

**Verna Grahek Mize : Save Lake  
Superior Campaign Collection  
MS-134**

**Finding aid prepared by Elizabeth Russell, revised by Lindsay Hiltunen**

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

June 06, 2014

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections

4/7/2011

1400 Townsend Drive

Houghton, Michigan, 49931

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections
<b>Creator</b>	Mize, Verna G.
<b>Title</b>	Verna Grahek Mize : Save Lake Superior Campaign Collection
<b>Date [bulk]</b>	Bulk, 1967-1980
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1950-2001
<b>Extent</b>	9.14 cubic feet; 16 manuscript boxes, 2 oversize folders.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Mixed materials [Folder]</b>	1-2
<b>Mixed materials [Box]</b>	1-16
<b>Mixed materials [Drawer]</b>	3-D Object Box Lid
<b>Abstract</b>	Records, circa 1970-circa 1990, of the Save Lake Superior Campaign, a campaign spearheaded by the late Verna Mize that worked to prevent the further degradation of Lake Superior and to promote its rehabilitation. Includes correspondence, reports, clippings, and photographs.

### Preferred Citation

MS-134, Verna Grahek Mize : Save Lake Superior Campaign Collection, Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, Houghton, Michigan.

## Biographical note

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Verna Grahek Mize (1913-2013) was a pioneer in the environmental movement. In 1967 she initiated, and for several years led, a successful national citizen effort to stop the pollution of Lake Superior by the Reserve Mining Company of Silver Bay, Minnesota, which was totally owned by the Armco and Republic Steel Corporations. Her "Save Lake Superior" campaign, as she called it, based out of her home in Potomac, Maryland and the creation of the Save Lake Superior Association, a Minnesota-based environmental activist group, was a classic confrontation between citizens and powerful giants of industry. It brought the federal government, the states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, and environmental groups into a lawsuit against Reserve Mining Company. It was the longest, most costly, most bitterly fought environmental case in history. As a result, the company was forced to end its discharge into Lake Superior.

In his book, "The Great Plains States of America," Neal R. Peirce wrote of Mrs. Mize's campaign as "an amazing demonstration of woman and citizen power." Over the course of her campaign, Verna Mize testified before the Subcommittee on the Environment of the Senate Commerce Committee. She made numerous radio appeals and television appearances, including Ted Koppel's "Nightline" on NBC in 1984. Verna was given the title, "First Lady of Lake Superior" by Michigan Governor William G. Milliken in 1975. She received an American Motors Corporation Conservation Award in 1976 "in recognition of exceptional service in the cause of conservation." She also received a U.S. Department of Commerce bronze medal award for "superior federal service." The people of her hometown, Houghton, honored her with a park dedicated in her name in 1981.

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## Collection Scope and Content Summary

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Records, 1950-2001, of the Save Lake Superior Campaign, a campaign spearheaded by the late Verna Grahek Mize. The campaign worked to prevent the further degradation of Lake Superior and to promote its rehabilitation. This collection includes correspondence, reports, court proceedings, books, articles, clippings, brochures, audiovisual materials, and photographs.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections,

4/7/2011.

### **Revision Description**

8/19/2013

### **Access**

Available for use in the Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections.

### **Processing History**

Elizabeth Russell,4/7/2011

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **Genre(s)**

- Audiocassettes
- Books
- Clippings (Information artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Magazines (periodicals)
- Maps (Documents)
- Newsletters
- Photographs
- Press releases
- Printed ephemera
- Reports
- Videocassettes

### **Geographic Name(s)**

- Lake County (Minn.)
- Silver Bay (Minn.)
- Superior, Lake

## Subject(s)

- Environmental policy - Minnesota - Citizen participation
- Environmental policy - Wisconsin - Citizen participation
- Environmental policy -- Michigan -- Citizen participation
- Environmental protection -- Minnesota -- Citizen participation
- Environmental protection -- Wisconsin -- Superior, Lake
- Environmental protection--Michigan--Superior, Lake
- Environmentalists -- Minnesota
- Environmentalists -- Wisconsin
- Environmentalists--Michigan--Upper Peninsula

## General Correspondence

## Collection Inventory

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Correspondence - Judge Miles W. Lord 1974-1985	1	4
Correspondence - Agnes Mather 1971-1974	1	5
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## Save Lake Superior Campaign

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**Book Chapters, Manuscripts, and Book Related Files**

Lake Superior Basin Water-Oriented Outdoor Recreation 1970	7	17
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Great Lakes Foundation - The Common Law of Water, Research Report 1971	8	2
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Book Part - The Great Plains States of America, pg. 126-129, by Neal Peirce	8	4
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## Serials and Periodicals

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"A Brief History of Lake Superior Research Based on Excerpts Taken from an Article by A.M. Beeton and D.C. Chandler Concerning the St. Lawrence Great Lakes from Limnology of North America" edited by David Grace Frey 1963	8	76

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"Effects of Taconite on Lake Superior" by Dr. D.I. Mount 1970	9	3
"The Effects of Reserve#s Taconite Tailings on the Ecology System of Lake Superior" by James Hagley 1971	9	4
"Establishing Vegetation on Iron Mine Tailings" 1970	9	5
IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risk of Chemicals to Man, Asbestos Report, Volume14 1977	9	6
Lake Superior Enforcement Conference - Technical Committee Report on Taconite Tailings Disposal 1971	9	7
"Lake Superior Research - We#d Better Get Started" by Thomas P. Evans 1972	9	8
Mortality Patterns Among Hard Rock Gold Miners Exposed to an Asbestiform Mineral 1976	9	9
A Preliminary Report on Asbestos in the Duluth, Minnesota Area 1974	9	10

## Press Releases

"Re-examination and Update of Information on the Health Effects of Occupational Exposure to Asbestos" 1976	9	11
"Reserve Mining Company - Shut Down?" by Catherine Parker, A paper prepared for English 11, White Pine High School 1975	9	12
Reserve Mining Company Taconite Pelletizing Waste, Silver Bay, Minnesota 1968	9	13
The Stoddard Report - "An Appraisal of Water Pollution in the Lake Superior Basin 1969-1972	9	14
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A Summary of the Studies Regarding the Effect of the Reserve Mining Company Discharge on Lake Superior, Dr. Donald I. Mount 1973	9	16
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Booklet - NEMO - Northeast Minnesota Organization for Economic Education, "Wake Up!" 1974	9	18

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Verna Mize and Kris Kyro, WMPL, Lake Superior Campaign, 8 and 4 and 83 1983	10
WDIO - Duluth - Reserve Nov 23 1984	10
Phone Conversation with Dean Rebuffou - Minneapolis Tribune, 3 and 6 and 85 1985	10
Verna, WMPL - Hancock, MI, 4 and 22 and 85 1985	10
Verna, WMPL - Hancock, MI, 4 and 22 and 1985 1985	10
Verna Mize, 7-31-1985, WMPL 1985	10
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Lake Superior Update	10
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Capital Bylines, 6 and 22 and 1971 1971	11

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Interview - Verna Mize with Lloyd Schwartz, WJR, Wash. Bureau, 7 and 25 and 1971 1971 13

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Northwoods Hour, 7 and 26 and 1972 1972 15

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**MS-134.009 Objects and Artifacts 1976-1979**

Framed Citation - American Motors Corporation Non-Professional Award to Verna Mize 1976

Plaque - American Motors Conservation Award to Verna Mize 1976

License Plate - Superiorland (black and white with image of the Upper Peninsula outline)

Button - Save Lake Superior (SLSA) pinback

Medal and Pin, in blue case - Medal of Award for Superior Service to the US federal government, awarded to Verna Mize 1979

Taconite from the Reserve Plant (in clear, plastic jar with lid)

## Objects and Artifacts

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Taconite Tailings, Reserve Mining Co., Silver Bay, Minn. (Tailings in water preserved in clear, glass vial with lid)