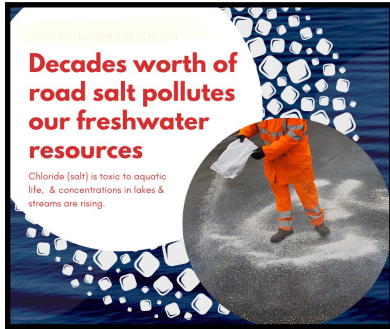


**Putting Duluth - and Minnesota - on a Low [Road] Salt Diet:  
Learn how passing a limited liability bill can help**

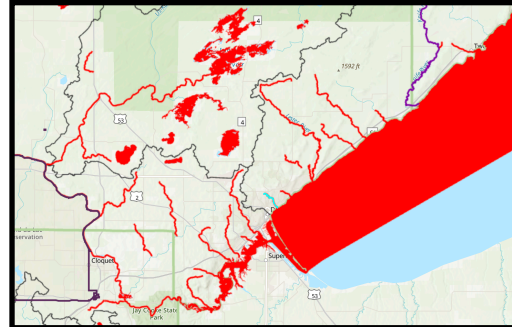
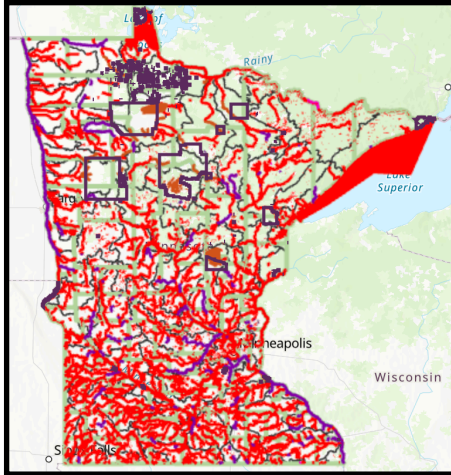
January 17, 2024, 6:30-8:00 PM

Hybrid Venue: Hartley Nature Center (Open to the Public, Refreshments Served!)  
and Zoom (link to be added soon)



Already, despite our unusually mild December, you've undoubtedly noticed crystals of salt scattered on parking lots, sidewalks, and streets - and you've probably been grateful for the safety they provide. As you spread deicers on your own property, you may consider toxicity for pets and your plants. But do you also think about salt's toxicity for drinking water, wildlife, fish and aquatic bugs, native plants, soil, buildings, and bridges? And are you aware that the chloride in many salts persists and so continues to build up, year after year, endangering aquatic and terrestrial life as well as infrastructure? Chloride could be considered a "forever chemical"! Learn more about chloride pollution and toxicity [here](#).

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency water monitoring (see [MN Chloride Conditions](#)) shows that salt concentrations are increasing in lakes, streams, and groundwater throughout our state. The maps below show "impaired" and proposed impaired lakes and streams, which have chloride levels too high to meet MPCA standards set to protect fish and other aquatic life. In Duluth, Kingsbury, Keene, and Miller Creeks are listed, and Chester Creek is among streams proposed to be added in 2024. And chloride has not been monitored in many streams across the St. Louis River Watershed, so the problem may be even more widespread than is currently understood.



Red = Chloride-Impaired Waters throughout MN (left), and in our watershed (right)  
MPCA draft 2024

<https://mPCA.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=fcc5a12d2fd4b16bc95bb535d09ae82>

Salting in winter in Minnesota is clearly a balancing act between human safety and environmental damage. Minnesota has considerable effective training and oversight over road salting at the state, county, and many local governmental levels, but one factor which could still affect the balance is liability for commercial/private snow removal and ice management. The Minnesota legislature is currently considering one or more liability limitation bills to encourage "best practices" training in salt application among commercial and private applicator. Our League has partnered with Duluth's Isaac Walton League to invite experts from New Hampshire, which has several years of experience with a similar law - including a successfully opposed lawsuit - to share that experience with us. Please join us! (Details follow)

## The January 17th meeting will be hybrid

We'll meet in person at **Hartley Nature Center** (public welcome) and on zoom, with remote interactive presentations by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. Zoom link to be added soon.

- 6:15 Doors open, coffee and refreshments, tabling for Salt info and Salt Watch program
- 6:30 Welcome, Introductions (zoom begins)
- 6:45 Guest/remote presentation: New Hampshire Dept. of Environmental Services
  - Aubrey Voelker, Salt Reduction (Green SnowPro) Program Coordinator
  - Ted Diers, Assistant Director, Water Division
  - Steve Landry, Supervisor, Watershed Assistance Section
- 7:30 Discussion: Status of Minnesota's bill(s)
- 7:45-8:00 Refreshments, further tabling for Salt info and Salt Watch program

### How can you help?

**Did you know** that if you put one teaspoon of salt in a five-gallon bucket of freshwater, you will create a solution that is harmful for many aquatic organisms and that exceeds allowable chloride levels?

**Did you know** that if you over-salt your driveway, steps, or walkways, you might be contributing to our water quality impairments? Duluth's curbs and storm sewers help transport salt into our rivers and Lake Superior without treatment and there is no cost-effective means to treat impaired waters.

**Did you know** that salt doesn't even melt ice below 15 degrees, so applying more salt doesn't improve safety? Use sand for traction when it is too cold, or check labels on other deicers for colder temperatures.

**Did you know** that our Duluth League approved advancing Salt as a program area of action at their November 11th meeting?

### How can YOU act?.

- Clear snow before it turns to ice, and apply salt only if needed. The more you clear, the less salt you'll use.
- When you salt your driveway or sidewalks, use tool indicators such as a 12 ounce mug for 10 feet of sidewalk, or a goal of "3 inches between grains". And spread the word, as well as the deicer.
- Sweep up leftover salt, sand, and deicer and reuse it as needed.
- Support the City's efforts to:
  - Adequately fund their snow management fleet so they can optimize their technologies for efficient application that helps balance safety and the environment.
  - Develop an ordinance that requires registration of commercial applicators, promotes their training, and identifies the locations of snow storage sites.
- Support the passage of a state law that would limit the liability of certified commercial applicators from slip/tip/fall lawsuits. (HF820/SF755 was introduced last session, but not heard in committee; introductions were made in prior sessions, as well.)
- Learn more at Hartley on January 17th!

