



Protect Water Quality from Metallic Mineral Mining Pollution

Protecting Maine from metal mine 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 operations could pose 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 cleanup costs for the Callahan mine that was closed more than 40 years ago. The total cost of cleanup, paid for by Maine taxpayers, is estimated to reach \$23 million.
- Some mines are sited and designed poorly, causing water pollution that will need to be treated forever.



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

- Maine has precious waterways that must be protected, including rivers and streams that support some of the best brook trout fishing in the northeastern United States.
- Mining advocates claim that "new technologies" will protect Maine's water quality, but they have not identified any new technologies that would do this.
- The risks are too high to allow out-of-state mining corporations to use Maine as an "experiment" for unproven mining techniques. If metallic mining occurs in Maine, then:
 - Mines must meet very stringent environmental standards.
 - Maine taxpayers must not be stuck with cleanup costs.

The Board of Environmental Protection made bad rules even worse. The new rules would:



Swift Gulch, 2004. Dean Stiffarm Photo.

- Allow perpetual wastewater treatment.
 - Increase the likelihood that mining companies could avoid paying for the messes they make.
 - Allow open pit mines right next to the vast majority of Maine's lakes, including many of its most spectacular ones; and also allow open pit mines next to large amounts of conservation land, even if it was purchased with money that Maine voters approved for land conservation purposes.
- Impose no restrictions on where underground mine shafts could go. They could go under lakes, rivers, peoples' homes, and Maine public reserved land.
 - Have ignored comments from 2,240 concerned citizens urging strengthening of the rule.

The Legislature should reject the metallic mineral mining rule.

For more information, please contact Jenn Burns Gray, 207-781-6180 ext. 224 or jgray@maineaudubon.org



Maine's Environmental Priorities Coalition

is a partnership of 28 environmental, conservation and public health organizations representing over 100,000 members who want to protect the good health, good jobs and quality of life that our environment provides.

We are counting on Maine policymakers to take the important steps needed to make wise use of Maine's extraordinary environment so Maine people and Maine's economy can thrive.

350 Maine	Maine Lakes Society
Appalachian Mountain Club	Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Atlantic Salmon Federation	Maine People's Alliance
Bicycle Coalition of Maine	Maine Rivers
Conservation Law Foundation	Maine Wilderness Guides Organization
Environmental Health Strategy Center	Natural Resources Council of Maine
ENE (Environment Northeast)	Physicians for Social Responsibility, Maine Chapter
Environment Maine	Product Policy Institute of Maine
Friends of Casco Bay	RESTORE: The North Woods
Maine Audubon	Sierra Club, Maine Chapter
Maine Center for Economic Policy	The Ocean Conservancy
Maine Conservation Alliance	The Wilderness Society
Maine Council of Churches	Toxics Action Center
Maine Council of Trout Unlimited	
Maine Interfaith Power & Light	