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MINNESOTA SCIENTISTS CALL FOR A TAMARACK REGION SULFIDE ORE STUDY OF ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE DATA & MINING EFFECTS

*New Environmental Threats Posed by Talon Metals and Rio Tinto
District-scale Nickel Mining*

ST. PAUL, MINN., April 18, 2024 – Retired scientists who worked on the Minnesota Duluth Complex area Copper-Nickel Study in the 1970s have now called for a similar Tamarack Region Sulfide Ore Study of environmental baseline data and likely impacts from sulfide ore mining by Talon Metals and Rio Tinto in central Minnesota.

No Minnesota study has yet researched mining in the Tamarack area, upstream of the wild and scenic St. Croix River, the Mississippi River, and Minnesota's largest population center. Minnesota rules require an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a new sulfide ore mine project. However, the proposal Talon Metals submitted in June 2023 to start this process only proposed to mine the first 225 acres of more than 31,000 acres of lands and mining leases that Talon controls.

Bruce Johnson, a chemist/biologist who worked for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and participated in Minnesota's Copper-Nickel Study in the 1970s emphasized, "Fifty years ago, our State recognized that an EIS for a site-specific project picked by a mining company was inadequate to protect the water, air, lands, and creatures of an entire region. They had it right. Talon Metals' initial project is one tenth of one percent of its potential mining district. It's ridiculous that environmental review of that small project would be enough to risk opening up the Mississippi River and St. Croix River watersheds to the most toxic industry in America."

Fred Campbell, a retired geologist who also worked for the DNR on Minnesota's 1970s Copper-Nickel study explained, "A Regional Study in the Tamarack area is needed to put the science first. Minnesota should have comprehensive and independent baseline data on regional geology, hydrology, and chemistry so we can understand the risks rather than taking a blind leap of faith into new sulfide ore mining."

(more)

Neither the DNR nor the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) have publicly raised the question of whether a Tamarack Region Study should be completed before sulfide ore mining is permitted upstream of the St. Croix River, the Mississippi River and the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

Paula Maccabee, Advocacy Director and Counsel for WaterLegacy, stated, “Talon Metals and Rio Tinto are sitting on \$135 million in federal handouts and planning for district-scale sulfide ore mining in the heart of Minnesota. Minnesota should now choose science—not subsidies—to protect the Tamarack region and our downstream communities from new threats posed by sulfide ore mining.”

The paper calling for a Tamarack Region Sulfide Ore Study of Environmental Baseline Data and Mining Effects can be found [here](#).

Documents related to Talon Metals’ proposed initial mining project can be found on the DNR’s website [here](#).