



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**PRE-CONFERENCE HEARING SET FOR FLAMBEAU MINE
CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION**

April 17 Hearing Next Procedural Step in COC Process

LADYSMITH, Wis. - Flambeau Mining Company today announced it has been notified by the State of Wisconsin Division of Hearings and Appeals that the pre-hearing conference regarding the company's petition for a Certificate of Completion (COC) has been scheduled for 1 p.m. Tuesday, April 17, 2007, at the Rusk County Courthouse. The COC is the next procedural step to acknowledge that the reclamation of the Flambeau Mine has been successfully completed.

The purpose of the pre-hearing conference is to simplify the public hearing process, and to establish schedules for submitting documentary evidence and for pre-hearing discovery. According to the state's pre-hearing conference notice, no testimony will be heard at the pre-hearing conference. At the pre-hearing conference, the hearing examiner will set the date for the next step, which is a public hearing on the COC petition.

"The COC process continues and the pre-hearing conference is the next step," said Jana Murphy, environmental manager for the Flambeau Mining Company. "When the date for the public hearing is set, the public will have the opportunity to share its thoughts on the reclamation of the site, including our successful efforts to create biodiversity and an outstanding nature area for public use where the mine once operated."

The Flambeau Mining Company filed its COC petition with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) in January 2007. Upon granting the COC, the State of Wisconsin may then release up to 80 percent of the \$11 million reclamation bond, which the Flambeau Mining Company began posting prior to construction of the mine. 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 bond in place as an additional guarantee for the long-term care of the site, which will continue for decades.

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, river fishing and more. 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 that are accessible from the site.

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.