

TAMARACK



WATER ALLIANCE

Greetings from Tamarack Water Alliance!

This is our second monthly newsletter, thank you for signing up for these updates. It's been a full month as members of our group work together to learn as much as we can about the proposed Nickel-Sulfide Mine that Talon Metals and Rio Tinto are developing. For this month's newsletter, we wanted to share with you some of the main concerns of our group after reviewing Talon's documents describing their intentions with this mining project.

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.

What We Know About the Proposed Talon Metals Mine

If you are on the fence about the proposed Talon Metals sulfide mine in Tamarack, Minnesota, you may not be alone - Talon has not shared a full mine plan. Yet, it is important to consider the following facts as noted in Talon's Preliminary Economic Analysis (PEA) (https://talonmetals.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Talon-Tamarack-PEA3_2021.pdf) provided by Talon Metals:

- Talon indicates that their tailings pile (called a CFTF and located at the mine site) will cover 75 acres with a height of 82 feet (page 268 of the PEA). This **tailings pile will contain high sulfide tailings** which, when combined with water, create sulfuric acid (battery acid) contaminating the environment.
- Wind will blow contaminated dust from this pile into the surrounding area contaminating the environment. Wind born dust from normal operations will also contribute to this contamination.
- When the mine closes after 12 years of mining, this high sulfide tailings pile will be capped and left in place (see page 264). In effect, **Tamarack will be a toxic waste site forever holding the sulfide waste products from the mine** and this will likely be visible from the town.
- This toxic "Mt. Talon" will be a visible eyesore for miles around as it is located

on the high ground upstream from the surrounding lakes and rivers of the Mississippi River watershed. As the tailings pile cap and liner deteriorate over time, the tailings pile toxic drainage can destroy the sensitive ecosystem affecting surrounding lakes and wetlands. Will there be any wild rice left to gather? What will happen to the aquatic life? What will be left to hunt and fish?

- Talon will need to **pump and clean about 350 cubic meters per hour of water out of the mine** (see page 228). This is approximately 92,500 gallons of contaminated water per hour! (over 2.2 Million gallons per day). Where does Talon put this water and does this effectively drain the aquifer and lower lake levels significantly? Are we ready for this? Will our wells dry up?
- Talon has indicated that they think water pumped from the mine does not need to be treated. But this water has come into contact with the high sulfide ore and ore dust created from mining and blasting operations. This becomes another huge source of local contamination.
- Even if Talon treats this water with large industry grade reverse osmosis filters, the output water is sterile affecting the water chemistry of the local environment.
- Separately, a great deal of water will be needed for the first stage of mineral processing on site (see page 248 of the Talon PEA). Talon estimates that the total water requirements for ore processing on site at 543.0 m³/h (or 143,000 gallons of water per hour). **A large volume of this contaminated water (estimated by Talon to be 31,000 gallons per hour on page 249 of the Talon PEA) is not recoverable and evidently flows into the environment.** This is unacceptable as it guarantees that the area will be contaminated with sulfide based waste products.

To date, sulfide mining has a 100% track record of failure in water rich environments. Wouldn't it be better to protect our rural lands and waters? Our area includes pristine wild rice lakes, the headwaters of the Mississippi, two wild and scenic rivers, the largest state park in Minnesota, and the Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge. *[What about choosing to love our sky blue waters?](#)*

Review our community slide presentation,
(tamarackwateralliance.org/docs/TamarackMineConcerns-Consolidated.pdf)



"The Mille Lacs Band harvests medicinal plants, forest products and wild rice in lakes near the Tamarack project. The backwaters of Big Sandy Lake have rich resources in wild rice. The people who ultimately benefit from the mine will be the wealthy, who can afford to drive a Tesla. The Band supports green energy but not at the expense of our environment or natural resources or our people."

—Kelly Applegate, Department of Natural Resources Commissioner, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe in a recent MinnPost article: [What \(if anything\) does a deal with Tesla mean for the controversial Tamarack mining project in Northern Minnesota?](https://www.minnpost.com/greater-minnesota/2022/01/what-if-anything-does-a-deal-with-tesla-mean-for-the-controversial-tamarack-mining-project-in-northern-minnesota/) (https://www.minnpost.com/greater-minnesota/2022/01/what-if-anything-does-a-deal-with-tesla-mean-for-the-controversial-tamarack-mining-project-in-northern-minnesota/)

Image: [Creative Commons / Lorie Shaul](#)

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.

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.

