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* Please note that for publication, the Bangor Daily News editors made minor changes to the submission below.

Stand Up Against Mining in Maine This Month!

Canadian mining company Wolfden Resources is petitioning the Maine Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC) to rezone 374 acres of property at Pickett Mountain so that it can mine for zinc and other metals. The outcome of Wolfden’s petition has the potential to increase the risk of metal mining operations in many other areas of Maine. We cannot allow this to happen.

As part of this process, the LUPC will hear public comment in Millinocket on October 16 and 17 and in Bangor on October 23. The public is invited to arrive at 6:00 P.M for a 6:30 P.M. start. Locations can be found on the LUPC website.

Wolfden’s proposed mining site is near Pickett Mountain where Penobscot and Aroostook counties meet. It is one of the most beautiful and ecologically rich areas of Maine with amazing cold-water fishing. It is close to Baxter State Park and a little over five miles from Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. A metal mine would destroy or put at significant long-term risk the features that make this a rare and wonderful place — its clean water, scenic beauty, its natural quiet and dark skies. Why should anyone outside Pickett Mountain care about this? Because the LUPC’s decision will send an important message to mining companies about what we value.

In Maine, our identities, our economy, and our State “brand” are built on the fundamental idea that we prioritize and protect our ecological and scenic resources. Mining metals jeopardizes these resources. It is heavy industry that poses enormous immediate and long-term risk to the environment and businesses that depend on it. Mining companies can’t just come in and use the land for a while. It’s not like renting an apartment. By statute, a metallic mineral mine must remediate after closure, and a hundred years later that area *may* look the way it used to, but the failure of tailings facilities and water treatment plans poses perpetual contamination risk to soil and water resources.

Metal mining companies are here and they are watching what our State does. Wolfden tried mining in Pembroke. Another Canadian company Exiro Minerals wants to mine in Warren, Union and Hope, home to thousands of people in the heart of the Georges River Watershed.

Other mining companies are watching closely to see how easily our State gives in to the pressure to mine at the expense of our natural beauty and clean water.

The area the LUPC is being asked to rezone contains “protection districts,” areas, according to the LUPC, “where development would jeopardize significant natural, recreational and historic resources.” Wolfden’s mine puts these significant resources in jeopardy, particularly from acid mine drainage and irreparable damage to the area’s water and soil. If the LUPC rezones at Pickett Mountain, they are sending the message that it’s open season for metal mining in Maine.

Stand up and let your voice be heard by the LUPC that you oppose Wolfden’s rezoning application. Speak at a public comment session or send your comment to wolfdenrezoning.LUPC@maine.gov.

For more information, see the [Maine LUPC website](#) as well as the website of the [Natural Resources Council of Maine](#).