

Minnesota Sulfide Mining PETITION

"PROVE-IT-FIRST" CONCERNING METALLIC SULFIDE MINING, ACID MINE DRAINAGE (AMD) and HEAVY METALS in MINNESOTA's WATER RICH ENVIRONMENT.

Petition Concerning Metallic Sulfide Mining. Position- Minnesota should enact a "PROVE IT FIRST" Mining Moratorium similar to Wisconsin's Act 171: Mining Moratorium Law.

Background information: Unlike taconite production, mining for copper, nickel, and trace minerals in sulfide ores results in an environmental problem known as Acid Mine Drainage (AMD). Sulfuric acid produced by the exposure of sulfides to air and water, in combination with toxic metals that leach from the ores, contaminate the watershed and kill aquatic plants and animals, and wildlife that depend upon them.

Multinational mining companies are currently planning to mine bands of sulfide ores located across the Superior National Forest of Minnesota. These mining activities would leach sulfuric acid and heavy toxic metals into the Boundary Waters (BWCAW), the Lake Superior, Rainy River, Mississippi & St. Croix River watersheds if allowed to proceed. People use these watersheds for recreation, fishing and drinking. Exploration is most advanced in the northeastern part of Minnesota and is occurring across the entire state. The pollution from these mines requires near-perpetual treatment as the metals and Acid Mine Drainage can continue to pollute for centuries.

PROVE IT FIRST- THE STATE OF MINNESOTA SHALL NOT ISSUE A PERMIT TO MINE SULFIDE ORES UNTIL IT HAS BEEN PROVEN THAT IT WILL NOT POLLUTE THE GROUNDWATER OR SURFACE WATERS OF THE STATE.

We petition that the State government deny a permit to mine for sulfide ores in Minnesota until the permit requester submits documentation from groundwater/surface water monitoring that includes data showing that:

- (1) An example mine has been *closed* for 10 years without the pollution of groundwater or surface water from acid drainage at the tailings site or at the mine site or from the release of heavy metals; and
- (2) An example mine has *operated* for 10 years without the pollution of groundwater or surface water from acid drainage at the tailings site or at the mine site or from the release of heavy metals.

Before the State makes any irreversible decision to allow sulfide mining within our valuable watersheds, a company shall be required to prove that this type of mining has occurred elsewhere where it has not caused environmental harm or pollution.

