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What about sulfide mining in Wisconsin?

The billboard tells us that Wisconsin said no to sulfide mining. Discussions with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources reveals that there never has been a sulfide-mining request denied in that state. There has only been one permit application that has completed the process and that was the [Flambeau Mine](#) near Ladysmith. A mining permit was applied for at Crandon for a large sulfide mine but the mining company decided to sell the property to the local Tribes and the process was halted. Also there was never a moratorium on sulfide mining in Wisconsin. Wisconsin added a requirement in their permitting process of referencing a sulfide mine that operated for 10 years without a violation and one that shut down for 10 years without a violation in the US or Canada. Three sites were referenced in the Crandon permit process, but the permit application was withdrawn before the WDNR confirmed their validity.

The Flambeau Mine was a Kennecott sulfide mining operation that ran for about 4 years in the 1990's that was considered very successful by the local community. They mined copper, gold and silver sulfide ores in an open pit, which was totally backfilled and reclaimed. Peak employment was 100 people and averaged 60 jobs over the period. When they were done, the land was reclaimed to a condition that not only predated mining, but to a pre-farming wilderness condition. The open pit mine was 140 feet from the Flambeau River and operated without any violations of its permits. The Flambeau River water quality never suffered and measures are in place to insure future compliance.

The economy of the Ladysmith area is much stronger today because of the Flambeau Mine. Local officials estimated that 700 jobs were created because of mining related funds and most of those jobs are still there. The industrial base got a shot in the arm from the mine and upgraded their facilities. When the mining stopped, these businesses were robust enough to keep providing ongoing jobs to the local workforce. This was timely due to the job losses from a slowing agriculture and manufacturing base in the area. The unemployment rate was over 10% before the mine started, dropped to 7.5% during mining operations and dropped to 6% after the mine closed. There are many factors influencing these numbers, but it disproves the statement of an anti-sulfide mining group that local unemployment is higher due to sulfide mining.

A socioeconomic study of the Flambeau Mine Project by the Northwest Regional Planning Commission details much of the impact on the local area. The Flambeau Mining Company provided \$11 million to the city town and county in tax **Snapz Pro X**. It paid a total of \$64 million in state, local

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