

January 22, 2025

Elizabeth Lincoln, Director  
Legislative Reference Library  
645 State Office Bldg.  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1050

Dear Ms. Lincoln:

On behalf of the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota, I submit this letter as the annual report to the Legislature under Minnesota Statutes Section 137.52(b). The report outlines the University's efforts, in collaboration with the United States Department of Defense, to address environmental impacts associated with the former Gopher Ordnance Works (GOW), a World War II smokeless powder production facility located on University land in Rosemount, Minnesota. That land includes Vermillion Highlands: A Research, Recreation and Wildlife Management Area, which is managed under a cooperative agreement between the University and the Department of Natural Resources. Per Minn. Stat. §3.187, the cost to prepare this report was \$840.00.

### **Background**

GOW was operated by E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company during World War II on behalf of the United States government. Over decades, the University and federal and state agencies have worked to identify and mitigate contamination on the site.

### **Settlement and Funding**

In 2024, following discovery and motion practice in the University's federal cost recovery action, the University, the Army Corps and E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company reached a settlement of all claims in the litigation. The settlement terms are documented in a Consent Decree entered by the Court on September 4, 2024. Under the Consent Decree, the United States paid \$13 million to the University to be applied against past and future response costs at the site. The University is required under the Consent Decree to ensure that all necessary remediation of the site is completed with oversight by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

### **Future Plans**

The priorities and timeline for site cleanup will be guided by anticipated land use changes. The University is currently developing planning steps and schedules and expects to submit an initial Response Action Plan to the MPCA in 2025. This plan will address contamination in closest proximity to ongoing and anticipated redevelopment activities at the site.

The University remains committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Consent Decree and advancing environmental stewardship in partnership with the State.

Sincerely,



Gregg Goldman  
Executive Vice President for Finance and Operations

cc: Brian Steeves, Executive Director and Corporate Secretary, Board of Regents  
Douglas Peterson, General Counsel, University of Minnesota  
Alice Roberts-Davis, Vice President, University Services  
Melisa Lòpez Franzen, Executive Director of Government and Community Relations  
Leslie Krueger, Assistant Vice President for Planning, Space, and Real Estate  
Gretchen Miller, Central Region Wildlife Manager, DNR, Vermillion Highlands Joint  
Steering Committee