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## **FLAMBEAU MINING COMPANY REQUESTS CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION**

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### **Certificate of Completion from WDNR Is Next Step For Reclaimed Site**

LADYSMITH, Wis. - Flambeau Mining Company today announced it has filed a petition with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) seeking a Certificate of Completion (COC) for the reclamation of its Flambeau Mine. The COC is the next procedural step to acknowledge that the reclamation of the Flambeau Mine is complete. In November 2006, the company formally announced that it was planning to request the COC from the WDNR in late 2006 or early 2007.

“Over the past few months, we have had the chance to brief local officials and the community on the reclaimed site and the Certificate of Completion process, and we are pleased to have now submitted our formal request to the WDNR,” said Jana Murphy, environmental manager for the Flambeau Mining Company. “We are proud of our \$20 million reclamation effort, which has transformed this former mine site into a community and recreational asset. We made that promise early on, and it has been kept.”

In 2001, the Flambeau Mining Company sent the WDNR a Notice of Completion (NOC) for the site’s reclamation. Based on WDNR site inspections and a review of the Flambeau Mining Company’s 2001 Annual Reclamation Report, the WDNR approved that completion notice. That began a minimum four-year period to observe the site to ensure that the reclamation efforts were a success and that vegetation continued to develop. The COC is the next administrative step in that reclamation process.

The Flambeau Mining Company successfully reclaimed the mine site following active mining, which ended in 1997. That reclamation effort resulted in the establishment of the 150-acre recreation and nature area that is open to the public for events, hiking, bird watching, horseback riding, river fishing and more. In 2006, there were several hundred visits to the site for recreational purposes. Specifically, recent events held at the site included the 2006 Bird Watch sponsored by the Hunt Hill Nature Center – Audubon Society and the WDNR; the 2006 Rusk County Conference in the Garden held in conjunction with the UW-Extension; the 2006 Healthy Lifestyles for Rusk County annual community walk; the 2006 Leaf It to Rusk events; and more.

In addition, the reclaimed site features more than 250 native plant species, including prairie grasses, wetland plants and wildflowers. Abundant wildlife also call the reclaimed site home, including more than 45 species of birds, 20 species of butterflies, several amphibian species, deer and other wildlife. Additional features of the reclaimed site include educational signs on the walking trails to share the history and significance of the site and five miles of horseback riding trails along the Flambeau River.

With the Flambeau Mining Company's formal petition submitted, a schedule will be set for next steps, including a public hearing to provide an opportunity for the community to comment on the reclamation.

"We expect the COC process to take several months, and we think it will provide the opportunity for us to showcase what a great asset and recreational resource the site has become," said Murphy.

Upon granting the COC, the State of Wisconsin may then release up to 80 percent of the \$11 million reclamation bond. The Flambeau Mining Company began posting the reclamation bond prior to construction. However, the law requires that even if the WDNR finds the reclamation 100 percent complete, at least 20 percent of the reclamation bond must be kept in place for 20 years.

In addition to those retained funds, the Flambeau Mining Company also has a separate \$1 million bond in place as an additional guarantee for the long-term care of the site, which will continue for decades.

"The COC is an important step not only for our company but also for the state," said Murphy. "The Flambeau Mine project promised to follow or surpass Wisconsin's stringent metallic mine regulations, and that promise was kept. We also promised to benefit our local community, and thanks to the involvement and support from the local community and good leadership throughout Rusk County, that promise was kept as well."

The Flambeau Mine operated from 1993 to 1997 and produced more than 181,000 tons of copper as well as gold and silver. The mine met or surpassed all environmental regulations and permit conditions, provided more than 70 safe and family-supporting jobs for local residents, and supported long-term economic development. In addition, it protected the environment and the Flambeau River, and enhanced community and educational resources through a \$500,000 contribution to build the Rusk County Community Library. The Flambeau Mining and Reclamation project was the first and only effort to date to be approved and operated under Wisconsin's stringent mining standards. Those standards were established under the State's Comprehensive Mining Law and additional regulations. For more information on the reclaimed Flambeau Mine, visit [www.flambeaumine.com](http://www.flambeaumine.com).