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To: [DEP, MiningComments2016](#)
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The Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the Board of Environmental Protection do not seem to be doing enough to protect Maine when it comes to mining. Why?

I began to do research and the more I learned, the more dumbfounded and heartbroken I became. The Callahan Mine is a well-documented disaster—a discarded mine/toxic waste dump. The environmental impact from the Callahan Mine will continue to cause harm for many years to come, affecting neighboring residential properties and the nearby waterways and ocean. Trees grow stunted at the site. Wildlife, birds and fish that live around Goose Pond and the neighboring estuary have tested positive for contaminants, including high levels of copper, zinc, cadmium and lead.

Callahan Mine is one of 14 Environmental Protection Agency Superfund sites in Maine. The EPA oversees the ongoing “clean-up” efforts. The Callahan Mining Corporation leased the site and extracted 800,000 tons of copper and zinc from 1968 through 1972. The mining process left arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, manganese, thallium and zinc, as well as PCBs. Through a loosely based agreement the Idaho company was able to reject any responsibility related to the remediation of the toxic waste they left behind.

“Callahan leased 68-acre Goose Pond, a state tidal estuary, from the state, and drained it to get at the ore body beneath it. The company blasted a hole 380-feet deep and paid a reported \$20,000 to the state in royalties over the five-year period. Part of the state mining lease says, “Lessee will cooperate with Lessor, its various agencies and the other officials of the town of Brooksville . . . in the planning, funding, and implementation of a program for the rehabilitation of the said lands upon the completion of the mining activities thereon. The details of such program, including the funding and administration of the same and the source of funds to accomplish the program shall be the subject of further discussion and negotiation between the parties.” —Bangor Daily News, August 14, 1979, Jean Heavrin

In 1992 the Callahan Mining Corporation was bought by Coeur Mining Company for \$54 million. So who is paying the estimated \$23 million needed for the on-going testing, surveys and clean-up that continue today and for years to come? The Maine taxpayers. But worse is the irreparable damage that continues to poison the land and leach into the water, in turn poisoning the people, wildlife, birds and fish in much more far-reaching areas.

The Kerramerican Mine in Blue Hill is another example of the environmental hazards caused by mining. Operations ceased in 1977 but erosion caused toxic materials to leach out into surrounding soil and into groundwater and surface water. Studies in the 1990s indicated arsenic, cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, mercury, silver and zinc present in the soil and water. pH levels measured 2.8. In this case \$11 million for clean-up costs was paid in 2007 by the 3 companies involved: California-based Kerramerican Inc., Black Hawk Mining Ltd., and Denison Energy Inc., both Canadian companies. Open-pit mining is risky to do in areas where there is much precipitation. One “solution” to the problem was to cap the site so snow and rain can’t fall onto it. Does this seem like a good long-term remedy?

Instead of relaxing laws pertaining to mining, we should learn from the mistakes made in the past. Much stricter laws should be put into place to protect the environment. Maybe mining should be banned altogether? Job creation is short-lived when it comes to mining, unless you are involved in the clean-up and monitoring aftermath. The damage left behind is far too costly for Maine and seems to just benefit the big businesses who take the money and run. Please do not forget the consequences.

<http://www.nationalobserver.com/2016/07/21/news/irvings-invasion-maine>

Sincerely,

Kathy Bouchard

life-long resident