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GOVERNOR ASKED TO HALT ALL ACTIVITY AT EAGLE MINE SITE

Marquette, MI -- Representatives of WAVE, a new grassroots environmental coalition, met today with Greg Andrews, Governor Snyder's Upper Peninsula representative. They brought a letter to the governor, calling for an immediate halt to construction of the Eagle Mine on the Yellow Dog Plains.

WAVE asks that EPA mining experts prepare an impact study that encompasses all aspects of the Eagle Project, including mining, transport, and milling of ore. WAVE contends that the environmental impact statement funded and prepared by Kennecott Minerals did not meet the requirements of the new law regulating nonferrous metallic sulfide mining in Michigan.

Accompanying the letter were petitions signed by over 15,000 persons, including doctors and health care professionals who oppose development of the mine because of the risks posed to the region's water resources and to the health of people dependent upon it.

London-based Rio Tinto, aggressively anti-union, is developing the mine under the subsidiary name Kennecott Minerals. Despite numerous pending lawsuits, Kennecott has acquired the necessary permits and may soon begin excavating the mine. The portal is to be blasted through *Migi zii wa sin* (Eagle Rock), a Native American sacred site, an act akin to blowing up a church, synagogue or temple to the Ojibwe tribe.

According to WAVE spokesperson Catherine Parker, "The mine puts surface water, ground water and air quality at risk—along with the numerous and permanent jobs that come from the current recreation and tourism businesses." She adds that the flawed process demonstrated by the permitting of the Eagle Mine sets a dangerous precedent, especially with the recent increase in mining exploration in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Testimony from doctors and public health professionals makes it clear that health is a key concern, especially for our children, seniors and future generations. To date, the state has chosen to ignore the potential health impact on the region, and WAVE hopes that Governor Snyder will change that.

They are requesting an in-person meeting with Governor Snyder to discuss their concerns.

Parker explained that the choice facing the Governor—whether to halt the mine's development or allow the portal to be blasted—will impact the health of people in the Upper Great Lakes Region. She continued, "This is Governor Snyder's opportunity to take a long term view of what is best for Michigan's citizens and not jump at the fast money and short term economic gain represented by the Eagle Mine's development."

WAVE is a new grassroots coalition of individuals and representatives of environmental, health, and citizen groups around the Great Lakes Region. Its mission is to protect our water resources as part of a sustainable future.

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