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Bad River Watershed Association to Present Results of 2011 Baseline Water Quality Study in Potential Mine Area

The Bad River Watershed Association (BRWA) will present the initial results of their baseline water quality study of streams near the potential Penokee Mine on Tuesday, February 21st, 2012 at the Morse Town Hall in Mellen at 6:00pm. In addition to the presentation of these results, BRWA staff will explain how highly credible baseline water quality data is gathered, why it is important for future decision making, and how Bad River watershed residents can get involved in learning more about stream health and water quality.

In 2011, BRWA expanded its ongoing watershed-wide monitoring of water quality to several streams located in or near the area of the proposed GTAC taconite mine in the Penokee Hills. The monitoring work was conducted from May through October on sites on the Tyler Forks River, the Potato River and several other trout streams in the Town of Morse in Ashland County and the Town of Anderson in Iron County. Monitoring at these sites focused on two important indicators of stream water quality and ecological health.

Water temperature and the types and abundance of aquatic insects found in the water were studied to begin determining the baseline, or pre-mine development, condition of the streams. In-stream instruments recorded hourly temperatures, and a spring and fall sampling program looked at the aquatic insect population of the streams.

The Morse Town Hall is located at 402 2nd Ave. in Mellen. Funding and/or equipment for BRWA's baseline water quality study was provided by the Town of Morse, the Iron County Land and Water Conservation Department, the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Indian Commission, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board, and the Dutton Foundation.

The Bad River Watershed Association is a nonprofit citizens group with the mission to promote a healthy relationship between the people and the natural communities of the Bad River Watershed by involving all citizens in assessing, maintaining, and improving watershed integrity for future generations.