Panel explores recycling efforts
By DAN ROBLEE (droblee@mininggazette.com), The Daily Mining Gazette  November 20, 2015

HOUGHTON - The good news, Copper Country Recycling Initiative co-chair Suzanne Van Dam said at a panel discussion Thursday, is Houghton County expects to open a new cardboard recycling drop-off next month. That's thanks to a $92,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

The bad news, according to co-chair Evan McDonald, is the probable reason the DEQ looked on the grant request so favorably.

According to a 2013 study, he said, the Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region, which includes six western U.P. counties, recycles less cardboard than any other region in the state.

With limited recycling drop-offs and only the City of Hancock offering curbside recycling, the same study reported that "in Houghton County we do not have convenient access to recycling," McDonald said.

The Recycling Initiative hopes to change that, beginning with cardboard, which Van Dam said makes up about 10 percent of Houghton County's waste.

The new cardboard recycling program was just one of the ideas recycling initiative members and guests discussed at the Thursday's Green Lecture Series forum, which was held at Michigan Tech and sponsored by the Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative and several partner organizations.