



Tamarack Water Alliance Community Zoom Meeting Wed. September 7, 2022, 10am CT

Everyone is invited to attend our open community virtual Zoom meeting on Wednesday, September 7, 2022 at 10am CT. This is an opportunity for you to learn about risks to the community of the proposed Talon Metals mine in Aitkin County. September's meeting will focus on the Eagle Mine in Michigan. Thank you for signing up for our email newsletter.

If you believe nickel-sulfide mining is too risky in Aitkin County, Tamarack Water Alliance has yard signs with this messaging available. Your \$6 donation helps defray costs. Email waters@tamarackwateralliance.org to arrange pickup of your sign.

We hope you will share this information with others and keep in touch as we build a community that can protect water and health from the dangers of sulfide mining.

Encourage your friends, family and neighbors to sign up for the monthly Tamarack Water Alliance [email newsletter](http://eepurl.com/hOboEb), (<http://eepurl.com/hOboEb>).

Tamarack Talon Metals Mine Risks

We are NOT making this up. All of this information is published in the Talon Metals PEA, a lengthy 350 page document posted on their website. You can read it here: https://talonmetals.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Talon-Tamarack-PEA3_2021.pdf

Talon's marketing says nothing about these details that will deplete our aquifers, contaminate our water supplies, and make Tamarack a permanent toxic waste site.

- Talon plans to pump 2.3 million gallons of water a day out of our local aquifers. SOURCE: PEA p. 276.
- This dirty water may not be treated, yet will be contaminated with sulfide ore and dust. SOURCE: Talonmetals.com/sommonly-asked-questions/ "Most modern mine water is not toxic."
- Additionally, a great deal of water will be needed for the first stage of mineral processing on site. SOURCE: PEA p. 248
- And where will they put all this contaminated water that they do not appear to want to filter?
- In 12 years after mining ceases, Talon plans to cover not remove the 82 ft high 75 acre high sulfide and cobalt contaminated tailings pile. SOURCE: PEA p. 264. Overtime the tailings pile will deteriorate and contaminate the surrounding area. SOURCE: pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23625128/. Do we want a permanent toxic waste storage facility in Tamarack?
- Real estate values will drop. Who wants to own property next to a toxic mine?
- Talon owns mineral rights to 32 square miles which will affect a large number property owners. Clearly this is a BIG project.
- The toxic "Mt. Talon" formed by the high sulfide tailings pile will be a new geologic feature, visible for 15-20 miles. It will be located on the highest ground around, with Horseshoe, Lake Minnewawa, Round Lake, and Big Sandy all downhill. SOURCE: en-gb.topographic-map.com/maps/ilbc/Aitkin-County/.
- Wind will blow the dust from the contaminated pile and mine ventilation shafts into the surrounding area, and dust from normal mining operations will contaminate the environment and pose human health risks.
- The large majority of jobs will go to skilled contractors (not employees) outside the area who will not have benefits. SOURCE: PEA p. 238.
- What happens when Talon leaves since it is a non-US company? What if they go bankrupt? Is our community left with a mess?

Learn more at [Tamarack Water Alliance](http://tamarackwateralliance.org), (tamarackwateralliance.org)

We hope you will share this information with others and keep in touch as we build a community that can protect water and health from the dangers of sulfide mining.

Reflections from a Recent Visit to the Eagle Mine by Shanai Matteson

Just over a year ago I attended a community meeting that Lynn Anderson (now of Tamarack Water Alliance) organized at the Lake Minnewawa Sportsmen's Club. Paula Maccabee of **Water Legacy** (waterlegacy.org/) spoke about the possible health risks of sulfide mining near the village of Tamarack, in Aitkin County.

It was the first time I understood the scope of what Rio Tinto – a global mining

company with a documented record of environmental destruction and human rights abuse – intends to do here in Aitkin County with the help of its exploration and marketing partner, Talon Metals.

At that meeting by the lake, I recall our State Representative, Dale Lueck, telling the gathered community members that we should visit other copper and nickel mines before making any judgments about Talon Metals and their intentions for our local community.

Last month, Representative Lueck and other local officials accompanied Talon Metals executives and staff on a visit to the Eagle Mine in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Representative Lueck wrote about his experience at Eagle Mine for the Aitkin Independent Age newspaper, calling it "eye-opening" – but failing to mention important aspects of that mine which are most concerning.

For example, Lueck did not mention the mine's expansion after operations began, or changes to the company's environmental controls over time, which locals refer to as "permit creep" ... Nor did he mention the disposal facility where Eagle dumps mine waste – an old mine-pit lake, already filled with pollution from a former gold mine – which Eagle has had challenges engineering to the intended specifications.

To get a fuller picture of that project, a small group of Aitkin County residents took a tour of Eagle with the mining company's community relations team, and with people who are part of the Community Ecological Monitoring Program (CEMP), which monitors how much pollution the mine is putting into the air and water.

It is important to keep in mind that **all mines pollute**, and cause many other impacts, both intended and unintended. This is a fact that even marketing officials will not deny.

Eagle Mine is an underground nickel and copper mine located in western Marquette County, part of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It's the first mine to be permitted under Michigan's Part 632 Non-Ferrous Mineral Mining Law.

It's worth noting that Minnesota's mining laws and regulations are not designed to handle the challenges of non-ferrous minerals mining. It's a very different type of mining than has happened here before, and carries very different risks – especially in a wetland environment like we have here in Aitkin County.

While I was interested in what the mining process at Eagle entails, especially its impacts on environmental and public health and safety, I also wanted to understand as much as I could about what the process of developing and permitting a mine like this looked like from the ground. Eagle was also a Rio Tinto project, and so examining its process and engagement with surrounding communities is helpful to understanding what is happening here at home.

What impression does the mine make on a one-day visitor like Dale Lueck, guided by a company with marketing motivations like Talon Metals? And more importantly, what has it meant to someone living in the nearby community for decades or even

generations?

We took a day-long tour of Eagle's mining operation – at least what we could see of it from the surface. We followed that with a tour of the Humboldt Mill, where ore from the Eagle mine is processed and where toxic mine tailings are discarded into a nearby mine-pit lake.

We also spent a few days visiting with members of the community around the Eagle mine, to understand what happened prior to the mine being permitted, and since operations began.

It was, as Dale Lueck said, eye-opening. The people working at Eagle were welcoming and well-informed, but also clearly experienced at presenting their mining operation to a skeptical audience.

At the end of our tour, they shared about their community engagement work.

A lot of research, and money, goes into the work of convincing community members to accept the risks of the mine and to lower their outrage at environmental and public health harms. Companies like Eagle are purposeful in who they hire or partner with, because these are the people who will convince others about the safety and the benefits of a mine.

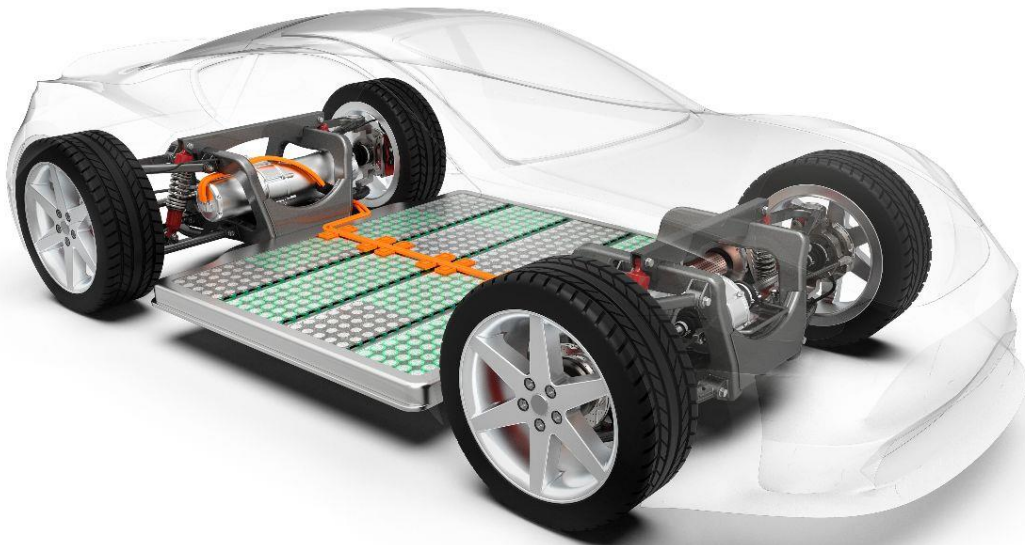
I'll be sharing some reflections from this tour and our conversations at an upcoming Tamarack Water Alliance Community Zoom meeting. I hope we might also be joined by community members we met from Michigan's Upper Peninsula, with whom we continue to talk about ways our communities can support one another in our efforts to educate ourselves about mining company proposals and their social and environmental impacts.

Last month, Talon announced that it had acquired rights to explore for nickel on 400,000 acres of land near the Eagle Mine and Humboldt Mill, so our communities are more connected than we might have thought when we took that trip!

Part of our rights and our responsibility as a downstream community is to look beyond the press releases and the marketing, to understand what is really going on as companies work to obtain permissions to pollute. I hope this can be part of our conversation this month, and I welcome others to bring their questions and observations.

Shanai Matteson is a writer, researcher, and cultural organizer who works on community-based science projects, water policy, and environmental justice issues. She was raised in Aitkin County, and currently lives north of Palisade. She is a volunteer with Tamarack Water Alliance, and also works in partnership with the University of Minnesota's Long-term Ecological Research Program, Honor the Earth, the US Water Alliance, and many other groups. You can reach her at shanaihmatteon@gmail.com

Learn More About the Eagle Mine in Michigan:
<http://savethewildup.org/about/eagle-mine-facts/>



"Recycling has the potential to reduce primary demand compared to total demand in 2040, by approximately 25% for lithium, 35% for cobalt and nickel and 55% for copper. This creates an opportunity to significantly reduce the demand for new mining."

Prepared for Earthworks by the Institute for Sustainable Futures, April, 2021, *Reducing New Mining for EV Battery Metals: Responsible Sourcing Through Demand Reduction Strategies and Recycling*

<https://earthworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/UTS-EV-battery-metals-sourcing-20210419-FINAL.pdf>

Who We Are

Tamarack Water Alliance (tamarackwateralliance.org) is a group of local residents and landowners working together with others from across Minnesota to protect water and community health from the dangers of sulfide mining near our beloved lakes and wild rice beds, at the headwaters of the Kettle River and in the Mississippi River watershed.

A proposal by a foreign owned mining company to mine nickel and other metals near Tamarack in Aitkin County threatens the health of our communities. This kind of sulfide mining, especially in water-rich environments, has never been done without severe impacts to water and the health of those downstream. Mining here is also a threat to environmental justice and the long-term economic security of nearby native and rural communities.

Review our community slide presentation,

(tamarackwateralliance.org/docs/TamarackMineConcerns-Consolidated.pdf)

Download seven informative flyers: (<https://tamarackwateralliance.org/resources.html>)

- Talon Mine Risks,
- High Sulfide Mines Create Acid Mine Drainage,
- Nickel Not Needed for Future EV Batteries,
- Minnesota's Prime Wild Rice Lakes Under Threat,
- Minnesota Regulators Poor Record In Protecting The Environment,
- Responsible Mining

We will be sending this monthly newsletter to keep you informed about this project, to share information and opportunities to act, and to invite you to gatherings where you can connect with others who share a passion for clean water and community health.



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