

PRESS RELEASE
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ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS EARN A VICTORY FOR LOCAL WATERWAYS

By: Kristen Rasmussen – Director of Communication, GLA

GREEN LAKE, WISCONSIN, DECEMBER 12, 2022— In a packed court room on December 22, the Green Lake County Board of Adjustment (BOA) voted to uphold the appeal of the conditional use permit for the Skunk Hollow Mine by the Green Lake Association (GLA), the Green Lake Conservancy (GLC), the Green Lake Sanitary District (GLSD), and a local landowner.

The verdict meant that Kopplin and Kinas' application for Skunk Hollow Mine—a non-metallic quarry near sensitive springs and trout streams—was denied.

The hearing was held at the Green Lake County Government Center, where over 100 community members attended in person—despite impending blizzard warnings—and another 100 watched online.

Out of the 66 public comments shared, only two were in favor of the proposed mine, signaling the strong opposition from the community and the deep conviction to protect the area from the negative impacts of a mine.

Evidence by the three organizations included an appraisal study, archeological study, and hydrogeology study—all of which demonstrated the damage the proposed mine would have to the proposed location at County Highway K and Brooklyn G Road and the surrounding area, including damage to Mitchell Glen and Powell Spring. Ultimately, the BOA found that Kopplin & Kinas failed to gather and present substantial evidence to meet certain mandatory standards required to obtain a conditional use permit to mine in a Farmland Preservation District.

The hydrogeology study sponsored by the appellants concludes that: "Skunk Hollow Mine cannot be operated as proposed without adverse impacts on the health and welfare of nearby residents or without degradation of aquatic resources including Powell Spring and Creek, White Creek, Mitchell Glen, Glen Creek, and Dakin Creek."

These unique resources near the proposed Skunk Hollow Mine are tens of thousands of years old. The community and local government are responsible for protecting these ecological treasures to avoid risking irreversible damage to Green Lake's waterways.

"The financial burden has been on non-profits to make sure Green Lake County follows its own regulations," stated Melissa Curran, President of the Green Lake Conservancy during her public comment. "This should not be the case."

"We're not opposed to mining; we are opposed to mining here. Not here. Not ever," Curran continued.

With the help of dedicated members of the community, the GLA, GLC, and GLSD work tirelessly to protect natural resources surrounding Green Lake, including Mitchell Glen, Dakin Creek, White Creek, and Powell Spring. Their victory on Thursday is a win for Green Lake’s waterways.

“We are overwhelmed by the support of the community at this hearing,” said Stephanie Prellwitz, Executive Director of the GLA. “We’re all in this watershed together, and knowing the voice of the community was represented—and the impact that a mine at this location would have on families, farmers, and waterways—made all the difference.”

The three organizations express their gratitude to the community for their support through attendance, participation in public comments, signing the petition, and donating to the organizations to help pay expenses for the appeal. Collectively, the efforts of this community have protected these ecological treasures and critical waterways for future generations. Visit greenlakeassociation.org/skunk-hollow-mine for more information.

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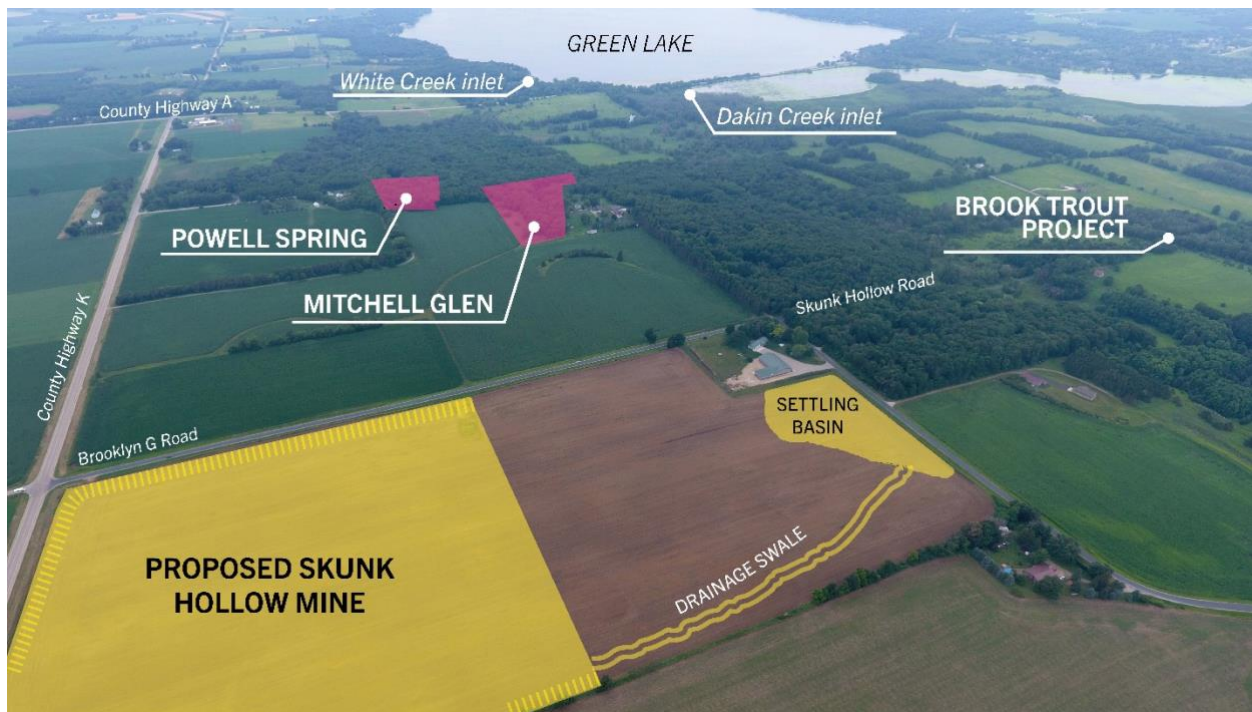


Caption: Green Lake Association’s Executive Director, Stephanie Prellwitz, shared public comments stressing the importance of considering alternate mine sites outside of one designated within a Farmland Preservation District.

Photo credit: Green Lake Association



Caption: Board of Adjustment Members, Brian Zimmerman (left) and Vice-Chair, Rick Dornfeld (right) deliberated on Thursday before both voting to uphold the appeal and deny the conditional use permit.
Photo credit: Green Lake Association



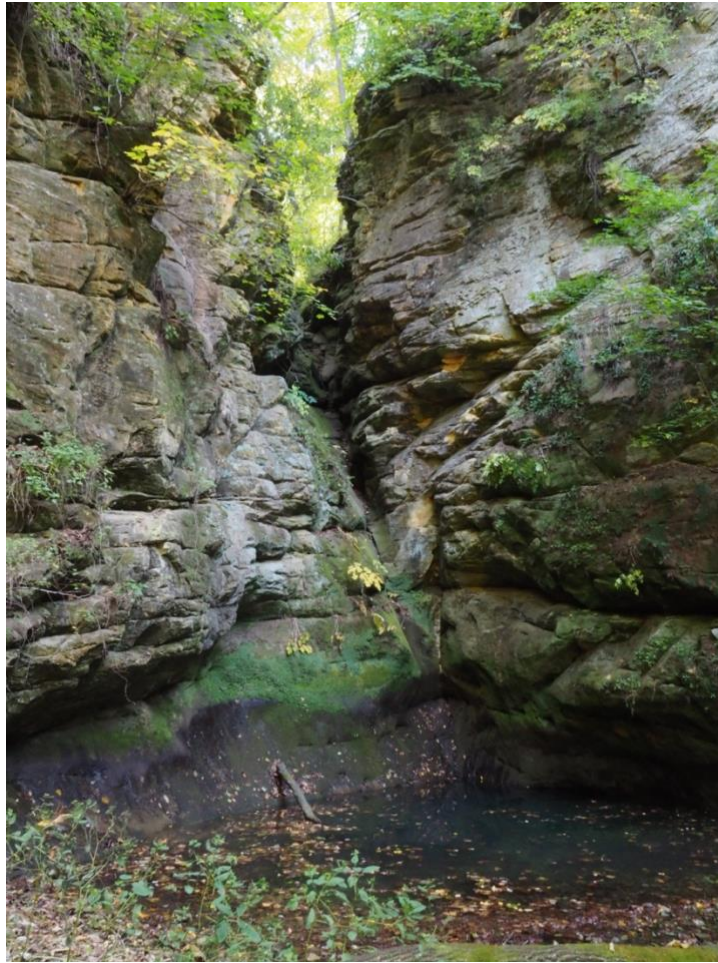
Caption: Aerial overview of the approximate location of the Skunk Hollow Mine and its stormwater features in proximity to Green Lake and surrounding water resources. Groundwater flows from the proposed mine site northwest, toward Green Lake.

Photo Credit: Mat and Henry Boerson; graphics by the Green Lake Association.



Caption: The source of Powell Spring pours out from the side of a limestone rock face, located just below the cabin shown in this image. Powell Spring is dependent on groundwater and is located 2,000 feet from the proposed Skunk Hollow Mine site.

Photo credit: Green Lake Conservancy.



Caption: Mitchell Glen, an iconic Green Lake landmark owned by the Green Lake Sanitary District, supports a remarkable biodiversity of plants and animals, and provides ecosystem services that benefit the public.

Photo credit: Green Lake Association