

Mining rules 2016

Thank You for the opportunity to voice my concerns to you all here today.

My name is Peter Crockett, I am a life long Mainer, born in Portland, I grew up & raised a family in the Portland area where I remained until 2005 when I found a piece of property in Argyle Township on the western shore of the Penobscot River. I grew up before the 1970 clean air standards were set into effect. I remember the Presumpscot River being so fouled from the paper mill in Westbrook that I could barely keep my lunch down while in a car going 50 miles an hour over that river. I remember seeing a dull brown haze hang over the entire Casco Bay area from the oil fired power plant in Yarmouth, & I remember swimming in the ocean at Willard beach in South Portland while human feces were floating all along the beach.

The state of Maine has come a long way in the last 45 years, & we all owe it to ourselves as well as our children & all future generations to keep up the good work.

Our magnificent state is best known for its rugged beauty, mile after mile of lush green forest accented with quiescent ponds, deep clear lakes, recently cleaned rivers, cold flowing streams, & thousands of miles of fertile shore line from the sea coast to the banks of every river & stream flowing nutrients & life from inland to the oceans, & back again.

Our majestic state has referred to itself as “VACATIONLAND” since 1936. The sign greeting north bound travelers just over the New Hampshire border reads “MAINE THE WAY LIFE SHOULD BE”. & why, we ask, is that? Its harder to notice traveling south into the mass of civilization that exists between Boston & Richmond. The difference, or reason, if you may, that is far more obvious to the north bound traveler heading into Maine from southern areas soon starts to become quite profound. First you notice the trees & find panoramic views of harbors & river beds, then you realize it has been some time since you have been accosted by bill boards which still line the sides of many roads & highways in other states. Maine has a bottle bill which is a major reason our roads are as clean as they are. We have beautiful rivers & streams which draw flocks of ducks & geese that feed on the plentiful fish which are only present now because of the previous efforts we have undertaken to clean our waters.

It's hard not to marvel at the astounding beautiful & abundant nature that surrounds us here in Maine, even when we experience it for thousands of times, it still brings a comforting sense to our world.

It IS this clean air & clean water that makes MAINE “THE WAY LIFE SHOULD BE”! These are the elements of a healthy life. This is exactly what Maine has to offer. The ability to sell our state as a tourist destination is a resource that gains value as it is used. The more people who experience the rugged & sometimes harsh beauty of Maine, & bring the story of their trip back to their friends & coworkers, the more the value of our world grows. This is a resource that has the potential to grow greater than any other resource the state has to offer. This is the one Maine resource that is not finite!

Mining on the contrary, will start to loose value the very instant the first pound of ore is removed from the site, this devaluation of the resource will continue until the area is a lifeless, worthless, wasteland, what was once our valuable resource has been harvested & the spent remains of a once pristine mountain & stream system will be abandoned & returned to the stewardship of the state & the people of Maine, only after it is useless.

We have seen first hand how previous big business has treated our resources & the people of our great state. They set up shop & reap the benefits of our resources while providing the absolute minimum in return to protect the environment which sustains us all.

As soon as they find a new place where they are able to employ the locals in near slave conditions, & rape the land with no regard for anything but the dollar bill, they move out & leave the locals to clean up their horrific messes. WELL , it wouldn't be so bad if that was all they did, unfortunately, more often than not, adding insult to injury, these multi-billion dollar companies partition local & state governments for tax breaks & special deals to keep the jobs in the area, & then close up shop just as they had initially planned, take the millions of dollars, lay off all the workers, & leave the Maine tax payers to clean up their disastrous mess after bilking the tax payers & state of Maine for a bill of sales which never gets delivered.

I see NO reason to expect any variation of this business model from any arm of industry to another.

I, personally, do not believe the method of mining in question could be performed in a manner which does not present grave consequences for our environment & a healthy future of our world here in Maine.

I, personally, dont believe we should allow any industrial activities in the state of Maine which would leave any amount of toxins behind! The entire concept of leaving a ticking time bomb of death & a legacy of threat to our environment , in perpetuity ,goes against everything our state stands for. It is NEVER a question of if the teetering paint can of death on the door frame will fall, it is a question of when it will fall, & how hard it will hit. The problem is that mountains seem to be where the mining occurs & mountains are tall, Waste runs down hill to the rivers & on to the oceans where we fish for lobsters & haddock & shrimp & so many other species that rely on a healthy environment to survive & flourish. These heavy metal toxins are destructive to every living thing they contact throughout the river systems & on to the Penobscot Bay & the Gulf of Maine. Just this last week I read a story about a mining waste lagoon in Butte Montana where a huge flock of snow geese flew into the lagoon while on their migration southward. OVER 2000 dead geese were found in Idaho, those were the ones who were able to fly away for a bit before they were overcome by this avoidable tragedy, while many others never made it out of this torturous pit of death.

THIS IS NOT WHAT MAINE wants in our world!

Will it be a man made event such as the events of August 2015 where workers at the Gold King Mine in southern Colorado “accidentally” dumped 3 million gallons of heavy metal waste water into the local river. I dare say that would be enough to kill every living thing in the majority of Penobscot Bay after killing every thing & leaving the stench of death in its wake along every water way it traveled on its route to the ocean.

This is NOT a risk the people of the State of the Maine want to take! The laws of the state of Maine regarding mineral & other extraction processes MUST be written to protect our environment, to protect the resources which make Maine “ THE WAY LIFE SHOULD BE”.

Our state has plenty of poison splinters in it as it is. Any regulatory body which would allow more of this type of destructive development is NOT working in the best interests of the State of Maine or the best interests of the people of the State of Maine.

Thank You

Peter Crockett 12/13/16