

Online Comment

Permit Portal: Air

3/16/2018

Comment:

March 16, 2018 I write to oppose MPCA's draft water pollution (NPDES/SDS) permit, and MPCA's draft CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 CERTIFICATION for the PolyMet sulfide mine project, as currently proposed. The Mission of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is to protect the environment and Minnesota citizens from pollution. From what I read and study, the MPCA has proposed a draft water pollution permit that does not set limits on polluted seepage through groundwater and a draft certification that the PolyMet project would not harm water quality, increase mercury contamination of fish, affect the environment or impair human health. The MPCA's draft water pollution permit not only fails to set limits for contamination that would seep from PolyMet waste facilities to wetlands and streams; the MPCA would not even require monitoring of surface water quality in the places closest to the PolyMet tailing basin or concentrated waste storage facilities. Without surface water monitoring, even if PolyMet pollution violates the Clean Water Act, it could be many years before that contamination of our waters is detected. And in the meantime, we will have failed our children, our elders, our water, our tribal people and their treaty rights, the wild rice and wetlands, our traditional cultural properties, the air we breathe and the trees and fauna which bless us with possibilities to meet the very real climate change which challenges our "usual ways" of doing things. It was Aldo Leopold who said, "When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." And the movement of peoples at Standing Rock birthed the wisdom phrase, "Water is Life." And, from Pope Francis, "Fresh drinking water is an issue of primary importance, since it is indispensable for human life and for supporting terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems... [A]ccess to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights." I suggest that we can do better, in protecting the very elements which stand threatened by PolyMet's sulfide mine project. We all need to gather around the mission to protect the environment for Minnesotans and for all up-river and down-river dwellers, for time to come. Water flow has no political boundaries. We are all connected. In summary, I oppose MPCA's draft water pollution (NPDES/SDS) permit, and MPCA's draft CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 CERTIFICATION , as currently proposed for the PolyMet sulfide mine project. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

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Attachments: