Wolfden’s Pickett Mountain Mine: A Dangerous Threat to the Katahdin Region

Wolfden Resources is a virtually unknown company that has petitioned the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC) to rezone land near Pickett Mountain for metal mining. The company has no actual mining experience, little money, and has not provided accurate or timely information about its plans.

An Untrustworthy Company

The company has been antagonistic toward Maine laws and procedures. It has:

• Failed to prove it can treat pollution adequately. Because there are no streams large enough to handle the mine’s wastewater discharges, Wolfden would need to treat its pollution to be as clean as natural groundwater before it injects it into the ground. The company has provided no example of a comparable mining operation that has been able to do this.

• Shown disrespect for Maine’s mining law and rules. Wolfden has proposed disposing of tailings in closed tunnels and shafts even though Maine rules prohibit this. The Department of Environmental Protection specifically banned this practice because it would contaminate groundwater.

• Not documented that it has the financial ability to develop a mine. The LUPC requires this because mining is such a demanding and dangerous industry. Only companies with strong finances can afford to do the job well. The financial statement from Wolfden’s initial rezoning petition admits it doesn’t have adequate funding.

Threats to Maine’s Tribes

• Wolfden’s mine would threaten areas that tribal members use for hunting and gathering traditional foods and medicines, particularly Penobscot lands and waters near Grand Lake Matagamon.

• The mine is at the headwaters of the Mattawamkeag River, which is critical habitat for endangered Atlantic salmon. Both the Penobscots and Maliseets are committed to restoration of this fish that has such important cultural and spiritual value to them.
Threats to Traditional Maine Businesses

Wolfden’s mine is also a threat to traditional Maine businesses that employ many people in the Katahdin region. Sporting camp owners and guides have commented against the proposal and urged the LUPC to reject it.

Mining companies always promise lots of high-paying local jobs and future prosperity, but this is almost never true. Good jobs mostly go to highly skilled specialists who travel to various mine sites and leave after exploiting the resources.

According to Thomas Michael Power, a leading economist on mining:

*Across the United States, mining communities, instead, are noted for high levels of unemployment, slow rates of growth of income and employment, high poverty rates, and stagnant or declining populations. In fact, our historic mining regions have become synonymous with persistent poverty, not prosperity.*

Take Action to Stop Wolfden’s Dangerous Mining Proposal

Join NRCM in urging the LUPC to reject Wolfden’s application for rezoning. You can make your own voice heard by sending an email to the staff at LUPC stating your opposition to the rezoning at Wolfdenrezoning.LUPC@maine.gov.

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