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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 10, 2005

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Reclaimed Mine Site Bustles with Activity During Open House

Hundreds enjoy a day of exploring public trails, ice cream, community displays and horse rides

On most days, the sounds a visitor hears on the reclaimed Flambeau Mine site are the splash of a muskrat in the restored wetland or the song of a warbler winging its way across the grassland prairie.

But on Saturday, September 10 the site bustled with human activity as Flambeau Mining Company hosted an Open House complete with horse rides, a community fair, ice cream, hats and sandwiches.

The day also included the grand opening and dedication of 5 miles of equestrian trails built on land the Company owns adjacent to the site. The trails were developed through partnership among the City of Ladysmith, the Flambeau Riders, Inc. and the Flambeau Mining Company.

At the ceremony, the trails were officially dedicated as the Copper Park Equestrian Trails. Adrian Jackman, President & CEO of Kennecott Minerals, along with representatives from the Flambeau Riders, Inc. and the City of Ladysmith participated in the ceremony that featured a horse breaking through a ribbon.

In addition to trails for horse and riders, there are four miles of mowed and gravel trails on the reclaimed mine site for walking, bird watching, skiing and other non-motorized recreation. The area is open to the public, free of charge, throughout the year.

“When the permitting process began 16 years ago, we made promises to the community that we would mine the metals society needs, protect the water, the Flambeau River and the natural resources we all value and provide long-term benefits to the local communities,” noted Mr. Jackman in his remarks to the crowd. “Today we are delighted to join with all of you to celebrate promises kept at this remarkable, reclaimed site.”

(more)

Open House at Reclaimed Flambeau Mine 2-2-2-2

The reclamation began in 1998, and has created or re-established woodlands, wetlands and grassland prairies on the 181-acre site. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) sets performance standards for reclamation that specify the number and the species of native plants which must survive and thrive, over time, on the site.

The reclaimed site met – and in many cases surpassed -- all of the standards in 2001, allowing the submittal of the Notice of Completion to the DNR. An additional four years of monitoring of the reclamation was required prior to consideration for a Certificate of Completion. The certificate of completion process is set to begin in 2006.

In addition to the biodiversity and health of the plants and animals on site, Mr. Jackman pointed to results of the extensive monitoring of the Flambeau River and groundwater surrounding the site as examples of the mine's exemplary track record.

“Independent laboratories perform the testing that has shown, conclusively, there has been no change to the water quality in the river either upstream or down. Groundwater contains no acid and the levels of other minerals are well within the levels that protect human health and safety and the environment,” Mr. Jackman said.

There are 48 wells on site to monitor groundwater quality and elevation. Monitoring will continue on site for up to 40 years.

Mr. Jackman also mentioned long-term benefits to the community as a key component of the project. “A recent study by the Northwest Regional Planning Commission showed that over \$11 million in tax and other payments made by the Company came back to local communities. They have leveraged those dollars and were able to double that amount for long-term economic benefits for all citizens,” he said. “In addition, the reclaimed site itself, which encourages tourist and public use is another wonderful long-term gain for Rusk County.”

“At every stage of the project, we've hosted site tours,” noted Jana Murphy environmental manager for Flambeau Mining Company. “With the wildflowers in bloom, reclamation complete and the new horse trails opening, this was a great day to celebrate the promises we've kept and the partnerships with the local community that have helped make it all possible.”

Visit the Flambeau Mine's website at www.flambeaumine.com