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# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **Sierra Club Applauds GTac Departure**

**Madison:** The Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter is pleased with the announcement that Gogebic Taconite (GTac) will abandon its destructive proposal to mine iron ore in the Penokee Range of Wisconsin. The deeply flawed proposal threatened significant and permanent harm to air, wetlands, streams, rivers, and drinking water in one of the most pristine regions of our state. The announcement vindicates the extraordinary efforts of Wisconsin Tribes, including the Bad River and Red Cliff Bands of Lake Superior Ojibwe, residents of Ashland and Iron Counties, environmental and conservation organizations, and legislators working in bi-partisan cooperation to safeguard these irreplaceable resources.

“Gogebic Taconite’s efforts here were a cruel hoax on residents of northern Wisconsin and marked by dishonesty and deception. GTac wouldn’t play by our environmental and mining rules and Wisconsin residents would not tolerate this company gaming the system for profit while leaving taxpayers to pick up the tab,” said Dave Blouin, Sierra Club Mining Committee Chair, “GTac has now demonstrated its true bottom line by packing up rather than allow the public to have input and control over the destructive mining proposal.”

Governor Walker’s support for this proposal underscores his misplaced policies on job growth as he is an outspoken advocate for environmentally destructive, boom and bust mining with no long-term positive gain. “Wisconsin residents and legislators have rejected Governor Walker’s agenda for destructive mining proposals that move Wisconsin backwards,” said Elizabeth Ward, Chapter Program Director, “Walker’s agenda has already cost Wisconsin tens of thousands of potential clean energy jobs by limiting or killing sustainable policies such as wind energy, high speed rail, transit improvements, and Focus on Energy.”

The Sierra Club remains vigilant and concerned that the Penokee Range and Bad River Watershed are not yet fully protected from iron mining proposals since the Strip Mine Giveaway Bill (AB 426/SB 488) is still active in committee nor are there permanent protections for the watershed in place. “Legislators, including Senator Dale Schultz and Bob Jauch, clearly understood that the bill would have caused far more harm than good,” said Blouin, “The vote yesterday preserves for now our existing mining regulations protecting Wisconsin’s environment, protects local control, and honors the public’s rights to remain involved and informed. We sincerely hope that legislators have learned that Wisconsin residents won’t tolerate loosening of environmental protections for mining but we take nothing for granted.”

The Sierra Club thanks Senators Schultz and Jauch for their continued leadership on this issue and their respect for open and transparent process when considering potential iron mining in the Bad River watershed.

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Senators who voted to protect our resources by voting against the Strip Mine Giveaway Bill: Tim Carpenter, Spencer Coggs, Tim Cullen, Jon Erpenbach, Dave Hansen, Jim Holperin, Bob Jauch, Jessica King, Chris Larson, Julie Lassa, Mark Miller, Fred Risser, Dale Schultz, Jennifer Shilling, Lena Taylor, Kathleen Vinehout, and Bob Wirch.

Senators who voted for destructive iron mining by voting for the Strip Mine Giveaway Bill: Robert Cowles, Alberta Darling, Mike Ellis, Scott Fitzgerald, Pam Galloway, Glenn Grothman, Sheila Harsdorf, Neal Kedzie, Frank Lasee, Mary Lazich, Joe Liebham, Terry Moulton, Luther Olsen, Leah Vukmir, Van Wanggaard, and Rich Zipperer.

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*Founded in 1892 by John Muir, the Sierra Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. The Sierra Club's mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out those objectives. The Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter is made up of 15,000 members and supporters working to promote clean energy and protect water resources in Wisconsin.*