

FACT SHEET



Deer Tail Press
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THE BUZZARDS HAVE LANDED! *The Real Story of the Flambeau Mine*

1. AUTHORS: Roscoe Churchill and Laura Furtman

2. PUBLISHER: Deer Tail Press, Duluth, MN (www.deertailpress.com)

3. BOOK SPECIFICATIONS:

- Hard cover, 1,285 pages, includes numerous photos, newspaper clippings and references to Wisconsin's mining laws
- Detailed index
- CD-ROM, includes mining company reports, documents drafted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), legal briefs, financial spreadsheets, reports written by Evelyn Churchill and correspondence between mining company attorneys, state legislators, local officials, regulators within the Wisconsin DNR, representatives of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission and private citizens.

4. PRICE (General Public):

- Suggested List: \$80
- Direct through Deer Tail Press: \$48 (plus Minnesota tax and shipping)*

5. BRIEF SUMMARY (See Synopsis)

6. WHO MAY BE INTERESTED:

-EDUCATORS AND HISTORIANS – *The Buzzards Have Landed!* is Roscoe Churchill's personal account of how a British mining company muscled its way into a small rural community in northern Wisconsin to build a gold, copper and silver mine on the banks of the Flambeau River. Roscoe and his wife Evelyn, who are known in environmental circles as the "Grandparents of Wisconsin's Anti-Mining Movement," were in the middle of the battle from the beginning to the end. And in his trademark style, Roscoe combines factual information with color to tell the *real* story of what happened.

The Buzzards Have Landed! touches on numerous areas of academic endeavor including environmental studies, sociology, Native American studies, economics, environmental law and political science. It is a comprehensive case study of how a multinational corporation paved the way for its invasive project by undercutting local democracy and exerting undue influence on state regulations governing environmental protection and taxation. The book is replete with examples of dirty tricks and political finaglings – the kinds of things that enabled the Flambeau Mine to be built in the 1990s despite significant local and tribal opposition. As Roscoe states in the introduction to the book, "Not only is mining dirty, but so too the politics that are employed." And Roscoe would know. He served eight terms on his local county board during the controversial mining years and was a member of the committee that evaluated the Flambeau Mine proposal. He was also appointed by Wisconsin's governor to serve on a statewide task force on mining in the late 1980s and witnessed the crafting of Wisconsin's weak mining laws. As a result, Roscoe's story is more than just opinion. Everything he says in the book is backed by factual information – town and county board resolutions, legal briefs, mining company reports, financial spreadsheets, newspaper articles and correspondence between mining company attorneys, state legislators, local officials, regulators within the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and representatives of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission. All of these documents are available for the reader to view on a CD-ROM that accompanies the book. Besides being of general interest, this is certain to be an invaluable resource for instructors preparing lectures and presentations, students doing research papers and citizens preparing testimony for public hearings.

-ENVIRONMENTALISTS – *The Buzzards Have Landed!* discusses the concept of acid mine drainage at length and contains a shocking series of graphs and charts documenting present-day groundwater and surface water pollution problems at the Flambeau Mine site. Despite mining company claims to the contrary, the Flambeau Mine demonstrates once again that “there is no such thing as an environmentally responsible metallic sulfide mine.” They *always* pollute.

-SOCIOLOGISTS – *The Buzzards Have Landed!* tells the story of how local people banded together to form a powerful network across the State of Wisconsin to fight off a huge corporation. At one point Roscoe was even interviewed by the *Los Angeles Times* because of the great strides being made by the locals in opposing the multinational giant that had moved to town. The Churchill model is one to be emulated by other small communities facing corporate assault.

-NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES – The book features information about how Native and non-Native peoples put aside their differences to develop strategies for preserving Wisconsin’s northwoods for future generations. In particular, Roscoe and Evelyn worked with Wisconsin tribal members from Red Cliff, Lac Court Oreilles, Mole Lake, Lac du Flambeau, the Menominee Nation, Oneida Nation and Potawatomi Nation on the mining issue. Feelings of mutual respect abounded, as evidenced by the fact that the Churchills were adopted by the Menominee Nation in 1994 as tribal elders.

The Buzzards Have Landed! primarily tells the story of the Flambeau Mine but also touches on aspects of the historic battle waged by tribal members and concerned citizens against the Crandon mine proposal in northeastern Wisconsin. Needless to say, the book covers an important period of Indian-environmental cooperation in the history of Wisconsin’s tribes.

-LEGISLATORS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ATTORNEYS – *The Buzzards Have Landed!* chronicles the enactment of Wisconsin’s weak mining laws and other state regulations affecting groundwater protection, hazardous waste management and mineral taxation. Names of many prominent figures in Wisconsin politics who were involved in crafting these laws are mentioned; some of them will like it and others will not. Wisconsin statutes and natural resource rules are reprinted in the book for ease in review, their loopholes exposed and suggestions made for how to amend the laws to better protect Wisconsin’s economic and environmental interests. Legislators and environmental attorneys from not only Wisconsin but other states are certain to benefit from studying the Wisconsin experience.

-ECONOMISTS AND TAXPAYERS – The book provides detailed tables and graphs showing the “non-effect” of the Flambeau Mine on the local Rusk County economy, thereby debunking the claim that mining brings economic prosperity to local communities. The book also provides much detail about Wisconsin’s mining tax law, by which a mining company does not have to pay taxes on the first \$250,000 of net profit claimed per year. By highlighting tax loopholes such as these, the book gives other states a “one up” on what to avoid in their own mining tax laws as well as providing Wisconsin legislators with a blueprint for change.

-ANY COMMUNITY FACED WITH THE PROSPECT OF HARD ROCK MINING – Roscoe’s story contains extensive information about the tactics used by Kennecott Copper Corporation to make inroads in his small rural community. By reading what happened to the Town of Grant in Rusk County, Wisconsin, others who face similar assaults will be better prepared to fight their own battles. As Roscoe states in the introduction to the book:

It is my hope that you can learn from my experience. ... If and when the buzzards land in your town, I want you to have a "one-up" on the kinds of dirty tricks they play and the obstacles you will need to overcome. Most of all I want to encourage you to fight for your land and clean water, so they aren't snatched away from you and future generations. I trust there will always be a core group of people who will put the environment above corporate greed. This book is for you.

-ANYONE INTERESTED IN A COLORFUL STORY! – *The Buzzards Have Landed!* recounts the ups and downs experienced by Roscoe and Evelyn Churchill as they took on a multinational corporation, and it also gives a glimpse into their personal lives. Not only does the reader feel the “high” of what it was like for the Churchills to win a major court battle against the mining company in 1995, but the “low” that Roscoe experienced a year later with the death of his sweet Evelyn. As Roscoe once stated, “My hope is that when people read my book they will laugh, cry and get mad!”

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