

STOP DEREGULATION OF MINING POLLUTION



The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) wants to avoid enforcing water quality standards that control pollution from mines, ethanol plants, and other polluters! MPCA has proposed rules to deregulate Minnesota mining pollution.

What would MPCA's rules do?

1. **Remove** Minnesota's numeric standards limiting typical mining pollutants, including major ions and salts (such as chlorides, hardness, and conductivity).
2. **Weaken** Minnesota water quality standards that prevent excessive sulfate.
3. **Provide no limits** on discharge based on protecting Minnesota waters. Protect water quality only for large downstream appropriator of water (minimum of 1 million gallons per year or 10,000 gallons per day).
4. **Narrow the protection** of wildlife to "watering," treating wildlife like livestock.

MPCA's proposed Mining Pollution Deregulation would protect polluters, not people or natural resources, with the following results:



Spotted Salamander



Lake Sturgeon



Blanchard's Cricket Frog

- **Contamination of high quality waters in the Boundary Waters and Lake Superior watersheds** by taconite and copper-nickel mining pollution.
- **Dangerous consequences for Northeastern Minnesota waters** with naturally low sulfate, chloride, hardness, and conductivity. These waters are especially vulnerable to major ion and salt pollution.
- **Destruction of aquatic insects, fish, amphibians, and sensitive ecosystems** due to salts and conductivity pollution.
- **Threat to the survival of state species of concern**, including the lake sturgeon, spotted salamander, mudpuppy, and cricket frog due to salts and conductivity pollution.

- **Growth of algae blooms** in once clear lakes caused by the release of phosphorus from lake sediments due to the presence of high levels of sulfate.
- **No protection for sustainable and smaller farms** that don't require appropriation permits. Salty water would destroy soil health and impair sensitive crops.
- **Major harm to important economic activities** including Minnesota fishing, recreation, tourism, and sustainable farming.
- **Damage to exercise of Treaty Rights to hunt, fish and gather** reserved to the Ojibwe/Chippewa people.
- **Injury to the developing brains of infants and children** due to increased mercury contamination of fish resulting from increased sulfate.



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT MINNESOTA'S WATERS?

You can help protect the Boundary Waters and Lake Superior watersheds and waters throughout Minnesota from Pollution Deregulation:

- **Provide your comment** using WaterLegacy's online sample at [WaterLegacy.org/StopPollution](https://www.waterlegacy.org/StopPollution).
- **Speak up at the virtual public hearing** on February 4, 2021 that will go from 2:00 - 8:30 pm or until everyone is heard.
- **Create a brief (3 to 5 minute) video** on your own cell phone or laptop before February 20th, 2021 and WaterLegacy will submit it to the administrative law judge as your testimony.

Contact Waverly@waterlegacy.org or Paula@waterlegacy.org for talking points and information on how to testify and comment.