



POLICY PRIORITIES

PROTECT OUR DRINKING WATER

Every Minnesotan deserves access to clean, safe drinking water. Unfortunately, legislation this session fails to protect public health, our environment and the well-being of communities struggling with polluted wells.

- **Obstructing the Groundwater Protection Rule (SF 3656 / HF 4133) & (SF 2893 / HF 3719) & (SF 2720 / HF 2887):** The 1989 Groundwater Protection Act gives the state authority to protect our groundwater (the source of drinking water for 75% of Minnesotans). The state has proposed a modest 2-part rule to require improved fertilizer management in the most vulnerable areas – using steps that many farmers already take. Legislation obstructing the rule has been included in several House and Senate bills.
- **Undermining the Safe Drinking Water fee (SF 3656 / HF 3138):** The legislature has failed to include a small (\$3.36/yr per connection) increase in this fee – which is proposed in part to keep up with inflation. This will force the state to scale back water quality monitoring and specialized engineering assistance, placing our public water supplies at risk.

SAVE POLICY BASED ON SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Many bills in play this session undermine environmental science and public participation in Minnesota's water management decisions.

- **Nullifying sulfate limits in wild rice waters (SF 2983 / HF 3280) & (HF 3502):** Removes Minnesota's existing sulfate water quality standard, prevents listing of wild rice waters, replaces a science-based standard with political fiat, and violates the federal Clean Water Act. Sulfate pollution increases mercury contamination of fish, impairs aquatic habitats and decimates wild rice.
- **Approving the Line 3 pipeline (SF 3510 / HF 3759):** Terminates an ongoing public review and approval process and immediately grants Canadian Enbridge Energy full authority to build the Line 3 pipeline on its preferred route without further state approval.
- **Suspending protections for White Bear Lake (SF 3656 / HF 3502):** Suspends an existing legal directive for managing groundwater in the northeast metro. If passed into law, the bill would result in conflicting instructions for the Department of Natural Resources, putting sustainable water management and White Bear Lake water levels in peril.
- **Preempting local sustainability (SF 3135 / HF 3606):** Removes the ability of local communities to regulate any type of packaging including single-use plastic bags, Styrofoam to-go containers, and more. This policy undermines existing local environmental policies and impedes the development of more sustainable product alternatives.
- **16-year holiday for wastewater treatment (SF 3656 / HF 3502):** Grants industrial and municipal wastewater dischargers a 16-year holiday from new water quality standards.
- **Water transfers without a permit (SF 3656 / HF 3502):** Allows flooded mine pit lakes to be drained of accumulated high-sulfate waters without treatment.



- **Undermining DNR well permitting (HF 3502):** Forces the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to pay out of pocket for the costs of any test well if the state denies a water appropriation permit - even if the denial was the result of impacts on rare and fragile wetlands.
- **Legislative approval over agency permit fees (SF 3656 / HF 3502):** State agencies are limited by law to only charge permit fees necessary to cover the costs of their permitting work. This bill allows legislators to block fee increases (where admin costs of those permits have increased) and shift the cost of regulation from polluters to taxpayers.
- **Guilt by association (SF 3463 / HF 3693):** Discourages free speech and assembly by threatening jail time and large fines for participants of (or who are deemed “guilty by association” with) peaceful protest where an unaffiliated individual damages “critical infrastructure” (which is already illegal to damage).

INVEST IN CLEAN WATER

Minnesota must continue to invest in clean water and keep politics out of funding critical water infrastructure.

- **Invest in water infrastructure:** The Governor has requested \$167 million in funding for water infrastructure projects throughout the state – money that is badly needed to repair and maintain our rapidly aging water infrastructure.
- **Allocate the Clean Water Fund:** \$25+ million in Legacy Amendment money for clean water is waiting to be allocated to protect our water. Those resources should be invested in clean water initiatives this session.
- **Don't mess with the Environment Trust Fund (SF 2934 / HF 3352):** Legislation aims to redirect \$10 million from Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund (20% of the fund) for grants to wastewater utilities - previously paid with general funds. This shift denies resources for important environmental projects and misspends a voter-approved trust fund.

PASS THE GOOD STUFF

A few bills this session include important provisions that improve our water. The **chloride reduction policy (HF 3502)**, **working lands language (HF 3502)**, **Beginning Farmer Tax Credit improvement (SF 3656 / HF 4133)** and **well testing at point-of-sale language (SF 3341 / HF 3699)** will improve water quality, public health and agricultural diversification throughout the state. Please work with legislators and the Governor to ensure they are included in final negotiations this session.

#ProtectOurWater

Water Action Day Sponsors: Audubon Minnesota, Clean Water Action, Duluth for Clean Water, EMA Inc., Friends of Pool 2, Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, Friends of the Mississippi River, Izaak Walton League, Land Stewardship Project, League of Women Voters, Minneapolis Rowing Club, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, Minnesota Environmental Partnership, MN350, The Minnesota River Congress, ONE BluWorld, Pollinator Friendly Alliance, Save Our Sky Blue Waters, Sierra Club North Star Chapter, St. Croix River Association, Trout Unlimited, WaterLegacy, Women's Congress for Future Generations.

Water Action Day Partners: Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters, Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River, Conservation Minnesota, CURE (Clean Up the River Environment), Environment Minnesota, Honor the Earth, Minnesota River Congress, Native Lives Matter Coalition, The Nature Conservancy, New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen, Pesticide Action Network, Save the Boundary Waters, Take Action MN, Wilderness in the City, Women's March MN.