

Pamela Arnold

I am a regenerative and organic farmer in Scandia, Washington County. My farm is MDA Water Quality Certified, and I am a citizen member of our local watershed advisory counsel. I live on the St Croix National Wild and Scenic River and I have deep roots in the Rainy River, and Lake of the Woods. I also draw my water from a well. My aquifer is connected to Goose Lake. All of the waters in my small piece of Minnesota are on the impaired waters list. I am deeply concerned about the scale of water impairment in Minnesota and our neighboring watersheds. Mining permitting, as I've observed thanks to the good work of non-profit groups like WaterLegacy, is without sane oversight by state authorities whose first priority should be the health of Minnesota and Minnesotans. The MN DNR, and MPCA, and our governor Tim Walz have not demonstrated their authority to scrutinize mining, road construction, large scale agriculture and CAFO permitting from the standpoint of water quality, and the toxic situation we are forced to "live" with. From my perspective, business is the biggest citizen in Minnesota. The current state of graft insures the impossibility of returning to the days when we could drink lake water, breath fresh air outdoors, count on our wells to be safe, when we believed in the force and goodness of our state government regarding public health, and care for the future of our natural resources. We no longer have many local newspapers that aren't controlled by big money. There is no truth to count on. I write to ask you to step up to this obviously toxic situation that is ensuring the ongoing disappearance of the natural beauty and health of Minnesota. We are the headwaters, and we must think beyond our own greed.