

**Inakamigad Miskwaabikokewin Anishinaabe-Akiing**

**(Chronology of Copper Mining in Ojibwe Country)**

**5000 BCE and 1200 BCE: Gete-Anishinaabe in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota mine copper along Anishinaabeg-gichigami (Lake Superior) including Minong Minis (Isle Royale). The miskwaabikokewin (copper) is considered a sacred metal imbued with spiritual substance.**

**1669: Fr. Claude D’Ablon, a Jesuit missionary, collects information on copper mining in the Lake Superior region.**

**1701:  Pierre-Charles Le Sueur mines for copper in Minnesota near present-day Mankato. The copper he extracted proved to be worthless.**

**1729: Charles de Beauharnois, governor of New France, and Gilles Hocquart, his attendant, submit a report of their copper findings to the French Minister. Reports also submitted in 1736 and 1737. Although they were able to obtain samples, their reports cited the difficulties they had in obtaining information from the Ojibwe in locating specific mining sites.**

**1826: Treaty with the Chippewa: Article 3 - *The Chippewa tribe grant to the government of the United States the right to search for, and carry away, any******metals or minerals from any part of their country. But this grant is not to affect the title of the land, nor the existing jurisdiction over it.***

**The Ojibwe bands of Anishinaabe Akiing (Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan) signed the treaty at present-day Fond du Lac. Although Ojibwe lands were not ceded, the Ojibwe allowed for exploration of copper and other metals and minerals.**

**1839: Douglass Houghton, Michigan's first state geologist, begins mapping Michigan’s natural resources. His fourth report, published in 1841, triggers the first great copper mining boom.**

**1843: Lake Superior Mining Co. opens the first copper mine in Michigan.**

**1852: Isle Royale Mine opens the first mine on Minong Minis (Isle Royale).**

**From the mid-1840s to the late 1870s, there were one-hundred and eleven copper mines in the Upper Peninsula and twenty-eight on Isle Royale.**

**1955: Copper Range Company begins large scale mining at White Pine. The White Pine mine was active until 1995. In 1996, the company began in-situ leaching – a method of using sulfuric acid to recover copper. Ojibwe activists from the Bad River Ojibwe Nation blocked railroad shipments of sulfuric acid from Wisconsin because the acid would contaminate groundwater and nearby Lake Superior. Copper Range then began to transport the acid with trucks. However, in 1997, the company abandoned their reclamation efforts.**

**1969: Copper deposit discovered at Flambeau Mine. Open pit mining at the site from 1993 to 1997.**

**(Over)**



**1996: Anishinabe Ogichida (Protectors of the People), led by Walt Bresette, successfully blockade railroad tracks on the Bad River reservation to prevent delivery of sulfuric acid to the White Pine copper mine in Michigan.**

**1975: Exxon discovers copper deposits at Crandon. In 1986, Exxon abandons plan for mine. In 1993, Exxon joins with Rio Algom Ltd., a Canadian mining company, to form the Crandon Mining Company.**

**The Sokaogon Band of Ojibwe oppose the mine citing detrimental effects on manoomin and fish. They are joined by the Menominee tribe, Stockbridge-Munsee community, and the Forest County Potawatomi in their opposition. Exxon abandoned their efforts to open the mine due to low world mineral prices.**

**1993: Kennecott opens Crandon Mine. Mine closes in 1997.**

**2004: After a 30 year struggle, Mole Lake Ojibwe and Forest County Potawatomi buy the Crandon mine to put an end to the mining.**

**2005: Polymet, a Canadian mining company, discovers copper deposits in northeastern Minnesota. In 2008, Polymet submits its Draft Environmental Impact Study. The tribal response from the Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, and Bois Forte Ojibwe bands to the DEIS cites, among other environmental concerns, the impact of raised sulfate levels that will severely impact manoomin stands in the 1854 Ceded Territory. In 2009, Glencore, a Swiss mining company, buys stock in Polymet. In 2011, Polymet receives a 4 million dollar loan from Iron Range Resources for land to buy that will be then swapped with the National Forest Service. Polymet’s final EIS will be submitted in fall 2012 and they expect to begin building their plant in late 2014.**

**In addition to Polymet, four other mining companies are seeking permits to open copper mines in northeastern Minnesota – Franconia Metals Corporation, Twin Metals/Duluth Metals, Cardero Resource Corporation, and Teck Mining Company. Kennecott is proposing to open copper mine in Crow Wing County, and a copper mine and a sulfur mine in Aitkin County.**

**2007: Kennecott (a subsidiary of Rio Tinto) applies for mining permit for Eagle Mine Project. In April 2010, Ojibwe activists set up at protest camp at Eagle Rock, a site considered sacred to the Ojibwe. In 2011, Kennecott Eagle Minerals Corporation begins construction of Eagle Mine Project.**

**2012: Twin Metals announces plans to build a vast underground mine, the size of a small city, near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. Ironically, Twin Metals names the project as the Nokomis Project.**

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**Protect Our Manoomin**