

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Kennecott cited for Salmon Trout River violation

(MARQUETTE, MI) - Kennecott Eagle Minerals Company has violated Michigan's Inland Lakes and Streams Act by pumping water out of the Salmon Trout River without a permit. Recently-obtained Michigan Department of Environmental Quality documents show that the state agency issued a Notice of Violation last February.

"This Violation is just a preview of how Kennecott will treat Michigan's natural resources if they get a chance: grab now and apologize later," said Michelle Halley, Attorney for the National Wildlife Federation.

In Spring of 2008, Kennecott was notified by the MDEQ that the placement of a pump on the bottomland of the middle branch of the Salmon Trout River was an "unauthorized activity." The notice goes on to say "the DEQ has, therefore, determined that this activity is in violation of Part 201, Inland Lakes and Streams." The letter warned of impending action, stating, "Violation of this part may subject the violator to enforcement action as provided by the statute." The violation notice was signed by Joan Duncan, a district representative from the MDEQ's Land and Water Management Division.

Internal MDEQ documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act go on to describe the situation as "pump located on the stream bottom. Very hot. No permit." After the violation was issued, Kennecott reportedly removed the pump.

This is the first time the public has learned of the violation, which was brought to MDEQ attention by a citizen complaint and discovered by the National Wildlife Federation through the Freedom of Information Act process.

"Kennecott has already disregarded Michigan's laws to protect water, and they haven't even begun mining. This violation shows that Kennecott/Rio Tinto is continuing its global history of violating and harming waters right here in Michigan," said NWF's Halley. "We continue to urge concerned citizens to discuss this issue with elected officials and to participate in public comment opportunities to oppose the project."

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