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Testimony submitted to BEP hearing on revised mining regulations:

Geographically the Town of Westmanland is situated roughly 30 miles NE of the proposed mining site at Bald Mountain. My wife and I have lived here since 1974 supporting ourselves largely through diverse, small scale farming. We have, over the past 40 years, developed a deeply felt affection for this place: for the wildlife and the forests, for the play of seasons over the landscape, for the waters that course through it.

These things have defined our lives and now, as we grow old, this is what we would most wish to see passed along undiminished to those who come after.

As a species we are profoundly interconnected with all of the remarkable diversity of life in this world. Feeling and respecting that connection is an essential part of the experience of being human. Yet it is precisely that connection which is being torn apart by destructive and ill considered projects worldwide. Projects such as:

- > mountaintop removal in West Virginia with the toxic tailings bulldozed into adjacent valleys
- > hydrofracking in Ohio and Pennsylvania contaminating groundwater to the point that methane, not water gushes from the kitchen faucet.
- > Tar sands extraction in Alberta-- befouling Albertan surface waters for generations to come and boosting carbon dioxide emissions beyond a point where they pose a grave and measurable threat to both global climate and the biological viability of the oceans.

Take a map of the world, stick in a pin at random and likely a similar story can be found nearby---Romania, Britain, Italy, Mexico, Brazil, Papua New Guinea---. As we damage the world we damage ourselves and yet the pace of this willful destruction continues to accelerate.

And, so it would seem, it is coming to Maine as well.

Maine : "the way life should be" (?). That slogan might have to be reconsidered if projects such as the Bald Mountain mine are permitted.

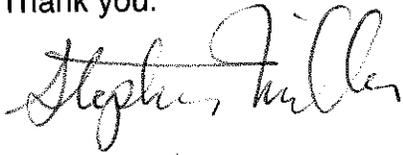
The hazards posed by mining metal sulphide deposits are well documented and this particular deposit carries additional risks due to unusually high levels of arsenic in the ore body. Tailings from this mine will remain a toxic hazard over a time frame longer than human history. Who will guarantee the integrity of a tailings impoundment 50 years hence or 100 ?

One might have imagined the the experience with the Callahan mine in Brooksville would have banished consideration of any other such mining efforts in the state. Four decades after that mine was shut down and despite a \$ 23 million taxpayer funded cleanup the site continues to bleed toxic metals into surrounding waters. Is this to be the fate of the Fish River watershed as well?

In my view mining Bald Mountain will be an unprecedented assault on the integrity of the landscape and waters of northern Maine. I find it very disturbing that the Maine Legislature in collaboration with Irving Corporation is working to weaken our mining regulations so that this project can be implemented.

In consideration of our obligation to future generations who will be living on this land I would hope that the BEP recommends that these seriously weakened rules not be passed into law.

Thank you.

Handwritten signature of Stephen Miller in cursive script.

10/17/2013