



FOLK Friends of the Land of Keweenaw

Grassroots Stewards of the Western Upper Peninsula

SPRING 2020 FOLK NEWSLETTER

Earth Day 50th Anniversary!

And we've already missed out on two spring celebrations!

COVID-19 INTERVENES!

FOLK was a co-sponsor of an event to celebrate the UP on March 27th and also was one of several sponsors of a week-long Earth Day celebration scheduled for April, both of which were canceled by the invasion of the virus. Not all is lost, however:



Celebrate Earth Day - Join folks from all over the world using this link: www.earthdaylive2020.org/

Sign up for 3 days of live events April 22nd -24th. Also read about the tremendous outcomes and environmental protections that have resulted from this event in the history section of the official Earth Day website: www.earthday.org/

6 Lessons Coronavirus can Teach Us About Climate

Change (earthday.org)

Earth Day 2020 comes at a tumultuous

time. COVID-19 has upended our lives and if there was ever a time in which humanity should finally recognize that we belong to one connected family on Earth, this should be it. We share a single planet, drink from the same water and breathe the same air.

1. Science matters. We can save lives by funding and accessing the best science available. The science on climate change has been clear for decades, but we've failed in communicating the danger to the public, leading to slow action and widespread denial of the facts.

2. How we treat the natural world affects our well-being. The loss of habitat and biodiversity creates conditions for lethal new viruses and diseases like COVID-19 to spill into human communities. If we continue to destroy our lands, we also deplete our resources and damage our agricultural systems.

3. The sooner we mobilize for action, the less suffering will take place. Quick and drastic action can flatten the curve for coronavirus. Similarly, drastic action on climate change could reduce food and water shortages, natural disasters and sea level rise, protecting countless individuals and communities.

4. We have the ability to make drastic changes very quickly. All over the world, healthy people are changing their lifestyles to protect more vulnerable people. Similar dedication for climate change could transform our energy consumption immediately.

5. All of us are vulnerable to crisis, though unequally. A society burdened with social and economic inequality is more likely to fall apart in a crisis. Industries and people who profit from an unjust status quo will try to interrupt the social transformation that a crisis requires.

6. Holding on to a vision of a just, peaceful and sustainable Earth will give us strength for the future. Business as usual--digging up fossil fuels, cutting down forests and sacrificing the planet's health for profit, convenience and consumption--is driving catastrophic climate change. On our 50th anniversary of Earth Day, as fear and illness sweep the globe, find solace in the natural world. In the suddenly quiet streets and skies, we can hear birds sing.

Will Growing International Concerns About Biomass Energy Trickle Down to the L'Anse Warden Electric Company?*

A University of Calgary School of Public Policy Briefing Paper, Volume 12:29, September 2019 states: "The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) **should take the biomass/biofuel pathway off the table** and countries that have been the major devotees to this illusionary method for climate change mitigation should phase it out."

Policy recommendations include an increase in afforestation (planting trees where they haven't been planted before) and reforestation and soil carbon enhancement while restricting land clearance to reduce heat-trapping emissions that cause global warming.

*Sixty-eight Finnish climate, environmental and ecological scientists wrote a public letter in March 2017 raising concerns over the climate and biodiversity impacts of Finland's forest policy. They highlight how a "**Bio-economy**" which promotes the idea that **wood-based fuel and wood-based products are always carbon neutral and therefore climate friendly, is essentially a myth.**

www.climatechangenews.com/2019/07/09/finlands-forestry-myth



FOLK

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2020

Sustainability

Film Series for April 16 will be online!

Seed: The Untold Story. Join

Online Facilitated

Discussion: 8-9 pm, April 16th. For

information on how to view the film and join the discussion using

Zoom go to

[https://](https://blogs.mtu.edu/cseo/)

[blogs.mtu.edu/](https://blogs.mtu.edu/cseo/)

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UP Energy Task Force Update

Folk organized a public “Listening & Update” event at the Portage Lake Pubic Library on February 22nd. Two members of the UP Energy Task Force, Jenn Hill and Roman Sidortsov, gave an overview of the UP energy system with updates on the first phase of the Task Force work on the UP propane supply structure. This was informal, not an official Task Force meeting.

The UP Energy Task Force was created by Governor Whitmer’s Executive Order in June 2019 to assess the UP’s overall energy needs and how they are currently being met. In cases of energy disruptions, the Task Force was to formulate alternative solutions for meeting our UP energy needs, with a focus on security, reliability, affordability, and environmental soundness. The final draft went to the Governor on March 31st, 2020. Public comments to be submitted by April 6th, 2020.

Access the report here: Michigan.gov/UPEnergyTaskForce

Eagle Mine Update:

In an unexpected announcement on August 21, 2019, Eagle Mine halted their regional exploration program that began in the spring of 2019 in southern Houghton and Baraga counties.

Consideration of capital investment allocations was the reason given by Lundin Mining.

Expansion of the Eagle Mine, Eagle East, in Marquette County, continues as planned.

Membership Form

FOLK Friends of the Land of Keweenaw

PO Box 671 Houghton MI 49931

Please print: Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone (____) _____ Date _____

Individual (Annual Membership/Jan-Dec): \$10

Senior Citizen, Unemployed, Student (Annual): \$5

Contribute to FOLK’s mission to protect the integrity of Lake Superior’s Watershed \$_____

I want to get involved with FOLK! Please contact me by: (circle one) email or phone.

Total enclosed: \$_____

FOLK Adopt-A-Highway Pick-Up

MI Dept. of Transportation (M-dot) has canceled the first highway pick-up in the state, due to COVID-19. The program is planned to resume for the summer in July 18th-26th.