



The PolyMet Sulfide Mine Threatens Minnesota

The proposed PolyMet NorthMet sulfide mine (owned primarily by Glencore) would be located at the headwaters of the St. Louis River, the largest tributary to Lake Superior. The project would be upstream from the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and the City of Duluth. Sulfide mines in water-rich environments like Minnesota have a 100% failure rate, threatening our life-giving water and the communities who rely on it.

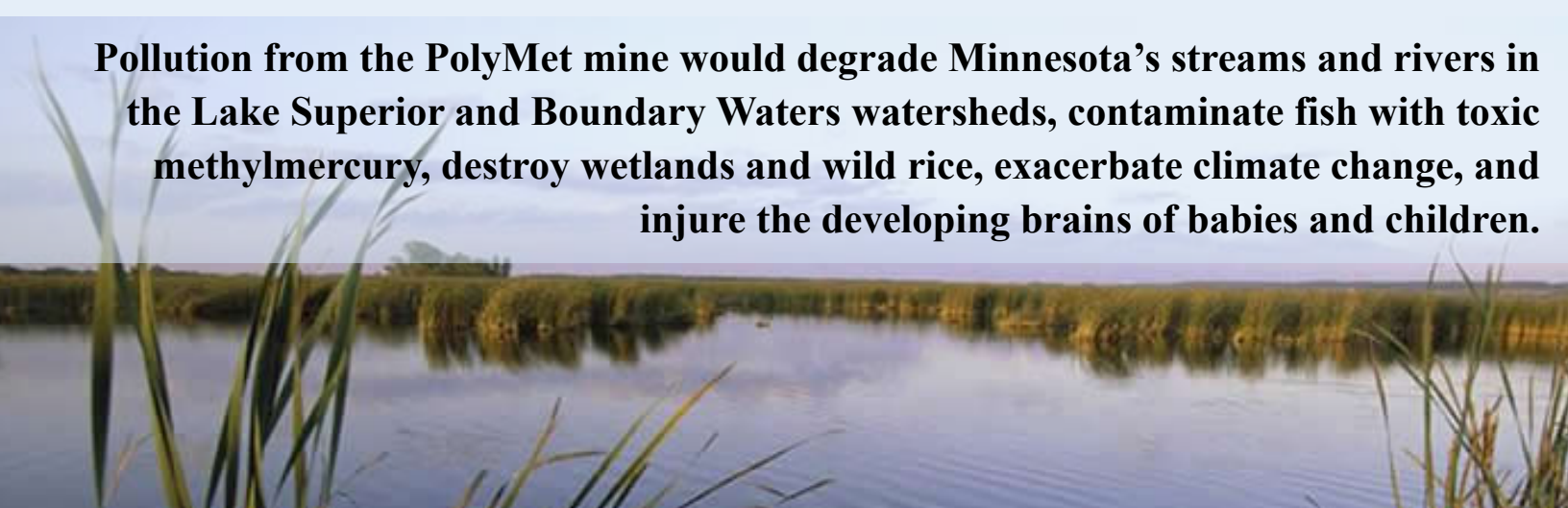
THE MINE

PolyMet would blast and dig over 500 million tons of waste rock and ore from the ground over 20 years. The PolyMet deposit is low-grade, meaning it has a low concentration of copper and nickel but a high concentration of sulfur. Over 99% of what is dug out of the ground would be waste. When sulfur-bearing ore is exposed to air and water, sulfuric acid forms, resulting in acid mine drainage and leaching toxic metals that can permanently contaminate water.

THE WASTE STORAGE

PolyMet plans to store the waste “tailings” on top of a huge unlined pile of old tailings that are vulnerable to liquefaction. In Brazil, January 2019, a similarly designed tailings dam collapsed, killing over 250 people. This is the cheapest and most dangerous design for tailings dams. Seepage from the tailings waste would require water quality treatment for more than 500 years. In addition, the technology proposed by PolyMet has never successfully captured seepage at the rates PolyMet assumed in claiming its mine would not violate water quality standards.

Pollution from the PolyMet mine would degrade Minnesota’s streams and rivers in the Lake Superior and Boundary Waters watersheds, contaminate fish with toxic methylmercury, destroy wetlands and wild rice, exacerbate climate change, and injure the developing brains of babies and children.



The Bait & Switch: Glencore's Ownership Role

PolyMet secured permits for Minnesota's first proposed sulfide mine without disclosing the extent of its "partnership" with multinational bad actor Glencore. In June 2019, after PolyMet received all its permits, Glencore bought 72% majority ownership of PolyMet. Yet, Glencore is not on any PolyMet permits, meaning Glencore is not accountable for financial assurance, pollution, or dam safety. So far, Governor Walz has *urged* Glencore to agree to be on PolyMet project permits. WaterLegacy has advocated that Minnesota *require* Glencore to be accountable on any PolyMet permits.

WaterLegacy's Advocacy to Protect Minnesota

WaterLegacy is challenging PolyMet's permits in court, exposing evidence of "irregular" and improper procedures used to hide PolyMet water pollution threats, opposing PolyMet's dam permits and permit to mine, and demanding a contested-case hearing to dispute PolyMet's false claims. We've succeeded in preserving the sulfate standard that protects wild rice in court, rulemaking and by securing vetoes of legislation. We also advocate to uphold state and federal water quality, health and safety standards to protect our communities. In all our work, WaterLegacy collaborates with Tribes, citizens, health professionals, scientists, faith communities and other environmental groups.



What Can You Do to Help?

- ✧ Volunteer with us by emailing Emma@WaterLegacy.org and become a WaterLegacy Champion at waterlegacy.org/become-a-waterlegacy-champion/.
- ✧ WaterLegacy can provide you with coaching and support so that you can: 1) talk with your neighbors, friends and family about sulfide mining and protecting Minnesota's life-giving waters; 2) write comments to government officials and letters to the editor; and 3) attend, participate in, and speak up at hearings, meetings, and direct actions.
- ✧ Support WaterLegacy financially. We can help you host a fundraiser at your home or online (i.e. Facebook fundraisers), and you can donate online at <https://waterlegacy.org/donate/>.

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