



Mertainen

A case of mining and coexistence with other land uses



This case is about the exploitation with compensation for impact on nature values in the surroundings (ecological compensation)

SCALE

National, regional and local

EXTENSION OF THE PROJECT

About 720 hectares

TYPE OF MINING

Open-pit mining

MINERAL RESOURCES

Primary

Iron (magnetite)

Possible sub-product

Apatite

SGU

Sveriges geologiska undersökning
Geological Survey of Sweden

The Mertainen iron deposit was discovered in 1897 and it was briefly mined in 1956-1958 as an open-pit. It is an example of how old mining information and recent exploration has led to recent permits for mining with concession in 2000 and the company LKAB received approval for the environmental permit required for mineral extraction, issued in 2014. The deposit was entered into system of areas of National Interest when the Geological Survey of Sweden (SGU) approved the status. The location of the mineral resource is geographically beneficial in relation to LKAB's already existing processing plants in Svappavaara. Ore occurrence is large and the mineral resource is easily accessible and located near existing road and rail infrastructure. There are no residential areas close to the planned mining site. Thus, the direct disturbance to people in the form of noise, dust and vibrations etc. is limited. Mining operations will have impacts on reindeer husbandry since the area is important in terms of providing winter grazing for reindeers. Two Sami villages are affected by the mining site: Gabna and Laevas. Mining in Mertainen will also affect areas with high nature values and recreational values for the locals. The mining operations at Mertainen will use approximately 720 hectares of land for an industrial area, but also impact wetlands, coniferous forests and mixed forests in the surroundings. Following the Land and Environment Court's approval of LKAB's compensation plan for creating new nature values instead of those impacted. The ruling states that LKAB has to protect an area at least equal in size to the impacted area of 1220 hectares. The compensation plan includes restoration, protection and management measures for forest land and wetlands.

