

WaterLegacy Breaking News!

PolyMet Water Permit Pollution Process Under Investigation

Court of Appeals Grants WaterLegacy Motion - Orders District Court Investigation of “Procedural Irregularities” in PolyMet Water Pollution Permit

June 25, 2019 - The Minnesota Court of Appeals ordered that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s (MPCA) PolyMet permitting cases be sent to district court to investigate irregularities in the permitting process that kept documents out of the record and may have affected the MPCA’s decision. The Court held,

We conclude that [WaterLegacy] has provided substantial evidence of procedural irregularities not shown in the administrative record, and thus that it is appropriate to transfer this matter to district court for a hearing and determination of the alleged irregularities.

WaterLegacy attorney Paula Maccabee pointed out in a June 25th *Associated Press* story carried nationally that the district court has the power to issue subpoenas, place people under oath and allow lawyers to question witnesses.

“What this means is the courts are making sure that the permitting process has integrity,” Maccabee said. “And there will be an opportunity for the district court to find out the truth, and make sure the public knows the truth, and make sure that Minnesota doesn’t issue PolyMet a weak permit that fails to protect the environment and human health.”



Minnesota Legislative Auditor will Investigate MPCA Handling of PolyMet Permit

June 21, 2019 – State Representative Rick Hansen, chair of the Legislative Audit Commission and the House’s Environment and Natural Resources Finance Division, called for an investigation by the Legislative Auditor of MPCA’s handling of the PolyMet permit. An audit was initiated on June 24, 2019.

EPA Union Reveals Leaks Blockbuster Email – MPCA in Cahoots to Suppress EPA Comments

June 18, 2019 – The union representing Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 employees in Minnesota released a leaked email showing apparent malfeasance in the PolyMet mine permit process.

On June 20th, the *StarTribune* quoted Congresswoman Betty McCollum condemning the cover-up of PolyMet permit information:

“This e-mail communication appears to represent an absolutely intolerable breach of the public trust by two regulatory agencies. The public has every right to question whether the PolyMet permitting process was rigged against the legitimate environmental and public health interests of Minnesotans.”

WaterLegacy Secures Release of EPA Comments Showing MPCA PolyMet Permit Won't Protect Water

June 12, 2019 - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finally released EPA comments highly critical of the water pollution permit prepared and issued by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for the controversial PolyMet project. WaterLegacy had sought these comments for more than a year, and had sued EPA under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to secure these comments. These comments were released by EPA as a result of WaterLegacy's FOIA lawsuit.



EPA Internal Watchdog Launches Probe of PolyMet Permitting Process

June 13, 2019 – The EPA Inspector General launched an investigation of EPA's conduct in review of the PolyMet water pollution permit. In a *Star Tribune* article, Jeffry Fowley, a retired EPA attorney who called for the EPA Inspector General investigation, accused both the EPA and the MPCA of a “coverup.”

Fowley characterized PolyMet's permit as weak, and “an end run around the... requirements of the Clean Water Act.”

Multinational Bad Actor Glencore Takes Majority Control of PolyMet

June 27, 2019 – Glencore, a giant multinational company under investigation for violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, and notorious for environmental contamination and labor abuses took ownership of 70 percent of PolyMet.

WaterLegacy asked the state Department of Natural Resources early last year for a hearing to put Glencore on the permit to mine, but that didn't happen, leaving Minnesota's environment and taxpayers vulnerable in the event of PolyMet toxic pollution or dam failure. Maccabee told the *StarTribune*, “We don't know why state agencies didn't look beyond PolyMet's shell company to the multinational corporation — Glencore — putting in the money and calling the shots for the mine project.”

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