

Greater Milwaukee Green Party: Stands with Menominees against Back Forty Mine

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The Greater Milwaukee Green Party stands with the Menominee tribe against construction of the Back Forty Mine in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

The tribe recently filed suit to prevent the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality from issuing the final wetland permit allowing Aquila Resources to fill Menominee River wetlands to build a large open-pit sulfide mine near Menominee tribal lands.

The tribe's suit focuses on forcing the federal government to control decisions that could pollute waters that pass through more than one state. The Menominee River forms the border between Upper Michigan and Wisconsin.

Milwaukee County delegate to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC), and GMGP co-chair Barbara Maniotis said "It's unnerving to think that the same Michigan government that approved diverting drinking water in Flint from Lake Michigan to the Flint River would be allowed to destroy wetlands for a mine."

"Wisconsin has had scientists aid in major environmental decisions for a long time," Maniotis said. "Opening up this mine goes against common sense measures to protect our water system and those long held values of consulting and trusting expert scientists to determine whether or not to move forward on a project that could have massively detrimental effects to our natural resources."

If approved, the Back Forty mine threatens to leach sulfuric acid into local groundwater and the river.

“The Greater Milwaukee Greens have stood for indigenous treaty rights since its founding in the 1980s,” GMGP co-chair Greg Banks said. “We will continue to fight with them, especially in defense of the environment.”