

**ATTACHMENT NO. 1**

**LAKE VERMILION – SOUDAN UNDERGROUND MINE STATE  
PARK DEVELOPMENT**

**WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING EAW PUBLIC  
REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD**

**MARCH 4, 2013 – APRIL 3, 2013**

From: Darren Vogt [mailto:DVogt@1854treatyauthority.org]  
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 2:57 PM  
To: Wieland, Ronald (DNR)  
Subject: RE: Lake Vermilion and Soudan Underground Mine State Park  
Development EAW to be released on March 4

Thank you for the communication and sharing the information. I have reviewed materials to date, and have not identified any specific comments. Any potential impacts to cultural resources may be of concern, and it is my understanding that the Tribal Historic Preservation Office at Bois Forte is reviewing project information.

Darren Vogt  
Environmental Director  
1854 Treaty Authority  
4428 Haines Road  
Duluth, MN 55811  
218-722-8907 (phone)  
218-722-7003 (fax)  
dvogt@1854treatyauthority.org  
www.1854treatyauthority.org

From: Smith, Kathy J (DNR)  
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:27 AM  
To: \*Review, Environmental (DNR)  
Subject: LV-SUMSP EAW

I would love to see more remote primitive/backpack campsites.

Thanks, Kathy

From: Walczynski, Mike - NRCS, Duluth, MN  
[mailto:Mike.Walczynski@mn.usda.gov]  
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:49 PM  
To: Wieland, Ronald (DNR)  
Subject: RE: Lake Vermilion - Soudan Underground Mine State Park  
Developments EAW

This is from the Web Soil Survey. It looks like someone tried to capture ratings while looking at the various soil components per map unit as in map unit description. Mike

From: Wieland, Ronald (DNR) [mailto:Ronald.Wieland@state.mn.us]  
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:44 PM  
To: Walczynski, Mike - NRCS, Duluth, MN  
Subject: RE: Lake Vermilion - Soudan Underground Mine State Park  
Developments EAW

Mike: Thanks for taking a look at the EAW. I did not put Table 1 together so I am not sure where the data was generated from. Is the information you provided below included in the web soil survey results or

From: Walczynski, Mike - NRCS, Duluth, MN  
[mailto:Mike.Walczynski@mn.usda.gov]  
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:35 PM  
To: Wieland, Ronald (DNR)  
Cc: Risley, Roger - NRCS, Duluth, MN; Walczynski, Mike - NRCS, Duluth, MN  
Subject: RE: Lake Vermilion - Soudan Underground Mine State Park  
Developments EAW

Mike Walczynski  
Area Resource Soil Scientist  
USDA-NRCS  
4915 Matterhorn Dr  
Duluth MN 55811  
218-720-5308 ext 113  
mike.walczynski@mn.usda.gov

Please refrain from building rental cabins. Sincerely,

John Karakash  
po box 307  
Chisholm Mn 55719

[illegible]

From: Julie Hardy [mailto:fishtrap2603@hotmail.com]  
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2013 6:57 PM  
To: \*Review, Environmental (DNR)  
Subject: camping

To whom it may concern: As a resort owner I feel the state should not operate resorts in competition with private tax paying resorts that must try and compete with resorts that are funded with the very tax dollars we pay you.

Jeff Hardy

[illegible]

From: Gregory Kappes [mailto:gvkappes@hotmail.com]  
Sent: Sunday, March 10, 2013 12:21 PM  
To: \*Review, Environmental (DNR)  
Subject: Soudan Vermilion State Park

I am very excited about the new start park on Lake Vermilion. I hope construction of the park will fit the beauty of the lake.

I would like to see the campsites being more private with trees for boundaries between sites. I do not like "parking lot" campgrounds. Campsites on the waters edge would be awesome. Docks at these campsite would be great. I would like to have electric power on the docks as well for charging boat batteries. I would be willing to pay extra for this.

Thanks , Greg Kappes

[illegible]

From: David Holmbeck [minnesotapetra@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2013 4:16 PM  
To: Environmentalrev.dm@state.mn.us; \*Review, Environmental (DNR)  
Cc: Potter, Ron L (DNR)  
Subject: "LV-SUMSP EAW"

Ronald Wieland  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Box 25  
500 Lafayette Road St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Mr. Wieland:

Below, find my comments on the Lake Vermilion State Park EAW. Please be advised that I want to receive the Record of Decision, including the Response to Comments.

Let me begin by saying that I am disappointed in the meager amount of short-range and long-range development proposed by the DNR at the project site. In my opinion, the project is meager compared to the 2009 to 2010 publicity-hype and the zealous campaign by the DNR, the governor, and legislature in to buy the land when the state budget outlook was so unfavorable. Based on the price that we tax payers paid to US Steel, I think that we deserve to get more for our money. On the surface, it appears that we are protecting some rare natural resource; or keeping perceived competing-use of the property low, because of pressure by other nearby parks or residents on Lake Vermilion.

In 2005, while reviewing the proposed 3- Bays on Vermillion EIS, I spent several days walking and reconnoitering the property. At that time, it seemed to me that the property's interior was laced with a network of trails and mine workings. Clearly, it is not pristine and wild land, but could be more appropriately labeled as mineland. Moreover, the proposed Vermilion State Park project should not require an EIS level of review compared to the 3- Bays on Vermillion, especially if near shore park development is kept to a minimum. I think, however, that besides the Main Campground (identified in Figure #7), there needs to be more interior campsites, including one additional boat docking and lake access for non-riparian campers who would be set in the park's interior. Additional interior development should also include a small, but additional network of motor vehicle roads.

In closing, let me reiterate by saying that given the history of mining activity in the interior of the property, the DNR should not preclude more park development there, since there would be a low risk of harm to natural resources; and that the benefit to all publics would be commensurate to the money we paid to buy the land from U.S. Steel. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  
David G. Holmbeck  
614 Walter Ave.  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

[illegible]

**Cancel project**—Sell the land and mineral rights to private investors and balance any internal DNR budget issues. Private citizens are good stewards of land and pay property taxes.

Richard Hanson  
5108 142nd Path West  
Apple Valley, MN 55124

From: Jon Clark [mailto:jrclark75@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Saturday, March 23, 2013 10:38 PM  
To: \*Review, Environmental (DNR)  
Subject: LV-SUMSP EAW, suggestions for ski trails in Vermillion State Park

First, I would hope that snowmobiling is not allowed in this quiet park. But if it is, there should be as large a distance as possible between quiet cross country ski trails and any possible snowmobile trails due to the noise generated by snowmobiles.

Also, many of us who ski skate would like to see trails in this park groomed for both classical skiing and ski skating. At least, a good portion of the new trails being developed should be groomed for both styles of skiing.

Jon Clark  
4745 Washburn Ave So.  
Minneapolis, MN 55410  
jrclark75@yahoo.com



I PROPOSE THAT THE USE OF ANY RV OR PORTABLE GENERATOR BE PROHIBITED IN THIS NEW PARK.

**Comment Letter No.**   **11** >>  
3/29/2013  
RE: LV -SUMSP EAW  
Dear Mr. Wieland,

It has come to our attention that there have been alterations to the previously approved plan regarding the park development on Armstrong Bay. We have several concerns regarding these changes. Furthermore we would like clarification on a number of issues that we will be facing as your development progresses.

1. We strongly disagree with relocation of the RV camping area.  
Specifically:

- There was much time and effort put into the original planning phase to keep overnight camping outside of Armstrong Bay (which was approved by the planners), such a drastic change in that plan should be opened again for a public meeting type of forum.
- There is no doubt it will intrude on our peace and tranquillity.
- Generators from RV's will pollute the sound environment and will also degrade the air quality.
- We see there are planned electric hookups, but we see no ban on generators.
- Light pollution will also be an issue in the new location

2. We are also concerned about the effect on local wildlife:  
Specifically:

- There is a nesting pair of Bald Eagles close to your development site.
- There are listed in your report several plants and animal species that are threatened.
- What are you doing to protect them? Do we need an EIS?

3. We are VERY concerned about your WTP.  
Specifically:

- Where is it exactly located?
- What kind fumes will it be dumping into the atmosphere? (We will be downwind from this location a majority of the time.)
- If there is flooding or damage to the facility, where will the overflow







From: Mary Kay Bates [mailto:mkbates@me.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 1:46 PM  
To: \*Review, Environmental (DNR)  
Subject: LV-SUMSP EAW

I read that proposed developments include "campsites, camper cabins, sanitation buildings and a new public water access. Future development may include a visitor center; more camping areas, trails, adventure play areas and supporting roads, parking lots and utilities."

Thanks for your consideration. Best regards,

From: David Bauer [mailto:dbauer@hurleyandassociates.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 2:07 PM  
To: \*Review, Environmental (DNR)  
Subject: LV-SUMSP EAW

Major comment: you will never have enough camping sites in the park or parking spaces at the boat ramp, it will be much more efficient to add them initially then to re-do them later.

David and Belinda Bauer  
5317 720th Ave  
Dumont, MN 56236



*Interim day use activities were available at this location starting in 2010. This area should include day-use facilities that focus on accommodating the needs of campground visitors, **but would be separated from the campgrounds to provide access to day users as well.** Development of this area should avoid impacts to the cultural sites and consider including the following amenities:*

- 1) a carry-in access site and parking area for paddling sports*
- 2) a campground boat access and parking area*
- 3) shore-fishing opportunities*
- 4) lakeside hiking trails*
- 5) picnicking opportunities*

***VS4.1:** Develop a clustered, family-friendly, semi-modern (i.e., electric, sanitation, wireless capability and showers) **campground within a reasonable walking distance of the lake on Cable Bay,** but screen visibility of the camping from the lake. The campground should cluster like kinds of use in order to minimize user conflicts. The campgrounds should include sites for tents, camper trailers, recreational vehicle campers, camper cabins, cart-in/hike-in tents and kids' activity areas (e.g., natural play areas). Boat docking for campers should be provided in Cable Bay and should be clustered to minimize impacts to the shoreline and aquatic habitat. Trails should connect the campground area to the Armstrong Bay hiking trails. The parks should investigate the demand for year-round use of the campground.*

It is our request that there be no development of overnight camping in the Armstrong Bay area and that the intent of the CMP be carried out as intended by relocating such overnight activities to the Cable Bay and/or Mattson Bay area as intended. Absent this outcome, it is our feeling that these changes are significant enough to warrant an official revision of the CMP allowing for public review and input. Further, it is hard to comprehend why the vast majority of the infrastructure build-out is occurring in a relatively small area of the park, nearest to the residents, while the majority of the purchased land is unused. I include below excerpts from the states Management Plan process addressing the potential need for amendments:

### ***Management plans for state parks and state recreation areas (SRAs)***

***[Strategic plans](#) / [Plans open for public comment](#)  
[Plans under development](#) / [Completed plans](#)***

### ***What's a management plan?***

*A management plan is a 20-year strategic vision for state parks and state recreation areas (SRAs). It guides the development of facilities and management of resources. For example, a management plan will point out where a new trail should be located, which areas should be restored as prairie or hardwood forest, or what the focus for the park's interpretive programs will be.*

*Management plans are developed through an open public process. Parks and Trails staff work with DNR resource specialists, other agencies, local government officials, local legislators and citizens to identify issues and develop recommendations. A Citizens Advisory Committee, including representatives from local communities, park users, and other interested citizens, plays a key role in the planning effort.*

### ***Plan amendments***

*Frequently, a new facility or type of use is added to a park that was not included in the original management plan. Examples might be timber harvesting, youth or group camping, or mountain biking. Rather than completely rewriting the plan, Parks and Trails staff will prepare an amendment that details the proposed change, the reasons for the change, and the potential effects of the change on resources and management.*

### **Amendments are open to public and community comment during the planning process and an official public review period.**

- 3) Pg 3; 6b and Pg 11, item 8 --- Mention is made in this section and elsewhere regarding the need for “road improvements” outside of the Armstrong Bay Day Use Area (DUA) for further development of the park. It is our understanding that approval of this EAW is necessary before any further construction occurs outside of the DUA which such construction activity has been completed. Pg 11, item 8 identifies various permits needed to be obtained before proceeding with certain work.

New road construction has been taking place the past several months extending westward for several miles towards the mouth of Armstrong Bay and towards Cable Bay. The question is whether all necessary permits, if required, have been applied for and retained for this road construction assuring the avoidance of high quality native plant communities, old growth, rare species, wetlands, and archaeological or historic sites as well as prevention of storm water run-off and other related concerns?

- 4) Pg. 3: 6b--- It is requested in this EAW that approval for “future” park developments be included in this EAW despite not having specific information regarding many aspects of these proposed “future” developments. Given the lack of specifics, and the possibility of plans changing (as they have already from the CMP), should not there be a requirement for further public input once these “future” plans are more certain? Or is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) the proper mechanism for addressing these future stages?

Within the EIS guidelines, it is stated “The RGU must consider other actions related to the total project when determining the need for an EIS (part 4410.2000), including the project’s future stages, other development in its proximity and actions induce if the project is built.”

One area of particular concern could be the potential negative environmental impact and disturbances that could come from the proposed Group Camp Areas which are very close to the Armstrong Bay residents along Lake Vermilion Park Drive. The size and numbers of group campers could be very large. Considering that the proposed area is quite far from the more central park activities, what are they going to do? Also, this is an area with significant wetland areas that is not very attractive to any outdoor activities without disturbing the wetland area.

- 5) Pg. 5, 8, 24, and 32 --- Noise, electrical hook-ups, etc. There is no mention of whether electric and/or fuel powered generators are allowed in LVSP. In prior discussions with MDNR personnel, it was commented that given the fact that electric hook-ups are being supplied, there should not be any need for visitors to operate generators. We strongly urge that generators of any type not be allowed to eliminate the possibility of noise and air pollution from these mobile sources for the benefit of other park visitors and residences nearby.
- 6) Pg. 5 and 8 --- Ingress/egress for local residents/neighbors --- What assurances are there that local residents will have access to their properties while the "Lake Vermilion Park Drive" is being constructed and post construction? There is no mention of the potential for retaining local area resident access points from the Murray Forest road or the Cell Tower to Hwy 169. What is the process and procedures for neighbors and their family and friends to gain access to their properties? What assurances are there that residents/neighbors retain access after construction? It is my understanding that expense free easements have not yet been officially recorded as promised to the neighbors/residences where this is needed despite significant time and attention to this. I believe this is a necessary step in the process in order to proceed and has the full support of local regulatory agencies. Who will be responsible for maintenance of the roads including snow removal?
- 7) Pg. 16 --- Swimming --- It is identified that a swim area will be included near the proposed Lakeside Lodge. What assurance will there be that swimming and associated noise and potential destruction of the shoreline will not occur in areas such as the Armstrong Day Use area? A natural sandy shoreline exists adjacent to a very significant "archaeological" finding and will quite likely attract swimmers with the potential for shoreline and archaeological disturbances. Further, what assurances are there that this archaeological site will not be disturbed considering the new "day use" parking lot has been constructed in very close proximity? I understand pathways have been intentionally constructed to guide people away from this sensitive area, but will that be enough when such an attractive swimming area is so close?
- 8) Pg. 24 --- Houseboats---It is mentioned that a houseboat tie up site is proposed along the eastern shore of Stuntz Bay, near the future Lakeside Adventure Play Area. What assurance is there that houseboats (or for that matter, anyone deciding to overnight camp along the shoreline in a non-designated camping area) will not be allowed to park elsewhere along the shoreline of the LVSP? There has been significant evidence of noise disturbances coming from the unauthorized parking of houseboats in the past causing excessive noise issues during evening hours.

- 9) Pg 30, 31, 37, 38 --- Traffic --- There seems to be a great deal of unknowns as to the magnitude of visitor traffic. Shouldn't there be a greater understanding of potential traffic congestion and/or air pollution resulting from the new LVSP and related traffic before approval of an EAW? Is an EIS necessary in better determining the potential negative impacts to the environment and traffic patterns potentially impacting local residents? 392 estimated daily trips for "designed facilities" works out to approximately one trip every 2 minutes assuming 12 hours of usage---that does not seem to be insignificant and only comprehends "designed facilities"? This is the only area where an estimate was provided. Information or estimates were "not available" for "estimated total average daily traffic generated", nor "recently developed facilities", nor "future developments", nor "estimated maximum peak hour traffic generated and time of occurrence". Pg 38 estimates "300,000 annual visits per year can be expected" in LVSP--this translates to approximately 1,428 trips per day assuming 7 months of usage and only one trip per visitor which is low. Certainly the development of this park will present energy, hazardous air pollutants, and climate/greenhouse gas issues that were not there before the project which seems to be minimized in this EAW.

Pg 32, Item 23. Stationary source air emissions has an N/A. Why? Are generators considered "stationary" source air emissions? What other potential sources are there?

- 10) Pg 32 Item 24 --- Odors, noise, dust---"Additional visitor and park operations traffic would locally pose minor increases in odors, dust, and noise. The existing vegetation that provides a buffer to the nearest neighbors will help diffuse potential noise from vehicles using the park. Most ambient noise will not carry the distance to neighbors." What proof is there of these statements? What about the potential for noise pollution and disturbances coming from overnight campers, as well as vehicles, disturbing the peace and tranquility experienced by the neighbors/residences for decades? Should the possibility of noise pollution not be more formally addressed within this EAW or is an EIS a more appropriate venue for addressing these issues? What specific actions have been taken to "engineer" in noise mitigation actions to determine the potential impact before construction and normal operations? Again, the elimination of the North campground and any overnight activity in the Armstrong Bay area as agreed to in the CMP would help resolve concerns in this area.
- 11) Wastewater Treatment --- What assurances are there that this will be properly contained and/or disposed of properly? Is there a potential for odors impacting the residents and park visitors? What about the proper handling of trash and garbage which if not done in a timely fashion will attract bears to the area.
- 12) There is no mention within the EAW of policing, park management, emergency service availability, day-use hours, conflict resolution, etc. Do the proposed roads follow regulatory guidelines for emergency response, safety, multiple entrance/exit points, etc., etc.? Should not these very basic and primary resident rights be addressed in this EAW or is an EIS a more appropriate venue for addressing these issues? Another area of concern is the greater potential for forest fires and associated negative environmental and safety impacts given the traffic and number of visitors to the park. Our residences are east of the facilities, most often downwind---what are plans for emergency response and/or ways to limit this heightened exposure brought on by this development?



- 13) What are the rules for the day-use areas such as access hours, the handling of nuisances, or variations from the rules? Will there be 24 hour park management helping to enforce the rules of the park helping to limit noise disturbances and maintaining property owners privacy and safety? Is there any precedent or possibility of prohibiting jet skis in the Armstrong Bay area, an activity that does not now exist but will certainly add significantly greater noise to the area if available?

We do appreciate the opportunity to provide our input and help shape the on-going management of the park so as to maintain as much as possible the environmental integrity of the park as well as the rights of the neighbors who have much invested in this area. We look forward to your response.

Thank you,

Tom & Monica Pustovar

**P.O. Box 56 • Soudan, Minnesota 55782**

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Box 25  
Attn: Ronald Wieland  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Following are the Township of Breitung Town Board comments on Lake Vermilion and Soudan Underground Mine State Park Development Project EAW as discussed at our 3/26 board meeting.

- Further study or evidence of fact on the possibility of connection to public water and sanitary sewer should be provided. Impacts to the environment would be minimized with sewer treatment and healthier drinking water would be available to visitors of park with the connection to existing public utilities. Service of this type could be provided to all or portions of the park facilities depending on cost of construction and estimated higher usage areas. The EAW does not address this option or reasons for not considering it.
- Feasible and logical access for current property owners in the Armstrong Bay Area for the use of their snowmobiles to connect to non park trails should be designated to avoid the potential impacts of “trespass access” to reach their desired destination. Lack of such designation may result in degradation of the off road/off trail areas in the park.
- An opportunity to improve the preventative measures in the plan to control or limit the advancement of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species would be to include a cleaning station and further education to all visitors of the park at the proposed Welcome Plaza/Contact Station. The EAW assumes 300,000 visitors to the park annually which could threaten the quality of the park without stronger emphasis on the spread of Invasive Species. Minnesota’s newest state park could potentially become a leader in the State/Country with going beyond complying with guidelines and directives.

- Combined the two parks have nearly 10 miles of shoreline and include 15 small islands yet the plan includes only one Houseboat tie up. This type of visitor has the least environmental impact to the park as they are self sufficient with domestic water and sewer needs and users are primarily water based. In the present plan, visitors of this type do not have access to the future developments of the park and designated ties up should be established now to ensure that full use of the park is available.
- As noted the Lake Vermilion Park Drive will be a Township Road and we have verbal agreements in place to maintain the road when constructed. The EAW does not address the restrictions (if any) on the type of winter road deicer or road sand that could be used.
- Roads that travel within or through the state park should not be constructed or resurfaced with "rumble strips" located on the centerline or shoulders of the road to minimized the noise impact within the state park. Note that such language would include the MN State Hwy 169 that runs through the park boundaries. The EAW should address this potential noise impact.
- For safe entry to and exit from the park, the speed limit on the HWY 169 that runs through the park should be limited to 50 MPH. This is the current speed limit for the same highway as it passes from Tower through Soudan. It would be logical to continue at that speed limit until the vehicles have passed the north eastern edge of the park. Noise would be favorably impacted as well.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the development plans of the two parks and continue to support the DNR in these efforts.

Sincerely,



Tim Tomsich  
Chairman

520 Lafayette Road North | St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4194 | 651-296-6300

ROD ATTACHMENT 1



Using the Power of History to Transform Lives  
PRESERVING > SHARING > CONNECTING

## State Historic Preservation Office

April 2, 2013

Mr. Ronald Wieland, Environmental Planner  
MN DNR Division of Ecological and Water Resources  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul MN 55155

RE: Lake Vermillion and Soudan Underground Mine State Park Development  
Breitung Township, St. Louis County  
SHPO Number: 2013-1542

Dear Mr. Wieland:

Thank you for providing this office with a copy of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the above-referenced project. It has been reviewed pursuant to the responsibilities given the Minnesota Historical Society by the Minnesota Historic Sites Act and the Field Archaeology Act.

Both the Soudan Mine and the Stuntz Bay Boathouse Historic District are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and additional significant archaeological sites have been identified within the parks as well. Therefore, it will be important to evaluate the effect that various park development initiatives will have on cultural resources within the state parks.

As you may be aware, our office commented earlier on the Cooperative Master Plan developed for these parks (SHPO # 2011-0686). We are pleased to see that the current EAW takes into account the entire scope of development for these properties. However, we expect that our office will also be receiving and reviewing more detailed plans for individual projects within the parks as they are developed, funded and permitted.

We have already reviewed plans for the Armstrong Bay Day Use (SHPO #2012-2740). At the present time, we are consulting with the MN DNR and the Corps of Engineers regarding the Lake Vermillion Park Drive project (SHPO # 2013-1287). We anticipate additional consultation as facility planning and construction continues. In particular, we will need to work closely with the MN DNR and the Corps of Engineers as plans are formalized for the Main Campground facilities.

Thank you for staying in communication with our office throughout the development process. If you have further questions, feel free to call me at 651-259-3456.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Mary Ann Heidemann, Manager  
Government Programs and Compliance

cc: Dave Radford, MN DNR Parks and Trails  
Brad Johnson, USACE Regulatory



Twin Cities Field Office  
4101 American Blvd E.  
Bloomington, Minnesota 55425-1665

minimize disturbance, and will work with you to determine if a disturbance permit is needed.

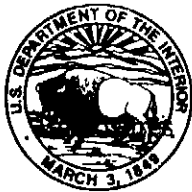
Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this EAW and we look forward to working closely with you to minimize impacts to listed species and bald eagles. Please contact Andrew Horton, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at (612) 725-3548, ext. 2208, if further assistance is needed or when initiating section 7 consultation.

Tamara Smith  
Acting  
for

Sincerely,



Tony Sullins  
Field Supervisor



## United States Department of the Interior

### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Twin Cities Field Office  
4101 American Blvd E.  
Bloomington, Minnesota 55425-1665

April 22, 2013

Ronald Wieland  
Environmental Planner  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Road  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Lake Vermilion and Soudan Underground Mine State Park Development  
Environmental Assessment Worksheet, St. Louis County, Minnesota  
FWS TAILS # 03E19000-2013-R-0070

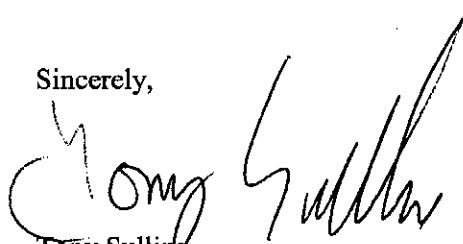
Dear Mr. Wieland:

This letter is meant to clarify statements made in our April 3, 2013 letter regarding the Lake Vermilion and Soudan Underground Mine State Park (LV-SUMSP) Development Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW). Our response was mainly attempting to gain additional information as to the potential impacts of the proposed project. At the time of our letter, we understood that MNDNR and County Regional Rail Authorities were seeking federal 404 permits, and thus may have sought to participate in the ESA section 7 process as applicants. However, the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) acting as the Federal Action Agency submitted a may affect, not likely to adversely affect determination in regards to Canada Lynx and we have since concurred with that determination. Thus, there is no remaining ESA section 7 obligation for either the Corps or its permit applicants.

In regards to the EAW, we suggest clarifying the statement listed on page 19, that "due to the limited area of development within the 4,000 acre parkland, the proposed project should have minimal adverse effects on the Canada lynx." We recommend this language be updated as to not create confusion on the anticipated effects to Canada lynx. We will continue to work with your agency to provide any assistance needed to help minimize impacts to Canada lynx and bald eagles.

Please contact Andrew Horton, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at (612) 725-3548, ext. 2208, if further assistance is needed.

Sincerely,



Tony Sullins  
Field Supervisor

cc (email only):  
Mr. Rich Baker, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources