Writing Letters to the Editor regarding PolyMet’s Proposed Open Pit Mine

Three Tips for LTE’s:
1. Keep it straightforward and concise – get to the point, 250 words or less.
2. Make it personal and heartfelt – why do you care?
3. Provide a specific, concrete action step – what do you want people to do?

Main points & key facts:

1. PolyMet will pollute Minnesota’s waters for at least 500 years. Water from the mine and processing plant will be contaminated with toxic metals and sulfates. PolyMet’s own mine plan admits that millions of gallons of polluted water will seep off site, un-captured and untreated. This will continue for hundreds of years.

2. PolyMet’s plan for an open pit mine will directly destroy more than 900 acres of wetlands, and threaten more than ten square miles of additional wetlands with toxic contamination and drainage.

3. No information is provided in the SDEIS about the amount and form of financial assurance (a “damage deposit”) that PolyMet will be required to provide to cover cleanup costs extending over centuries. Abandoned mining sites across our nation are the single most-costly environmental liabilities left to taxpayers. When funds are not available, waters, lands, wildlife and people in the area suffer toxic effects for generations.

4. Instead of opening new mines will cost taxpayers and the environment, we could greatly increase recycling of copper, nickel and other metals, with less impact to the environment, reduced emissions of global warming gases, and provide greater potential for jobs. The US is presently recycling far less than half of the copper and nickel we discard every year.

Action:
Submit your letter to the editor to a local paper near you or email your letter to the Star Tribune at Opinion@startribune.com or the Duluth Daily News at letters@duluthnews.com.

Sample Letter-to-the-Editor:

To the Editor,

I love the woods and wetlands of Northern Minnesota. Every year I go up with my family a cabin in the Boundary Waters for a week of nature hikes and relaxation. Not only is this area a unique part of Minnesota's natural heritage, it’s the headwaters of the Great Lakes.

In Minnesota's Arrowhead Region, between Lake Superior and the Boundary Waters, a multinational corporation called PolyMet is seeking a permit for an open pit sulfide mine, a toxic type of mining never before done in our state. The risks to our Minnesota wilderness are great. Water from the mine and processing plant will be contaminated with toxic metals and sulfates. PolyMet’s own mine plan admits that millions of gallons of polluted water will seep off site, un-captured and untreated. This will continue for hundreds of years. That is twice the length of our own country’s history. This is a bad deal.

I urge Governor Dayton, the Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers protect our pristine environment and cultural heritage and reject PolyMet’s proposal.

Sincerely,
Name City Phone