNR photo showing what you are up against if you fall through the ice without having taken any safety precautions to save yourself.

Lake is typically not as thick as the ice on shallower lakes in the early part of ice season. Some years we get heavy snowfall on thin ice. This results in slush and “wafer” ice that is typically not as strong as solid ice of the same thickness.

Ice anglers can take a few extra steps on ice safety. Ice picks can be made from large spikes and tied together with thick twine; they can be used to pull yourself back up on the ice if you fall through. You can also buy those ice safety picks at local bait shops and outdoor sporting goods stores. People who venture out on early ice should keep an ice spud and regularly check the ice

thickness. It is always good to have a buddy when you venture onto the ice who could help you if you get into trouble. ATVers and snowmobilers can also keep a rope with them they could throw to another person with a machine that has fallen through the ice. If you have questions you can call the Michigan DNR or your local Sheriff Department.



Bill Ziegler is a frequent contributor to UP Environment.

“Dewy Spider Web,” Pamela Quinlan (Runner-up, Hidden Beauty)



“Frozen Bush,” Judy Reid (Runner-up, Nature Panorama; see also p. 6)



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WARNING, ACTION, HOPE:

A Report from the Mining Watch Canada International Conference in Ottawa, Ontario, November 14-15, 2019

Horst Schmidt

Mining Watch Canada (MWC) has become the foremost advocate against irresponsible mining in their country. On top of that, they also have taken on how badly Canadian mining companies are mangling environments overseas and creating social problems in countries they operate in.

I traveled two days to reach Ottawa, Ontario, for “Turning Down the Heat: Can We Mine Our Way Out of the Climate Crisis?”, the 2019 MWC conference. It was the first conference that connected mining, renewables, and climate change. The conference was attended by indigenous peoples, academics, and environmental activists. As with other conferences I have attended, there was a mix of topics, from saving the environment to developing a renewable economy to social costs of the transition.

The keynote by Mark Jacobson of Stanford University was entitled “Transitioning the World to 100% Clean Renewable Energy and Storage for Everything.” He called it the wind, water, solar solution. He mentioned the use of floating offshore wind turbines, changing over to electric motors, greater reliance on batteries. His strategy could achieve a 2050 goal of global energy reduction to 8.7 TW from 20.3 TW if we continue as usual. (A terawatt is equal to one trillion (10^{12}) watts.) His talk was more positive than those of most of the other speakers. This can be attributed to not dealing with extractive and manufacturing costs on the front end and disposal at the back end.

First Nations:

Tales of hope, legal victories and beliefs

In Canada many indigenous tribes call themselves First Nations because they were here before Euro-American settlers. In their move from the destructive paternalism of the past, they have been able to not only assert their treaty rights, but have gained respect in Canadian courts, in some cases thwarting mining interests threatening to destroy their lands.

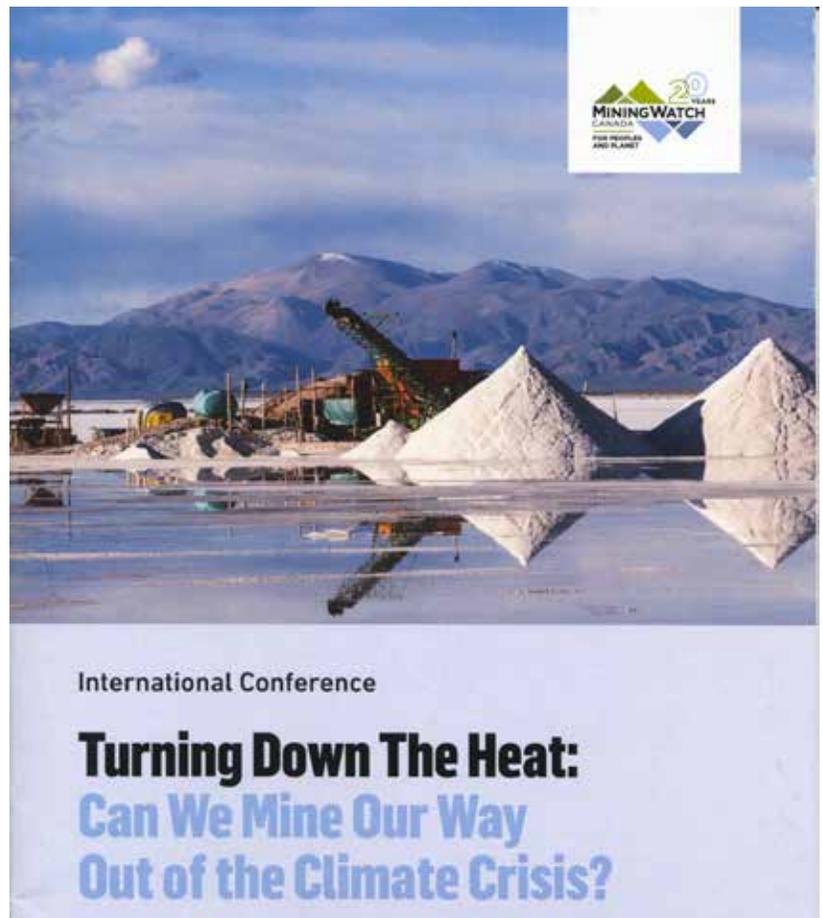
There is a spiritual dimension which ascribes to nature living spirits in wildlife and the land itself. There is belief that one takes enough to survive, but bequeaths to future generations.

The First Nation speakers are leaders in their communities who spoke of the attempts to assimilate through boarding schools for the purpose of destroying native cultures, as in the US. There is a resurgence of their cultural identities, languages, and traditions where cultures espouse taking only what is needed, being caretakers or stewards, developing a gratitude for the territories in which

they live, and protecting the water (such as grandmothers doing water walks), learning humility, retelling their creation stories.

Cautionary tales

Much of the remainder of the conference was a snapshot of the mining scene in different parts of the world. The pictures painted by the speakers were not always hopeful. A number of speakers emphasized the injustices and inequality created by the extractive industry. It is difficult for indigenous peoples to gain rights, retain ownership, and



get respect for their traditional laws. Disdain by mining companies of the environmental costs and pollution. Exploitation of labor. Government collusion with the extractive industries.

Some key takeaways from individual presentations:

- The focus in renewables is on profits and jobs — who benefits and how costs are externalized. An example is the scramble to get contracts in Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia, which have over 60% of the world's lithium brine.
- Deep-sea mining would vacuum ocean floors, destroying aquatic life and creating damage from redeposited sediments. Mining companies would be able to externalize costs due to lack of real controls.
- The World Bank predicts huge demand for metals, especially for battery materials.
- J. Lepauws from St. Johns University talked about his research on electronic waste (e-waste), of which 400,000 tons were exported by the US last year. E-waste is becoming a larger proportion of the waste stream. Even though we are recycling the materials, there are not enough of the right kind

Not mentioned explicitly during the conference, on a global scale the inability to have a responsible mining system is due to many factors, rules that favor governments and mining industry, corruption, greed, and labor exploitation. There was some talk about moving away from the growth paradigm. Degrowth and a circular economy were presented as alternatives to capitalism.

The impression I received from the speakers is that we can build a renewable world with the same exploitative mining system. Will what got us into trouble in the first place create a hell on earth for the majority of the world's population? Or will we finally listen to the wisdom of First Nations?

A number of Michigan Tech students went to Madrid for the UN Climate Change COP25 conference last year where they saw the negotiations between countries, sometimes succeeding, sometimes faltering as they sought solutions to difficult greenhouse gas reductions. These and many other young people from around the world will be in leadership positions in the not-so-distant future as options narrow with the need to work together. There is hope.

Horst Schmidt is president of UPEC.

above the ground.

- A union steward talked about his organization involving workers through discussion on how they can become vested in the changeover to renewables. Another speaker said greater reliance on wood could alleviate the need for mineral extraction due to wood's sustainability.
- As much as our personal footprints matter, individual action is not enough to reduce greenhouse gases. Carbon pricing could help.
- Some speakers brought up enforcement for accountability to match the scale of industries. The European Union has begun to set up a legal framework.
- An example of poverty, war, and injustice, the Democratic Republic of Congo has a near-monopoly on cobalt, producing 60–70% of the world's supply, of which 20–30% comes from artisanal mining. With the world's insatiable demand for cobalt, exploitation of workers who live in extreme poverty continues.
- An organization called Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance has set up a mining certification system that needs buy-in from the industry.

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The fall view upriver from the McClure Basin. This beloved view in Marquette County is proposed for protection as part of a Community Forest. See the story on U.P. land trusts inside.

Support UPEC by becoming a member or renewing your membership today! Just fill out the form below. All memberships run with the calendar year. Not sure if your membership is current? Email us at upec@upenvironment.org – we'll be glad to help!

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