



Protect Water Quality from Mining Pollution

Protecting Maine from mining pollution will help conserve our natural heritage and ensure that Maine people do not end up paying cleanup costs.

Metallic mineral mining poses serious risks to Maine

- Mining poses a major new threat to Maine's rivers, lakes and groundwater.
- Mining for metals in sulfide deposits, where copper, silver and gold may be found, creates sulfuric acid and toxic runoff. This "acid mine drainage" pollution can devastate water quality and kill aquatic life.
- The type of mining proposed for Maine has never been operated successfully without polluting nearby waters.
- Mining companies are notorious for shutting down on short notice and leaving cleanup costs to taxpayers. The "boom and bust" mining cycle can shift huge cleanup costs onto the public.
- Maine citizens are still paying nearly \$1 million per year to clean up the Callahan mine, which closed more than 40 years ago. The mine continues to contaminate surrounding water and aquatic life with heavy metals, but the biggest part of the cleanup there hasn't even started.
- Most mines end up causing water pollution that needs to be treated forever, often at taxpayer expense. Any new mining rules should prohibit that in Maine.



Maine needs strong protections to prevent metallic mining from wrecking our environment

- Maine has rivers, streams, and ponds that support some of the best brook trout fishing in the United States.
- Mining advocates claim that "great new technologies" will protect Maine's water quality, but there are no "great new technologies". Mining is still very dangerous for people and the environment, just as it has always been.
 - Therefore, Maine needs very protective mining rules that will keep our environment clean and protect our taxpayers.

The Legislature is again reviewing the rules that it rejected last session. These rules would:



Swift Gulch, 2004. Dean Stiffarm Photo.

- Allow perpetual wastewater treatment.
- Allow mining companies not to pay enough money up front to cover major environmental disasters, forcing the public to pay for cleanup.
- Allow mines to contaminate unlimited amounts of groundwater under large areas of land.

The Legislature should reject these rules again.

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