

Sulfide mines in other states have left taxpayers with hundreds of millions of dollars in cleanup costs. Minnesota could do a lot with \$234 million.



Question #4: Will Minnesota taxpayers be protected?

Why is this an important question? Let's look at some real-life examples:

When Grouse Creek gold and silver mine in Idaho began operations in 1994, it was touted as a “state of the art” mine. Three years later, the mine closed, leaving a leaking tailings basin, over 250 water quality violations for toxic pollutants, and the need for long-term water treatment. In 2001, the Forest Service calculated reclamation costs for the site at \$60 million. The mining company’s own reclamation bond covered only \$7 million of that cost, leaving taxpayers with roughly \$53 million in costs to try to contain the pollution. Today, the site continues to have costly water quality problems that the government seeks to address and for which taxpayers are paying.

In 1998, the mining company for the Zortman Landusky mine in Montana abandoned the site, filed for bankruptcy, and left Montana’s taxpayers liable for \$33 to \$95 million. The mining company for the Summitville Gold Mine in Colorado filed for bankruptcy in 1992, leaving \$234 million in clean-up costs to the public.

If sulfide mining companies leave Minnesota with \$234 million in mine clean-up costs, that is the same amount of money as...

- five times more than the Minnesota Legislature’s 2013 allocation for Head Start early learning scholarships.
- nearly **twenty-five times** the state general fund allocation for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in 2014–2015.
- almost three years of the annual general fund allocations for Duluth Public Schools.
- four times the proposed costs to expand civic centers in Rochester, Mankato and St. Cloud.

Learn more at miningtruth.org

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