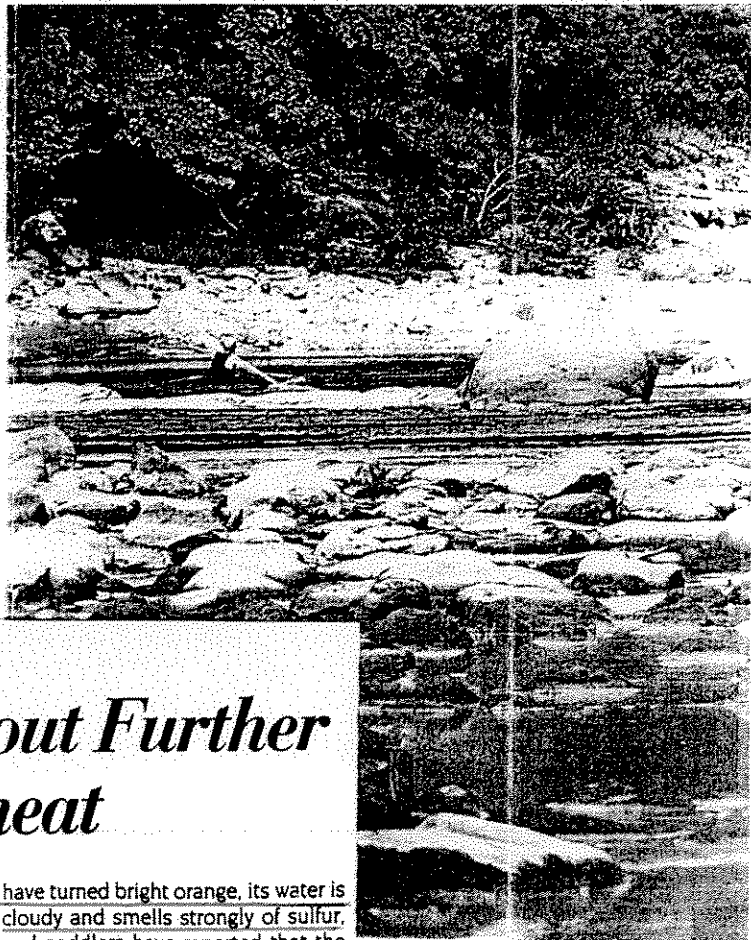


PT28



## *Mine Blow-out Further Degrades Cheat*

**W**hile most paddlers look forward to heavy spring runoff, paddlers on West Virginia's Cheat River could just as well do without it. Following weeks of heavy spring rain, an underground mine on a tributary of the Cheat began discharging acid runoff at a rate of 800 gallons per minute — making the mighty Cheat mighty acidic. No one who runs the river regularly can remember it ever being this heavily impacted by mine runoff.

The Cheat River drains the largest free-flowing watershed east of the Mississippi and has long been a favorite for rafting customers and private paddlers. But the Cheat is also a dead river. Acid mine drainage has rendered the river lifeless for most of the 20th century. Its spectacular canyon, clear water and rapids with names like Big Nasty and Even Nastier have largely masked the Cheat's problems from paddlers.

With the recent blow-out, the river's acid pollution problem has reared its head for all to see. The river's rocks and car-size boulders

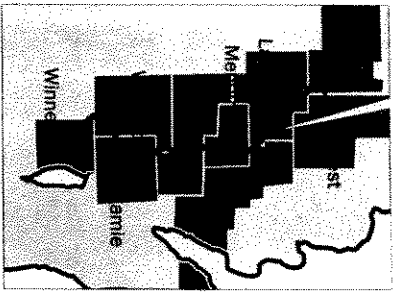
have turned bright orange, its water is cloudy and smells strongly of sulfur, and paddlers have reported that the water burns their eyes. With such pollution, the Cheat's reputation as a prime paddling destination may soon disappear.

We hope these mine breaks don't become a regular occurrence," says Imre Szilagyi, owner of Appalachian Wildwaters, which operates on the Cheat. "A succession of these incidents would have profound negative consequences to our industry." Local newspapers have already cited cases where customers wanting to raft the Cheat changed their mind when confronted with the river's polluted waters. T&T Fuel Co. owns the blow-out mine. Acid from T&T's No. 2 and No. 3 mines flows into the Cheat just above the canyon via Muddy Creek. Unfortunately the problem does not end there. Muddy Creek also receives acid runoff from mines situated along one of its feeder streams, Martins Creek. The mountainsides along the Muddy Creek drainage and other Cheat tributaries are also riddled with old mines that further threaten the river.

On the bright side, there are some signs that the federal government and the state of West Virginia have taken notice of the river's problems and are committed to the long, costly process of restoration. Robert Uram, head of the Interior Department's Office of Surface Mining, recently toured the site and pledged his office's assistance. And David Callagxhan, director of West Virginia's Division of Environmental Protection, told attendees at a recent conference on Appalachian rivers that his agency is trying to get more money to better address the state's acid runoff problem. And that might once again make paddlers look forward to spring rains.

# Exploring the Wolf River, Crandon mine debate

## Wolf River



NORTHWESTERN ART

## Mining moratorium bill

Senate Bill 3, popularly known as the "mining moratorium," passed the Wisconsin Senate March 11 on a 29 to 3 vote. It was introduced in the Assembly two days later and sent to the Environment Committee. A public hearing on the bill is scheduled on Oct. 14 at 1 p.m. at State Fair Park in West Allis. The committee is expected to vote on the bill in early November.

According to the Department of Natural Resources from issuing a metallic mining permit for the mining of a sulfide ore body until DNR determines that a mine has operated in a similar sulfide ore body in the United States or Canada for at least 10 years without polluting groundwater or surface water and that a mine that operated in a similar sulfide ore body in the United States or Canada has been closed for at least 10 years without polluting groundwater or surface water."

# Mining bill will protect our natural resources

## By SPENCER BLACK

Imagine an airplane that crashed every time it took off. Suppose the manufacturer of that plane then claimed that he had new technology that would prevent future problems and invited you and your family along on the next flight. Before you boarded that plane, you would probably want to see at least one successful flight.

That scenario is similar to the situation we now face with proposals to open mines in sulfide ore bodies in northern Wisconsin such as Exxon's proposed Wolf River mine. Why? Because every mine in a similar sulfide ore body has led to severe environmental damage.

Wisconsin will be the big loser if Exxon's proposed Wolf River mine ends up polluting drinking water supplies or our rivers and lakes. For that reason, I have proposed the Sulfide Mining Moratorium Bill. My bill will prohibit the opening of a new mine in a sulfide ore body until a similar mine has been operated elsewhere for at least 10 years without significant environmental damage.

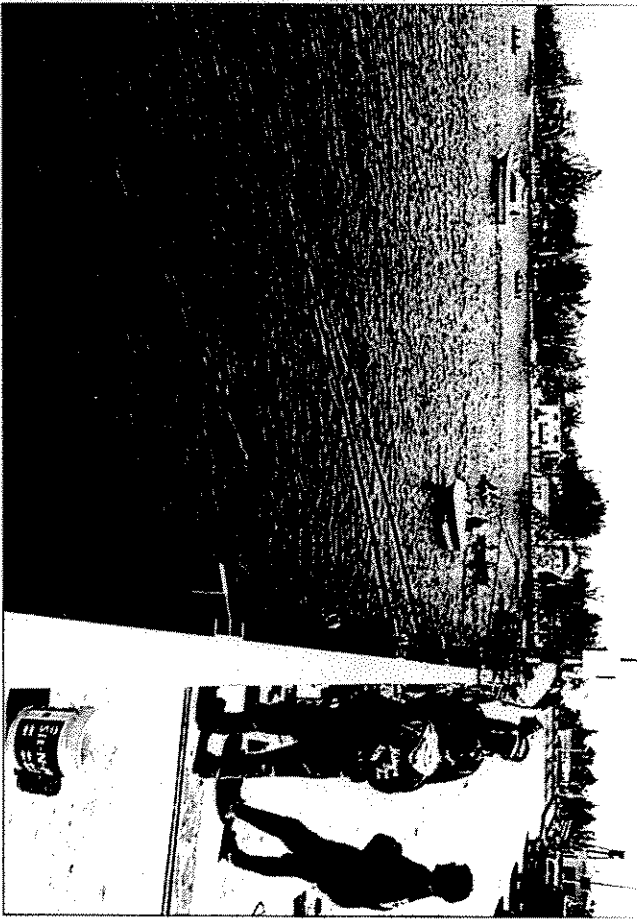
The ore in the proposed Exxon mine contains a high percentage of



Rep. Spencer Black

sulfide minerals. In order to extract the copper, zinc and other metals, the mining operation pulverizes the sulfide rock. While the valuable minerals would be shipped to Canada, the ground up sulfide materials called tailings would be left near the mine in what would be, by far, Wisconsin's largest toxic waste dump.

The tailings dump would be 90 feet high and cover an area larger than 220 football fields. When these



THE WOLF RIVER in Winneconne is a hot fishing spot for residents and tourists.

waste sulfide tailings mix with air and water, sulfuric acid is created.

Across the country, sulfide mining wastes have caused extensive environmental damage from acid draining into rivers, lakes and drinking water supplies. A great many rivers in Appalachia and the Rocky Mountains remain lifeless due to acid drainage from mines even decades after the mines were closed and the mining companies moved elsewhere.

The potential for acid drainage pollution from such a large dump would concern us wherever it was located. But its location in the headwaters of the Wolf River, one of our state's most famous and pristine rivers and the Fox River's largest tributary, makes it especially threatening.

Exxon cannot cite even one example of a mine in a sulfide ore body similar to the Wolf River deposit that has not caused extensive pollution. Even Exxon admitted, at a recent legislative public hearing in Green Bay, that there is no mine that they can point to that has been operated and reclaimed for a reasonable length of time without environmental damage.

Even though Exxon admits that past mines have caused great environmental damage, they now claim that new technologies will prevent that damage at their Wolf River mine. However, those technologies are unproven. Reports indicate that some recent mine operations have been promising, but other new mines have become environmental disasters. For example, the Summitville mine in Colorado, which opened only 10 years ago, had to be shut down after polluting many miles of trout streams and poisoning water supplies in southern Colorado. Taxpayers in that state will pay as much as \$150 million to try to clean up the damage.

Mining advocates claim that the four year history of a small mine in Ladysmith should clear the way for Exxon's proposed Wolf River mine. The Ladysmith mine is a fraction of the size of the Wolf River mine. What makes the comparison even less relevant is the fact that there is no tailing waste dump at Ladysmith because all the ore is shipped for processing in Canada. The community where the processing facility is located in Canada has very severe pollution problems. The Wolf

River-Crandon mine will process the ore on site.

Exxon and other mining advocates claim that we don't need the mining moratorium bill because Wisconsin's mining laws are already strong enough. However, our mining laws contain many loopholes. For example, mining is the only industry in the state that does not have to follow the strict standards of the state's Groundwater Law — the law that protects our drinking water. Mines follow separate, but weaker, rules. Also, many of the provisions of the mining laws can be waived at the request of the mining company and with the approval of the Department of Natural Resources.

This is especially worrisome now that the DNR is a politically controlled agency. The change to a politically controlled DNR was made at the request of lobbyists representing the mining industry. In fact, since the DNR became a political patronage agency in 1995, it has more and more played the role of cheerleader for Exxon. Most independent observers now believe that the new, political DNR will make its decisions on the mine based on profits, not science. In addition, the

Public Intervener, whose job was to watchdog the DNR, has been eliminated.

The latest effort by Exxon to kill the mining moratorium bill has been based on the routine suggestion by legislative lawyers to make a technical change to the language of the bill. This technical clarification which happens on almost every major legislation has already been accomplished by an amendment drafted by the nonpartisan Legislative Council.

This fall, the state Assembly is scheduled to vote on the mining moratorium bill. The state Senate has already passed the bill by a bipartisan vote of 29-3 despite a multimillion dollar lobbying and advertising campaign by Exxon.

The mining moratorium bill is a common sense approach to prevent mining operations from polluting our drinking water and rivers and lakes. Our greatest wealth in Wisconsin is not copper or zinc — it is our potential supply of clean water.

**SPENCER BLACK**, a Democrat, is the author of the mining moratorium bill which includes Madison, which includes Madison.

# Mining moratorium won't accomplish anything

BY MARC DUFF

Few issues in Wisconsin generate strong emotion, political activism, protest leading to arrest and doom-day predictions as metallic mining. This is ironic considering Wisconsin was named the "Badger State" because of its rich mining history dating back to the 19th century.

The proposed Cranston mine has prompted recent uprisings among concerned parties and environmental groups, including some considered extreme and radical, like Earth First and the Wisconsin Greens. These groups oppose the Cranston mine and back legislation authored by Rep. Spencer Black (D-Madison) which attempts to stop metallic mining in Wisconsin for decades. While Black's bill (Senate Bill 3) and mining issues deserve thorough attention, the Legislature must be careful and not allow politics and radical agendas interfere.

Proposing a mining moratorium automatically suggests Wisconsin's environmental regulations are inadequate to protect our lands, forests and waters. This is ludicrous. When Wisconsin's comprehensive mining and environmental laws were enacted in the early 1970s and 1980s, they were considered the best in the nation. Since that time, these laws have only been strengthened.



Rep. Marc Duff

Mining Association credited Wisconsin with enacting "arguably the toughest environmental regulations impacting mining early in the environmental movement." In fact, Black wrote a column on Wisconsin's continual high rank on environmental quality published February 17, 1995, in the Clark County Press in which he writes, "When states are ranked on the quality of their environment, Wisconsin is almost always at or near the top. ... Wisconsin has long been a leader

in enacting strict laws to keep our outdoors clean.

In light of this, we should have confidence in our state's environmental regulatory structure and allow the mining permit process to work rather than let emotional politics intervene. It is better to trust the state's technical experts, scientists, independent consultants and professionals to scrutinize proposed mine projects and protect the environment.

There is no doubt the covenants methods of mining in the 1800s and early 1900s were damaging to the environment. However, modern mining technology and engineering has dramatically changed that record so that environmentally responsible mining is the standard. In fact, the only way a mine can receive a DNR permit to operate in Wisconsin is if it will meet strong environmental requirements and it will not endanger public health, safety or welfare.

Modern mines have operated throughout North America without harm to the environment. Colorado's Henderson Mine, Missouri's Viburnum Mine #27, California's McLaughlin Mine, and Montana's Stillwater's Cannon mine have all operated in an environmentally responsible manner, many in sensitive areas. Wisconsin's Flam-

beau Mine in Ladysmith, which operated from 1993 until this year, has been hailed as a success and complied with all of our tough environmental regulations. It is important to note that if Black's mining moratorium bill had been in effect in the 1980s, the successful Flambeau Mine would have been prevented for many decades.

Few bills have generated as much confusion and emotion as Senate Bill 3, the so-called "mining moratorium" bill, which passed the state Senate in March. Because of amendments added to the bill in the Senate, there has been a great deal of confusion over what the bill actually does. As a result, an impartial legislative attorney was asked to write a legal opinion on SB 3. The conclusion was that the bill imposes no moratorium on mining and adds no more stringent provisions to protect the environment or Wolf River from upriver mining practices.

One can't help but wonder why the bill's proponents failed to pass SB 3 in a way that would actually result in a moratorium on mining in Wisconsin. Perhaps supporters of the measure know SB 3 wouldn't pass the Senate in that form. Or maybe they were more interested in creating a hot political issue than in working to strengthen Wisconsin's already tough environmental laws.

Supporters of SB 3, who claimed to be protecting the environment, cast anyone opposed to this do-nothing legislation as a villain. In truth, their actions and their bill were nothing but political posturing and empty rhetoric.

While the focus has been placed on SB 3, which provides no further protections to the environment, many of my Republican colleagues have been working on initiatives guaranteed to give the DNR the regulatory tools it needs to protect the environment while allowing mining to occur. Some of these are as follows:

- 1) Last session a new law was enacted which makes mining companies perpetually responsible for costs and clean up associated with mine waste facilities;
- 2) New rules were requested to enhance the groundwater rules as it relates to mining;
- 3) DNR was asked to forward new rules that require mine operators to place in a special fund adequate moneys to cover any preventive and remedial actions necessary to clean up the site or problem caused by the mine; and
- 4) A bill, AB 236, would require an applicant demonstrate they will use proven technology to protect surface and groundwater from contamination in order to obtain a min-

ing permit.

Our environment is far too important to be used as a pawn in a political game, use scare-tactics and make questionable prognostications. Just as a diverse group of people came together to create our welcome mining laws in 1981, I would welcome those who would join me to reach a consensus on improving our current laws.

Our position is clear: If a mining company can't prove its operation is safe, if they can't make assurances their mine won't contaminate ground or surface water in Wisconsin, they won't receive a mining permit to operate in our state. Current Wisconsin mining laws require state-of-the-art engineering design, technology for pollution prevention, environmental monitoring, and strong financial rules to guarantee mines in Wisconsin are built, operated and reclaimed to high environmental standards. There is no need to have politics delay mining in Wisconsin for several decades because of what is already in place.

**MARC DUFF**, a Republican, is chairman of the Assembly's Environment and Utilities Committee. He represents the 98th district, which includes New Berlin, Brookfield and Elm Grove.



Gregg Underheim (R-Oshkosh)

The contacts I have gathered from my district are strongly in opposition to the mine. That certainly affects my thinking. I wish the bill would be debated solely on the merits of the issue. There is a lot of emotional baggage that comes with this topic. The opponents of mining have used that strategy effectively. There have been legitimate concerns as well as the fears that have been raised.



Carol Owens (R-town of Nekimi)

We shouldn't legislate out of fear. It drives people to do very strange things. As it is worded now, I won't vote for the so-called mining moratorium. I could change my mind if the legislation is made better. The question is who operates the mine and under which rules. The Cranston mine will be mined — that's a given — only a matter of when.



Judy Klusman (R-town of Clayton)

Senate Bill 3 is based on some good science. If I were to vote on that bill today, I would support it. My constituents are overwhelmingly in support of strengthening our mining laws. The Cranston mine is a little different because you're going down into the mine and refining the ore in place. Senate Bill 3 is a reasonable piece of legislation. This is incredibly important when you talk about the headwater of the Wolf River. It affects my entire district. Somewhere between 25 percent of the state's water comes in that area. We can't take the chance.

# The News

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 51

APRIL 24, 1996

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88 8  
Rep. Lorraine Serotti  
P.O. Box 8953, State Capital  
Madison, WI 53708

## Black: Is Serotti backing mining in Wisconsin

### Hearing held in Keshena on proposed bill to place moratorium on mines if

By Michael J. Boucher  
EDITOR OF THE NEWS

Wisconsin lawmaker Spencer Black told a small audience in Keshena Monday night about a vacation his family took to the Rocky Mountains last summer.

### NEWS ANALYSIS

Is it in S-G's best interest to sell any of its property?

Black, who described himself as an avid angler, said he went to a local sporting goods store to buy some lures and get some tips on where to find a few good fishing holes.

"Don't fish there. Nothing has lived in that creek for 50 years."

Black, who held hearings in six locations Monday including Keshena on a bill he has proposed to enact a minimum 10-year moratorium on new mines in Wisconsin, said the proposed Crandon mine

### THEY'RE FIGHTING TO SAVE THEIR HOME



By Dennis R. Cooley  
PUBLISHER OF THE NEWS

See BLACK, Page 3

### Area News

# Black: State representative pushing for moratorium on mines

Continued from Page 1

could have the same disastrous impact on the Wolf and Wisconsin rivers.

The state legislature is set to vote May 7 on Assembly Bill 758 that would prohibit new mines in Wisconsin until it can be proven the mines will not contaminate surface or ground waters. The bill would bar Exxon and other companies from mining a sulfide ore body — like the mine proposed at Crandon — until a similar mine has been operating at least 10 years without polluting nearby waters.

Black asked local residents to contact their state representatives and urge them to support the bill. He also told the group that their lawmaker in Madison, Rep. Lorraine Seratti, "has not been very supportive" of the mining moratorium legislation.

The bill is only one vote of moving forward, Black said, adding Seratti "will be put to the test. Let's see how she votes (May 7)."

A Department of Natural Resources' study has shown that every sulfide mine has caused water pollution, Black noted. "The DNR report could not turn up even one example of a mine in a sulfide ore body that has not caused significant environmental harm," he stated.

The proposed Crandon mine would create the largest toxic waste dump in Wisconsin — covering an area the size of 350 football fields and generate 1 million gallons of wastewater daily that would be pumped through a roughly 4-mile pipeline and dumped into the Wisconsin River, Black explained.

*By Glenn Steinhilber, oppose the*

tant than a few (mining) jobs," Teller said, noting he drank water from the Wolf River while growing up as a child on the reservation.

Dixon said voters hold the real power and not mining lobbyists.

"I'm a politician on the reservation," Dixon stated. "I'm hired and fired at the ballot box (and so are state lawmakers). We can fire them if we want to."

Part of Monday's audience included rural Shawano's Len and Judy Pubanz, who have lived along the shores of the Wolf River for decades.

"A mine at Crandon will have a tremendous (environmental) impact here," Len Pubanz told The News.

"There's never been a (sulfide) mine anywhere in the world that hasn't polluted the environment."

A tribal environmental spokesman, Kenneth Fish, noted a final draft of an impact study on the Crandon mine is targeted for publication in 1998. After the environmental impact study is completed, the DNR will decide to approve or deny a state permit for the mine.

"It's a tough fight (against a wealthy mining company)," Black said. "But it's very important. If the

people speak out...we can very definitely stop the mine."

A coalition opposing the mine has stops scheduled this Saturday at the Shawano City-County Library and Sunday at the Keshena Youth Center. Both events begin at 1 p.m. Organizers have encouraged area residents to attend and to form local groups opposing the Crandon mine.

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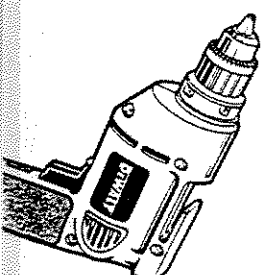
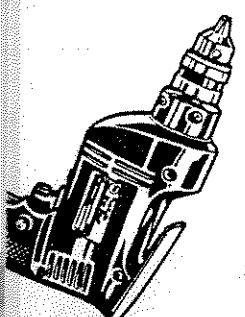
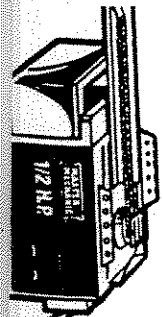
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# GRAND RE-OPENING

## Thru April 28th



failure of sulfide mines not to pollute the environment and the track record of one of the companies proposing the mine, Exxon — Black said, pointing to the Alaska oil spill disaster.

Exxon has begun running radio spots promoting mining "but they won't come to a hearing like this because they can't defend their position," he stated.

Mining industry claims that new technologies have made their operations more environmentally safe don't hold water, Black said, noting that a mine opened in Colorado 10 years ago, closed 5 years later and could now cost taxpayers \$150 million or more to clean up.

"I don't think we want to be the guinea pig for unproven technology and put our resources at risk," he said. Mining opponents say the Crandon mine could impact animal, fish and plant life along both the Wolf and Wisconsin rivers.

Black, the Democratic leader on the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, said he was encouraged to learn Monday that University of Wisconsin students marched to the office of a high-ranking aide of Gov. Tony Thompson — James Klausner, a former Exxon lobbyist — to protest the proposed Crandon mine.

"We've had a lot of experience with (sulfide) mines and it hasn't been very good," Black said, noting 95 percent of the crushed rock extracted to get sulfide ore becomes a waste product and creates sulphuric acid when mixed with air and water.

Black, who praised the environmental reputation of the Menominee Indian Nation, was joined by tribal leaders including Chairman John Teller and Vice Chairman Louis Dixon in calling for support of AB-758 and to oppose the Crandon mine.

"We must draw the line in the sand that the Earth is more impor-

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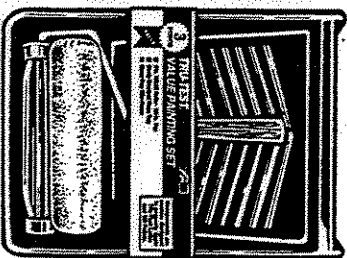


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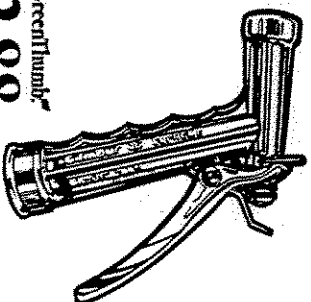
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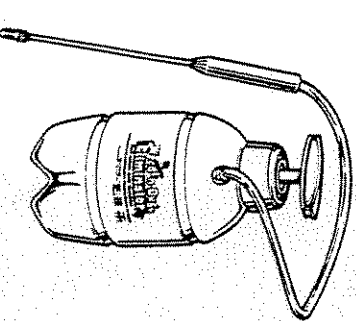
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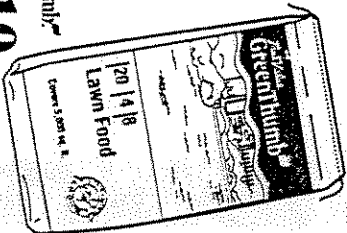
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# Proposed mine's effect on lakes questioned

By DON BEHN  
of the Journal Sentinel staff

Crandon Mining Co. has failed to substantiate its claim that operating a proposed underground mine in Forest County would not significantly reduce water levels in nearby streams and lakes, state environmental regulators have said in a letter to the company.

Unless some of the questions state regulators have about the project are answered by officials of the company, one Department of Natural Resources official said he would have "substantial concerns" about their claims.

Possible errors in the company's 1995 computer analysis of the effects of mining on ground water levels also could prevent regulators from accurately predicting changes in water levels at Mole Lake, west of the mine site, according to the letter and an accompanying report written by Christopher Carlson, a hydrogeologist with the Department of Natural Resources in Madison.

Similar errors could underestimate the expected drop in flows of several streams, including upper Pickeral Creek and two others feeding Rolling Stone Lake in Langlade County, Carlson said. In winter, the small creeks are the only source of ox-

xygen to the ice-covered lake. If their flows drop to a trickle, bacteria that digest dead algae in the lake would consume most of the remaining oxygen and cause fish to die.

Crandon Mining is seeking local, state and federal permits to remove 55 million tons of zinc and copper ore from its deposit 5 miles south of Crandon and 2 miles east of the Mole Lake Chippewa Reservation. Construction of the underground mine would take three years. Ore would be excavated and processed for 28 years, the company says in reports filed with the DNR.

The proposed mining project is opposed by environmental activists and some area residents.

The pumping of an average 700 gallons per minute of ground water out of the proposed Crandon mine will reverse existing flows of ground water in certain areas. And state regulators must determine whether the possible drops in stream and lake levels could damage the environment.

Don Moe, technical and permitting manager for Crandon Mining in Rhineland, said the company would respond to the DNR's comments at a meeting later this month. "This is just an expected part of the process in their review," Moe said.

Regulators will write a draft environmental impact statement, which could be made public this summer, provided they have all the information needed.

There have been some problems gathering information. The DNR says Crandon Mining has not complied with requests made last spring for details on the computer analysis, known as a ground water flow model.

"Until the issues raised by these comments are addressed, we will be unable to use the

**The pumping of an average 700 gallons per minute of ground water out of the proposed Crandon mine will reverse existing flows of ground water in certain areas.**

model to assess projected impacts from your proposal," Carlson said in the letter.

Among the missing details is an explanation of how the company checked the accuracy of the measurements used in the model — from precipitation to ground water elevations and other geological information, Carlson said.

"At this point, we're asking for more information," Carlson said. "If they can't provide us with adequate information, we may have very substantial concerns about their conclusions.

For now, we are reserving our judgment."

The maximum expected flow of ground water into the mine would be 1,270 gallons per minute, but the company intends to block much of it.

To do that, the company says it will drill holes into bedrock in advance of constructing new underground corridors. Ground water in the areas should be drained quickly, but if it continues to flow, the company will pump grout into the bedrock to

prevent additional water from flowing into the sites. New mine corridors subsequently would be dug into the grouted bedrock.

Some of the ground water trickling into the mine will be used to control dust and to operate drills.

Ground water that does not meet state water quality limits would be treated and cleaned of most pollutants. That water will be tested before being pumped through a pipeline and discharged into the Wisconsin River at the Hat Rapids Dam in Oneida County, the company says in

reports submitted to the DNR.

In a ground water report submitted to the DNR in September 1995, Crandon Mining concluded de-watering the mine would not change water levels on Larsene, Meltonga, Rolling Stone, Ground Hemlock, Rice, Mole, Crane, Pickeral, St. Johns, Walsh, Kimberly and Clark lakes.

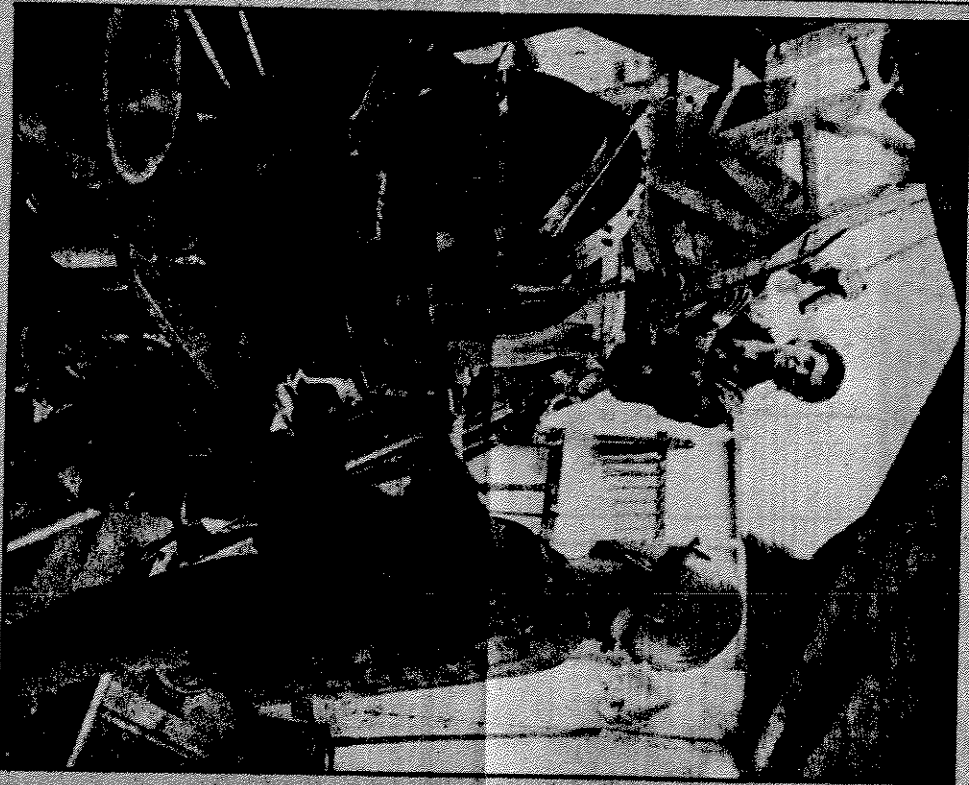
But Mole Lake does not have an outlet stream, and its water gradually seeps into the ground, Carlson said. "If ground water levels below the lake drop more than the company expects, the amount of water seeping out of the lake would increase, and its surface levels would drop," he said.

Carlson doubts the company's computer analysis can accurately predict effects on Mole Lake. The reason is that it might not include a boundary marking the maximum distance that ground water would be drawn toward the mine during operations.

Water levels on Little Sand Lake, immediately south of the mine, would be expected to drop less than 1 inch, the company's 1995 report says.

"Only Skunk Lake will experience a major change," the report says. But the lake is entirely on mine property and has no fish population, according to the company.

# DRILLING RIGS STAKE CLAIMS IN THE WOODS



State Journal photo by  
L. ROBERT URMEN

Other a helper, Perry, Bell, above left, and other Mike, Tuer, both from Carleton, head to a drilling rig near Onondaga County's Willow River. Deep in the pine woods, Noranda Minerals's drilling crews work around the clock, inside the red building. They are removing core samples that are 1.8 billion years old. Noranda plans to apply for permits this summer to mine silver and zinc at the town of Lyme site.



## Minerals: new treasures of the North

By Ron Saaby  
and Jeff Meyers  
Wisconsin State Journal

LYNNE — The high-pitched whine can be heard, even above the steady roar of the Willow River rapids.

It's the sound of the drilling rigs powering their diamond-tipped bits into stone. Noranda Minerals, a

Canadian company, is at work in the southern Onondaga County woods, bringing up long, slender columns of mineral-rich rock laid down more than a billion years ago by an ancient volcano.

With pros for many hard-rock minerals climbing out of a decade-long depression, mining giants such as RTZ (Kennecott Corp.'s British holding company) and Noranda Minerals are searching Wisconsin's North Woods, searching for copper, gold, silver and zinc.

Soon, the sound of drilling will be replaced by the thunder of dynamite near Ladysmith, on the banks of the Flambeau River. Kennecott this summer begins digging a 225-foot-deep pit with the hope of removing copper and other minerals valued at more than \$500 million.

Later this spring, other companies will probably begin the long process of getting state permits to mine in the Willow River country and in the Chequamegon National Forest in Taylor County.

With the state polled for what may be its third era of mining, the Wisconsin State Journal took a look at the issue.

Beginning today and running through Thursday, we report what we found.

■ A nation-wide chest of Kenecott operations turned up several environmental violations. But state laws fail to consider the company's record of violations elsewhere before granting permits.

**BOOM OR BUST?**

■ Kenecott, posting on a reported political strategy, declined comment. Co-opted opponents had maneuvered legally behind the scenes to gain crucial government approval of a local pact.

■ Ladysmith officials, in negotiation with Kennecott, got no financial or technical aid from the state even though they said help was desperately needed.

■ Mining companies, eager to win support in northern counties, have denounced thousands of dollars to local governments, churches and schools.

■ Gov. Tommy Thompson and his aides kept close tabs on the Ladysmith project and helped relay company complaints in 1985 that the Department of Natural Resources wasn't acting quickly enough. DNR apparently resisted the pressure.

■ Mining promises tax revenues and hope for an area with unemployment nearly double the state average. However, some tourism operators fear mines will scare away vacationers.

■ Wisconsin's mining laws, touted as among the best in the country, are only as good as the regulators who use them. Actions were granted for the Flambeau mine. Opponents say other loopholes threaten the largely pristine nature of the North Woods and could lead to pollution of surface water and ground water and the destruction of fragile wildlife habitat.

**Mining arouses emotions, inspires lively debate and creates jobs/12A, 13A**



## A SPECIAL PLACE FOR ALL CONCERNED



Linda Craver of Ladysmith worries about the impact the mine would have on the Flambeau River and its wetlands.

State Journal photo by ROSEBURNER

# Mining damage key issue

By Ron Seely  
and Jeff Meyers

Wisconsin State Journal

One day last September, Jim Wise and his wife, Pam, took their mountain bikes up into the Willow River country not far from their Tomahawk farmhouse.

From Highway 8, which separates Lincoln and Oneida counties, all the way north to the Willow River and its reservoir, the country the Wises biked through that day is wild. There are hidden lakes and winding creeks, bogs and stands of pine. Timber wolves howl at night. Bald eagles ride the thermals above the hills. In one clearing, high above a narrow, clear creek, are the ruins of an old Chippewa roundhouse and nearby a cemetery with 30 Indian graves.

On that bright fall day, the Wises saw something found only in the deepest of this wild country.

A huge creature was basking at a butterfly. It pounced and played like a housecat, and when it turned sideways, Jim saw its long tail. He realized they were getting a glimpse of a mountain lion, an animal rarely seen in Wisconsin.

"The Willow," Jim Wise said, remembering that day, "is a special place."

Special, too, for a Canadian mining company called Noranda Minerals. Wise and his friends have listened in alarm in recent months as the high, hard white of Noranda's drilling rigs carries across Willow River country from what's called the Lyme deposit. Later this summer, Noranda probably will apply for permits to mine the site for silver, zinc and gold. Kennecott Corp.'s Flambeau Mining Co. already has state permits allowing it to dig an open-pit copper mine 140 feet from the



Willow River rapids, a walleye spawning area, is downriver from potential mine site.



**BOOM OR BUST?**

Flambeau River, about 75 miles west of Willow River country. Other companies, too, are drilling and planning to start the long state review process.

Despite assurances from the mining companies and state officials, the people of the north are wondering what all this will bring.

"I just have mixed feelings about it," says Kale Sandus, a housewife running to be chairwoman of the town of Lyme. She wonders whether her well is safe. "What's going to happen 15 or 20 years down the line?"

The people of the Ladysmith area are familiar with Sennas' questions, having tried to answer them for more than 15 years. Even as Kennecott prepares to blast, there is lingering apprehension at the local level and a growing outcry from mining critics around the state.

Mining opponents like Wise, who heads an anti-mining group called Northwoods Alliance, have built their campaigns on mostly environmental grounds.

Opponents of a "mining district" across northern Wisconsin that will alter the present nature of the North Woods and hurt the tourist-drawing power of the region.

While the Flambeau mine site is on an old farm, the Willow River site and other areas in those areas would appear to have more impact, said DNR environmental assessment specialist William Tans.

■ Pollution of surface waters such as the Flambeau River in Rusk County and the Willow River system in southern Oneida County.

■ Pollution of ground water by seepage from piles of mining waste and by dangerous chemicals such as cyanide that may be used in some gold mining operations.

■ Destruction of fragile habitats for wild-

MJS 9-16-97

# Mining moratorium bill won't add to protection

I am writing in response to an Aug. 25 letter by Laura Furtman of Webster. Furtman made false insinuations and accused me of delaying action on the mining moratorium proposal.

Furtman's letter grossly exaggerates the impact of the proposal. She believes it will "effectively

decide the fate of northern Wisconsin's drinking water, rivers and forests" and that it is "crucial to the protection of drinking water

in every county."

Not true! An impartial legislative attorney wrote a legal opinion concluding that the bill imposes no mining moratorium and adds no provision to protect the environment or the Wolf River from mining.

Wisconsin's current stringent

mining, ground water, surface water and solid waste laws adequately protect our drinking water, rivers and forests.

I committed to two public hearings on the bill. The first was May 12 in Ladysmith. The second, which I have scheduled twice in the Milwaukee area this summer, had to be canceled due to ongoing delay by Senate Democrats in passing the budget.

Assembly Speaker Ben Brancel and I now hope to hold the second hearing on Oct. 14 at State Fair Park, assuming budget action is completed.

Subsequently, a committee vote will be held on the bill and other mining-related proposals, which I am working on, that improve our stringent mining laws. I remain committed to ensuring strong environmental laws in Wisconsin, while allowing appropriate metallic mining to occur.



Duff

Rep. Marc Duff  
Chairman  
Assembly Committee  
on Environment  
R-New Berlin

## Bill does nothing

The letter by Laura Furtman of Webster (Aug. 23, Page 10A) made some false insinuations and accused me, as chair of the Assembly Committee on Environment, of delaying action on a bill related to mining in Wisconsin.

Last March, the state Senate passed Senate Bill 3 that supporters hoped would stop metallic mining in Wisconsin for decades. The intent of many is to prevent the proposed Crandon Mine from receiving a state permit to operate.

I committed to holding two hearings and a committee vote. Hundreds of people attended the first hearing May 12 in Ladysmith, at which Ms. Furtman testified.

Unfortunately, the three-month delay in passing the budget by Senate Democrats has twice forced cancellation of Milwaukee hearings. Speaker Brancel and I now plan to hold the second hearing in mid-October.

Ms. Furtman's letter grossly exaggerates the impact of SB 3. She and many others believe this bill will "effectively decide the fate of northern Wisconsin's drinking water, rivers and forests" and that it is "crucial to the protection of drinking water in every county."

These statements couldn't be further from the truth. An impartial legislative attorney concluded the bill imposes no moratorium on mining and adds no more-stringent provisions to protect the environment from "unproved" mining practices.

Is it truly Ms. Furtman's intent to demand a vote on a bill that does nothing? If a vote were held on SB 3 in its present form, it would be

*E.C. Leader Telegram*

*9/15/97*

defeated in committee. Hopefully, improvements can be made for additional environmental protections.

I remain committed to making sure Wisconsin has strong environmental laws while allowing appropriate metallic mining to occur.

**MARC DUFF**

State representative, New Berlin

## 32 Legislator: 'mining moratorium' misleading

By Collin Lueck

Citing a recent opinion by state attorneys, the Wisconsin House of Representatives Environment Committee chairman is calling the "Mining Moratorium" bill a meaningless piece of legislation.

Rep. Marc Duff (R-New Berlin), who heads the committee in which the bill now sits, said the idea that the bill would protect the environment is a myth.

"I just want to stop perpetuating this myth," he stated.

The proposed bill was passed by the State Senate as SB3. Amendments added in the Senate have created confusion over the bill's current meaning, Duff stated.

After a hearing in Ladysmith demonstrated limited understanding of the bill by legislators and the public, Duff requested a legal review by the state's Legislative Council.

"We should be voting on bills with a full understanding of what they mean," explained Duff.

The nonpartisan group of attorneys found that the bill as passed by the Senate would not prohibit mining or further ensure environmental safety, Duff noted.

"Their conclusion is that it's not in fact a moratorium," said Duff.

The bill, authored by Rep. Spencer Black (D-Madison), was prompted by the proposed Crandon Mine, which many fear could cause significant environmental damage.

Duff said the bill in its original form was an attempt to prevent the Crandon Mine from being developed. But, he added, the Senate's amendments have gutted the bill of its initial intent.

"If the proponents of this bill wanted to stop the Crandon Mine, this bill is not going to do it," stated Duff. "That's what the impartial legislative attorneys have concluded."

The bill would require a prospective metallic mine developer to show that a similar mine had been operated for at least 10 years and been closed for another 10 years without violating any environmental laws. With that proof, mining permits could be considered.

The phrase "without violating any environmental laws," Duff pointed out, means that the most environmentally disastrous mining operations in history could be used

as successful examples due to a lack of regulations at that time.

"This is the big loophole in the bill," he said. "You can look at a mine from back in the 1800s and it meets the qualifications because there were no laws."

Duff indicated that SB3 has little chance of emerging from his committee in the form passed by the Senate. Instead, Duff said he would like to amend the bill to strengthen mining regulations.

"What we won't do is pass a bill that just bans a mine," stated Duff.

Mining legislation is presently on temporary hold as the Senate continues to wrangle over the state budget, normally passed by June 30. Pending completion of the budget, Duff said he hopes to present a new version of SB3 in September.

# Compact talks paving way for mine, Garvey says

MJS  
12-11-97

**Thompson aides say gaming talks have nothing to do with Crandon site**

By CARY SPIVAK  
of the Journal Sentinel staff

Gov. Tommy Thompson is using gaming compact negotiations — in which he is demanding the state's Indian tribes give up their rights to regulate the environment — to pave the way for a controversial zinc mine in Crandon, Ed Garvey, Democratic gubernatorial candidate, charged Wednesday.

"Thompson is improperly using the gaming compact negotiations to try and get the Exxon mine approved," Garvey said in an interview. The governor "is holding these gaming compacts up for ransom, and the payoff will be the permit for the Exxon mine," said Garvey, who is challenging Thompson in his anticipated unprecedented bid for a fourth term.

At issue is Thompson's demand, voiced during ongoing gaming compact negotiations, that tribes give up the ability to ask the federal government for

permission to regulate the environment on and near their reservations.

Many members of the tribes near the proposed mine in Forest County privately contend the governor's demand is a way to get their governments to lose regulatory authority that could block the mine from opening. The mine would be owned by a Wisconsin partnership created by Exxon Coal and Minerals of Houston and Rio Algom Ltd. of Toronto.

Thompson's lead negotiators denied Garvey's charges.

"We have made it absolutely clear to the tribes that nothing we are discussing in these compacts has anything at all to do with mining," said John Matthews, Thompson's chief of staff.

DuWayne Derickson, Mole Lake Chippewa tribal planner, said that Garvey's statement "shows that he is truly supporting the tribes in their opposition to the Crandon mine." The tribe is near the proposed mine site.

Apesanahkwat, chairman of the Menominee Tribe located down river from the mine site, has said he would agree to use state environmental regulations

enforced by the tribe as part of a deal that also included the ability to open an off-reservation casino.

A spokesman for the Potawatomi Tribe, located near the mine site, declined to comment.

Thompson's sought the restriction as one of about 20 demands that he has imposed on Wisconsin's 11 tribes that are operating 17 casinos in the state. The casinos took in nearly \$683 million in gaming revenue and nearly \$280 million in profits last year.

Many of Thompson's demands, including his call for limiting spearfishing rights granted through treaties, have nothing to do with the regulation of the casinos or the amount of gambling profits that tribes should pay the state.

Garvey said the talks should be limited to gaming issues.

The governor has threatened to make the Indian casinos illegal by letting compact agreements expire in 1998 and 1999. The state would urge the federal government to shut the gambling halls, which employ between 14,000 and 15,000 people, Thompson aides have said.

The mining issue has seldom come up during the more than one year of compact negotiations and has never been subject of extended discussion during those talks, said Mark Bugher, Thompson's top deputy, and tribal sources.

Matthews and Bugher both said Wisconsin already has the toughest mining regulations in the nation. The Department of Natural Resources "is not going to allow those standards to be compromised," Matthews said.

# Duff's 'fine' with putting mine tailings dump anywhere in state

## TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing because I believe the people of Pierce County need to know about a statement made by the Assembly Environment Committee Chairman, Marc Duff, at the recent public hearing on Assembly Bill 70, the Mining Moratorium Bill. The meeting was held in Ladysmith on May 12 and lasted over seven hours. It was attended by more than 300 people.

Before getting into the specifics of Rep. Duff's statement, some background information is in order. I am just a regular citizen, a pharmacist by trade. I attended the meeting because I am concerned that Exxon's proposed zinc-copper mine near Crandon is likely to pollute our lakes and ground water with sulfuric acid and heavy metals, to say nothing of its impact on the scenic beauty of our Northwoods. It's common knowledge that the mine would produce the largest toxic waste dump in the state, a "tailings dump" that would cover an

area over 200 football fields in size and be as high as a 10-story building. Since the waste water from the mine would not meet standards for dumping into the nearby Wolf River, Exxon proposed to pump over a million gallons of water a day over to Rhinelander and dump it into the Wisconsin River instead.

Tom Ward, a member of the Wisconsin Resources Protection Council, was one of many to speak at the hearing. At one point during his heated testimony, he said to Rep. Duff, "They should put the tailings dump down in Madison." I was shocked to hear Rep. Duff respond, "Fine by me." Ward went on to say, "Well good. Let's work on that. Let's put the dump right down there with Governor Thompson. Let it look over Lake Mendota and Lake Monona and let's pump the (waste) water from Madison to Middleton when they get done with it."

"Fine by me." Is that any sort of statement to be coming from the lips

of the chairman of the Assembly Environment Committee? It shows a great lack of sensitivity to the concerns of the people of Northern Wisconsin and leads me to wonder if any part of the state is immune to exploitation by the mining industry. It's no secret that other potential mining sites have been identified close to La Crosse and Eau Claire.

Based on Duff's statement, even

Pierce County is not sacred. Would you want such a dump to be put next to your home? If your answer is "No," please speak up and voice your opinion to your state representative. And contact the Speaker of the Assembly, Rep. Ben Brancel, to request that the bill be brought to a vote on the Assembly floor as soon as possible.

Laura Furtman  
Webster

1-12-98 WSS

# Poll: Crandon mine unpopular Clinton, Thompson get so-so ratings

State Journal staff

Dane County adults oppose the proposed Crandon mine by a large margin and give only average job approval ratings to President Bill Clinton and Gov. Tommy Thompson, according to an Edgewood College poll released over the weekend.

The poll showed that 60 percent of those Dane County adults surveyed were against the proposed Crandon mine in north-central Wisconsin near the head waters of the Wolf River. Nineteen percent said they were for the mine, and 21 percent were unsure, according to the scientific survey.

A bill that could affect the future of the Crandon underground zinc and copper mine is set for Assembly debate later this month.

Please see **POLL**, Page 3A

# Poll

Continued from Page 1A

The bill, which already passed the Senate, would establish a mineral mining moratorium in the state.

The Edgewood College poll, an annual student political science project in its 10th year, surveyed 398 randomly selected Dane County residents age 18 or older. The survey was conducted by telephone from Nov. 8 through Nov. 18. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 5 percent, said professors Steven Davis and Frank Casale, who supervised the survey. Other results from the poll:

■ Clinton, a Democrat, received a job approval rating of 52.1 percent, below the national numbers, while Thompson, a Republican up for re-election this year, received a 49.4 percent approval rating, which is below statewide figures.

■ Other job approval ratings included U.S. Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., 70.3 percent; U.S. Herb Kohl, D-Wis., 67.8 percent; U.S. Rep. Scott Klug, R-Wis., 65.7 percent; and Madison Mayor Sue Bauman, 60.9 percent.

■ In a matchup between likely U.S. Senate opponents, Feingold, a veteran Dane County politician, received 54 percent backing compared to Republican opponent Mark Neumann's 17.4 percent. Neumann is a congressman from Janesville. Nearly 30 percent of those surveyed — 28.6 percent — weren't sure which candidate they would support in the November contest.

Expert poll-watchers caution that random polls of adults don't necessarily indicate election results, in part because less than half of eligible voters are likely to vote in a non-presidential election year.

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FOR

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# Games Surrounding Mining Bill Continue

**To the Editor:**

Just when it looked like the Mining Moratorium Bill might be coming to a vote on the Assembly floor, look what has happened. We have change in the make-up of the key players who will determine the

fate of the Bill, with the exodus of Ben Brancel as Speaker of the Wisconsin Assembly and the likely succession of Scott Jensen to the post, the Bill looks to be in limbo again. And remember, this Bill is designed to protect Wisconsin's

drinking water, including yours in Walworth County. It requires companies like Exxon to prove they will not pollute Wisconsin's ground and surface waters before being allowed to set up shop wherever they please.

Now I don't know much about politics, so when I heard the name, Scott Jensen, as the pick for the job, I naively wondered if his choice might have a bearing on whether or not the Bill gets to the floor. Then I happened to see an article that appeared in the April, 1997 issue of "This Month in Mining," and my worst fears became a reality. It turns out that Jensen was a guest speaker at the Wisconsin Mining Associations meeting this past February, a conference openly motivated by the industry's desire to defeat the Bill. He characterized anti-mining activists as a breed of "new prohibitionists," going so far as to allude to their tactics as being similar to those used by the Nazis! He seems to forget that the Mining Moratorium Bill is just a common sense approach to regulating the sulfide mining industry. At any rate, it looks like my question has been answered.

Thompson, Klauser, Meyer and now Jensen. Does anyone else see a pro-Exxon pattern here? We need to call Representative Jensen and our local representative to demand that the Mining Moratorium Bill be brought to a vote and passed as soon as possible. No more games! Rep. Jensen can be reached at 888-529-0032, and Walworth County's Representative Neal Kedzie at 888-534-0043.

Laura Furtman  
Webster

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NOV 09 1997

# 32 Mining bill opponents have an amendment ready

BY RON SEELY  
Lee Newspapers

MADISON — Republican opponents of a bill that would place a moratorium on hard-rock mining in Wisconsin are proposing substantial changes to the proposal as it works its way toward the floor of the Assembly.

Last week, the bill's Democratic author called the Republican effort to alter the legislation a veiled attempt to weaken it.

"They'll try to pass something," said State Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, "but they'll take all the teeth out of it. I suspect there will be

an attempt to gut it."

But, State Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, said late last week that he has drafted a substitute amendment that addresses what he considers "major flaws" in the proposed legislation.

The bill in question would require mining companies seeking permits in Wisconsin to cite a mine in similar geology that had operated for 10 years and been closed for 10 years without harming the environment. If a company can't cite such a mine, it would not be granted permits.

At stake is the future of the largest mining project ever proposed in the state — a plan by mining giants

Exxon Minerals and Rio Algom, a Canadian company, to dig an underground mine near Crandon in northeastern Wisconsin, and remove 55 million tons of copper, zinc and lead ore over 28 years. The subsidiary formed by the corporations — Crandon Mining Co. — is seeking state and federal permits for the mine. Action on the state permits is still more than a year away.

Opponents of the moratorium say the bill, if passed, will doom the Crandon project and cripple the mining industry in the state.

Already approved by the Senate, the bill will be discussed and acted upon by the Assembly's Environment

Committee Tuesday. Republican leaders have indicated they expect the bill to be passed out of the committee and reach the floor of the Assembly this winter.

Of the several changes Duff is proposing, the most dramatic would separate the mine waste site from the rest of the mine site and eliminate the 10-year requirement for the safe operation of the mine waste site. Instead, Duff's amendment would require that the DNR evaluate whether a cited mine's waste disposal site is using technology that is protecting the environment. The DNR's decision, Duff said, would be based on case studies and scientific data

from the site. Opponents would be allowed to contest the agency's decision, Duff said.

"The 10-year test is meaningless compared to a test that proves through lab and case studies that the technology being used is made to work for 100 years," Duff said. "My feeling is that 10 years shouldn't be the test. Science should determine this, not an arbitrary number picked out of the sky by Mr. Black."

Duff said he didn't know whether Crandon Mining Co. would be able to meet the revised requirements.

Seely is a reporter for the Wisconsin State Journal in Madison



5C  
3C

# LOCAL

Friday, January 30, 1998

1C

## Rio Algom trying a 'new approach'

**■ Crandon Mining is now Nicolet Minerals, and the new president says he's eager to listen to neighbors.**

**By Mike Flaherty**  
Legislative reporter

The Canadian business pursuing a mining project near Crandon has dissolved the company created to build the mine and replaced it with a new subsidiary and new leaders.

The company formerly known as Crandon Mining Co. with an office in Madison, is now Nicolet Minerals Co. It was announced

Thursday.

The new company expects to obtain the necessary state and federal permits for the mine and begin building it within two years, said the new company's president, Donald Cumming, formerly a vice president of operations for Rio Algom Ltd.

Rio Algom is the Canadian mining company that owns Nicolet Minerals.

Until last week, Crandon Mining Co. was a partnership between Rio Algom and petroleum giant Exxon. But Exxon last week sold its interest in the company for \$22 million plus 2.5 percent of the profits if the mine is built.

Rio Algom, now sole owner of the mine, is starting fresh "with a new approach," said Rio Algom President Pat James.

"I look forward to listening and talking with our neighbors to build and operate a mine that will be a model of environmental stewardship," Cumming said.

Keith Resopke, legislative director of Wisconsin's Environmental Decade, a nonprofit citizens group, said the change doesn't remove the potential for harm from the mine.

"I hate to sound too cynical but it may be an effort to just confuse the public," he said. "It appears to be purely cosmetic."

The state Legislature is still considering a bill that could restrict or temporarily ban the mining project.

The Assembly last week passed a modified bill that wouldn't allow the mine to open until it was dem-

onstrated that a similar mine elsewhere in the country has operated without being cited by federal or state regulators for pollution violations.

The Crandon proposal includes building a deep shaft to extract and process 55 million tons of copper and zinc ore from a site near the Wolf River. To avoid damaging the river, the project would treat and pump its wastewater more than 30 miles through a pipeline to the Wisconsin River.

The Senate is now considering the changes made by the Assembly.

Meanwhile Thursday, the state's largest business group refused to answer charges from Democratic lawmakers that mining interests bankrolled 1996 ef-

orts to oust anti-Crandon mine Democrats.

A spokesman for Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce, James Pugh, said he didn't know if backers of Crandon Mining Co. contributed to the 1996 campaign.

But he said a free speech court case so far backs WMC's contention that corporations that contributed to the effort have no obligation to report their participation because they were engaging in "constitutionally protected issue advocacy."

State Rep. David Travis, D-Madison, this week said he and other Democratic lawmakers targeted by WMC all were opposed to the proposed mine.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

# COMMENT

## Protect the environment, but don't ban mining

**M**any of you may have heard of the mining moratorium bill being debated in the state Legislature. This is an issue that I have been following with a great deal of interest.

First of all, let me assure you that I do not and will not support mining activities that will destroy the environment of this state.

Wisconsin has some of the strictest mining laws in the country. If it is determined through the permitting process being conducted right now that the Grandon Mine cannot meet Wisconsin's environmental standards, it will not be approved.



**ON MINING**  
**REP. JEFF PATE**

vice mining equipment.

Hundreds of local families rely on the mining industry for their livelihoods. An outright ban of the mining industry in Wisconsin sends the wrong signal to the working men and women who rely on these highly skilled, well-paying jobs.

Third, I believe that any decision whether or not to approve the Grandon Mine should be based strictly on science, not on emotion. It would certainly be unwise to leap to a conclusion before we have all the facts.

The permitting process has not been completed. The state Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are preparing separate, comprehensive scientific reviews of the proposed mine.

The mine will have to comply with all state regulations and to obtain some 40 state, federal and local permits. The environmental and regulatory standards that a mine must meet are at least as rigorous, if not more so, than those that apply to all other industries.

Finally, I don't believe we should be considering a blanket ban on all mining in Wisconsin. Instead, the focus should be on prohibiting unsafe mining.

Mining in this state is subject to the same air pollution, wastewater discharge, solid and hazardous waste disposal, groundwater withdrawal and stream diversion regulations that apply to every other industrial activity in this state. There are not rules just for mining that are more lax or lenient.

Moratorium supporters claim there are different laws for wetland protection and groundwater pollution. The Legislature did pass laws subjecting the mining industry to wetland and groundwater standards before applying essentially the same requirements to other industries. These restrictions mandate minimal disruption of wetlands due to mining.

Additionally, the state agency that regulates mining has testified that the groundwater statute that applies to mining "is functionally the same" as laws for all other industries.

### COMPROMISE

I feel strongly that it is essential to protect Wisconsin's precious natural resources. I have canvassed in both the Wolf and the Wisconsin rivers and know firsthand of the pristine nature of those areas. I firmly believe we can create legislation that both protects the environment and does not outright banish a segment of Wisconsin industry.

The mining moratorium legislation, as currently written, does not create that balance. Hopefully, changes will be made during debate in the Assembly.

As deliberation on the moratorium continues, I will seek out compromise language that achieves such an equilibrium. I am confident that if cool heads prevail in such a discussion, this will become a piece of legislation that I can support.

*State Rep. Jeff Pate, a South Milwaukee Democrat, represents the 21st Assembly District.*

**WRONG SIGNAL TO WORKERS**

Second, this issue not only has a tremendous statewide impact, but the local impact to our own community is great as well. We all use products containing thousands of pounds of minerals every year in items such as cars, computers, phones and appliances.

Additionally, Harnischfeger Industries Inc. and Bucyrus International Inc. operate plants in Oak Creek and South Milwaukee, respectively. These companies design, build and ser-

# Here's the Assembly's version of mining bill

State Journal staff

Here is a description of the Assembly's version of the so-called mining moratorium bill, Senate Bill 3, as written by senior staff attorney William Ford of the non-partisan Legislative Council. The bill does not specifically mention the Crandon zinc and copper mine project but rather a "sulfide ore body," which would apply to the Crandon site.

"The bill establishes two pre-conditions that must be met before the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) may issue a mining permit for the mining of a sulfide ore body. These two pre-conditions are in addition to all of the other requirements of current mining law. Before the DNR may issue a permit for mining of a sulfide ore body, the DNR must determine, based on information provided by a mining permit applicant and verified by the DNR, that both of the following have occurred:

1. A mining operation has operated in a sulfide ore body which has (operated) ... in the United

States or Canada for at least 10 years without the pollution of ground water or surface water from acid drainage at the (waste) tailings site or at the mine site or from the release of heavy metals.

2. A mining operation that operated in a sulfide ore body which has ... been closed for at least 10 years without the pollution of ground water or surface water from acid drainage at the (waste) tailings site or at the mine site or from the release of heavy metals.

The bill defines 'pollution' to mean 'degradation that results in any violation of any environmental law as determined by an administrative proceeding, civil action, criminal action or other legal proceeding.'

... The bill also provides that the DNR may not base its determination with respect to either of the two pre-conditions on any mining operation that has been listed as a federal Superfund site or ... for which the operator is no longer in business and has no successor that may be liable...."

## Key facts about Crandon project

The proposal: Over a period of 35 years, Crandon Mining Co. plans to pull tons of zinc and copper from a shaft mine located on about 550 acres about 5 miles from Crandon. Until Friday, the project had been a joint venture of Rio Algom Ltd., of Canada, and Exxon. Exxon announced Friday the sale of its interest to Rio Algom.

Key dates:

1976 — Exxon announces the discovery of a vast mineral deposit.

1986 — Exxon withdraws its permit applications, citing poor metal prices.

1993 — Exxon and Rio Algom announce formation of Crandon Mining Co. to seek development of the deposit.

1994 to present — Crandon Mining and state Department of Natural Resources discuss technical aspects of proposal.

1997 — State Senate approves mining moratorium bill that could delay project.

1998 — State Assembly approves a revised version of the bill, sending it back to Senate. Environmentalists charge that revisions gut the bill; Republicans say they strengthen it.

Fall 1998 — Thompson administration science advisory panel conclusions to be included in DNR draft environmental impact statement.

1999 — Final impact statement and likely permit decisions. Administrative hearings begin six months later.

2000 — State administrative law judge likely releases decision on mine permits. Court appeals may follow.

2003 — If court appeals take place, the likely earliest time mine construction could start, according to DNR Secretary George Meyer.

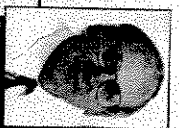
# Mine critics should separate concerns, speculation

Environmentalists are revving up over what they claim are significant dangers to the Wolf River.

Things heated up when American Rivers, a Washington-based organization that bills itself as the nation's leading river conservation group, named the Wolf River as the fifth most endangered river in the country.

The River Alliance of Wisconsin followed suit. Before long the Sierra Club was on board to round out an all-out defense of the river. What's threatening the river?

Stan MILAM



It's the same thing environmentalists blame for all real and imagined environmental problems — the proposed zinc and copper mine near Crandon. Tom Cassidy, the Washington

attorney for American Rivers, is predicting dire consequences associated with the mine, including polluted groundwater and a draw-down of nearby lakes and streams. This grim picture is carried forward by Dave Blouin, the chairman of the Sierra Club's state mining group.

And while criticizing some of Gov. Tommy Thompson's cabinet officers for holding a fundraiser for members of the Joint Committee on Finance, Sierra Club legislative coordinator Caryl Terrell slipped into anti-Exxon rhetoric.

“Who are the special interests seeking special favors?” Terrell asked.

“Did Department of Natural Resources Secretary George Mayer raise money from Exxon, and what did they want?”

There's a common theme in all this complaining beyond the Exxon hashing. Criticism of the mine is based on what environmentalists refer to as threats.

In other words, there remain several possibilities, some of which could cause problems. But we never learn what is real and what is speculative from the mine's critics because they are too busy building all these coalitions and alliances to oppose it.

The environmentalists would better serve Wisconsin citizens by sticking to the facts and separating out the hyperbole in a search for solutions, not more threats.

S-1-91

Madison columnist Stan Milam writes about state affairs.

# WISCONSIN

• Tuesday, April 22, 1997

## Group warns of danger from mine

**By Jeff Meyers**

State government reporter

A state environmental group declared Monday that Wisconsin's environment is threatened, mostly by the "imminent" danger of the Crandon mine on the upper reaches of the Wolf River.

But leaders of Wisconsin's Environmental Decade, in releasing their fourth annual "State of the State's Environment" report, also said there were reasons to be hopeful.

Among them:

■ The likelihood that the full Assembly will debate and vote on the Senate-passed "mining moratorium" bill that would effectively block the Crandon mine. A Republican Assembly committee chairman last week promised to hold hearings on the bill and suggested the measure would get to the floor.

The Decade anticipates a floor vote this fall or next spring. Keith Reopelle, legislative lobbyist for the group, believes the bill has a good chance of passing if it gets to the Assembly floor and gets a fair debate.

If it passes, Reopelle added, he wouldn't rule out a signature from the governor given that Gov. Tommy Thompson's expected reelection bid would come in November 1998.

Thompson has said he'll support the mine if it passes the state's environmental standards, but he also has pushed measures he said will make the standards tougher. The mining industry says the mine, a joint venture of Exxon Coal and Minerals and Rio Algom Ltd., can operate safely.

■ The broadening of the state's

coalition for environmental and conservation causes. The mine issue and Thompson's 1995-97 budget have helped bring hunters, anglers and conservationists together with core environmentalists, Reopelle and spokeswoman Susan Franz said.

The coalition, called the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, is unified on key issues such as the mine, land use and highway building.

■ Critics of Environmental Dec-

ade accuse it of using scare tactics to alarm citizens and help Democrats.

High points of this year's report include taking the bald eagle off the list of endangered species, Senate passage of the mining moratorium bill and creation of wind turbines in DePere to produce electricity.

Low points include listing more than 34 species as threatened and endangered, the Crandon mine proposal and greater moves to deregulate the electric utilities.

OTHER VIEWS

# Citizens must act to protect Wolf River

By FRANK ZUERN

There are two major threats to the environmental quality of the Wolf River watershed. The obvious one concerns the real potential for the long term toxic contamination from the Exxon mine. As the 88 million pounds of acidic waste leaches out of the 40 million tons of mineral wastes (tailings), the health hazard to the Oshkosh drinking water supply is direct and very dangerous. This is because the holding ponds for the toxic soup will leak eventually.

The other threat is citizen indifference to this issue. Any acid waste run-off will cause a crisis for the survival of the delicate embryos in the sturgeon and walleye spawn. This would remain a real danger for decades and even centuries. It probably would mean irreversible environmental damage. Therefore, why take a foolish, shortsighted risk to the water quality of this priceless watershed?

The political plan in Madison is for some Assembly Republicans and

Democrats to weaken the Mining Moratorium Bill, creating a "toothless tiger", then voting for passage so as to fake a genuine concern for the environment. Will you allow this to happen, or will you take a decisive action?



Zuern

The money planners for Exxon-Rio Algom (a.k.a. Crandon Mining Co.) want to pile up the largest waste dump ever built in Wisconsin. The hole in the earth will make a 40-million-ton mound of sulfide mine waste (tailings) on 350 acres of what was once good land. The disposal plan requires four 100 acre-tailings ponds to contain the chemically tainted water. To unleash this contaminated brew directly down the Wolf River and into our Winnebago Pool,

several possible scenarios could occur.

► 1. A heavy deluge, such as 15 inches of rain in a short time, could easily wash out one or more of the earthen holding ponds;

► 2. A tornado could create a devastating waterspout, releasing the toxic waste water;

► 3. Imagine the damage at this precarious site from even the slightest earthquake. There could be other unpredictable human errors or other natural catastrophes.

This mine will be a chemical out-house placed in the fragile headwaters of the pristine Wolf River. Both of the corporations involved in the operation have a terrible track record of environmental pollution in nearly every spot they have mined. Their legacy is too often a community abandoned and left to struggle with poisoned wells, polluted rivers, lakes, and wetlands.

There is a federal law requiring our governor to approve (or stop) anyone from diverting water out of the Great Lakes watershed. The pipeline to the Wisconsin River

does that. This will create a perilous precedent. Why has Gov. Thompson chosen to ignore this important law? Should our leaders be more concerned about the wealth of Exxon, or the health of citizenry?

The American Indians guarded these natural treasures of the Wolf River Basin for over 8,000 years. They held the lakes, streams, forests and all wild creatures sacred to their tribes. Aren't these cathedrals of nature just as sacred to all of us? This watershed is the lifeblood for all of its inhabitants.

The Assembly Environment Committee will hold a public hearing on this issue in early May. The Chairman is Rep. Marc Duff (R-08) 266-1190. Please contact your Area Assembly legislators at (608) 266-9960, a fast legislative hot line. Please remind our legislators that pure water is a priceless commodity in Wisconsin and watersheds like the Wolf River are crucial sources of it.

**FRANK ZUERN** is a 40-year resident of Oshkosh who retired after serving for 32 years as a teacher and administrator in local public schools.

# WISCONSIN

• Thursday, December 4, 1997

## Black, Meyer spar over mine rule

### DNR head denies danger to water

By Mike Flaherty  
Legislative reporter

The company hoping to mine the copper and zinc ore beneath Forest County soil must now meet a new set of ground water rules — but the state and mine opponents differ over the rules' impact.

The rules approved Wednesday by the Department of Natural Resources Board would be a strict set of regulations to better protect Wisconsin's ground water, said

DNR Secretary George Meyer. But they also extend the area around the mine that companies can pollute without having to shut down the mine — which increases chances of severe pollution, protested environmentalists.

The rules, which must be approved by the Senate and Assembly's natural resources committees, extend "special lenient treatment of the mining industry," Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, told the DNR's oversight board.

The rules mean landfills and other facilities regulated by the DNR will face stricter rules than mines, which have much more potential to hurt the environment, Black said.

At the center of the debate is a proposal by the Cranston Mining

Co., a partnership of Exxon and a Canadian mining firm, to open a 506-acre copper and zinc mine near Cranston. The mine, called a sulfide mine because the ore is locked in acid-bearing rock that must be stripped of its mineral, has become embroiled in controversy over mining regulations in Wisconsin.

Environmentalists worry that the mine's acid-laden tailings could pollute ground water and the nearby Wolf River.

The company counters that the mine's waste water, which will be piped to the Wisconsin River, will be clean enough to drink — and that it has engineered a lining that will seal the tailings and never leak.

One of the new ground water rules will require ground water

#### Status of proposal

■ **Summary:** Metallic mining ground water rules approved Wednesday would extend the area around mines the DNR will monitor for pollution.

■ **Status:** The DNR Board endorsed the rules Wednesday.

■ **Next step:** The proposed rules must be reviewed and approved by the Senate and Assembly's natural resources committees before they have the force of law. The Legislature meets again in January.

testing at both 150 feet and 1,200 feet from the mine.

Meyer told Black he is "not

wrong" in telling people the new rules don't protect ground water. If the agency finds pollution at the mine's 150-foot boundary, it is required to take action, Meyer said.

"This agency would never turn its back on its responsibility to protect ground water — and our actions prove it," he said in a testy exchange with Black.

Black, a former lobbyist for the Sierra Club, countered that the rules should be more strict. If the agency finds pollution at 150 feet, it is required to act — but it is not required to shut down the mine or make the company prove in court that it can fix the problem quickly, Black said.

That's the standard other businesses, such as landfills, have to meet, he said.

# Mining sides dig in for Assembly debate

## Moratorium measure passes key committee

By Mike Flaherty

Legislative reporter

A temporary ban on a new type of mining technology passed a key Assembly committee Tuesday and is now headed for a full Assembly vote — and possible passage by the Legislature early next year.

The vote was a major victory for environmental groups, Indian tribes and northern Wisconsin tourism groups that are hotly opposed to the construction of a hard rock copper and zinc mine near Crandon that uses acids to strip away the minerals.

Citing fears that the new mining technology, or the acid-laden tailings the mine produces, might pollute the headwaters of the nearby Wolf River, opponents want to ban that type of mine until mine owners can demonstrate that a similar mine in another state has already operated one safely for at least 10 years.

"All we're saying is show us one that works first before we approve a similar mine in this state," said Rep. Peter Bock, D-Milwaukee.

The debate centers around permits for a huge underground mine proposed by Crandon Mining Co., a firm created by Exxon Minerals and Rio Algom, a Canadian partner. The plan is to use acids to extract 55 million tons of copper, zinc and lead ore over 28 years.

The mining moratorium measure (SB 3) already has passed the state Senate.

On Tuesday, two Republicans, Rep. Eugene Hahn, R-Cambria, and Rep. DuWayne Johnsrud, R-Eastman, joined four Democrats to approve the measure in the Assembly's environmental committee.

That means the measure could pass the full Assembly and deliver it to Gov. Tommy Thompson this winter.

Thompson spokesman Kevin Keane said the governor hasn't seen the bill but won't approve anything that "puts good rhetoric over good science" in a state that

already has some of the "nation's strictest mining laws."

Assembly Speaker Scott Jensen, R-Waukesha, said earlier this week he's committed to a "full debate" on the measure when the Assembly meets during its January floor period.

That debate is likely to be ugly if Tuesday's committee vote is any indication.

The committee considered several versions of the mining moratorium bill. Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, offered one that Republicans called "a complete ban" on sulfide mining in Wisconsin that is "dangerous public policy."

Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, offered one that Democrats called "toothless" — and a "trick" because they said it pretended to offer added environmental protection but did nothing.

In the end, the committee approved the Senate-passed mining bill — which also drew heated debate.

"This is absurd. It is a toothless bill," Duff complained before voting against it.

"This is a major victory," Black countered.

Department of Natural Resources Secretary George Meyer said the mining moratorium bill "does not add any meaningful protection to the environment of Wisconsin."

That's because the Senate "mining moratorium" bill says that to pass the test, companies must have operated mines for 10 years without violating environmental laws, Meyer said. "But laws were much weaker in years past. They might have created a lot of pollution but still met legal standards."

"That's how the DNR chooses to interpret it, but that interpretation is incorrect," Black said. "The intent of the Senate is clear. Doctors wouldn't proscribe a medicine that hadn't been tested for safety. Why would we experiment with our precious resources?"

Both sides said that when the issue finally moves to the Assembly floor for debate, there will be many attempts to change it.



3/4/97

# Critics say Crandon Mining report has flaws

By Ron Seely

Environment reporter

An anti-mining group has taken issue with a recent Crandon Mining Co. report that cites several hard-rock mines, including those in southwestern Wisconsin's historic lead-mining district, as proof that such mines can be operated and reclaimed safely.

The report, "Environmentally Responsible Mining," was commissioned by Crandon Mining, the partnership formed by Exxon and Rio Algom to build a proposed zinc and copper mine in northeastern Wisconsin. It was released at a mining industry conference two weeks ago in Milwaukee.

Based on a survey begun in the

fall of 1995, the report cites several mines that are operating safely, including the open-pit copper mine in Ladysmith. For a proposed requirement that, to qualify for Wisconsin permits, a mining company point to a mine that has been closed for 10 years without damaging the environment, the consultants cited old lead mines in southwestern Wisconsin and a lead and zinc mine in Viburnum, Mo., that closed in 1978.

But the Mining Impact Coalition of Wisconsin, a group that generally opposes mining, said neither example meets the requirements in the proposed metallic mining moratorium bill. That bill, scheduled for a vote in the state Legislature later this month, would place a moratorium on hard-rock mining in the state until the mining industry can cite a metallic sulfide mine in similar geology to northern Wisconsin that has operated safely for 10 years and has been closed and reclaimed without environmental damage for 10 years.

Natural Resources is in the midst of projects to clean up old polluted mine sites where the drainage of acid mine wastes has turned some waters red and orange. Debora Strubsacker, a geologist and consultant who helped prepare the report, said the requirement that an example be found in similar geology is flawed because no two mine sites are exactly alike. "That opens up a mother lode of ambiguity," she said. Strubsacker disagreed that the old lead mines in southwestern Wisconsin are not good examples of safely closed mines. She said there are a few mines that have caused problems but added that "there are literally hundreds of mines that haven't."

## Crandon Mining gains another foothold

CRANDON, Wis. (AP) — A company seeking approval to open an underground zinc and copper mine has gotten the go-ahead from another local government body.

"It is one more milestone," Crandon Mining Co. spokeswoman Mary Kay Grasmick said Friday. "It is the last of four agreements in Forest County needed by Crandon Mining."

Chuck Sleeter, a leading critic of

the mine from the nearby Town of Nashville, said the local agreement amounts to the mining company waving around money.

"Dollars, that is how you get it," he said. "You offer enough money and you get it. Face it. That is life."

The agreement approved by the Town of Lincoln Board Thursday could generate about \$3.5 million for the town from the mining com-

pany if estimates of the life of the mine are accurate, Town Board Chairman Al Savoie said.

"Our feeling is we did the best that we could. We are satisfied," he said Friday in a telephone interview from his home. "I think the mine can operate safely. The Department of Natural Resources has explained as much as they can at this point."

7-20-97

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NOV 13 1997

32 • The reconnection of the mine from institutional care to home requiring a \$50,000 safety bond, ...

## Chair defends Assembly Committee on Environment

Dear Editor:

I read with interest the letter written by Laura Furtman which recently appeared on this page.

It appears that Ms. Furtman has once again chosen to lash out on the issue of metallic mining in Wisconsin without bothering to get her facts straight.

Under the guise of being a non-political Wisconsin resident, she has attacked me, Assembly Speaker Scott Jensen and former Speaker Ben Brancel in a series of letters sent to newspapers throughout the state during the last several months.

Although she claims she doesn't "know

much about politics," Ms. Furtman is, in fact, quite an accomplished political operative. In addition to being a prolific letter writer, she is an active member of the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, a group which vigorously lobbies members of the state Legislature on environmental issues.

In the course of making her attacks, Ms. Furtman never once contacted any of our offices to ask about our plans for Senate Bill 3, the so-called Mining Moratorium Bill, which in its current form does nothing to strengthen Wisconsin's tough mining laws or to prevent the proposed copper-zinc mine in Crandon from moving forward.

Had Ms. Furtman bothered to contact us,

she would realize that the Assembly Committee on Environment (voted) on SB 3 on Nov. 11, and that Speaker Jensen will follow through on former Speaker Brancel's pledge to bring the bill to the Assembly floor for a vote if it passes committee.

It's too bad that Ms. Furtman is more interested in using editorial pages such as this one to fight her war on half-truths and unsubstantiated allegations than she is in entering into an open and honest debate on the issue of mining in Wisconsin.

**Representative Marc Duff, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Environment**

## DNR secretary raps mining moratorium bill

10/13/97  
FDL Reporter

MILWAUKEE (AP) — A Senate-passed mining moratorium bill due for a final public hearing Tuesday is being panned by the state natural resources secretary as ineffective and based on a faulty concept.

The Department of Natural Resources encourages legislators "to abandon the idea that a proposed project should be judged based on the performance of other projects designed and operated decades earlier," DNR Secretary George Meyer said in a letter last week to

Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin.

The bill would require a mining applicant to provide information on a similar mine that operated for 10 years and has been closed at least 10 years without causing environmental damage.

Competing events were scheduled today by backers and opponents of the bill, which is before Duff's Assembly Environment Committee. It was passed 29-3 by the Senate last spring.

The Mining Impact Coalition of Wisconsin and other anti-mining

groups planned a rally at noon today outside the Trade Mart building at State Fair Park, where the hearing will be held Tuesday.

Organizers asked rally participants to wear blaze-orange hunter safety clothing as they show support for the bill.

**OUR USED C**  
**Now They're as**

# A mining step in the right direction

A kinder, gentler mining company? We'll soon find out.

The sale of Exxon's half share in the underground zinc and copper mine near Crandon in northeast Wisconsin means the Canadian-based mining firm, Rio Algom, now holds full interest in the project.

There are a number of challenges that must be met before a single ounce of ore can be mined in Forest County, but the chances of resolving those problems have been enhanced by Exxon's decision to bow out — as last week's passage of a mining moratorium bill in the Legislature so clearly demonstrated.

Exxon's close-to-the-vest style riled many local residents and officials, and the company was perceived as heavy-handed and unyielding by some state legislators in Madison.

Plus, Exxon's reputation among environmental activists made it easy for opponents to believe the worst. Anytime Exxon's name began a sentence, someone was sure to finish it with "... Valdez oil spill in Alaska."

Exxon sold its interest in the Crandon mine for \$22 million plus 2.5 percent of the profits if the mine is built. Immediately, the name of the project was changed from the Crandon Mining Co. to Nicolet Minerals Co., mainly as a symbol that change was in the wind.

"Very frankly, we bring a different approach to the project, a different way of operating," said Pat James, chief executive officer of Rio Algom. "... The company hasn't been open enough. We

haven't been as accountable as we should have been."

Skeptics say a sulfide mine is a sulfide mine, and they doubt the Exxon pullout will make any difference in the environmental bottom line.

We'll see. Mining is the core business for Rio Algom, which operates mines in the United States, Canada and South America, and is exploring in Ireland and Africa. It also owns a mineral distribution company that has been doing business in Wisconsin for years. In short, Rio Algom's entire reputation rides on mining and related endeavors.

The company may also be willing to revisit some water-treatment options that seemed off the table when Exxon was calling more of the shots. For now, however, it stands by its questionable belief that treated water can be pumped safely into the Wisconsin River.

The change in ownership in Crandon may partially explain why the mining moratorium bill finally cleared both houses of the Legislature. But as lawmakers on both sides of the question agreed, the moratorium bill does not mean the mine cannot be built. In fact, Nicolet Minerals will continue to pursue the necessary permits from the state Department of Natural Resources.

The fight over sulfide or "hard rock" mining in Wisconsin is far from over, but passage of the mining moratorium bill means the public has a greater assurance that environmental standards will be met. Also, Wisconsin can now deal with a single company that cares only about mining. The combination is worth watching.

**'The president is our nation's leader, and his integrity must be beyond reproach.'**  
**Steven J. Lacher in Today's mail**

**OF**

WSJnl 2-8-98

## OUR OPINION

# Empty promises don't generate energy

Imagine a plentiful, inexhaustible energy source that does not emit greenhouse gases, harm the ozone layer or otherwise contribute to global warming. Now imagine that the biggest impediment standing in the way of making greater use of that energy source is the federal government.

You don't have to imagine it. It's true.

The energy source is nuclear power, which could safely and dramatically ease the nation's dependence on polluting fossil fuels, if only the problem of finding permanent storage for radioactive waste from civilian plants could be solved.

In 1982, Congress promised to do just that. It pledged to find a place to safely store nuclear wastes by Feb. 1, 1998, and even collected nearly \$14 billion from utility ratepayers to get the job done. Of that amount, \$372 million came from taxpayers in Wisconsin.

That promise was not kept. In fact, it's not even close to being kept. Worse yet, the very institutions that made the promise are now pretending like the obligation never existed.

The federal Department of Energy was ordered by Congress in 1982 to begin disposing of nuclear fuel by Jan. 31, 1998. In 1993, several utilities and state public service commissions became worried that the feds weren't going to meet the deadline and began asking DOE for some firm answers.

Instead of answers, they got excuses.

Twice, the U.S. Court of Appeals has affirmed that DOE is responsible for finding a permanent nuclear waste site. But the DOE continues to drag its bureaucratic feet, citing a politically delayed study of the proposed

**An unkept federal promise is standing in the way of expanding the use of clean, dependable nuclear energy.**

permanent storage site at Yucca Mountain, Nev.

In the meantime, the DOE will keep the \$14 billion except for what it doles out to the states to handle nuclear waste stored in temporary sites.

Joseph Mettner, a member of Wisconsin's Public Service Commission, compared DOE's waste storage default to hiring a local waste contractor to haul away asbestos in a building — and the contractor weasels out of the job after being paid in advance. Meanwhile, Mettner said, "the waste sits in a Dumpster in the alley behind your building" and the money draws interest in the contractor's bank account.

People wouldn't stand for that in their private lives, nor should they stand for it when the government is involved. It's time for the nation's environmental Luddites to make a choice: Either quit complaining about greenhouse gases, or quit blocking nuclear power through their friends in the Clinton-Gore administration.

Call or write your members of Congress (that information appears elsewhere on this page) and ask them to support Senate Bill 104 or House Resolution 1270, either of which would force the DOE to solve the problem. After 16 years, it's time to keep a promise that would help solve the nation's energy dependence problems and protect the environment.

## Confusing twists to mining bill came from Democrats and GOP

In a confusing twist of events last week, Democrats in the Assembly voted overwhelmingly to pass a mining moratorium bill authored by a Democrat in the Senate, but only after they argued passionately against the measure.



**Stan  
MILAM**

The bill requires mining companies to provide examples of mines that have operated pollution-free for at least 10 years and remained free of pollution 10 years after closing before they can mine in the Badger state. The two days of debate focused on the definition of pollution and who determines whether violations have occurred.

As originally written, the bill merely defined pollution as any violation of any environmental law. Republicans who control the Assembly by a 52-46 margin amended the bill to require that violations be determined in court or by other official bodies such as regulators.

Republicans claim their amendment tightens up the bill and will allow mining companies fewer examples to choose from when attempting to meet the requirements regarding years of operation and beyond. Democrats say the amendment guts the bill and expands mining company choices.

The amendment was introduced at the request of the Department of Natural Resources. Most Democrats and environmentalists believe the DNR stopped being an independent steward of the environment when the power to appoint the DNR secretary was transferred from the DNR board to the governor.

Democrats, led by Rep. Spencer Black of Madison, protested any attempt to amend the bills as sent from the Senate, where it passed 29-3. They argued that because the Senate has 16 Republicans and 16 Democrats, the partisan deadlock will result in little, if any, agreement on major legislation.

Republicans rightfully ignored that argument and amended the bill. After all, the majority party has the power and responsibility to pass legislation it deems appropriate.

Black and most of his colleagues then voted for the amended bill — the one they claim is gutted and pro-mining. They claimed they had to vote for the bill to keep it alive in hopes the Senate would remove the amendment.

This twisted logic could be applied to Republicans in the Senate who could claim that they voted for the bill in hopes their colleagues in the Assembly would correct crippling language. That's not the way things are done, and Black knows it.

The bottom line here is anti-mine forces could not overcome clear political will. Republicans will pass a mining moratorium bill and take the credit for it.

Black and his Democratic colleagues in the Assembly were doing nothing but covering their backsides when they voted for the bill as amended. They know that in November the average voter will not be swayed by the argument that Republicans passed a mining moratorium bill that's really not a moratorium, and Democrats also voted for it while insisting that it will do nothing to stop evil mining companies from spoiling the environment.

You can't have it both ways, not even in the Legislature. If you believe a bill is bad public policy, don't vote for it. If you vote for it, be ready to take blame or praise.

Voters won't be swayed by Black's claim that he had to save the patient so others could kill it.

*Madison columnist Stan Milam writes about state affairs.*

# Mining foes look to Senate

## Vote on moratorium scheduled for today

By Ron Seely  
and Jeff Mayers

Wisconsin State Journal

Mining opponents are hoping the state Senate today will put the teeth back into a proposed mining moratorium bill they say was weakened by the state Assembly.

Senate Democratic and Republican leaders scheduled a vote for today after bipartisan talks pointed to a compromise amendment.

"We need to get this thing taken care of," said Senate Minority Leader Mike Ellis, R-Neenah.

Ellis, however, disagreed that the Republican-led Assembly's revision weakened the mining moratorium measure. "Before there was no definition of pollution," he said. "This toughens the bill."

Even in its original form, sponsors said the bill likely would only delay — not ban — a controversial Crandon zinc and copper mine proposed by Canadian mining giant Rio Algom.

The proposed compromise, being worked out by Sens. Kevin Shibilski, D-Stevens Point, and Robert Cowles, R-Green Bay, was immediately backed by the Sierra Club.

"This will close the loophole created by the Assembly," said Brett Hulsey, of the Sierra Club's Midwest office.

The state Senate approved a mining moratorium bill last year; the Assembly amended it two weeks ago over the objections of environmentalists and Democrats.

The original bill required mining companies seeking Wisconsin permits to give evidence of a mine, similar to the one they would build, that had operated safely for ten years and has been closed for an additional 10 years without causing pollution.

But the bill approved by the Assembly amended the bill by further defining the word "pollution." It would allow a mining company to use as an example a mine that hasn't been cited by the government for pollution violations.

That means mines that caused pollution could be considered non-polluting as long as they hadn't been legally cited, representatives from Wisconsin environmental groups said at a press conference Monday morning.

"We're looking to both parties in the Senate to lead the effort to eliminate the loophole created by the Assembly," said Keith Reppelle, legislative director for Wisconsin's Environmental Decade.

The two houses of the Legislature must agree on legislation before it can be sent to GOP Gov. Tommy Thompson, who has yet to take a clear stand on the bill.

The three basic options before the Senate are:

- Agree with the Assembly changes, sending the bill directly to Thompson.

- Reject the amendments, sending the bill back to the Assembly for another vote on the initial Senate version.

- Amend one of the amendments, sending the bill back to the Assembly for approval of that change.

## Moratorium bill would spur lawsuits, manager says

STEVENS POINT (AP) — Passing the so-called mining moratorium bill would open the door for lawsuits, says an executive for a company that wants to operate an underground zinc and copper mine in northern Wisconsin.

"That bill is so poorly worded that it's going to be fodder for lawyers to argue over for a long time," said Don Moe, permitting manager for Crandon Mining Co. "Let's see an objective standard, one that is measurable, and see if we can meet that standard."

The state Senate passed the moratorium bill and it awaits action in the Assembly. The bill was assigned to the Assembly Environment Committee, which has conducted one public hearing on it.

Plans are to schedule another hearing in Milwaukee in July or August, Marsha Buchholz, a clerk for the committee, said Thursday in a telephone interview from Madison.

The bill would prohibit the state Department of Natural Resources from issuing permits to Crandon Mining or any other metal-ore mine until:

■ The DNR determines a mine has operated in a similar sulfide mineral ore body in the United States or Canada for at least 10 years without polluting ground water or surface water.

■ The DNR certifies such a mine has been closed at least 10 years without polluting ground water or surface water.

It is impossible for Crandon Mining to compare its project to any other mine in the country because the new mine would include technology that didn't exist 10 years ago and doesn't exist at any one mine, Moe said.

State Sen. Kevin Shabilski, D-Amherst, said if Crandon Mining was testing new technology, it should be done elsewhere first. "You don't test new technology in an area surrounded by 8,000 lakes and two beautiful rivers," he said.

Shabilski said Crandon Mining's opposition to the moratorium bill makes him skeptical of its ability to operate a safe mine.

"If they took the millions they spend on public relations and used it for studying ways to make mining safer, we would all be better off," the lawmaker said.

Crandon Mining, a Wisconsin partnership formed by two international mining firms, Exxon Coal and Minerals of Houston and Rio Algom Ltd. of Toronto, is seeking local, state and federal permits to remove 55 million tons of mostly zinc and copper ore from an underground mine south of Crandon.

A study by the DNR on whether the 27-year operation can be done without harming the environment is expected to be issued this year.

Critics of the mine fear it will pollute water in the area, near the headwaters of the Wolf River. Supporters say the jobs are badly needed.

1053 1-18-98

## Views of The Capital Times

# Approve the mining moratorium

Mining has played a role in Wisconsin's history since long before statehood, and Wisconsinites have always recognized the benefits that have come to this state from that industry.

Thus, it is neither naive nor emotion that inspired 40,000 citizens to sign petitions urging the state Assembly to pass the mining moratorium bill. Rather, it is the harsh reality that, without it, powerful special interest groups and their allies in government are all but certain to approve the Exxon Corp.'s proposed zinc and copper mine in an environmentally sensitive region of northeast Wisconsin.

Polls show that Wisconsinites overwhelmingly oppose the Exxon mine, and for good reason. The huge mine would be located near Crandon in an area bounded by the Nicolet National Forest. The Wolf River and smaller streams and lakes have made this region one of the most attractive destinations for tourism that celebrates Wisconsin's natural beauty.



Wisconsinites have reason to believe that the Exxon mine plan poses a threat to that beauty.

Charles Norris, a respected hydrogeologist, was asked by the Sierra Club to review an environmental impact report submitted by Exxon's Crandon Mining Co. subsidiary. He concluded: "While one suspects the EIR to reflect the bias of the Crandon Mining Co. in favor of the project, it should be a legitimate attempt to assess the likely impacts of the project. It is not. It is a promotional vehicle that shuns critical investigation, obfuscates the assessment of data that is available, and stretches credulity in its conclusions."

Norris believes that the mine would have a permanent and adverse impact on ground water and surface water in the region, and he warns that the state Department of Natural Resources has not been sufficiently thorough in its analysis of Exxon's environmental claims.

It is the legitimate fear that the DNR, under pressure from Gov. Tommy Thompson and other Republicans with close ties to business interests, would allow the Exxon mine to go forward without adequate scrutiny that has led to the mining moratorium bill.

Ideally, Wisconsin would have a better mechanism for balancing the demands of environmental protection and mining development. But Thompson has weakened environmental protection in the state by gutting the Office of the Public Intervener and bringing the DNR under his control.

So the mining moratorium bill becomes a necessity. And it is not an unreasonable proposal.

Passed with overwhelming bipartisan support by the state Senate, the bill merely requires that a corporation seeking to open a mine in Wisconsin must provide an example of a similar mine that has been operated safely for 10 years and closed for another 10 years without causing pollution.

Some Republicans have balked at the moratorium bill, suggesting that it would harm business development. What they fail to recognize is that Wisconsin has always set higher industrial standards than most other states, and that this tradition is part of the state's appeal to responsible business.

This week, these Republicans may attempt to amend the bill in a crude attempt to kill it. Any amendment must be seen for what it is: a move to send the bill back to the Senate, where it could be buried in committee until after the Exxon mine has been approved.

The mining moratorium is needed — if only to stop the Exxon mine. The bill has the support of the people of Wisconsin. It should be passed by the Assembly without amendment, and signed by the governor.

*The views in this space are provided by The Capital Times, Dane County's afternoon newspaper.*



**E****THE MILWAUKEE SENTINEL**SOLOMON JUNEAU  
FOUNDER 1837

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 1998

PAGE EDITOR  
P. ROESSLEINDEPUTY EDITORIAL PAGE EDITOR  
SUE RYON

# Moratorium, mine both ill-conceived

Let's make this clear from the top: We have no use for the proposed Crandon mine. It's just a bad idea to dig a deep zinc and copper mine in the middle of a forested wetland, which includes the headwaters of the Wolf River.

Even with the most advanced technological safeguards, the mine is too much of an environmental gamble. Wisconsin must not play roulette with its precious natural resources and, in turn, the huge tourism and recreation industry those resources have spawned.

But members of the Assembly who oppose the mine — and their numbers are large — must be careful not to rush headlong into legislative quicksand in their zeal to stop this proposal. We're referring to the so-called mining moratorium bill, which has already passed the Senate, 29-3, and will be considered by the Assembly today. Speaker Scott Jensen (R-Town of Brookfield) predicts, unfortunately, that the bill will pass overwhelmingly.

The moratorium would prohibit the state Department of Natural Resources from issuing permits to Crandon Mining Co. unless the company could show that a similar metal-ore mine had operated for 10 years without polluting the environment and that such a mine had been closed for 10 years with no pollution detected.

Sure, that may sound reasonable, but DNR experts say such comparisons are difficult, if not impossible, to make. DNR officials also have valid concerns that the language of this bill and some proposed amendments is so broad as to be open to many interpretations, and likely to render the legislation ineffective.

The moratorium also appears to be a simplistic, politicized attempt to circumvent the DNR's comprehensive regulatory process and to single out one industry for punishment, which raises significant legal questions.

Yet we also are highly suspicious about the timing of Gov. Tommy Thompson's announcement the other day that a panel of five top state scientists he appointed would have veto power over the mine. Opponents believe the announcement is a ploy to derail the moratorium bill, and they may be right.

We're not questioning the credentials of the five or their integrity, but we earnestly hope this panel will be allowed to make a truly independent, scientific analysis before reaching its conclusions.

Perhaps it's naive to say so, but politics — whether in the Legislature or the governor's office — must not be allowed to play a pivotal role in a matter as important as this.

tall. This proposed Crandon mine site would generate an estimated 44 million tons of waste. Although the waste dump will have a liner over the top and one beneath it, it is well known that these liners inevitably leak.

There are no examples of metallic-sulfide mines that have been reclaimed or returned to a natural state. When the mines have closed and the pumps are shut off, nowhere has the water run pure and clean.

An additional major issue is the huge amount of ground water that will flow into the mine and cause direct impacts to lakes and streams. Exxon is currently predicting that they will need to pump an average of 600 gallons of water per minute, treat it, and send it in a 38-mile pipeline to the Wisconsin River at Hat Rapids.

The only piece of legislation passed in the last session (AB 919) dealing with long-term care for mine wastes is a major step backwards. Under the law before this bill, mining companies had to demonstrate financial capability to meet the responsibility for long-term care up to 40 years. This period could be extended for any length of time if found necessary by the DNR. The recent legislation provides the mining companies with a guaranteed escape route for the perpetual financial responsibility of the toxic waste dumps they leave behind.

If the mining company can demonstrate that long-term care is not necessary for adequate protection of human health and the environment, the DNR can terminate the company's obligation to maintain proof of financial responsibility for long-term care. Just in case their attorneys and scientists fail to prove their case the first time, they can do it again in five years. This is obviously not a prescription for requiring long-term care of these toxic dumps, but an opportunity for companies to shift the financial costs of perpetual care upon Wisconsin taxpayers for generations to come.

Contact your representatives and let them know that you will not sit back allowing Exxon to desecrate and pollute the earth for centuries to come. Assembly Bill 70 has yet to be issued out of committee and scheduled for a vote by the full Assembly. Make it clear to Governor Thompson that you will not tolerate this clear violation of trust and provide for the destruction of your and your children's generations.

*Lucretia Miller-Brennan is a Fond du Lac resident.*

## Crandon mine: No metallic- sulfide mines have returned to nature

**By Lucretia Miller-Brennan**

A partnership formed by Exxon and Rio Algom is proposing to mine an ore deposit about one mile long, running east to west, located in the headquarters of the pristine Wolf River.

They say they want to mine primarily copper and zinc and some lead, silver and gold. The ore deposit itself is approximately a mile long and more than one-half mile deep. About half of the tailings will be dumped into pits forming what could be Wisconsin's largest toxic mine itself. All of this is proposed to take place along Swamp Creek, a basin recently designated an outstanding natural resource water, in part due to its importance to the Mole Lake Chippewa as the only source of fresh water for the wild rice crop.

### BACKTALK

If Exxon's mine contaminates Swamp Creek, you cannot simply relocate the reservation and its famous wild rice.

In addition, the inherent danger of working in deep-shaft underground mines should be mentioned. Deep-shaft mines are faced with daily exposure over long periods of time to radioactive radon gas. The high-sulfur waste tailings represent the greatest long-term threat to the Swamp Creek Basin and the Wolf and Wisconsin rivers. These tailings, when exposed to air and water, produce sulfuric acid that further breaks down and releases other poisons. The chemical process that creates such acid-mine drainage sustains itself, and is virtually impossible to stop once begun.

Exxon is proposing to isolate this toxic soup forever in ponds that would cover as much as 350 acres, or about the size of 340 football fields — at least 90 feet

# Wading through the regulators

**Crandon Mining must settle several questions about water**

By **DON BEHM**  
of the Journal Sentinel staff

Forest County is saturated. The Wolf, Brule, Peshtigo and Pine rivers form in thousands of acres of wetlands. Some 500 miles of trout streams and 190 lakes large enough for a name lie in its forests.

Preserving these waters challenges the Crandon Mining Co. as it seeks federal, state and local permits to remove 55 million tons of zinc, lead and copper ore from a deposit five miles south of Crandon.

Final permit decisions are not expected until fall 1999, but the company must

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**Don Moe, Crandon Mining's permit manager:**

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"We're going to have to clean up the water even more, but at first blush this does not look like a problem."

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jump through several legislative and regulatory hoops before the process gets that far. One, a so-called mining moratorium bill passed last month by the state Senate, could be acted on by the full Assembly in September.

A more immediate hurdle is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

If the mine is built, the company will need to move water out of its way. Crandon Mining will pump an average of 700 gallons a minute — more than a million gallons a day — out of underground shafts.

Where that water will go is anything but certain.

Crandon Mining has asked for state approval to send 600 gallons a minute of

*Please see **WATER** page 14*

# Compromise needed on mining bill

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL 1-28-98

Now that Exxon has sold its half-interest in the proposed Crandon mine, its partner, the Canadian company Rio Algom Ltd., vows to continue the fight, but also says it will try to work with opponents to make the controversial project more acceptable.

Good luck. Opponents of the mine — and we're among them — strongly believe that it should not be built, period. No concessions or changes by Rio Algom are likely to change that view. The forested wetland under consideration is environmentally fragile, and the jobs the mine would generate are simply not worth the gargantuan risks to Wisconsin's natural resources.

But Democrats in the Legislature need to compromise on their mining moratorium bill. A moratorium is not the proper way to stop *this* mine or *any other*.

Rather than taking constructive steps to further tighten state regulations on mines to address valid concerns, well-meaning opponents of the Crandon mine — including the bill's author, Rep. Spencer Black (D-Mad-

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#### Poor tactic

A moratorium is not the proper way to stop this mine or any other.

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ison) — have opted for the politically expedient moratorium. The bill is really intended to circumvent the regulatory process and hold one industry, mining, to higher standards than other industries face.

Unfortunately, the bill has built up a huge head of steam in the Legislature; it was passed by the Senate last March and the Assembly last week. Still, like most bad bills, this one can be improved. Amendments added by the Assembly would do just that.

Officials with the state Department of Natural Resources have rightly criticized the language of the moratorium bill as ambiguous, arguing that it would be difficult to interpret and therefore to enforce. The amendments would correct that problem. For instance, one GOP amendment clearly defines what constitutes a violation of environmental law.

Black believes that amendment guts the bill; we believe the new language strengthens the measure. In the words of a DNR attorney, all the amendments make the language "more specific, more crisp and provide greater direction" to DNR regulators.

Ambiguous laws are bad laws, especially those that pertain to state regulation. How are regulators — or, for that matter, those being regulated — supposed to meet public standards that are deliberately vague?

The amended bill now goes back to the state Senate. Let's hope senators see the light.

# Rep illogical on mine issue

CT 12-15-97

Republican members of the state Assembly are desperate to come up with a reason to oppose the proposed mining moratorium bill, but that doesn't excuse lapses of logic.

State Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, suffered such a lapse last week when it was revealed that the mining moratorium bill would not apply to land owned by the state's Indian tribes. Duff, the chairman of the Assembly Environment Committee, reacted by declaring that the bill — which was passed overwhelmingly by the state Senate — is a “sham” and would do more harm than good.

Duff's statement is nothing more than the latest attempt by Assembly Republicans to come up with an excuse for blocking a piece of legislation that is extremely popular with the people of Wisconsin. What's troubling is that this desperation move is not only irrational but divisive.

Duff's statement is irrational because, even if the mining moratorium bill does not cover Indian-owned land, it is still necessary. In case Duff is unaware of this, the vast majority of Wisconsin land is *not* owned by Indians. On the theory that there might be some metals beneath lands not owned by the tribes, doesn't it make sense to regulate unsafe mining practices in those areas?

Duff's statement is divisive because it suggests that American Indians are somehow inclined toward the exploitation of their lands and would use what the legislator calls a “huge environmental protection loophole” to allow mining operations that the state opposes.

Duff's attempt to divide Indian and non-Indian interests is embarrassing. As Environment Committee chair, he knows that Indian tribes have taken a lead in opposing the proposed Exxon mine at Crandon.

If the Republicans want to try to make a case for mining projects, that's fine.

But when they attempt to obscure the issue with expressions of concerns as frankly irrational as those advanced by Duff, they insult the intelligence of Wisconsinites.

River instead.

Tom Ward, a member of the Wisconsin Resources Protection Council, was one of many to speak at the hearing. At one point during his heated testimony he said to Rep. Duff, "They should put the tailings dump down in Madison." I was shocked to hear Rep. Duff respond, "Fine by me." Ward went on to say, "Well, good. Let's work on that. Let's put the dump right down there with Governor Thompson. Let it look over Lake Mendota and Lake Monona and let's pump the [waste] water from Madison to Middleton when they get done with it."

"Fine by me." Is that any sort of statement to be coming from the lips of the chairman of the Assembly Environment Committee? It shows a great lack of sensitivity to the concerns of the people of Northern Wisconsin and leads me to wonder if any part of the state is immune to exploitation by the mining industry. It's no secret that other potential mining sites have been identified close to La Crosse and Eau Claire. Based on Duff's statement, even Brown County is not sacred. Would you want such a dump to be put next to your home? If your answer is, "no," please speak up and voice your opinion to your state representative. And contact the Speaker of the Assembly, Rep. Ben Brancel, to request that the bill be brought to a vote on the Assembly floor as soon as possible.  
— Laura Furtman, 27426 County Road H, Webster, WI 54893.

## A lack of sensitivity

I am writing because I believe the people of Brown County need to know about a statement made by the Assembly Environment Committee Chairman, Marc Duff, at the recent public hearing on Assembly Bill 70, the Mining Moratorium Bill. The meeting was held in Ladysmith on May 12, 1997 and lasted over seven hours. It was attended by more than 300 people.

Before getting into the specifics of Rep. Duff's statement, some background information is in order. I am just a regular citizen, a pharmacist by trade. I attended the meeting because I am concerned that Exxon's proposed zinc-copper mine near Crandon is likely to pollute our lakes and ground water with sulfuric acid and heavy metals, to say nothing of its impact on the scenic beauty of our north woods. It's common knowledge that the mine would produce the largest toxic waste dump in the state, a "tailings dump" that would cover an area over 200 football fields in size and be as high as a 10-story building. Since the waste water from the mine would not meet standards for dumping into the nearby Wolf River, Exxon proposes to pump over a million gallons of water a day over to Rhinelander and dump it into the Wisconsin

6.B. NEWS CHRONICLE  
6-4-97

called "Mining Moratorium Bill."

My remark that it would be "fine by me" to locate the mine tailings dump for the proposed Crandon Mine in Madison was merely a good-natured attempt at humor. Since the chief opponent of the proposed Crandon Mine, Spencer Black, represents the Madison area, many of us found humor in the thought of a mine tailings dump located near Rep. Black's district.

While some may have misunderstood that attempt at humor, I do take the issue of mining in Wisconsin very seriously. I continue to believe that we should do all that is possible to ensure that our mining laws remain the toughest in the country, and that our environment remains protected. I am working on several initiatives to further improve our mining laws which I expect will be considered by the full assembly later this year.

**MARC C. DUFF**

Chair, Assembly Committee on Environment

## Dogs are trespassers

To the Editor: *Country Today*  
6-25-97

I am not opposed to hunting bear, deer, rabbit, coyotes, etc. But I would like to address the trespassing issue.

As a landowner of 80 wooded and pastured acres, I do have an opinion. I own and love several dogs — hunting, working and house dogs. All during the dog running seasons, we have people collecting or attempting to collect their dogs on the road bordering our land. Since it is a dead end road, the township has a turn-around easement on our land.

At times the people who own weekend homes on that road cannot drive through the traffic jam

## "Fine by me..."

To the Editor:

After reading a recent letter from Ms. Linda Furtman which appeared on this page, it is apparent to me that some of the people involved in the emotional mining debate lack a sense of humor.

In her letter, Ms. Furtman wrote that she was shocked by my response to testimony at a recent Assembly Environment Committee hearing on the so-

JUL 15 1997  
STATE

## Lawmaker: Mining moratorium a myth

MILWAUKEE — A Milwaukee lawmaker said a mining moratorium bill recently approved by the state Senate is nothing but a myth.

Using a report issued last week by the nonpartisan Wisconsin Legislative Council, state Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, hopes to counter the "bumper sticker politics" that he said cloud the issues surrounding the proposed Crandon mine and the mining moratorium bill, which was passed by a wide margin by the Senate in March.

The Senate measure is awaiting passage in the Assembly Environment Committee, which Duff chairs. Duff said the version passed by the Senate is surrounded by confusion on both sides. The Assembly could vote on a bill as early as September, after an additional hearing is held in Milwaukee, he said.

The legislator said he would like to see a bill passed that would strengthen existing environmental laws, rather than try to ban the proposed mine.

—Wausau Daily Herald

try Division at any time. For information about our association and our annual reunions, please contact: Yvonne Mullins, secretary-treasurer-editor, HCR Three, Box 191, Rocky Mount, MO 65072-9014.

For 1/6/98 — Charles Millard  
Fond du Lac

## There are options if mining bill fails

The Crandon mining issue is coming to a head. The Sulfide Mining Moratorium Bill will be on the Assembly floor on Jan. 13th. It already passed in the State Senate.

What are the chances of the SMMB passing the Assembly? If democracy prevails, excellent! One state representative reveals that of over 2,000 pieces of correspondence that he's received, only five were opposed to the SMMB.

But really, the Crandon mine has evolved into an issue of much greater importance. This issue being a democracy. Democracy is majority rule. Whenever a legislator or a government body votes against the majority, it sets a dangerous precedent.

On Dec. 12, 1996, the town board of Nashville, Forest County, went against the majority of their people and passed a local agreement with Crandon mining. Five months later four of five Nashville town board members were voted out of office.

So, do we have options if the SMMB doesn't pass? You bet we do! One option is to find out who voted against the bill or voted to change it, and vote against those legislators in the 1998 November election.

If democracy is to prevail, we must do the maintenance.

— John J. Mutter, Jr.  
Shawano

7-11-97 A.D. Press-Gazette  
People's

## Exxon mine is 'bad news'

WEBSTER — I am writing to expose some inaccuracies in Rep. Marc Duff's response to my earlier letter. I find it rather curious that a legislator would find it necessary to take on a pharmacist. I can only conclude that I must have hit a raw nerve with him, exposing an attitude he would rather hide from the public. He agreed that he made the remark, "Fine by me," when presented with the scenario of locating Exxon's toxic mine tailings dump in Madison. He went on to say, however, that his remark was "merely a good-natured attempt at humor." I find nothing humorous in a remark like that, and neither do the thousands of people who stand to lose their supply of clean water. It's not that I lack a sense of humor. It's just that Duff isn't funny.

His "Fine by me" remark was made during some very heated testimony. It was not said in a light-hearted manner, as he would have you think. I believe that one's true colors come out during the heat of discussion, and Duff is embarrassed to have exposed his own callousness towards the environmental impact of mining in Wisconsin. While he may not want to admit it, he knows the proposed Exxon mine is bad news. Why else would he say that he "found humor in the thought" of putting the associated dump in the backyard of his opponent, Rep. Spencer Black?

He says he believes "we should do all that is possible to ensure that our mining laws remain the toughest in the country, and that our environment remains protected." But this statement is inconsistent with his voting record. In fact, he was given a grade of "D" by the Wisconsin Environmental Decade for his 1995-96 voting record. For example, he voted against considering legislation on the floor that would eliminate the exemption for mines from groundwater enforcement standards (AB 336). And in the last legislative session, he refused to allow any discussion or vote on the mining moratorium bill in committee.

If you do not want a dump like the one proposed for Crandon to be put next to your home, please contact your state representative to voice your support for AB 70, the mining moratorium bill. And contact the speaker of the Assembly, Rep. Ben Brancel, to request that the bill be brought to a vote on the Assembly floor as soon as possible instead of letting it die in committee. Both can be reached at (800) 362-9472.

Laura Furtman, Webster

Makes KKK comparison

**WISCONSIN  
Newspaper Association**

P.O. Box 5580  
Madison, WI 53705  
Clipping Service Division

**GREEN BAY**  
Green Bay Press-Gazette

NOV 23 1997

**A right to be heard**

32 GREEN BAY — In the second part of the *Press-Gazette's* mining moratorium series, Rep. Marc Duff, moratorium opponent and Assembly Environmental Committee chairman says, "Members have gotten literally hundreds of postcards saying how this is critical to our northwoods and tourism. Some legislators may buckle under the pressure."

First, I'd like to thank those who have taken the time to write a postcard, letter or call their local legislator. Most people don't realize they have the right to tell their legislator how they feel, or that those few moments spent make a difference. Apparently from what Duff has said, some legislators don't think their constituents' opinions make a difference, either.

They're forgetting one small detail, though. We, the taxpayers, voted them into office and if we don't care for their choices in office, we can just as easily vote them out in November 1998. We do have the right to be heard and taken seriously. A legislator's job is to serve and represent his/her district's feelings at the state and nation's capitals.

So, Rep. Duff, yes, some of your fellow legislators may "buckle under the pressure" of constituents. They may also be able to hold their seats in office because they took time to listen and did their jobs right.

So please, call or write your legislator. Tell them how you feel about the mining moratorium, the noisy truck stop across the street from your home or anything else your little heart desires. Let's remind legislators what their job is; apparently they're forgetting.

**Heather Haluska**, Green Bay

5/4/97  
**Mining: Protecting  
river a top priority**

Wisconsin residents and the Menominee Nation are rightly concerned about maintaining the Wolf River's pristine qualities.

They should be pleased to know that the Wolf River is among the nation's most protected rivers — rather than one of the 10 "most endangered," as listed recently by American Rivers.

The Department of Natural Resources has designated the Wolf as an Outstanding Resource Water (ORW), which gives it special protection. Under the ORW standard, treated water entering the Wolf River system would have to be just as clean as the water in the river. In other words, the law essentially requires zero pollution.

In the state's review of the proposed mine in Forest County, the protection of the Wolf is paramount. Because the mine and its tailings basin are located near a tributary several miles from the Wolf River, the project is receiving a degree of scrutiny unprecedented in Wisconsin.

With all of the state, federal, and local agencies involved in the review of the Crandon Project, it is impossible to imagine the Crandon Mine receiving a permit if there is any evidence that mine-related facilities would harm water quality in the Wolf River.

Something we said when we started the permitting process three years ago deserves repeating now: If it is not possible to build a mine that fully protects the Wolf River, then there will be no Crandon Mine.

— **Rodney A. Harrill**  
Crandon

*Rodney A. Harrill is president of  
the Crandon Mining Co.*



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**Lake Geneva**  
**Lake Geneva Regional News**

NOV 13 1997

## 35 Letter Writer Should Get Facts Straight

### To the Editor:

I read with interest the letter written by Laura Furtman which recently appeared on this page. It appears that Ms. Furtman has once again chosen to lash out on the issue of metallic mining in Wisconsin without bothering to get her facts straight.

Under the guise of being a non-political Wisconsin resident, she has attacked me, Assembly Speaker Scott Jensen and former Speaker Ben Brancel in a series of letters sent to newspapers throughout the state during the last several months.

Although she claims she doesn't "know much about politics," Ms. Furtman is, in fact, quite an accomplished political operative. In addition to being a prolific letter writer, she is an active member of the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, a group which vigorously lobbies members of the state Legislature on environmental issues.

In the course of making her attacks, Ms. Furtman never once contacted any of our offices to ask about our plans for Senate Bill 3, the so-called Mining Moratorium Bill, which in its current form does nothing to strengthen Wisconsin's tough mining laws or to prevent the proposed copper-zinc mine in Crandon from moving forward.

Had Ms. Furtman bothered to contact us, she would realize that the Assembly Committee on Environment will be voting on SB 3 on Nov. 11, and that Speaker Jensen will follow through on former Speaker Brancel's pledge to bring the bill to the Assembly floor for a vote if it passes committee.

It's too bad that Ms. Furtman is more interested in using editorial pages such as this one to fight her war of half-truths and unsubstanti-

Sincerely,  
Representative Marc Duff

Chairman, Assembly Committee on  
Environment

# Environmentalists should welcome Crandon mine

Design and operational standards are a victory for natural resources

BY CHRISTOPHER ROG

Certain politicians have adopted what they perceive as an environmental activist pledge to promote a moratorium on metallic mineral production in Wisconsin.

It is profoundly ironic that, here in the heartland of natural resource consumption and environmental activism, people could be so outspokenly opposed to what is potentially the most highly engineered, environmentally responsible mining project this planet has ever seen.

Crandon Mine Project opponents cite the potential pollution of ground water leaking from the tailings facility and concerns related to the wastewater pipeline or ground water drawdown as their reasons for opposition.

As evidence for their claims, well-intentioned environmental activists point to historic mining practices and the environmental problems created in days gone by.

In the rhetoric of the public dialogue, mine opponents have outrageously lumped together the sins of virtually every past mining project since the days of the copper-mining Roman Empire and laid them at the feet of the CMP.

In its attempts to counter these claims, industry is faced with the difficulty of crafting simple answers to simple criticisms. When an environmental activist says the mine will "pollute ground water," or will "kill fish," who among us would favor such a project?

Unfortunately, the technical responses to these quips are found in the volumes containing engineering design concepts, construction plans and environmental laws, which might require college education in civil engineering, hydrogeology and inorganic chemistry, plus three to four years to apply the education and study the details.

In an age in which political battles are fought with sound bites that last less than five seconds, mining projects with their troubling track record and complicated answers to simple criticism are at a considerable disadvantage in the public forum.

If mining had a track record under the new rules, the discussion would have recent history to

## IN MY OPINION

point to as successful evidence of modern mining methods.

The closest analogy might be the Flambeau Mine, where mine opponents made the same unfulfilled promises of environmental damage and dead fish during the permit hearing process as are being made today for the Crandon Mine Project.

To date, the only recorded dead fish associated with the Flambeau Mine is the fish the protesters brought to the project's master hearing and laid on the table as an emotional demonstration of what the project would do to the river and its fish if the mine was allowed to operate.

These and other environmental horror stories purveyed by opponents have turned out to have been false on a wholesale basis, a point that is conveniently forgotten or ignored by the activists and the representative electorate in the public dialogue involving the CMP and the mining moratorium.

In my opinion, the fact that only two or three of the world's several hundred multinational mining companies have chosen to operate in Wisconsin — where a highly regulated (and expensive) political climate challenges their every move — should be cause for environmentalists to cheer.

The presence of the CMP and the design and operational standards that have been proposed for it represent, by any rational measure, a significant environmental victory.

Those who have been at the front of the fight for environmental regulation of mining in Wisconsin for the last two decades should be at the head table welcoming the company and the project.

The true environmentalists' role at this point should be an important one in seeing that the environmental rules enacted by the people of Wisconsin are fulfilled in design and in practice, and with a positive "let's make it work" attitude.

For if the opponents push hard enough — and push the right legislative buttons — and the project is dropped and moved to some other unregulated corner of the globe, how could that possibly be construed as an environmental "victory," as activists would have us believe?

Many of us in the North Woods are of the opinion that the currently contemplated "show me one successful mine closure" moratorium should be adjusted to include this concept:

Show us one or more zinc mines from the world's currently operating zinc mines better engineered than the CMP. If there aren't any, the Department of Natural Resources must issue permits for the CMP.

Such language would put Wisconsin on the map and into history as a leader in global environmentalism, a spot in history of which we could all be proud.

*Christopher Rog, of Rhinelander, is a professional hydrogeologist, has a master's degree in geology and is president of Sand Creek Consultants, an environmental consulting firm with offices in Wisconsin and Montana.*

MJS-3/11/97

# Chvala, Johnsrud clash on mining moratorium bill

WSJ 4-12-97

## CAPITOL REPORT

JEFF MAYERS and MIKE FLAHERTY

Democratic Senate Majority Leader Chuck Chvala called on Assembly Republicans to bring a mining moratorium bill to a floor vote next month.

"Anything less would be a slap in the face of the people of Wisconsin," said state Sen. Chuck Chvala, D-Madison, an opponent of the proposed Crandon mineral mine in northern Wisconsin.

But one Republican predicted Friday that the Senate-passed moratorium would never get out of committee. "I don't think it's ever going to get out of there because there's an alternative to it," said state Rep. DuWayne Johnsrud, R-Eastman, adding he'll support the mine if it passes rigorous state standards.

Johnsrud is referring to a bill similar to GOP Gov. Tommy Thompson's proposed language pushing for the latest and best anti-pollution technology. That bill, sponsored by state Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, is due for a hearing Tuesday before the Assembly Committee on the Environment.

A hearing on the mining moratorium hasn't been scheduled yet but probably will be held later this spring, Duff's staff says.

### Study panel backs public school choice

A legislative study committee has approved a statewide public school choice plan, a Republican lawmaker said Friday.

"Competition breeds improvement," said state Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, chairman of the Legislative Council Study Committee on Open Enrollment. "Even though few may take advantage of the choice option, it will prompt school districts to think differently about the educational services available in their district."

Under public school choice programs in states such as Minnesota and Iowa, parents can send their children to school outside of their

home district. Such proposals have previously failed in Wisconsin, but Duff said a "broad consensus was reached on the scope of the plan, special education, tuition level and other issues that may have led to the policy's defeat in the past."

Approval by a legislative study committee usually leads to formal bill introduction and public hearing in the Assembly and Senate.

### Boyle bill aims to end Indian mascots

A Democratic lawmaker from Superior Friday proposed a bill to end the use of Indian logos and mascots in Wisconsin public schools.

"The use of offensive Indian logos and mascots in the public school system discriminates against Native Americans," said state Rep. Frank Boyle.

The legislation would ban school boards from using the following names for logos and mascots if the state superintendent of public instruction agrees their use violate anti-discrimination laws: Apaches, Blackhawks, Braves, Chiefs, Chieftains, Indians, Raiders, Red Raiders, Redmen, Warhawks and Warriors.

### Gephardt keynotes Democrats' gathering

Democratic House Leader Dick Gephardt of Missouri, a possible presidential candidate in 2000, is scheduled to be the featured speaker today at the state Democratic Party's annual Jefferson-Jackson dinner.

More than 500 party supporters are scheduled to attend the dinner at the Hyatt Regency in Milwaukee. Gephardt's speech is slated for 5:30 p.m.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# Legislator Makes Commitment to Environment

To the Editor:

I am writing in response to a letter by Laura Furtman of Webster, which recently appeared in your paper. In her letter, Ms. Furtman made some false insinuations and accused me, as chair of the Assembly Committee on Environment, of delaying action on a bill related to mining in Wisconsin. This is the third letter criticizing me Ms. Furtman has circulated statewide, and it is unfortunate I must continually respond to her inaccurate letters to get out the truth.

Last March, the state Senate passed legislation (Senate Bill 3) that supporters hoped would stop metallic mining in Wisconsin for decades. The intent of many is to prevent the proposed Crandon Mine from receiving a state permit to operate. When the bill was

referred to the committee I chair, I immediately committed to holding two hearings on SB 3 and allowing it a committee vote. Hundreds of people attended the first hearing May 12 in Ladysmith, at which Ms. Furtman testified.

I had hoped to hold the second hearing in the Milwaukee area this past summer. Unfortunately, the three-month delay in passing the budget by Senate Democrats has twice forced the cancellation of scheduled Milwaukee hearings on SB 3. In fact, the author of SB 3, Representative Spencer Black, supported delaying the hearing because he was going to be out of the state for three weeks.

Speaker Brancel and I now plan to hold the second hearing on SB 3, as promised, in mid-October in the Milwaukee area. Action on the budget should be completed by

that date, allowing us to avoid another cancellation of the hearing. Subsequently, a committee vote will be held on SB 3, as well as on other mining-related proposals.

In addition, Ms. Furtman's letter grossly exaggerates the impact of SB 3. She and many others believe this bill will "effectively decide the fate of northern Wisconsin's drinking water, rivers and forests" and that it is "crucial to the protection of drinking water in every county." These statements couldn't be further from the truth: Because of confusion as to what SB 3 does, an impartial legislative attorney wrote a legal opinion which concluded the bill imposes no moratorium on mining and adds no more stringent provisions to protect the environment or Wolf River from "unproven" mining practices. The truth is, it will be Wisconsin's current stringent mining, groundwater, surface water and solid waste laws that will protect our drinking water, rivers and forests.

Is it truly Ms. Furtman's intent to demand a vote on a bill that does nothing? The truth is, if a vote was held on SB 3 in its present form, it would be defeated in committee. Hopefully improvements can be made to the bill prior to committee action that will provide additional environmental protections. In the meantime, I am working on several proposals that will provide additional environmental protections. In the meantime, I am working on several proposals that are guaranteed to improve our already strong mining laws. I remain committed to making sure Wisconsin has strong environmental laws, while allowing appropriate metallic mining to occur.

Sincerely,

State Representative Marc Duff  
98th Assembly District

## Club Commends City

To the Editor:

The Kiwanis Club of Lake Geneva would like to publicly commend the Lake Geneva City Council members for their support. With help from the council members and the Street Department, the Kiwanis Club once again is able to have four

"Welcome to Lake Geneva" signs erected.

The sign project was started by the local Kiwanis Club in 1971 as a welcome sight to our visitors.

Sincerely,  
Connie Demuth  
Outgoing president

## Your Wisconsin Government Strength in Land Values Broadens

### Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance

For the 11th consecutive year, the value of Wisconsin's taxable property has grown--this year by \$1.1 billion to \$233.1 billion. Property values haven't declined since 1986, when they fell two per-

cent. Milwaukee is a comparatively "poor" county; it has only \$34,694 of equalized value per person compared to \$45,319 statewide.

Counties with the most per capita property value comprise a familiar list of vacation areas that combine desirable, high-value

# Letter Writer Should Get Facts Straight

To the Editor:

I read with interest the letter written by Laura Furtman which recently appeared on this page. It appears that Ms. Furtman has once again chosen to lash out on the issue of metallic mining in Wisconsin without bothering to get her facts straight.

Under the guise of being a non-political Wisconsin resident, she has attacked me, Assembly Speaker Scott Jensen and former Speaker Ben Brancel in a series of letters sent to newspapers throughout the state during the last several months.

Although she claims she doesn't "know much about politics," Ms. Furtman is, in fact, quite an accomplished political operative. In addition to being a prolific letter writer, she is an active member of the Wisconsin Stewardship Network, a group which vigorously lobbies members of the state Legislature on environmental issues.

In the course of making her attacks, Ms. Furtman never once contacted any of our offices to ask about our plans for Senate Bill 3, the so-called Mining Moratorium Bill, which in its current form does nothing to strengthen Wisconsin's tough mining laws or to prevent the proposed copper-zinc mine in Crandon from moving forward.

Had Ms. Furtman bothered to contact us, she would realize that the Assembly Committee on Environment will be voting on SB 3 on Nov. 11, and that Speaker Jensen will follow through on former Speaker Brancel's pledge to bring the bill to the Assembly floor for a vote if it passes committee.

It's too bad that Ms. Furtman is more interested in using editorial pages such as this one to fight her war of half-truths and unsubstantiated allegations that she is entering into an open and honest debate on the issue of mining in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,  
Representative Marc Duff

Chairman, Assembly Committee on  
Environment

## Returning Thanks Is Important

To the Editor:

"No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks," thought St. Ambrose about 380 AD. Don't think duty is a dirty work, it can mean merely need as in: It is the duty of the physician to heal the sick, and, of course, the duty of the healed is to thank the healer.

Besides the need for thanksgiving, there's also a benefit. As Robert Herrick, English poet, put it, "Thanksgiving for a former, doth invite God to bestow a second benefit." He penned that simply in his sacred songs called

"Noble Numbers," 1647.

An example of a thanksgiving prayer may be found in the Book of Common Prayer, the service book used in the Church of England and in other churches of the Anglican Communion. "Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we, thine unworthy servants, do give thee most humble and heartfelt thanks for all thy goodness and loving kindness to us, and to all men," The Litany, 1662.

Sincerely,  
Jack Gutknecht

## Lake Geneva Regional News

USPS 302-260

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FOUR YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

Published every Thursday  
by the Lake Geneva Printing and Publishing Co.  
315 Broad Street, Lake Geneva, WI 53147

Mailing Address: Post Office Box 937, Lake Geneva, WI 53147  
Phone: 414-248-4444

Second Class Postage paid at Lake Geneva, WI

### Official Newspaper

City of Lake Geneva  
Lake Geneva Area Elementary (Joint 1) School District  
Badger High School District  
Bloomfield Township - Village of Genoa City  
Williams Bay School District

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11/13/97

# Whether to mine should be a decision made locally

By Larry Brunzlick

The recent results of a St. Norbert College Survey Center/Wisconsin Public Radio phone survey regarding the proposed Crandon mine were published around the state. This "random" survey of adult Wisconsin residents asked whether operation of the proposed zinc and copper mine should be allowed.

What an irrelevant and unfair survey! Our species has been mining and using minerals and metals since the Stone Age. It is unrealistic to presume that we should, or ever will, cease all mining activities. The question is where and how will we mine.

If mining is not done in Crandon, economics will dictate it will be done somewhere else. Perhaps a Third World developing country will be mined instead, or other places where there is less attention to labor safety or environmental quality.

A better survey question might have been asked: "Where would you rather have your copper and zinc mined? In Crandon, where it is highly regulated and controlled, where modern mining practices have the least possible environmental impact, where the local area and state can have the benefits of economic growth? Or would

*Brunzlick is a physician and outdoorsman who lives in Bryant, about 30 miles south of Crandon.*

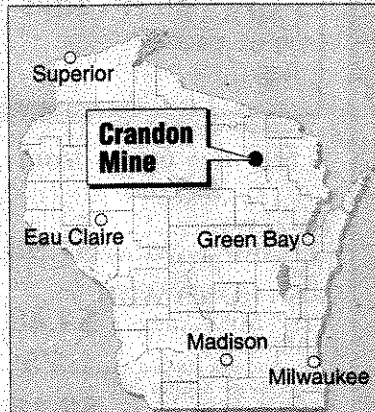
## GUEST COLUMN

you rather see poorly regulated mining in the Amazon basin with further destruction of the rain forest, rampant pollution and no economic growth to our northern communities and state?"

The survey is unfair because it implies that all Wisconsin residents should have equal say. I do not presume that I should have as much to say about what goes on in Florida or California as the local people there do. Nor would I appreciate Floridians and Californians dictating which industry is allowed in our state. By the same analogy, residents of outlying counties of this state should not have as much influence as the local residents and surrounding counties in deciding this issue.

Northern Wisconsin communities such as Crandon are plagued with low-income service jobs in the tourism industry. They deserve more say in their economic development. The well-paid employees of government and industry in the southern half of Wisconsin would not appreciate being told when, where and what kind of work they could do as some northern communities are.

Some have argued that mining wouldn't be good for Crandon because it is only short term. But if long-term industry were that easy to lure, then Crandon wouldn't be



- The Crandon deposit consists of about 55 million tons of recoverable ore, primarily zinc and copper, with small amounts of lead, silver and gold.
- The ore would be mined at a rate of 5,500 tons per day. After a three-year construction period, production would continue for about 28 years.
- Treated water from the mine would be discharged to the Wisconsin River at the Hat Rapids Dam via a 38-mile buried pipeline.
- According to federal and state law, the Crandon Mining Co. must assume responsibility for the mine forever and monitor the environment for 40 years after production ends.

SOURCE: Informational briefing materials, Crandon Mining Co., spring 1996

WSJ

considering the mine. In reality, few industries or businesses last forever or without change. Many people lamented the death of the carriage industry at the turn of the century, but life went on.

Thousands of businesses begin and end across this nation every year, but would it be right to restrict them because they might not last forever? Wake up, state legislators, and allow our communities self-determination.

## Give them a chance

To the Editor:

I personally grew up on a dairy farm. I know the hours and what's involved in farming. I feel the Farm Link program that the state started is great. My wife and I both love animals. I keep reading issues as to Wisconsin losing farms every day, thus Wisconsin losing our title "America's Dairyland."

With jobs on farms, or older retiring farmers I talk to, say you've been away from farming too long now or not enough experience. My point is how do you get experience now if you senior/younger farmers don't give people a chance? Also, if retiring seniors would give the younger starting farmer some breaks it would keep the farm going instead of sitting idle and wasting away plus keep our dairy industry stronger.

More information on preserving your farm can be obtained from Wisconsin Farm Link, (800) 942-2474.

**LEANORD BERGH**  
Gillett

## Lack of sensitivity

To the Editor:

I am writing because I believe the people of Eau Claire County need to know about a statement made by the Assembly Environment Committee chairman, Mark Duff, at a recent public hearing on Assembly Bill 70, the mining moratorium bill. The meeting was held in Ladysmith on May 12 and lasted over 7 hours. It was attended by more than 300 people.

Before getting into the specifics of Rep. Duff's statement, some background information is in order. I am just a regular citizen, a pharmacist by trade. I attended the meeting because I

am concerned that Exxon's proposed zinc-copper mine near Crandon is likely to pollute our lakes and groundwater with sulfuric acid and heavy metals, to say nothing of its impact on the scenic beauty of our Northwoods.

It's common knowledge that the mine would produce the largest toxic waste dump in the state, a "tailings dump" that would cover an area over 200 football fields in size and be as high as a 10-story building. Since the wastewater from the mine would not meet standards for dumping into the nearby Wolf River, Exxon proposes to pump over a million gallons of water a day over to Rhinelander and dump it into the Wisconsin River instead.

Tom Ward, a member of the Wisconsin Resources Protection Council, was one of many to speak at the hearing. At one point during his heated testimony, he said to Rep. Duff, "They should put the tailings dump down in Madison." I was shocked to hear Rep. Duff respond, "Fine by me." Mr. Ward went on to say, "Well, good. Let's work on that. Let's put the dump right down there with Gov. Thompson. Let it look over Lake Mendota and Lake Monona and let's pump the (waste) water from Madison to Middleton when they get done with it."

"Fine by me." Is that any sort of statement to be coming from the lips of the chairman of the Assembly Environment Committee? It shows a great lack of sensitivity to the concerns of the people of northern Wisconsin and leads me to wonder if any part of the state is immune to exploitation by the mining industry.

It's no secret that other potential mining sites have been identified close to La Crosse and Eau

Claire. Based on Rep. Duff's statement, even Eau Claire County is not sacred. Would you want such a dump to be put next to your home? If your answer is "no," please speak up and voice your opinion to your state representative. And contact the speaker of the Assembly, Rep. Ben Brancel, to request that the bill be brought to a vote on the Assembly floor as soon as possible.

**LAURA FURTMAN**  
Webster

## Stop the stealing

To the Editor:

Help! Someone's stealing one-fourth of my milk check. I didn't notice it until last fall when I got \$17 per hundred in September. The crooks must have forgotten to steal a part of my milk check that month.

I wrote to the secretary of agriculture, didn't hear from him yet; wrote to my congressman and senator, got a run-around from them; called the USDA, got put on hold and then somebody said we can't do anything until 1999. If the stealing of my milk check keeps on until then I'll be done farming and will be looking for a good labor union to join. Like maybe "Cow Milkers Union," a union for all the ex-farm owners that will be milking cows for the big factory farms.

Let's use our power to bring the crooks to justice, our milk is the power. The crooks are stealing one-fourth of your milk check, they are stealing from the working people, they're stealing from anybody that lets them.

Call or write to ARMPPA. They'll help you stop the stealing: (888) 276-7720 (toll free) or write to ARMPPA, Box 134, Waunakee, WI 53597-0134.

**RICHARD PECHA JR.**  
*Country Today 4-4-97 Bloomer*

# Mining bill aimed to protect state's water

By Spencer Black

WS 5/13/96

## GUEST COLUMN

Imagine an airplane that crashed every time it took off. Suppose the manufacturer of that plane then claimed he had new technology that would prevent future problems and invited you on the next flight. Before you boarded the plane, you would probably want to see at least one successful flight.

That scenario is similar to the situation we now face with proposals to open mines in sulfide ore bodies in northern Wisconsin such as Exxon's proposed mine near Crandon.

Why? Because every mine in a similar sulfide ore body has led to severe environmental damage.

Wisconsin will be the big loser if Exxon's proposed Wolf River mine ends up polluting drinking water supplies or our rivers and lakes. For that reason, I have proposed Assembly Bill 758, the Sulfide Mining Moratorium Bill. My bill would prohibit the opening of



**Black**

a new mine in a sulfide ore body until a similar mine has been operated elsewhere for at least 10 years without significant environmental damage.

The ore in the proposed Exxon mine contains a high percentage of sulfide minerals. In order to extract the copper, zinc and other metals, the mining operation pulverizes the sulfide rock. While the valuable minerals would be shipped to Canada, the ground-up sulfide minerals called tailings would be left near the mine in what would be Wisconsin's largest waste dump. The tailings dump would be 90 feet high and cover an area equivalent to 350 football fields. When these tailings mix with air and water, sulfuric acid is created.

Across the country, sulfide mining wastes have caused extensive environmental damage from acid draining into rivers, lakes and drinking water supplies. A great many rivers in Appalachia and the Rocky Mountains remain lifeless due to acid drainage from mines.

Exxon cannot cite even one example of a mine in a sulfide ore body similar to the Wolf River/Crandon deposit that has not caused extensive pollution. Exxon now claims that new technologies

will prevent that damage. However, those technologies are unproven. In fact, the Summitville mine in Colorado, which opened only 10 years ago, had to be shut down after polluting many miles of trout streams and poisoning water supplies in southern Colorado. Taxpayers in that state will pay as much as \$150 million to try to clean up the damage.

A recent State Journal editorial was critical of AB 758 and claimed Wisconsin's mining laws are already strong enough. However, our laws contain many loopholes. For example, the mining industry is the only activity in the state exempt from the state's groundwater law — the law that protects our drinking water. Mines must follow separate, but weaker, laws.

Also, many provisions of the mining laws can be waived at the request of the mining company and with the approval of the state Department of Natural Resources. This is especially worrisome now that the DNR is a politically controlled agency and the Public Intervenor, whose job was to watchdog DNR, has been effectively neutered.

The Mining Moratorium Bill is a common-sense approach to prevent mining operations from polluting our drinking water and rivers and lakes. Our greatest wealth in Wisconsin is not copper or zinc — it is our plentiful supply of clean water.

*Black, D-Madison, is the Democratic leader on the Assembly Natural Resources Committee.*



# 40,000 sign petition to back mining bill

By Ron Seely

Environment reporter

Environmental groups Thursday presented what they consider weighty evidence of statewide support for proposed mining moratorium legislation — a 2-foot-high stack of petitions bearing 40,000 signatures of people from all over the state who favor the bill.

"Here you are," said the Environmental Decade's Keith Reopelle as he handed the stack to Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison. "The people have spoken."

Black, who sponsored the legislation, said the 40,000 signatures are the most ever received by the Assembly on any legislation in recent history.

The proposed bill, scheduled to be taken up by the Assembly on Jan. 22, would require a company

that wants to mine in Wisconsin to cite a similar mine that has been operated safely for 10 years and closed for another 10 years without causing pollution.

Already approved by the Senate, the bill was prompted by concerns over plans by Exxon and Rio Algom to build a giant zinc and copper mine near Crandon in northeastern Wisconsin.

State Sen. Kevin Shibilski, D-Amherst, who helped shepherd the legislation through the Senate, called the pile of petitions "extraordinary." He said as impressive as the number of signatures is that they come from people all over the state and in occupations ranging from factory workers to merchants.

"There's too much evidence out there for politicians to defy this legislation," Shibilski said.

Even state Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, who opposes the proposal, said the stack of petitions was impressive and "shows the emotion behind the issue."

But Duff also said he has conducted surveys of his own constituents that show as many as 70 percent would support mining as long as it doesn't damage the environment. Between 13 and 15 percent of those surveyed, Duff said, support a moratorium.

Duff added that the 40,000 signatures would not change his mind. He and others have argued the moratorium is an attempt to halt the Crandon mine and that the bill, if passed, would discourage other business enterprises in the state.

"It's not going to influence my vote," Duff said. "I've always been against this."

# Moratorium on mines gains momentum

By Jeff Mayers

State government reporter

A year ago, Gov. Tommy Thompson tried to meet concerns about the proposed Crandon mine and blunt calls for a mining moratorium.

But today the mining moratorium — promoted by an energized coalition of Native Americans, conservationists, hunters, anglers and environmentalists — appears on the verge of passage.

On the eve of an Assembly vote this week, the Republican governor will announce the appointment of a science advisory council he says will be the test of whether the project proceeds. The council, led by UW-Madison's Anders Andren, is expected to make its recommendations by the end of this year.

"If this independent body determines the mine is not safe, it will not be built," Thompson is expected to say in Tuesday's state of the state address.

Then on Wednesday, the GOP-controlled Assembly is set to launch a debate about mineral mining and Crandon Mining Co.'s proposal to extract zinc and copper near Mole Lake Indian lands and the headwaters of the Wolf River. The Senate already has passed the moratorium by a 29-3 vote, with the support of many Republicans.

The battle over the bill and the Exxon-Rio Algom project, however, will be far from over — no matter how the legislation fares. The Department of Natural Resources, Crandon Mining and opponents all are girding for a long fight.

But first, the Legislature will have its say. Legislative action will determine whether Thompson will have to consider the politically risky bill in his re-election year. Thompson says he'll have to evaluate the final version before deciding whether to sign it.

Meanwhile, backers and opponents alike predict the bill will pass the Assembly in some form this week.

"This issue has energized people more than any other issue I've seen in my time in the Legislature," said state Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, the bill's author. "We do not want Exxon experimenting with our North woods."

Republican opponents credit Black and environmentalists with a masterful public relations campaign that has divided their ranks.

"I think there's a number of members running scared," said

Please see MINING, Page 7C

■ Advisory panel formed/7C

# WISCONSIN

1-16-98 MJS

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL — STATE EDITION

## Geologist says firm plays down mine risks

**Crandon Mining Co. report criticized as just 'a promotional vehicle'**

By DON BEHM  
of the Journal Sentinel staff

Madison — The Crandon Mining Co. misled the public and state environmental regulators by underestimating the environmental effects of its proposed underground zinc and copper mine in Forest County, a Colorado geologist said Thursday at the state Capitol.

Charles Norris, president of Geo-Hydro Inc., described the mining company's environmental impact report filed with the state as "a promotional vehicle" that does not adequately describe the potential effects.

The consulting firm was

hired by the Chicago-based Environmental Law and Policy Center of the Midwest to review the mining company's report. A summary of the geologist's comments, but no technical support documents, was released Thursday at a news conference.

The release was timed to influence next week's state Assembly vote on a proposed metal-ore mining moratorium bill, said Carl Zichella, Midwest regional director of the Sierra Club.

"Exxon's analysis is lean on fact and long on speculation," Zichella said. "According to them, no matter what they do nothing bad will happen to our drinking water, lakes, rivers and wetlands. It's preposterous."

At the news conference, Norris said that it might be possible to design an environ-

mentally safe mine at that location.

"But you can't assess this proposed mine's impact with the report that exists today," he said.

A mining company official challenged Norris to submit his complete analysis to the state Department of Natural Resources for peer review.

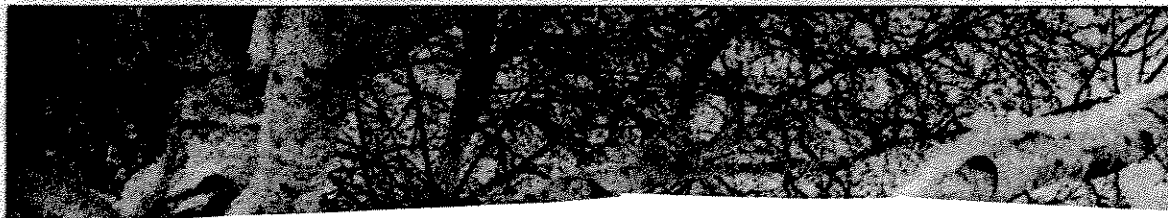
"These are his opinions after reading our report, which is in progress," said Don Moe, technical and permitting manager for the company. "And his assessment should be made to stand up to the same scrutiny as our analysis."

Crandon Mining Co. is seeking state and federal permits to excavate 55 million tons of zinc and copper ore from a deposit 5 miles south

Please see MINE page 2

(over)

City glow



# Mine/ Geologist cites risks

From page 1

of Crandon and 2 miles east of the Mole Lake Chippewa Reservation. The company is a Wisconsin partnership formed by Exxon Coal and Minerals Co., of Houston, and Rio Algom Ltd., of Toronto.

Norris based much of his analysis on the company's initial ground-water flow report, which was withdrawn last year following DNR criticisms. He acknowledged the company had agreed to revise this critical piece of the impact report but said the new ground-water analysis would again be inadequate.




Moe responded that the DNR already had forced basic changes in the ground-water study and that the revised analysis would not be completed until later this month.

Under the proposed mining moratorium bill, the DNR could not approve permits for a metal-ore mine unless the agency could meet two criteria: one, that a mine in a similar ore body had operated for 10 years without polluting the environment; two, that a mine in a similar ore body had been closed for at least 10 years without polluting the environment. The Senate passed the bill last year.

Mining opponents urged legislators to include the reference to a similar ore body in the bill because the Crandon Mining Co. proposes to mine a sulfide ore body. Sulfuric acid would be created when waste rock is exposed to oxygen in air or water.

Opponents fear the acid could seep into ground water and contaminate streams and lakes.

The company, however, says it has proposed several measures to prevent the acid from forming. For one, it would add limestone, a buffering compound, to the waste rock.

<b>Sunday</b>  8 / 22 Light snow, flurries possible.	<b>Monday</b>  25 / 18 Partly cloudy.	<b>Tuesday</b>  30 / 13 Becoming mostly cloudy.
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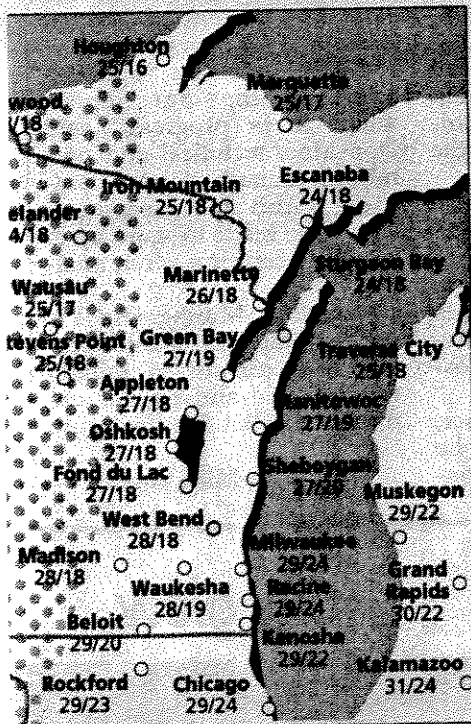
## Winds in January

in northern part of Illinois. Other patterns that we consider are warmer air moving in after a cold air mass. This caused Wednesday's snow from the lift of the warmer air riding up the colder surface air mass.

Another cause of Wednesday's snow was an upper air system that increased the atmospheric lift.

Other snow producers include cold fronts approaching from the northwest. This usually produces a short-term snowfall similar to showers ahead of a cold front in the summer. And we shouldn't forget the snow produced by Lake Michigan.

## REGIONAL FORECAST



## OUTLOOK

now spreading eastward across the state will be in the low to upper 30s overnight.

## Growth in

New Census Bureau estimates show counties with rising poverty rates.

Percentage of school-age population estimated to be living in poor families

1993	
United States	20.4
Wisconsin	14.3
<b>Milwaukee County</b>	<b>31.7</b>
Ozaukee County	2.3
Washington County	4.1
Waukesha County	3.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Census/ could

From page 1

was 31.7% of the school-age population in 1993, up from 26.2% in 1989.

Nationally, the number of poor schoolchildren climbed 24%, to 9.8 million in 1993. That was 20.4% of schoolchildren, vs. 17% in 1989.

State poverty rates for school-age children in 1993 were 9.8% in New Hampshire, 11.1% in Mississippi and 31.1% in the District of Columbia.

"We're still evaluating the estimates," said Paul Voss, director of the Applied Poverty Lab at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and member of a national advisory panel on census updates.

The newer estimates have their drawbacks, Voss says, but they're probably better than relying on data that could be

## Meeting seeks

# Black: Mining moratorium necessary

■ It's the only way to save the state from environmental harm, he said in defending his legislation.

By Ron Seely  
Environment reporter

State Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, defended his mining moratorium bill Friday as a "moderate" approach to hard-rock mining in Wisconsin and necessary to keep the state from becoming a guinea pig for untested mining technologies.

In a preview of a battle that is expected in the state Legislature later this fall, Black traded verbal jabs with Crandon Mining Company lobbyist Dale Alberts in a debate before the Independent Business Association of Wisconsin.

## Public hearing scheduled in Milwaukee

A public hearing on the proposed mining moratorium bill is scheduled for Oct. 14, at State Fair Park in Milwaukee.

The hearing has been scheduled by state Rep. Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, chairman of the Assembly's environment committee.

This will be the second hearing on the proposal. A hearing was held over the summer in

Ladysmith in northwestern Wisconsin. Testimony at that hearing was largely against the proposed mine. A staff member in Duff's office said Friday that those who testified in Ladysmith will be placed at the bottom of the sign-up list to speak at the Milwaukee hearing.

The hearing will be at 1 p.m. in the Trade Mart building.

The subject was the company's plan to dig an underground mine in northeastern Wisconsin and extract 55 million tons of zinc, iron, and copper ore.

Black touted the mining moratorium bill, which would place new restrictions on mining companies like Crandon, a subsidiary of Exxon Minerals Co. and Canada's Rio Algom Ltd.

The hearing will be at 1 p.m. in the Trade Mart building.

The bill, scheduled for a public

hearing next month in Milwaukee would require a mining company to cite a mine in similar condition that has operated for 10 years or more that has been closed for 10 years without damaging the environment. Black said such a law is necessary because most of the new technologies used by mining companies are unproven.

"Consider," Black said, "there were a new airplane developed and every time it took off it crashed. But then the man who invented the airplane came to you and said, 'We've fixed all the problems, we think it will fly fine. Would you and your family like to take a free trip?'"

Black also said mining companies have been unable to find a mine that would meet the requirements of the bill.

Alberts attacked the bill as "protectionist" and "discriminatory."

Please see MINING,

## Mining

Continued from Page 1B

The sole reason the bill has been introduced, Alberts said, is to stop the Crandon mine from being built. And, he added, it sets a bad precedent for companies that might want to do business in the state.

"What industry is next?" Alberts asked the small crowd, which included several other lobbyists and lawyers working for Crandon Mining. "I think the bill is designed to stop Crandon Mining and ban the industry from ever wanting to come back to the state of Wisconsin."

Alberts agreed the industry cannot cite a mine that meets the bill requirements. But he said those requirements are unrealistic and added that there are mines — such as the Henderson Mine near Empire, Colo. — that have operated safely for more than 10 years using modern mining tech-

nologies. While it doesn't meet the test of having been closed for 10 years, it is operating without harming the environment, Alberts said.

Alberts, a former government affairs manager for Rio Algom, said Exxon and Rio Algom are spending \$50 million to comply with the state's permitting process, which he called one of the most rigorous in the country.

Because of its location at the headwaters of the pristine Wolf River, the proposed mine has roused the ire of a diverse coalition of opponents, including environmental and conservation groups, fishing and hunting organizations, and Native Americans.

And Black charged the state's permitting process for mining companies has been compromised by politicization of the Department of Natural Resources, the agency that oversees the process. Unlike when the process was created, Black said, the secretary of the DNR is a member of Gov. Tommy Thompson's cabinet.

WSJ 9/2

JUL 16 1997

## 32 Duff: Moratorium bill a 'myth'

### Mining restrictions powerless, says Republican

MADISON (AP) — The so-called mining moratorium bill that easily passed the state Senate in March and is awaiting action in the Assembly "does nothing, really," a Republican committee chairman said Tuesday.

The measure, which backers said was designed to stall the opening of a mine in northern Wisconsin, will be amended, said Rep. Marc Duff, chairman of the Assembly Environment Committee.

"I just felt we needed to end the myth that it actually did something," said Duff, R-New Berlin. "You can't keep giving people against the mine false hopes that this is going to do it. It does nothing, really."

In the  
state

Under the bill that senators passed, the state Department of Natural Resources could not approve Crandon Mining Co.'s project or any other metal-ore mining operation without determining that:

► A sulfide ore mine, similar to the proposed Crandon mine, operated elsewhere in North America for at least 10 years without polluting ground or surface water.

► Such a mine has been closed for 10 years with no sign of water pollution.

Based on the DNR's interpretation of the bill, the measure will provide no additional assurances that mining can be environmentally safe and it will not create a moratorium on mining, according to a July 8 memorandum to Duff

from the Wisconsin Legislative Council.

"The bill is ambiguous concerning what environmental laws are to be referred to in determining whether mines operated in the United States and Canada have been operated and closed in a manner that satisfies the two preconditions of the bill," wrote William Ford, a senior attorney for the council.

But one of the bill's sponsors, Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, said Tuesday the DNR has misinterpreted the measure and he will offer needed changes to clear up the confusion.

"The DNR is bending over backwards to accommodate the mining company," Black said. "The legislative intent of the bill is very clear."

# Crandon Mining Co. outspends its opponents by 4-1 in lobbying

By Sharon Theimer

Associated Press

A company seeking state approval to open a mine in northern Wisconsin outspent the proposal's lead opponents nearly 4-to-1 while lobbying for the measure, an Associated Press review found.

The Crandon Mining Co., now called Nicolet Minerals Co., spent \$1,078,727 lobbying lawmakers in 1997, the AP reported.

That compares with a total of \$272,323 spent by mine opponents Wisconsin Citizen Action, the Menominee Indian Tribe, the Sierra Club and Wisconsin's Environmental Decade.

Much of Crandon Mining Co.'s lobbying was devoted to fighting a "mining moratorium" bill passed by the state Senate last year, said Dale Alberts, a lobbyist for the mining company.

The \$1 million was spent mostly on scientific and legal analysis of legislation and on time spent by lobbyists talking with every legislator who would meet with them, Alberts said.

"Unfortunately, regardless of our educational attempts, this moratorium legislation still seems to be passing the legislative bodies, regardless of the fact that it's fundamentally flawed," he said.

The bill would require the company to prove that a sulfide-ore mine similar to one it wants to open in Crandon has operated in North America for at least 10 years without polluting rivers, lakes, streams or ground water.

The Senate passed the bill last spring. The Assembly amended the measure and passed it last month, returning it to the Senate for a vote on the changes.

Nicolet Minerals Co. wants state and federal per-

mits to remove 55 million tons of copper and zinc from a deposit about five miles southwest of Crandon.


It wants to dig a shaft mine to a copper and zinc deposit, burying waste in a pit and pumping treated water to the Wisconsin River near Rhinelander.

Opponents of the mine contend it would harm the environment, including the Wolf and Wisconsin rivers. The mine's proponents contend it would operate safely and provide needed jobs.

Ken Fish, director of treaty rights and mining impacts for the Menominee tribe, said he considers the money the tribe has spent a good investment because it believes the mine would hurt the Wolf River watershed.

## ■ Senate takes up mining bill today/1B

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**MADISON FORECAST**  
 Today: Mostly cloudy. High 30  
 Winds: NE 7-14 mph.  
 Tonight: Cloudy. Low 14.  
 Details/back page

### 397 Letters to the Editor

LETTERS TO EDITOR: Letters should be no more than 500 words in length, must contain name, address, phone number and signature of the writer. The name and city will be printed on all letters. We reserve the right to reject or edit for potential libel, length, journalistic style and good taste. Letters must be mailed to: Letters, Shopper Stopper, P.O. Box 280, Merrimac, WI 53561. Or faxed to 608-493-2074.

#### PADDLEFISH BEING POACHED

There is a disturbing article in the Jan-Feb. 1998 issue of "Mississippi Monitor" about the poaching of paddlefish from our bioregion to supply eggs for the illegal worldwide market in caviar. This is in apparent response to the collapse of the beluga sturgeon population in the Caspian Sea because of overexploitation by Russian harvesters there. Apparently, hundreds of paddlefish carcasses were found slashed open for their eggs along river shorelines just in Indiana last year and the poaching situation is probably just as bad in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Paddlefish eggs are worth over \$200 per ounce once they are shipped to Russia, salted, relabeled, and shipped back to the U.S. with the typical female carrying 10 pounds of eggs or so. Of course, the corporate fatcats and celebrity starlets that feast on "caviar" probably could care less just where it comes from or under what circumstances.

Beginning April 1, all trade in sturgeon and pad-

### 397 Letters to the Editor

dlefish products will be covered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as CITES, but that is hardly a guarantee that the species will survive. Scientists in seventeen states are also planning an extensive tagging program to monitor the fish's population, but once again more statistics won't necessarily solve the problem. If this ancient species is to survive runaway capitalism and crass human greed, we grassroots activists need to be diligent in watchdogging our communities, reporting the poaching of paddlefish to authorities, and demanding strict enforcement of the rules protecting them. In the case of WI, people should contact the DNR enforcement division: 1-800-847-9367.

John Peck,  
Madison

#### MINING MORATORIUM BILL

Your readers are being misled by report that Assembly Republicans strengthened the Mining Moratorium bill (SB 3) last week when they amended it and passed it on to the state Senate. Republicans attached new language to SB 3 gutting the bill by allowing mines that have caused significant pollution problems to meet the crite-

### 397 Letters to the Editor

ria of the bill. The new language restricts the definition of "pollution" to only those mines which had polluted to such a degree that their irresponsible actions landed them in court or resulted in a fine. Unfortunately, the amendment created a loophole which allows numerous pollution-causing mines to meet the amended SB 3, because their polluting activities never resulted in a fine or court action. The loophole would allow the mining industry to claim, under this new definition of pollution, that even mines that have polluted rivers, streams and drinking water with arsenic, cyanide, and heavy metals were "non-polluting."

On January 23rd, the day after the Assembly amended and adopted the Mining Moratorium Bill, Exxon announced that it was abandoning the proposed Crandon mine and selling its share to partner, Rio Algom Ltd. of Toronto, Canada. Rio Algom state that same day that it expected to have permits to mine in hand in two years. Why is this important? Because it proves that the mining industry has nothing to fear from the amended SB 3. Unfortunately, Rio Algom's actions also show clearly why some Assembly Republicans voted for the amendment-it gave the green light to the proposed mine.

The Mining

### 397 Letters to the Editor

Moratorium bill is expected to be taken up by the state Senate in the upcoming session from February 3-12. Wisconsin River Valley readers who are concerned that the bill has been gutted should contact their state Senator and ask that the loophole in SB 3 be closed. Without the loophole, the mining industry would have to live up to their rhetoric and demonstrate that somewhere in North America, they have operated a safe metallic sulfide mine. And with or without Exxon, the proposed Crandon mine remains an unproven and unacceptable experiment on Wisconsin.

Dave Blouin, Chairman  
Sierra Club, John Muir  
Chapter Mining  
Committee,  
Madison

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## YOUR VIEWS

Full Reporter  
1-11-78

### Tell legislators: OK mining moratorium

Have Fond du Lac County's state representatives made up their minds about the Mining Moratorium Bill? It's time you found out, because this important bill is due to be voted on by the full Assembly in January.

In brief, the bill says that companies like Exxon cannot move into Wisconsin and mine for metals unless they first prove they can do it without polluting our ground and surface waters. That translates into protecting our drinking waters, including Fond du Lac County's. It sure makes common sense to me, but where do representatives John Dobyms, Carol Owens, Luther Olsen and Al Ott stand?

You may wonder why this should be of any concern to you. I believe that any legislator who opposes the Mining Moratorium Bill is in effect saying, "Yes, I'd be OK with the same sort of mine and toxic waste dump that Exxon proposes for Crandon being located in my own district." Any other conclusion would be hypocritical. After all, it's OK for Crandon; shouldn't it be OK for the legislator's own backyard?

Exxon's proposed Crandon mine would produce the state's largest toxic waste dump, a "tailings pond" over 90 feet deep and covering the size of at least 200 football fields. All similar mines have caused acid mine drainage, which consists of a toxic soup of sulfuric acid and heavy metals like

mercury and arsenic that inevitably leaks into the local water supplies. I doubt if most people in Fond du Lac County would want to live next to something like that.

It's time we band together to support the Mining Moratorium Bill and cancel out the negative votes of those legislators who oppose it. Call Fond du Lac County's representatives at 1-800-362-9472 and tell them to vote "yes" on the Mining Moratorium Bill as it stands — without any substitutions or amendments. Let them know they will be held accountable in the next election. Remember, voting "no" on the bill or watering it down with amendments will pave the way for Crandon's Exxon nightmare to occur around the state — maybe even in Fond du Lac County.

— **Laura Furtman**  
Webster

### 88 persons gave blood at Waupun

The Waupun American Red Cross Blood Drive, held on January 2nd at the National Guard Armory, had 88 donors. We wish to thank the American Legion and Auxillary, Jaycees, Kiwanis, Lions, Lionesses, AARP and those not affiliated with a group for their help and assistance.

The National Guard allowed us to use the building. McDonald's of Waupun provided the orange drink, Alto Dairy provided cheese and Lauer's provided coupons for chicken. We would also like to

thanks these people for their contribution to the blood drive.

Those reaching gallon marks were: Elton Klumpers (11 gallons), Hal Freriks (8 gallons), Charlotte Bronkhorst (5 gallons), Agnes VandeZande (4 gallons), Lois Staehline (3 gallons) and Sue Reilhoff (1 gallon). These donors, as well as all those that donated at this blood drive, should be commended for their willingness to donate to local blood banks.

Thanks again to all the donors, volunteers and those making donations to help make this blood drive successful.

— **Georgie Herrmann**  
Waupun

*Georgie Herrmann is a Red Cross Blood Drive volunteer.*

### Pilot training class seeks local member

U.S. Air Force Pilot Training Class 55K, which started training in 1953, is looking for Richard R. Broehm of Fond du Lac. Broehm probably graduated from high school between 1947 and 1951. If you have any information, contact William R. Reinders, 529 W. Ocotillo Place, Green Valley, AZ, 85614 or call (520) 648-2816.

We have found all but about 60 of the 371 classmates who went through training in Class 55K. With help from hometown persons and relatives, we hope to find the 60 missing class members.

— **William R. Reinders**  
Green Valley, Ariz.

# Oneida County OKs pipeline from mine; opponents cry foul

RHINELANDER (AP) — Crandon Mining Co. got a boost from the Oneida County Board, which approved the company's proposed pipeline through the county and cleared the way for the county to negotiate a mining agreement.

But environmentalists opposed to the mine say the board violated open meeting laws to do it.

The board voted Tuesday to support the proposed 38-mile pipeline that would carry treated wastewater from a mine site in Forest County to the Hat Rapids Dam on the Wisconsin River near Rhineland.

State law requires the mining company to get local agreements from governments affected by the mine. The company already has signed agreements with Forest County and some town governments near the mine site.

"It is a show of support," Chairman William Korrer said Wednesday. "If they can meet all state and federal standards, go for it, just like a knickknack shop down the street."

However, Melanie Kirsch, executive director of the Northwoods Alliance, has objected to how the board acted, saying it reached a decision without "meaningful public discussion." The group has complained to the district attorney's office.

District Attorney Patrick O'Melia didn't immediately return a telephone message Wednesday for comment.

Supervisor Jack Sorensen said they didn't violate the open meetings law.

The board also voted to repeal an August 1996 ordinance that barred them from negotiating a local agreement with the mining company until an environmental impact statement was complete.

An environmental impact statement has not been done yet.

County Clerk Bob Bruso said the ban was passed in the "best interests of the county at the time."

"Now, the inactive mining im-

pact committee of the county can start acting again," he said. "The committee can at least open a channel of communication with the mining company."

Crandon Mining, a Wisconsin partnership formed by two international mining firms, Exxon Coal and Minerals of Houston and Rio Algom Ltd. of Toronto, is seeking state and federal permission to remove 55 million tons of mostly zinc and copper ore from an underground mine just south of Crandon.

The board switched their position because "we can't stick our head in the sand. The fact that the mining company is here and they are here to stay — we are not accomplishing anything by not talking to them," Korrer said.

Crandon Mining spokeswoman Mary Kay Grasmick was pleased by the County Board's actions because it allows "us to resume dialogue with the county. It's important that the pipeline discussions be separate from the mine."

# Mining hearing rejected for Crandon

## Democrats say residents deserve to be heard

By Ron Seely  
Environment reporter

WSJ  
8-23-97

Crandon may be the site where Exxon wants to dig a giant zinc and copper mine but it apparently will not be the site of a hearing on the proposed mining moratorium bill that could halt the project.

Democratic members of the Assembly Environment Committee asked this week for Committee Chairman Marc Duff, R-New Berlin, to schedule a hearing on the bill in either Crandon or Rhinelander. A hearing was held earlier this month in Ladysmith, the site of the state's only operating copper mine. That hearing was attended by more than 200 people.

But Duff said Thursday he will not hold a hearing in Crandon, despite the request. He already has announced he will schedule a second hearing sometime early this summer in Milwaukee. But a third hearing is unlikely, he said.

"Another hearing would just delay the bill," Duff said. "We've already done far more than the Senate ever did."

The Senate approved the proposed moratorium late this winter and Duff said he hopes to get the bill out of the committee and to the Assembly sometime late this summer or early fall. The bill would prohibit issuing permits to a mineral mining company if it cannot cite a similar mine that has operated safely and has been closed for at least 10 years without having caused environmental damage.

State Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison, one of the committee members who requested the Crandon hearing, questioned Duff's motives.

"It seems very curious," Black said. "Unless your aim was to stack the proceedings of the committee against the bill."

In their letter, committee Democrats said residents in northern Wisconsin — who are most affected by the proposed mine — deserve another hearing, especially

since many from the Crandon area were not able to attend the Ladysmith hearing.

"If only one hearing is to be held in northern Wisconsin on the mining moratorium bill," the letter said, "it is very curious that it was held in Ladysmith and not in Crandon. The people of the Crandon/Rhinelander area deserve to be heard."

Duff said he held the initial hearing in Ladysmith because it is a central location and because he wanted committee members to tour the open-pit copper mine operated near the city by the Flambeau Mining Co. He suggested Democratic committee members travel to Crandon on their own.

"If the Democratic members want to go up there on their own, I'm not holding them back," Duff said.

Duff and Black differ on how the Ladysmith crowd split on the mining moratorium proposal. Black said about 60 percent of those at the hearing appeared to favor the proposal while Duff said the group was evenly split.

## Let's not base mine decision on politics

J-S - 10-29-97

I read your Oct. 19 editorial on the proposed Crandon Mine with great interest, and I hope you will forgive those readers who struggle with your logic.

You say the proposed mining moratorium is "poorly conceived and seriously flawed... politically contrived, simplistic." I agree.

You say the environment would be "better protected under the state's existing mining laws, and other applicable environmental regulations, among the strictest in the nation." You say the 3½-year review process leading to the Environmental

Impact Statement attests to "the thoroughness of the state's regulatory process." I agree.

But then you say that if this process ends in a Department of Natural Resources ruling in favor of the mine, the Legislature should intervene and stop it. In other words, even if the mine is proved entirely safe, by the officially designated state agency, by qualified state scientists and consultants, under the best, most thorough review process in existence, the project still should not go forward.

If that's the case, why have laws? Why have regulations? Why have a DNR? Why not just

decide the fate of mines and other projects on whim and speculation?

Citizens and businesses need to know what the rules are and what they can expect in the way of a permitting process at the front end of a project, not after they have spent several years and millions of dollars in meeting permit requirements.

I say, let's base our decisions on science and sound regulations, not on rhetoric and politics.

Rodney A. Harrill  
President  
Crandon Mining Co.  
Rhinelander

# Moratorium won't close mining company

**Harnischfeger head says approval would not mean a shutdown and loss of 1,200 jobs.**

**By Ron Seely**  
WSS  
3-11-97  
Environment reporter

The head of a large mining equipment manufacturer in Milwaukee said it is unlikely the company would shut down if a proposed mining moratorium bill passes the state Senate today.

In an interview Monday, Jeffery Grade, chief executive officer of Harnischfeger Industries, said that while his company opposes the moratorium, approval of the bill today would not mean the immediate shutdown of the plant or the loss of the 1,200 mining-related jobs the company provides.

"We have no intention of packing up our shop and moving away," Grade said.

Harnischfeger, with a total of 3,900 employees, is the Milwaukee area's sixth-largest manufacturing employer. One of its divisions, P&H Mining Equipment, manufactures surface mining machinery.

Opponents of the moratorium,

which is scheduled for a vote in the state Senate today, last week cited the concerns of Harnischfeger workers as reason to delay or defeat the bill.

The fate of the company took up much of the debate last week before the Senate's Agriculture and Environment Committee approved the bill for action today.

And late last week, more than a dozen representatives of the U.S. Steelworkers were lobbying door-to-door at the state Capitol against the moratorium.

The bill being voted on today would place additional permit restrictions on any mining company seeking to build a metallic mineral mine in Wisconsin.

Crandon Mining Co., the partnership formed by Exxon and Rio Algom to build a copper and zinc mine in northeastern Wisconsin, would be required to show that a mine in the United States or Canada has operated safely for 10 years and has been reclaimed for 10 years without polluting ground or surface water.

Today's vote caps a months-long public debate over the plan and comes after heavy lobbying by both sides. Supporters of the legislation

## Status of proposal

■ **Summary:** The bill, SB3, would require any company wanting to build a metallic mine in Wisconsin to cite a mine that has operated safely in similar geology for 10 years and has been reclaimed for 10 years without polluting ground or surface waters.

■ **Status:** The bill is expected to be voted on by the state Senate today.

■ **Next step:** A companion bill, AB6, is now in the Assembly Environment Committee and, if approved, is expected to be voted on by the full Assembly in late summer or early fall. If passed by both houses, the bill would go to the governor.

■ **How to get involved:** Call the legislative hot line 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays; (800) 362-9472 or 266-9960. The TDD number is (800) 228-2115.

Sen. Kevin Shibilski, D-Amherst, who sponsored the bill.

Last week, state Sen. Alberta Darling, R-River Hills, called for delaying the vote.

"The likelihood of the loss of at least 1,000 good-paying jobs in the Milwaukee metro area warrants further public hearings," Darling said in a news release.

But Grade said that for legislators to say the company is likely to close is "an overstatement." Grade did say he fears passage of such legislation would send the wrong message to Harnischfeger's customers and to businesses in general.

"For the last couple of days I've been fielding calls from our customers," Grade said. "They're asking, 'How can you be doing business in a state that does such a thing?'"

Grade, who said Harnischfeger does little business with Exxon, also said he's against the bill because it would amount to a ban on mining rather than a moratorium. He called the proposal "foolhardy and unreasonable."

Supporters of the bill, however, say it is wrong to characterize the proposal as a ban on mining.

are planning a noon rally at the state Capitol.

While the bill is expected to pass the Democrat-controlled Senate, some amendments related to the Harnischfeger concerns will probably be introduced, according to Ron Hermes, an aide to state