



**Save the Wild UP**  
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## Why I'm Fasting to Halt Construction of the Eagle Mine

Friends,

On July 9, I began a water-only, open ended fast to protest the construction of the Eagle Mine that is being built in the Yellow Dog Plains of Marquette County by Kennecott Eagle Minerals. Kennecott is a subsidiary of the London based mining giant, Rio Tinto.

I'm undertaking the fast as a part of the *U.P. Grassroots Campaign to Defend our Water and Stop the Eagle Mine* organized by WAVE (Water Action Vital Earth) and SWUP (Save the Wild UP).

*The campaign is urgently required. It may be our last, best chance to stop the mine. Kennecott has indicated that it may begin blasting the mine's portal in mid-September.*

The goal of the campaign is to arouse, inspire, and mobilize our citizens to make a renewed effort to block the mine. *Its specific objective is to convince Governor Snyder to issue an executive order to halt work on the mine and call for a complete third party impact study on every aspect of the Eagle Mine project.*

The mine is a badly flawed project. It is poorly designed and may collapse. The review of the Kennecott application by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality ignored the design deficiencies, suggesting that it was either incompetent or in collusion with Kennecott. Furthermore, metallic sulfide mines are inherently risky. There has never been one that hasn't contaminated the surrounding water sources.

In March, Governor Snyder refused an earlier request by WAVE to halt construction on the mine and order an EIS. In our letter we said:

Allowing the development of the Eagle mine to continue or to close the mine down is, quite simply, a question involving life and death choices. Physicians and public health professionals have testified repeatedly that our health and the health of our children is being placed at great risk by the Eagle mine for generations to come. We think you would agree that we should not compromise the lives of our people for a short term economic gain.

I was morally outraged by his decision. The decision precipitated the Campaign

I am fasting to support the goal of the campaign. It is my way to say "NO" to the unknown and possibly devastating consequences of the mine and "YES" to protecting our water and assuring a sustainable future for our children.

As a person of faith, I perceive the fast as a way of nonviolently placing myself between the Eagle Mine and our precious water resources and the people whose health and well being depend on them. If the Governor will not take responsibility for these matters, then we-the-people must do so.

Perhaps the Governor will listen and give some thought to his decision. Perhaps his conscience will tell him that he should do the right thing and suspend work on the mine.

And, hopefully, the people of Michigan will hear WAVE's call to join the Campaign and condemn the mine, demanding that the Governor call for a halt in its construction.

I hope also that the campaign and my fast not only halt the Eagle Mine but serve as a catalyst for concerted action across the western UP to anticipate and resist strongly future mines that are planned for our region. There has been and continues to be extensive exploration for new mines. Recently Kennecott Minerals began exploratory drilling in the Ottawa National Forest.

One further thought. I believe the mine is a symbol of the consequences of an alliance between the corporate sector of our economy, dominated by multi-national giants like Rio Tinto, and our state government that has effectively disenfranchised we-the-people and shredded the social contract. We no longer have an effective voice in the most basic decisions that affect our health and well being. How did this come about?. What is to be done about it? How are we to regain a voice in these decisions at every level of government? My conviction is that it can only be done by creating our own alliances, finding common ground, and working together to regain our voice. I invite other thoughts about this.

I look forward to hearing from you. Contact me at the email address above. You can also find me Monday through Thursday at 4:30 PM in front of the main Marquette post office on the corner of Washington Ave. and N. Third St.

In peace,

Scott Rutherford

### **Biodata**

I'm a 77 year old resident of Hancock, Michigan. I'm a graduate of Dartmouth College and served three years in the U.S. Navy. After working for A.I.D for six years, I went to work for the Economic Development Administration from which I retired in 1986. I am one of the founders of Omega House, a home for the terminally ill in Houghton. I am married to the artist, Joyce Koskenmaki. I have three children from a previous marriage and five grandchildren. I am a member of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Houghton, Michigan..

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