

Permit to Mine – Effective Commenting

Public participation and input is an important part of the state permitting processes. Clear, concise comments that address specific aspects of the draft permit will be the most effective in informing the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR's) final decision on the permit to mine. Under state law, some individuals and entities have the option of submitting formal objections or petitioning for a contested case hearing. Details on the public comment process is provided below. Information on the objection and petition processes is available in the [DNR Formal Objections and Petitions for Contested Case Hearing fact sheet](#).

When does the public comment period open for the draft permit to mine? Will there be public meetings?

The public comment period for the draft permit to mine opened January 5th and closes on March 6, 2018. Public meetings will be held at Mesabi East High School in Aurora, MN on February 7, 2018 and at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (DECC) in Duluth, MN on February 8, 2018. Open houses will be held from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Mesabi East and 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the DECC. A public comment forum will be held at both locations from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. These public meetings will be held jointly with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and will include MPCA's draft air quality permit, draft water quality permit, and draft 401 certification, as well as DNR's draft permit to mine.

How can I participate and make a public comment?

Throughout the entirety of the public meetings in Aurora and Duluth, stenographers will be available one-on-one to record oral comments, or you may submit your comments in writing. You may also request an opportunity to speak at the podium during the public comment forum. DNR anticipates that a large number of individuals will register to speak during the public comment forum, and we will limit each speaker to three minutes. We will use a random lottery system to determine speaker order. Given the level of interest anticipated, it is possible that not everyone who registers will get the opportunity to speak at the podium.

How can I most effectively communicate my message?

The most important part of an effective comment is for it to be informed, specific, substantive, and relevant to DNR's pending decision on the permit to mine.

How can I submit my comments in writing?

Written comments may be submitted at any time during the public comment period through the state's portal for the project: <http://polymet.mn.gov/>

Written comments may also be submitted to:

MN Department of Natural Resources
Division of Lands and Minerals
500 Lafayette Road, Box 45
St. Paul, MN 55155-4045

[What's the process following this public comment period?](#)

After March 6, 2018, DNR and its consultants will review all public comments, objections, and petitions received on the draft permit to mine and make any changes to the draft permit that may be warranted. DNR will then determine whether to hold a pre-decisional contested case hearing and the scope of any such hearing. If no contested case hearing is held, DNR will proceed to making its final decision on the permit to mine. If a pre-decisional contested case hearing is held, DNR will defer its final permit to mine decision until after the conclusion of that contested case process.

All comments will become part of the official record and will be managed in accordance with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.