

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources &
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Draft EIS Comment Form
Minnesota Steel Project

Name: GREG ANDREWS

Address: 4698 STODDART LANE

City: WHITE BEAR TWP State: MN ZIP: 55127

The following comments are on the Draft EIS for the Minnesota Steel Project (attach additional pages as necessary) The last day to submit comments on the Draft EIS is **4:30 p.m. on April 2, 2007**:

Fold

I was born and raised on the Levee Hwy^{#7}, approx. 5 miles west of the proposed project, I have numerous relatives that live in the immediate area and feel that the "project" would not adversely affect their health and safety but would enhance their quality of life through economic development, increasing the tax base, provide high quality paying jobs. I therefore wholeheartedly support the project.

Signature: [Handwritten Signature] Date: 3/14/07

Scott Ek
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Policy and Review
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4025
Environmental.Review@dnr.state.mn.us

Jon K. Ahlness
Regulatory Branch, St. Paul District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
190 Fifth Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638
jon.k.ahlness@mvp02.usace.army.mil

From: "STEVE BARB ARBOUR" <arbour1974@msn.com>
To: <scott.ek@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 3/14/2007 11:20 AM
Subject: Minnesota Steel

CC: "Bud Stone" <bud@grandmn.com>

Dear Mr. Ek,

I am writing in support of the Minnesota Steel Project. I am a retired banker with a good understanding of the economy in Northern Minnesota and have been involved with environmental issues for a number of years. This project will be a positive impact on the economy without having major impact on the environment. I believe the Draft EIS has done a thorough job in its review of the Project.

The area to be mined has been mined on and off for over 100 years. There does not appear to be any long term issues with it. The technology being used with the project is meeting or exceeding all state requirements. There will be no liquid discharge from the plant which is another plus.

I feel confident that all the State agencies will do a good job in monitoring this project and it will be a good addition to the area. Northern Minnesota is in need of new economic activity to insure viable communities. We cannot afford to continue to lose our youth from the area and maintain the current cities and towns. The Project will help keep this part of our state viable by helping retain these youth. Thank you for your time.

Steve Arbour
31849 Sunny Beach Rd.
Grand Rapids, Mn 55744
218-327-1270

March 30, 2007

1767 Watertown Rd.
Long Lake, MN 55356

Scott Ek, Principal Planner
Environmental Policy & Review
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Ecological Services
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Dear Mr. Ek,

I am writing to support the granting of appropriate environmental permits for Minnesota Steel, Inc. ("MSI"). MSI is exactly what northern Minnesota needs -- an environmentally sensitive business that uses the latest technology to minimize impact on the ecosystem.

To wit, MSI's facility has been designed using:

- State of the art, commercially proven technology
- Integrated facility allows for considerable energy savings, up to 30% less than traditional steelmaking
- Environmentally friendly process using natural gas and electricity as opposed to coal
- Mining will take place in a previously mined area which will minimize wetland impacts
- Company meets or exceeds all the rules and regulations, no variances have been requested
- Water will be recycled in a closed system, minimizing any potential release of pollutants

MSI provides the most environmentally sound solution using the best available commercial technology and ensures the company will be able to manage the process as a good environmental steward for future generations. At every opportunity the Company has opted for the conservative approach for the benefit of the environment. As a successful project, it will have a tremendous impact on, and will set the standard for, the State and the rest of the steel industry. The project will also showcase new technology which can then be employed in older plants to the benefit of the environment. It has been conceived and executed in a manner that can be used as a model going forward as to how we can balance the economic needs of society without compromising the quality of life we want.

I hope the MN DNR will consider approving MSI's environmental permits.

Sincerely,



Frank B. Bennett

From: "Thomas Bennett" <thomasbennett8@msn.com>
To: <environmental.review@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 3/12/2007 9:59 AM
Subject: Minnesota Steel

CC: "Joe Bennett" <j.bennett@bresnan.net>
Mr. Scott Elk, Principal Planner
Environmental Policy & Review
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Dear Mr. Elk:

Having spent the first 18 years of my life in Minnesota, I am still committed to the economic and environmental welfare of this wonderful state. I am therefore writing to urge you to issue the necessary environmental permits, so that construction of the Minnesota Steel facility on the Iron Range can proceed.

This project will provide tremendous benefits to the economies of the nation and especially northern Minnesota. Thousands of jobs will be created and the state will receive millions of dollars in taxes.

Of course your primary concern is the environmental impact this project will make I assure you that all aspects of air and water quality were carefully analyzed and integrated into the planning of this vitally important facility. In particular please note that natural gas, not coal, will supply the necessary power, and all water will be recycled in a closed system.

Again I ask that the Minnesota DNR move swiftly to issue the environmental permits to allow this economically and environmentally sound project to move ahead.

Sincerely,

Thomas H. Bennett
784 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources &
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Draft EIS Comment Form
Minnesota Steel Project

Name: Robert Bestul

Address: 12440 Doherty Rd

City: Hibbing State: MN ZIP: 55746

The following comments are on the Draft EIS for the Minnesota Steel Project (attach additional pages as necessary) The last day to submit comments on the Draft EIS is **4:30 p.m. on April 2, 2007**:

I believe that this project has done everything possible to ensure that the environmental impact is a minimum. I fully support this project + hope it goes forward.

Fold

Signature: Scott Ek Date: 3/14/07

Scott Ek
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Policy and Review
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4025
Environmental.Review@dnr.state.mn.us

Jon K. Ahlness
Regulatory Branch, St. Paul District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
190 Fifth Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638
jon.k.ahlness@mvp02.usace.army.mil

3-7-07

Dear Jon,

I am in favor of the Minnesota Steel project for both environmental and economic reasons.

The environmental emissions standards in place today are so high that the impact on the environment is very limited.

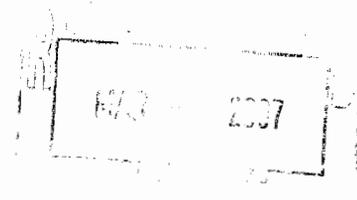
Also the economic impact for this region of Minnesota would be a huge positive.

We must move this project forward quickly.

Thankyou,



Jonathan Bunkowske
26621 James Drive
Grand Rapids, MN 55744



3-7-07

Dear Scott,

I am in favor of the Minnesota Steel project for both environmental and economic reasons.

The environmental emissions standards in place today are so high that the impact on the environment is very limited.

Also the economic impact for this region of Minnesota would be a huge positive.

We must move this project forward quickly.

Thankyou,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jonathan Bunkowske". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and address.

Jonathan Bunkowske
26621 James Drive
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

From: Environmental Review
To: Ek, Scott
Date: 3/22/2007 10:25 AM
Subject: Fwd: Minnesota Steel

>>> "Steven L. Crouch" <crouch@umn.edu> 3/21/2007 12:22 PM >>>

March 21, 2007

Mr. Scott Ek
 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
 Division of Ecological Services
 500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
 St. Paul, MN55155-4025
 <!--[if !supportLineBreakNewLine]--><!--[endif]-->

Dear Mr. Ek,

I am writing to lend my support to Minnesota Steel's application for an environmental permit to begin mining and production operations at the company's northern Minnesota facility.

By way of background, I would like to say that I was originally trained as a mining engineer and that from 1990 to 2002 I served as one of the University of Minnesota's representatives on the state's Minerals Coordinating Committee (MCC). As you probably know, the MCC is a legislatively-mandated organization with membership from the DNR Division of Minerals, the Minnesota Geological Survey, the Natural Resources Research Institute at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, and a member to be appointed by the dean of the University of Minnesota's Institute of Technology, a position that I currently hold.

During the time I served on the MCC, I recall that we had many discussions about the possibility—and the desirability—of someone implementing the comparatively new, but proven, technology for direct reduction of iron ore on the Iron Range. The economic advantages of doing this were always clear: production of a value-added product in Minnesota would contribute substantially to the economy of the state and bring new prosperity to northern Minnesota. I was disappointed at the time that no proposals for direct reduction plants were put forward, because I could see that this was the hope for the long-term future for the Iron Range.

This picture recently changed. The founders of Minnesota Steel have worked aggressively and successfully to raise money for a new direct steel-making plant in northern Minnesota, and the company is now poised to begin its operations. I firmly believe that Minnesota Steel's engineers have identified all the requisite environmental safeguards for the project, and I urge you to grant approval to their permit application.

Steven L. Crouch <!--[if !supportLineBreakNewLine]-->
 <!--[endif]-->

Microsoft Word 2003 document

From: Environmental Review
To: Ek, Scott
Date: 3/16/2007 8:41 AM
Subject: Fwd: MINNESOTA STEEL

>>> <Tom.DeLuca@zieglercat.com> 3/16/2007 7:44 AM >>>

Much has been said about the exportation of our industrial base and its jobs. Well this is an opportunity to provide and revitalize our steel industry with a state of the art processing facility. These types of opportunities do not present themselves often so a timely approval is of great importance.

This is a state of the art and commercially proven technology that provides for considerable energy savings. And energy savings always provide for less greenhouse gases. The process will use natural gas and electricity vs. coal.

Water will be recycled in a closed system, minimizing any potential release of pollutants.

The company meets or exceeds all the current rules and regulations and the mining will take place in a previously mined area which will minimize any wetland impact.

Besides the 700 full time employees that would be created (not to mention the state taxes and royalties paid) it is estimated to have a \$500 million impact on a two county region of Northern Minnesota.

More important it is an investment in our country. Currently the demand for steel slab in the USA is coming from overseas and Minnesota Steel will benefit the natural resources of Minnesota in the most environmentally sound manner while keeping the jobs in this country.

It is important that the State and Federal Government support this project. We have but one opportunity and it is too important to miss,

Thomas Deluca
PO Box 1018
Gilbert, Minnesota 55741

3/16/07

Mr Scott Ek

Regarding Minnesota Steel. I attended the informational meeting last night.

It was presented very well, and also well accepted by everyone there.

We need the Minnesota Steel Project, and have been waiting for it for years.

Please put it on fast forward.

Donald C Downs Sr.
3410 Swinerton Rd
Hibbing Mn 55746

*Mr. and Mrs. Larry O. Doyle
P.O. Box 456
Ranier, MN 56668*

March 24, 2007

Scott Ek, Principal Planner
Environmental Policy & Review
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Ecological Services
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR THE MINNESOTA STEEL PROJECT

Dear Mr. Ek,

This is to request that you support Minnesota Steel's planned iron mining, processing, and steelmaking facility, which is planned for construction in Minnesota's Mesabi Iron Range.

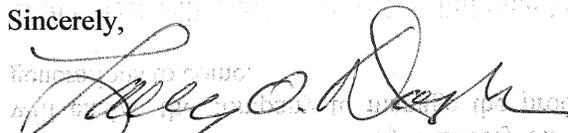
Minnesota Steel represents a long-term investment with sustainable natural advantages that will be economically sound during all business cycles. We believe that this project is good for Minnesota's future. The facility will rely on the best available commercial technology, which will enable the company to manage the process as a good environmental steward for many generations to come.

The project will provide up to 700 full time jobs and create more than 2,100 spin-off jobs. The facility will serve as an excellent model showing how Minnesotans can balance the economic needs of society without compromising the quality of life we expect for ourselves and future generations.

America's demand for steel slab (the product that will be produced by Minnesota Steel) is in excess of 10 million tons, all of which comes from unstable overseas sources (Brazil, Mexico, Russia and China). Minnesota Steel will upgrade the natural resources of Minnesota to a value-added product, and it will accomplish that goal in the most environmentally sound manner possible.

This is a good project. It makes economic sense, and we must not allow it to get held up in the long bureaucratic process of environmental approvals. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Larry O. Doyle



Elizabeth B. Doyle

From: "Erkkila, Eric (GE Infra, Energy, Non-GE)" <eric.erkkila@ge.com>
To: <environmental.review@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 4/2/2007 4:44 PM
Subject: Minnesota Steel Industries

To Whom it Concern,

In reviewing the available information for this project, I believe it is in the best interests of the State of Minnesota to grant the permits necessary to construct and operate the Minnesota Steel Industries Facility. This facility is going to be constructed and operated using the latest in technology to protect the environment. The use of green energy, recycling process water, capturing 100% of site storm water run-off will make this a leader in environmental responsibility in the mining industry.

Other considerations to be taken into account are:

- * Construction labor and material expenditures.
- * Stabilizing the regional economy by expanding the mining into a value added market.
- * The existence of a tailings basin and taconite mine at the site.
- * National security, securing another source of domestic steel in the event that foreign sources become difficult to obtain or disappear totally.
- * Operating expenditures and the increasing governmental revenues from activities at this facility.

Please take these comments into consideration when the decision is being made on the issuance of permits.

Eric C. Erkkila
2909 Parkwood Lane
Duluth, MN 55811

From: Environmental Review
To: Ek, Scott
Date: 3/22/2007 10:26 AM
Subject: Fwd: Minnesota Steel
Attachments: Part.001

>>> Kathy Furlong <lfurlong@rangebroadband.com> 3/21/2007 4:31 PM >>>

2101 11th Ave. E
Hibbing, MN 55746

March 22, 2007

Scott Ek, Principal Planner
Environmental Policy & Review
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Ecological Services
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Dear Mr. Ek,

As a member of the Hibbing Economic Development Authority (HEDA) and president of the Hibbing Business Development Corporation, I attended the environmental impact study public meeting in Nashwauk March 14, 2007, for the Minnesota Steel project.

My thoughts on the meeting are positive. Minnesota Steel had a great display which was well staffed with company personnel as well as Barr Engineering personnel. The Environmental and Department of Natural Resources people had wonderful information available and did an excellent job of mixing and mingling with the general public.

I was pleased that the seven or eight people who spoke were all in favor of the project. Only two voiced minor concerns, but they were not against the project. From all the reports that I have read and remarks I've heard, all indications are that your department and Minnesota Steel are diligently working to bring an environmentally friendly project to fruition. Congratulations to you and your staff for a job well done.

We all know this project will have a tremendous positive economic benefit for the area. The number of new jobs will bring new life to the Iron Range. I urge you and your people to keep the permitting process moving forward in a timely manner. The Iron Range welcomes you and looks forward to working with you.

Sincerely yours,

Larry Furlong

Douglas G. Hanson
38411 North Sugar Lake Road
Cohasset, MN 55721

March 14, 2007

Mr. Scott E. Ek
Principal Planner
MN Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Dear Mr. Ek:

I am writing this letter to provide my comments on the draft environmental impact statement for the proposed Minnesota Steel Project. I appreciate the opportunity to be heard on this matter and feel that it is my responsibility to provide input for your consideration. I respectfully offer the following comments:

Technology: This project is benefited greatly by the fact that the technology proposed offers promise for utilizing resources that could not be feasibly marketed through old technology and processes. It seems the technology upon which the project is based is new and advanced enough to offer "new life" to an old mining site and mineral reserve but has the advantage of being tested and proven.

Air and Water Pollution:

I believe it is critical to be diligent in maintaining our clean air and water resources. It's reassuring to note all the measures being proposed to ensure that we are not faced with choosing between clean air & water and jobs.

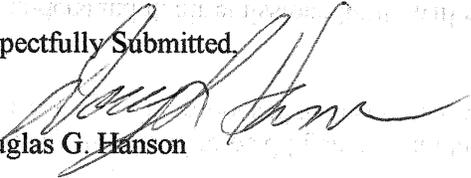
As I understand it, air emissions limits will not be exceeded and continuous monitoring will be conducted to ensure that is the case. I also understand that the plant will not discharge liquid, there will be seepage collection at tailings ponds and area lakes, rivers & streams will be monitored on an ongoing basis as well.

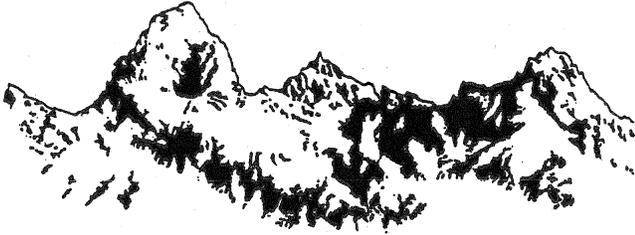
Economic and Social Impacts:

I think the overall economic and social impacts of this proposed project are the most significant impacts. I share with many people a concern for our environment including air and water quality. I also know that developing and maintaining an economy that can provide a good quality of life to those of us that choose to live here is a key consideration. This Project presents the potential of securing the economic futures of thousands of residents of our region now and well into the future. It would be difficult to overstate the significance of that consideration.

As a nearly life-long resident of the area, I want to be on record as strongly in favor of this project and its important economic and social benefits to all of us here. I urge you and all the DNR personnel considering this issue to place the appropriate emphasis on the positive social and economic impacts the project would have on our area. Even a casual observer who drives through the surrounding region can recognize the obvious signs of an economy that has been in decline for years. The revitalization of that mining site into a thriving steel plant is a golden opportunity for us all to see a genuine turnaround in an area that desperately needs it.

Respectfully Submitted,


Douglas G. Hanson



Al Hilde, Jr.

Route 65
9555 Snake River Road
Jackson, WY 83001
307-733-4034 Fax: 307-734-1836

March 18, 2007

Governor Tim Pawlenty
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Pawlenty:

In all my years in business the Minnesota Steel project up on the iron range is one of the most sensible and exciting endeavors I have witnessed. It kills so many birds with one stone -- jobs, environment, and good economics. It is a development that will be the envy of many other states and communities.

One of the most valuable features is the elimination of an entire step of heating the material in the steel making process. The benefit to both the environment and economics is enormous. May I urge your enthusiastic support of this important project. I still have family and business connections in Minnesota and would be pleased to see the Minnesota Steel project go forward. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Al Hilde, Jr.

C: Scott Ek, Principal Planner, MN Department of Natural Resources

Mr. Joe Bennett, Chairman, Minnesota Steel

From: "Ranger" <chevy2@rangebroadband.com>
To: <scott.ek@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 3/14/2007 10:08 AM
Subject: Minnesota Steel Nashwauk

Please see that this happens. It is the best deal I have ever seen for all concerned.
The State and all involved will benefit.
It's clean and on the cutting edge and will change the industry for the long term.

Don Hilligoss, Hibbing, MN 218.263.7578

From: <Dave.Johnson@zieglercat.com>
To: <environmental.review@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 3/15/2007 8:34 AM
Subject: Minnesota Steel

I am pleased to provide a letter of support on behalf of the proposed Minnesota Steel project.

This forward looking proposal will be a state of the art, environmentally friendly asset to the State of Minnesota. Their plan, its products, and the impact to the economy of the State of Minnesota and the Iron Range will enhance the quality of life and economics in this state.

Minnesota Steel's willingness to invest in the future of the State of Minnesota is a milestone in futhering the economic well being of the citizens of the State of Minnesota. Their revolutionary approach to provide a state of the art steel manufacturing facility is critical to the continued well being on the Iron Range. Job creation and enhanced product offerings is what we need to continue to be a great state.

The business plan of creating a product not currently available in the United States is to be applauded. We can reap the benefits provided by their long term vision. The health of the Steel Industry has not been as strong as it is today. We should make sure we take advantage of their proposal to establish a long term asset to assure the continued well being of our great state.

I fully endorse the establishment of Minnesota Steel and the economic benefit it will create for the State of Minnesota.

David Johnson
4159 Lantern Lane
Eagan, Minnesota 55123
612-581-6186

From: "Kathryn Johnson from Grand Rapids Realty" <kathryn@rapidsrealty.com>
To: <scott.ek@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 3/9/2007 2:52 PM
Subject: Minnesota Steel

Mr. Scott E. Ek,

I'm writing this letter in support of the Minnesota Steel Project. The positives of this project to the areas employment and economy which has previously been mined would be most hopeful and positive. My husband worked in the mines as a young man. He speaks with pride as he looks back on those years.

Thank you for your time and hard work.

Regards,
Kathryn Johnson
28562 E Harris Rd
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

218-326-4685

Kathleen D. Kirchner
P.O. Box 456
Ranier, MN 56668

March 19, 2007

Scott Ek, Principal Planner
Environmental Policy & Review
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Ecological Services
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR A THE MINNESOTA STEEL PROJECT

This is to request that you support Minnesota Steel's planned iron mining, processing, and steelmaking facility planned for construction in Minnesota's Mesabi Iron Range.

Minnesota Steel represents a long-term investment with sustainable natural advantages that will be economically sound during all business cycles. I believe that this project is good for Minnesota's future. The facility will rely on the best available commercial technology, which will enable the company to manage the process as a good environmental steward for many generations to come.

The project will provide up to 700 full-time jobs and create more than 2,100 spin-off jobs. The facility will serve as an excellent model showing how Minnesotans can balance the economic needs of society without compromising the quality of life we expect for ourselves and future generations.

America's demand for steel slab (the product that will be produced by Minnesota Steel) is in excess of 10 million tons, all of which comes from unstable overseas sources (Brazil, Mexico, Russia and China). Minnesota Steel will upgrade the natural resources of Minnesota to a value-added product, and it will accomplish that goal in the most environmentally sound manner possible.

This is a great project. It makes economic sense, and we must not allow it to get held up in the long bureaucratic process of environmental approvals. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Kathleen D. Kirchner

From: "Latvala Lumber" <l.lumber@mchsi>
To: <scott.ek@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 4/2/2007 4:17 PM
Subject: minnesota steel draft EIS

Dear Mr. Ek,

I attended the meeting on March 14th in Nashwauk, the process used to prepare the EIS draft and its findings was well done. I live on Swan Lake and have resided in the Nashwauk area for almost 50 years. I have attended 37 meetings over the last 3 years involving this steel plant. Minesota Steel officials have always provided information requested and have been very open and helpful. I fully support this project based on the fact that this area has been a mined area for almost 100 years, as well as the economic impact it will make in our area. Please expedite the completion of this draft to permitting of the project as timing is critical to Minnesota Steel and Itasca County.

Thank you David Latvala
 16078 East Maple Knoll
 Pengilly, MN 55775

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources &
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Draft EIS Comment Form
Minnesota Steel Project

Name: MARK MANDICH
Address: 36820 BAY POINT RD
City: BOVEY State: MN ZIP: 55709

The following comments are on the Draft EIS for the Minnesota Steel Project (attach additional pages as necessary) The last day to submit comments on the Draft EIS is **4:30 p.m. on April 2, 2007**:

Fold

Excellent Project Itasca County needs MN Steel. Very Professional Individuals working on the Project and always courteous & willing to answer any and all questions one might have. I am also the county Commissioner in this district and hear nothing but positive comments about this project as a whole.

Fold

Signature: 

Date: 3-14-07

Scott Ek
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Policy and Review
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4025
Environmental.Review@dnr.state.mn.us

Jon K. Ahlness
Regulatory Branch, St. Paul District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
190 Fifth Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638
jon.k.ahlness@mvp02.usace.army.mil

From: "Leif Nelson" <leif.nelson@itascalaw.com>
To: <scott.ek@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 3/8/2007 10:37 AM
Subject: Minnesota Steel Draft Environmental Impavt Statement

CC: "GARY ERICKSON" <gwericks@msn.com>

Dear Mr. Ek:

I have read the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and I am thoroughly impressed with the magnitude of the assessment. This is the first such Statement that I have read completly and I was previously unaware of the voluminous categories and topics addressed and the nature of the assessment.

The results of this Draft certainly seem to favor continuation of the DRI Project and I am sending this letter to advise of my support for the Project. Thank you for your efforts.

Leif Nelson

Leif Nelson
Lano, Nelson, O'Toole & Bengtson, Ltd.
515 NE Second Avenue
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
Tel: 218-326-9603
Fax: 218-326-1565
leif.nelson@itascalaw.com

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From: Environmental Review
To: Ek, Scott
Date: 3/26/2007 12:55 PM
Subject: Fwd: Minnesota Steel EIS in Nashwauk, MN

>>> "finnie" <finnie@mchsi.com> 3/23/2007 11:28 AM >>>

To Whom It May Concern:

Please approve the EIS for the Minnesota Steel Project in Nashwauk. It would greatly help improve the state of our economy in Northern Minnesota. With the new technological improvements for the mining industry this Project will be a safe and productive industry for the environmentally sensitive public concerned about maintaining Northern Minnesota's pristine ecological system.

Please, allow the environmental review process to permit this Project to proceed for the good of the Iron Range.

Thank you,
Terry Nevalainen
Terry Nevalainen,
Civil Engineer and Private Business Owner

From: Environmental Review
To: Ek, Scott
Date: 3/22/2007 10:27 AM
Subject: Fwd: EIS

>>> "DREW PROCHAZKA" <drew@rapidsrental.com> 3/21/2007 11:28 AM >>>

Dear Scott,

I went to the meeting that you hosted last week in Nashwauk. Thank you for doing that, I learned alot about the project and I was able to get my questions answered. The input that I would like to share is I would be in favor of the project going forward. I own Rapids Rental and Supply, just so you know where I am coming from. I feel the project would benefit my business, but the main reason I would like to see the project move forward is for my kids and grandkids. If we do not have good jobs in the area my kids will probably move to an area where the economy and the jobs are good. I did not see any environmental problems with the project that are not being addressed. I feel that the State and Federal Government has proper rules in place to protect us from any problems. In fact it seems that the project will actually improve the area because the way the last mine was left. In your study please place a high priority on the economic impact on this area. This area really needs some economic help. Its not just the money impact directly, but the lifting of spirits of the communities as a whole. Our schools have taken alot of hits on enrollment and consequently staffing. This project would at least stop the decline and possibly start a small growth. Thank you for taking the time to consider my input. Drew Prochazka

From: "Terry Rugar" <trugar@umdcad.com>
To: <environmental.review@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 4/2/2007 2:18 PM
Subject: Minnesota Steel Project

Scott Ek, Principal Planner

Environmental Policy and Review

Division of Ecological Services

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

500 Lafayette Road, Box 25

St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4025

Dear Mr. Ek:

I am a business consultant at the Small Business Development Center at Hibbing Community College in Hibbing, MN. As a former miner and life-long Ranger, I have experienced the "good life" provided by the mining industry here on the Mesabi Range. I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the Minnesota Steel Project proposal. From what I understand about the Environmental Impact Statement, Minnesota Steel's plan for emission controls and protection measures that will be utilized are among the most effective at safeguarding the environment. Minnesota Steel will have as minimal an environmental impact as is possible with today's technology. As a modern industrialized country, we cannot ask for more than that.

It has been my pleasure to have been associated with individuals who are now part of Minnesota Steel's team. I know them to be of the highest character and integrity. I believe that their plans for state-of-the-art emission control and environmental protection measures will ensure an ecologically responsible operation.

This is precisely the kind of investment this industry, this area, this country needs. I am looking forward to the day that this steel plant is up and running at capacity. I am confident that citizens of the Mesabi Iron Range will be proud to have such a facility located here and that we all will be enjoying its economic benefits.

Please help move Minnesota Steel through its approval process. We will all be beneficiaries.

Sincerely,

Terry J Rupar

Business Consultant

Small Business Development Center

Hibbing Community College

1515 East 25th Street

Hibbing, MN 55746

(218) 262-6703 - office, (218) 262-7399 - fax

(888) 387-4594 - toll free

trupar@umdced.com

www.umdced.com

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources &
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Draft EIS Comment Form
Minnesota Steel Project

Name: LARRY SALMELA

Address: 9708 HWY 22

City: ANGORA State: MN ZIP: 55703

The following comments are on the Draft EIS for the Minnesota Steel Project (attach additional pages as necessary) The last day to submit comments on the Draft EIS is **4:30 p.m. on April 2, 2007**:

Fold

I SUPPORT THIS PROJECT BECAUSE
THIS REGION WILL BENEFIT ECONOMICALLY.

Fold

Signature: *Jon K Ahlness* Date: 14 MAR 07

Scott Ek
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Policy and Review
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4025
Environmental.Review@dnr.state.mn.us

Jon K. Ahlness
Regulatory Branch, St. Paul District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
190 Fifth Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638
jon.k.ahlness@mvp02.usace.army.mil

From: "Linda Danielson" <Linda.Danielson@ironworld.com>
To: <scott.ek@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 3/8/2007 3:28 PM
Subject: Joe Sertich Letter of Support for Minnesota Steel

Dear Scott E. Ek:

I express my complete support for the Minnesota Steel project now that the EIS has been completed. Please enter my e-mail message into the record at the Wednesday, March 14, 2007 public hearing record. I have been involved in economic and workforce development for over 25 years here on Minnesota's Iron Range and this project is the next logical phase of value add mining and steelmaking that will provide 700 jobs with up to 2,100 spin off jobs.

The environmental technology is proven and meets or exceeds all state requirements with MACT and BACT. Ground water, streams and lake monitoring will assure the health of water systems. There is also no liquid discharge from the plant.

We've been mining here in Northeast Minnesota since 1902 and we need the positive impact on our economy of the area and state. Thank you for your attention to this important project.

Joe Sertich

1210 NW 9th Avenue

Chisholm, MN 55719

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources &
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Draft EIS Comment Form
Minnesota Steel Project

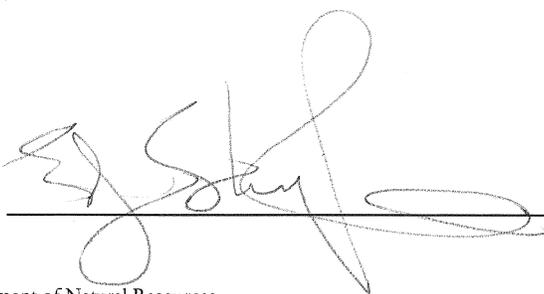
Name: Ed Shaughnessy

Address: PO Box 164

City: COLERAIN State: Mn ZIP: 55722

The following comments are on the Draft EIS for the Minnesota Steel Project (attach additional pages as necessary) The last day to submit comments on the Draft EIS is **4:30 p.m. on April 2, 2007:**

I support this Project 100% AS
I have seen to many ups & downs that
have caused our children to LEAVE THE AREA
Jobs Jobs!!!

Signature:  Date: 3-14-07

Scott Ek
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Policy and Review
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4025
Environmental.Review@dnr.state.mn.us

Jon K. Ahlness
Regulatory Branch, St. Paul District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
190 Fifth Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638
jon.k.ahlness@mvp02.usace.army.mil

Ironman Concrete Pumping
37334 State Hwy 65
Nashwauk, MN 55769
March 28, 2007

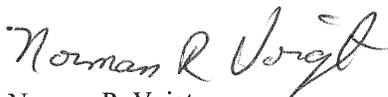
Scott Ek
Principal Planner
MN Dept of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Mr. Ek;

We are writing in support of the Minnesota Steel project that is proposed for the Nashwauk area in Itasca County. This project will be not only a great economic boost for this area, but also increase revenue for the state.

Because of the detailed environmental study involved in the permitting process and the continued monitoring of the operations by the State, we feel that any negative impacts should be minimal.

We hope that this project will proceed and continue in the tradition of area mining which began in 1902. Northern Minnesota can continue to be an area of outdoor recreation and provide jobs for our residents.


Norman R. Voigt

Elizabeth K. Voigt

From: <WALLEYEBROOKS@aol.com>
To: <environmental.review@dnr.state.mn.us>
Date: 2/21/2007 9:15 PM
Subject: Nashwak steel mill

I don't have the time or the knowledge to read and understand all the statements. I have to trust your decision on whether to go forward or suggest they stop. Just make sure the environment is protected! We have enough polluted lakes ect. They need jobs up there. But the enviroment should come first! As we lose places to go, the ones we have become moore special!

 AOL now offers free email to everyone. Find out more about what's free from AOL at <http://www.aol.com>.

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources &
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

**Draft EIS Comment Form
Minnesota Steel Project**

Name: JEFF WELCHER

Address: 1115 East E St

City: Iron Rtn. State: VT ZIP: 59807

The following comments are on the Draft EIS for the Minnesota Steel Project (attach additional pages as necessary) The last day to submit comments on the Draft EIS is **4:30 p.m. on April 2, 2007**:

Fold

I believe that the steel mill will be a responsible neighbor relative to this project. The project is economically and environmentally sound.

This is a rare and unique opportunity for not only the Plattsburgh Range but also the entire country. A groundbreak project of this scope comes along once in a lifetime.

I urge the State Dept of Natural Resources and the U.S. Corp to approve & expedite this permitting process

Fold

Signature: Jeff Welch Date: March 14, 2007

Scott Ek
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Policy and Review
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4025
Environmental.Review@dnr.state.mn.us

Jon K. Ahlness
Regulatory Branch, St. Paul District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
190 Fifth Street East, Suite 401
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638
jon.k.ahlness@mvp02.usace.army.mil

From: "Dr. Ernie Williams, Jr." <ernjo802@2z.net>
To: "Jon K. Ahlness" <jon.k.ahlness@mvp02usace.army.mil>, "Scott E. Ek" <sco...>
Date: 3/9/2007 5:05 PM
Subject: MN STEEL

This email is in support of the MN STEEL project slated for Nashwauk MN. I'm Dr. Ernest Williams, Jr., Optometrist. I was raised in Nashwauk, set up its first optometric practice in 1978 and subsequently moved my practice 13 miles down the road to Hibbing in 1993. I experienced first hand the economic hardships when Butler Taconite closed its doors in 1980. I had just started a business that I thought was going to fold. But we stuck it out, witnessing the exodus of our young people to areas of better employment which still exists in good part today as my 3 children (ages 25, 29 & 30) all receive college degrees but live and work in Minneapolis. The technology of this steel making plant has been studied thoroughly and is a proven entity. Its environmental impact is nothing new in respect to what is all ready here and its doors will be open to monitoring its effect to air emissions, ground water contamination, etc. The world wide demand for top quality steel, competitively priced, is at a high and is expected to stay so for years to come with the Asian market revving up its industrial revolution. This part of the state has a lot to offer a family who desires a rural life style with established communities that are geared up for replacing all that has diminished since the 1980s. My information is mostly derived from local newspapers. The articles I've read have me excited that this plant will be state of the art and if it isn't done here, it will wind up in someone else's back yard and another rare opportunity will be lost. Please do your utmost to assure that this project is handled in a safe and responsible manner. I hope you are excited and proud that MN has the resources and intelligent personnel to carry this through for the benefit of all. Thank you and god bless.

Comments from
Transcript of Public Meeting

*The following excerpts are taken from the transcript
of the Minnesota Steel Meeting on March 14, 2007.*

MSI 3-14-07 meeting.doc

1 this process to voting. And this process is not like
2 voting. It is intended for comment. Again, as I said
3 during my presentation, it's not a time to approve or
4 disapprove a project. I guess it was likened to the
5 voting process for the reason that it allows the people
6 to give their comments on the project, not a yes or no
7 to the project. So I just wanted to clarify that if
8 you read that in the Hibbing News-Tribune.

9 But again, thank you for coming and feel free
10 again to ask any of us here any questions you'd like,
11 and we'll see what we can do to answer them.

12 BRIAN STENQUIST: Thank you, Scott; thank
13 you, Steve. The coffee and cookies have been moved to
14 the left-hand corner of the room. Go get yourselves
15 some refreshments and have some interesting
16 conversations. Thank you very much.

17 (Meeting adjourned to open house.)

18 (Statement given to stenographer:)

19 ALDEN JUDNITSCH: My comment: I live south
20 of 169, between Oxhide and Snowball; and I'm concerned
21 about the mercury and the pollution and stuff. Is that
22 going to be monitored, and how is it going to be
23 controlled? And that's what I'm concerned of, because
24 Butler, when they were there running, a lot of times we
25 had -- our snow would be reddish in the wintertime.

T-1

1 I'm just kind of concerned how they're going to control
2 all that. I'd like to see that pretty well monitored.

3 My address is 17610 County Road 83, Pengilly.
4 (Continuation of public meeting.)

5 BRIAN STENQUIST: Ladies and gentlemen, if
6 you're interested in making an oral public comment or
7 if you're interested in listening to the oral public
8 comments, please come and take a seat, and we'll begin
9 that phase of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement
10 public information meeting. Thank you very much.

11 (Pause)

12 Ladies and gentlemen, we're about to begin the
13 oral public comment period. If you'll please take your
14 seats, we can find out how many people are interested
15 in making those oral comments. Thank you very much.

16 (Pause)

17 Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.
18 We'll now move to the oral public comment segment of
19 tonight's meeting. Let me explain this process as we
20 move into it. This is a part of the public record of
21 comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
22 We have two stenographers that will be recording your
23 oral comments. What we'd like to do, in a few moments
24 I'll ask how many people would like to make an oral
25 comment. We'll count those hands. We'll figure out

37

1 how to divide up the time that's available to us.

2 Then I'll ask those people who want to make oral
3 comments to please come up and stand in line here so
4 we can see who's about to speak. Then I'll invite you
5 up one at a time, for the allocated time or less if
6 you don't need to use all the time. You will need to
7 state your name and your mailing address so that we
8 can get this material back to you. We will also ask
9 you to spell your name so that the stenographers will
10 be able to record it accurately.

11 We'll take this segment of the meeting until
12 8:30. At 8:30 we'll move back in for additional
13 questions at the one-on-one, small group table level.
14 May I see a show of hands for those people who would
15 like to make an oral public comment, please? Hold them
16 up high so I can count them. (Showing of hands).
17 Thank you.

18 All right. I think we'll have time for four
19 minutes per oral comment. I hope that will be
20 adequate. Those who want to come and make an oral
21 comment, please come up, stand in line over here at
22 the three point line. Thank you all.

23 If the first gentleman would come and stand
24 right by the key here, stand up there, I'll hold the
25 microphone; you can state your name, address and then

38

1 spell your name.

2 RONALD RICH: My name is Ronald Rich, I live

3 in Edina and also at 28664 South Highway 65 on Swan
4 Lake. R-i-c-h is the last name. First name Ronald,
5 R-o-n-a-l-d.

6 The comments I have I'm adjusting a lot as we
7 go along. I'm director of the Swan Lake Association,
8 a group of citizens that live around Swan Lake that
9 are very concerned about the impact this project would
10 have on Swan Lake.

11 Before I start any comment, I want to make
12 sure that everybody understands we're not opposed to
13 this project going ahead. That's not the issue. The
14 issue is many of the technologies they're using could
15 be done better. I've learned quite a bit at this
16 meeting about some of the aspects and I've addressed
17 some of the six major concerns that our association
18 has, so I won't spend a lot of time commenting on
19 those.

20 I think the biggest single issue that we have
21 as a Swan Lake Association, as me as an individual --
22 I'm an engineer, environmental engineer -- is that the
23 tailings basin issue still is a very big concern to
24 our lake association. We had Butler Taconite. That
25 particular operation caused great degrading of quality

39

1 of Swan Lake during its operation. It had accidental
2 discharges. It had things that were promised that
3 weren't delivered, and then they went bankrupt. And

T-2

T-3

4 as they went bankrupt, they just left. And they left
5 and '86 was a very bad year for that lake, and we
6 don't want this to happen again.

T-3

7 This project is very, very dependent on high
8 steel prices, low natural gas prices and low
9 electricity prices; and if any one of those change the
10 wrong way, it goes bankrupt, it has to stop production.
11 So we have to be very careful what we do because the
12 impact on our lake will be permanent.

13 They're also proposing very, very large
14 amounts of tailings compared to Butler, upwards of 85
15 feet deep, and they could cover, over the total
16 lifetime of the project, half of Lone Pine Township
17 roughly as we estimate it. Not the 20 years that's
18 being evaluated here, but the actual 70 to 100 years
19 that the project has a life on.

T-2

20 So what our concern is, is there, primarily
21 on that issue, plus the heavy metals that might be in
22 the tailings that have not been addressed yet, is
23 there a way to deal with those tailings in a better
24 way than the Site Alternative 1 and 2? And we made a
25 comment before that said yes, there is. It is

T-4

1 technically possible, economically possible, and
2 actually from a water balance standpoint better for
3 Minnesota Steel to put that tailings back into
4 abandoned mine pits. Once they're done mining, they

5 can fill that taconite back in -- or the tailings back
6 in. It not only fits, it supplies water. Because
7 they're pumping from it, it does not contaminate the
8 groundwater. It's a much better approach from an
9 engineering standpoint, and that alternative has not
10 even been considered.

11 And I learned tonight that we already have a
12 mine in Minnesota that's doing that. Why aren't we
13 doing it at this one? Why are we taking out half of
14 the township, 18 square miles when the project is done?
15 It's permanently left with tailings and dust that have
16 to be managed, and that plant may be long gone. I've
17 lived on the lake, my family has lived on the lake 100
18 years. We'd like my sons to live there and their
19 grandsons to live there and have a reasonable
20 environment.

21 We have many other issues. I think my four
22 minutes are pretty close to being up, so I want to
23 make sure that we understand this. But the lake we're
24 trying to protect, and the tailings are the single
25 worst thing that can happen to our lake in our view,

41

1 and there's an easy solution that actually might help
2 Minnesota Steel become more economically competitive.

3 That's my comment. I'll be putting some
4 written comments in on that, and I really, really want
5 this to be included as an alternative in the Final EIS.

6 Thank you very much.

7 BRIAN STENQUIST: Thank you very much. Next
8 speaker, please.

9 DICK DEBOLT: Thank you, Brian. My name is
10 Dick Debolt, D-e-B-o-l-t. I live at 7018 Van Road,
11 just north of Duluth. I have a Duluth address. I'm
12 president and owner of Twin Ports Testing, Incorporated
13 from Duluth. And if I can speak a little bit of
14 history and get us up to date quickly, in high school I
15 remember mom and dad and the sticker, the taconite
16 amendment with a check, and apparently they voted yes
17 and the taconite plants evolved.

18 As our company started back in 1972, so we're
19 old-timers, I went to Hibbing Taconite and told them
20 how great I was, and they threw me out in the dust and
21 the dirt. And we picked ourselves up, and now at this
22 point in time we have the opportunity to be a player
23 in this project. It's overwhelming. It's enormous,
24 and we're just thrilled to be here, even be considered.

25 I thought the presentation -- I sat through

42

1 several of these. I thought the presentation was
2 stellar. There didn't appear to be any hidden agenda.
3 I think that as these problems arise, that they're
4 going to be addressed. We're thinking, after talking
5 to my friend, Bobby Latvala, if there's a person in the
6 room here who's enjoying a retirement from the mining

7 industry, here's an opportunity for your children and
8 your grandchildren, and I wouldn't pass this up for
9 anything. It's a wonderful thing.

10 It reminds me of the ethanol that we see.
11 We're making ethanol for gasoline. Is it good? No.
12 The price of a lowly tortilla is more expensive for
13 the Hispanic guy. It's more expensive to feed a cow.
14 Little things like that. For every action there's
15 another reaction. You go to the pharmacy and buy a
16 pill, you buy some medicine, isn't there a disclaimer
17 on it that says, maybe it's bad for your liver. Maybe
18 something could affect you because of this medication.
19 We have to keep that in mind. Let's be part of the
20 solution and not the problem. Thank you.

21 BRIAN STENQUIST: Thank you very much. Next
22 speaker, please.

23 TOM ANZELC: My name is Tom Anzelc. It's
24 spelled A-n-z-e-l-c. I live here, 44205 Burrows Lake
25 Lane, Balsam Township. I went to high school here. I

43

1 grew up in Keewatin, and I have the privilege of
2 representing most of the people here tonight in the
3 Minnesota House of Representatives. Thank you for
4 giving me that opportunity, and I want you to know
5 that I'm doing my best to get state government to do
6 its part to further this fantastic project; a project
7 that will literally give a rebirth to the western

8 Mesabi, literally from Hibbing to Arbo Township.

9 I'm also here tonight representing the Iron
10 Range delegation. They are 100 percent plus committed
11 to doing their part in furthering this project. In
12 fact, we are; we are halfway through the process of
13 getting state dollars committed to Itasca County and
14 the Community of Nashwauk to provide necessary
15 infrastructure so that this project can go forward.

16 I especially want to extend to you greetings
17 from my senator, Tom Saxhaug, and our other
18 representative, my friend and my mentor, Loren Solberg,
19 who has done so much already to further this project.

20 Lastly, when we get immersed in government
21 and working with agencies and expecting things to be
22 done and trying to move projects of this magnitude
23 along, we oftentimes forget the people who do the work.
24 And I'm referring to the great people in the Minnesota
25 Pollution Control Agency, the great people in the

44

1 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the great
2 people at Iron Range Resources, and all of the other
3 partners who are playing a role in the development of
4 this fantastic project.

5 Most of all, I want to thank the citizenry
6 for showing their interest, their commitment and their
7 support for the project all along throughout this
8 process, but especially for being here tonight. And

9 lastly, to parents and students and kids who live in
10 the Nashwauk-Keewatin School District, let's build the
11 steel mill and then let's build a new high school.
12 Thank you. (Applause)

13 BRIAN STENQUIST: Thank you, sir. Next,
14 please.

15 CATHERINE McLYNN: Thank you. Catherine
16 McLynn. I'm speaking as the chair of the Itasca
17 County Board of Commissioners. Our address is 123
18 Northeast Fourth Street, Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

19 Yesterday at our board meeting we passed a
20 letter of comment in support of the Minnesota Steel
21 project, and specifically addressing the question as
22 to whether the Environmental Impact Statement was
23 thorough and complete. Our comments include, and I
24 will be submitting this letter for the record, the
25 fact that the proposed location for the project is

45

1 primarily zoned industrial, and development of the
2 project is consistent with the goals of our
3 comprehensive land use plan. The commercial/industrial
4 goal is to encourage a sound and diverse economy that
5 meets the needs of Itasca County residents and
6 visitors for employment and services.

7 Our mining industry objective is to support
8 the continuation and expansion of the mining industry.
9 And third, our industrial location objective is to

10 locate industrial development in areas that minimize
11 conflict with other land uses and protect natural
12 resources.

13 We specifically noted items in the
14 Environmental Impact Statement that deal with water
15 appropriation, storm water runoff, seepage, protection
16 of the water quality in the three lakes, emissions,
17 and the fact that oversight from many regulatory
18 agencies will address many of the concerns. We
19 further noted that the no action alternative would
20 have negative social, economic and even environmental
21 impacts if the project does not move forward.

22 We concluded that we found the Environmental
23 Impact Statement to be a very thorough and complete
24 document upon which decisions can be made to move this
25 project forward. We'll be sending one more additional

46

1 letter noting that the Environmental Impact Statement,
2 this version, does not include any of the impacts of
3 the rail and public road, the infrastructure that we,
4 the county, are responsible for. That is being done
5 in a separate environmental assessment process. Thank
6 you.

7 BRIAN STENQUIST: Thank you very much. Next
8 speaker.

9 PAT KANE: My name is Pat Kane, K-a-n-e. I
10 am here representing GAVA, which is a Greenway area

11 based community group. The address is P. O. Box 76,
12 Coleraine. I am here just to let you know that the
13 GAVA Association will be submitting a letter of
14 support, 100 percent support of this project.

15 Speaking on behalf of -- I am also owner of a
16 company called Lefty's Tent & Party Rental in the area.
17 This is a project that has, I guess, exceeded the
18 expectations of a lot of people of this community, of
19 the size and magnitude, that I guess this community has
20 100 percent been in need of for several years, and we
21 are in full support also. Thank you.

22 BRIAN STENQUIST: Thank you, sir.

23 TARRY EDINGTON: My name is Tarry Edington,
24 and that's T-a-r-r-y, E-d-i-n-g-t-o-n. My address is
25 102 Northeast Third Street, Suite 160, Grand Rapids,

47

1 Minnesota. I am a housing development specialist for
2 the Itasca County Housing & Redevelopment Authority.
3 My work focuses my attention on housing conditions in
4 this county. We know that there are issues that arise
5 from a project like this, but we also know there are
6 issues that arise when you don't have projects like
7 this.

8 I want to speak specifically to the
9 socioeconomic aspect of the EIS. That section of this
10 EIS addresses quite thoroughly some of the historical
11 data of income, population trends, unemployment,

12 income levels of persons, and it lays a lot of that
13 out. It talks about the socioeconomic impacts of a
14 project like this.

15 What I want to bring to the table here is to
16 recognize in the housing arena there are two sides to
17 the equation; one is the cost side, the other is the
18 income side of those who occupy the housing. And one
19 of the things that we have experienced in this county
20 in years past with the declining incomes in the county
21 and not keeping up with the growth of economics in the
22 rest of the state and the country, is that there's a
23 growing disparity between the cost of having housing
24 available and what folks are able to afford. And what
25 that leads to is a need for a growth in income.

T-5

48

1 My work a lot of the time focuses on trying
2 to reduce the cost of housing through the actual cost
3 of construction and through the cost of financing for
4 the home buyer or the project developer. But the
5 reality is the other side of the equation can have an
6 equal or greater impact than trying to reduce cost,
7 and that side is the growth of incomes of the
8 population who lives here through the jobs that are
9 available. And the MIS project provides that
10 opportunity for Itasca County and the region around it
11 to benefit from jobs, not only directly at the plant,
12 but service and support jobs that also come about as a

13 result of this project being here, that provide
14 employment opportunities for people across the whole
15 spectrum of income.

16 So what I want to say about the socioeconomic
17 section is, I think it does a very good job of laying
18 out some of that historical data. The one point I
19 would make is that when it talks about the no-build
20 option, it does not place enough emphasis on what that
21 means for the area. And I would suggest that there be
22 a very clear extensive statement about the no-build
23 option and what that means for economics in Itasca
24 County, because without this project we continue in
25 the status we're in; whereas we have the opportunity

49

1 to change to a growth environment. Thank you.

2 BRIAN STENQUIST: Thank you, sir.

3 RON DICKLI CH: My name is Ron Dicklich,
4 D-i-c-k-l-i-c-h, and I live 31621 Spruce Drive,
5 Pengilly, Minnesota. I'm here tonight in my role as
6 executive director of the Range Association of
7 Municipalities & Schools, which is 25 cities, 15
8 school districts and 8 townships, which covers 6
9 counties in northeastern Minnesota. And I'm here
10 tonight in support of this EIS and the project on
11 behalf of the executive board of the Range Association
12 of Municipalities & School Districts.

13 Their support is based on a couple of things;

14 one being that Minnesota is one of the toughest,
15 toughest places to get permitting for anything, and
16 especially for mining, that if this project is
17 permitted through the Department of Natural Resources
18 and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, we deem it
19 to be a safe project that we can all prosper under.

20 We also support this project because it is an
21 opportunity to turn around 26 years of decline, 26
22 years of declining enrollment, 26 years of population
23 out migration. At one time we had three full senate
24 districts here. We've lost close to 70,000 people in
25 northeastern Minnesota, and we view this as an

50

1 opportunity to rebuild that.

2 It's also the excitement of a project like
3 this. You know, the steel industry is experiencing a
4 high because of what's going on in the world market.
5 But if that high is ever over, a lot of those steel
6 companies aren't going to be able to have the same
7 advantage as they have today. This project works even
8 in the low cycle of the industry. It was brought up
9 by somebody earlier, this project, and I'll repeat,
10 survives even in the low cycle of the industry.

11 And lastly, I'd just like to leave with this
12 note, and that is that on June 10th, 1985, in my role
13 as state senator, I stood in the parking lot of Butler
14 Taconite, along with Representative Solberg, and

15 watched as the last shift rolled out on a rainy,
16 drizzly, dreary afternoon. And I shall never forget
17 the faces of hopelessness and insecurity asking, Ron,
18 what are we going to do? And I said, I don't have
19 that answer for you, but we're going to keep trying
20 and working on this to make sure that something comes
21 back here. And after 22 years we now have an
22 opportunity to answer that commitment and that dream.

23 And that, along with this being a safe project
24 and based on the permitting that it will receive, that
25 is the basis of our support, and that we will do

51

1 whatever we can to help Minnesota Steel make the last
2 drag here to get their project financed. So I thank
3 you for your attendance tonight. (Applause)

4 BRIAN STENQUIST: Thank you, sir.

5 TOM PEARSON: My name is Tom Pearson. I was
6 born and raised in Hibbing. My primary residence is
7 in St. Paul. We have a lake home on the north shore
8 of Swan Lake, and we've had the property in our family
9 for 85 years. My name is spelled P-e-a-r-s-o-n. Our
10 lake home address is 31641 East Shore Drive.

11 We love the Iron Range. We love the lake.
12 We love the people here that I've grown up with and
13 lived with for many years. We view this project as a
14 tremendous economic opportunity for the Iron Range and
15 its people. And I'm not here to oppose the project;

16 rather I'm here to say that this is a project that
17 should be supported if it can be done in an
18 environmentally responsible manner.

19 Some concerns have been raised about
20 environmental issues, and I won't go into detail in
21 the time that I have, on issues such as noise, odor,
22 air quality, water quality. But there are two issues
23 that I am concerned about and I do still have
24 questions about, notwithstanding what is in the Draft
25 EIS, and I would like to see them analyzed further,

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1 see if there are alternatives.

2 One is the water availability issue,
3 particularly the augmentation issue of the area around
4 Swan Lake. It's my understanding that it will be
5 necessary to obtain water from some source such as the
6 Hill Annex pit, and according to the Draft EIS,
7 potentially from Swan Lake. I've been assured in the
8 conversations this evening that that is not likely
9 that it would come from Swan Lake, but it is a
10 possibility, as expressed in the Draft EIS report.

11 I've also got concerns about the tailings
12 basin, which, as I understand it from the diagrams and
13 from the discussions that I've had this evening, is a
14 20-year, roughly 20- to 30-year projection according to
15 one MSI official and a 40- to 60-year projection
16 according to another MSI official. I would like to

T-6

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17 see further analysis of that, of how long it is before
18 that area is expanded. I understand that the height
19 could reach potentially 70 to 75 feet. I have some
20 concerns about that.

21 So what I'd like to say in conclusion is I
22 think this is a project that represents a tremendous
23 opportunity for this area, but I would like to see
24 further analysis of the environmental issues,
25 particularly with respect to water availability and to

1 the tailings basin that is proposed for Lone Pine
2 Township. Thank you.

3 BRIAN STENQUIST: Thank you, sir. Next.

4 PETER McDERMOTT: My name is Peter McDermott,
5 M-c-D-e-r-m-o-t-t. I live at 3171 Woodland Drive,
6 Grand Rapids, Minnesota. I'm here as president of the
7 Itasca Economic Development Corporation, which is a
8 non-profit organization and represents the Itasca
9 County area as far as economic development. We have
10 the mission of helping create quality jobs, and I have
11 to say this project is an economic developer's dream.

12 Our support for the project is based on proven
13 technology and meeting or exceeding all environmental
14 standards. And as pointed out in the Draft EIS, the
15 positive socioeconomic effects of this project on the
16 local community are very substantial. Having said
17 that, I think they've underestimated them.

18 They talk about in the EIS 1.6 billion
19 dollars being spent on the project, and with the
20 indirect and induced effects being another billion
21 dollars, they computed, by the UMD study, equates to
22 2.6 billion dollars of total output. During the two
23 years of construction, at peak, they'll have 2,000
24 construction jobs, plus another 1500 more spinoff jobs.

25 As far as the ongoing economic impact, full

54

1 operations is measured by total output, that's 1.3
2 billion dollars, which is huge to the local economy.
3 And it is anticipated the project will employ up to
4 700 people in operations in high-paying jobs with good
5 benefits, and there'll be an additional 1550 jobs in
6 the area.

7 One thing that's not in the EIS, and I'll put
8 this in perspective for Itasca County because I happen
9 to know those numbers, but at peak production, the
10 output, you know, is 566 million dollars. How relative
11 is that to our total economy? Well, our total economy
12 is about 1.9 billion dollars of output, so it's about a
13 30 percent increase, so it's huge. In a value added
14 sense it's 197 million versus about a billion in total,
15 for about 25 percent.

16 On the full ongoing operations, output is
17 1 billion 230 million. And based on the total for the
18 economy of 1.9, it's about a 65 percent increase. So

19 this is going to be a huge increase to our local
20 economy.

21 I'll just paraphrase some of the other
22 questions. I know everybody wants to get out of here.
23 But one of the statements that was made in the report,
24 in the socioeconomic area, was that the average weekly
25 wage in Itasca and St. Louis Counties has continued to

T-9

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1 increase between 1980 and 2000. Well, I think this is
2 technically correct, but if you take the dollars in
3 constant dollars and take inflation out, you can see
4 that actually our wages have stayed flat since 1980 to
5 2005. And I'll be submitting these for the record, and
6 they're based from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.
7 They've stayed flat while the State of Minnesota has
8 gone up over \$10,000.

9 At one time, in 1980, our wages were higher
10 than the state average, and today we're \$10,500 less
11 than the state average. So we've lost ground
12 significantly, which is supported by Ron's earlier
13 comments.

14 So we've lost thousands of high-paying jobs
15 in the mining and wood products industries, and we've
16 replaced those jobs. We have about the same number of
17 people employed, but they're employed in retail and
18 tourism jobs. So we have this \$10,500 difference.

19 Itasca Economic Development has set the goal

20 of increasing our wages back above the state average by
21 the year 2015. This project alone, with the spinoff
22 jobs, will be about -- that \$10,000 difference will
23 increase this about \$1600 per year, so it's a major
24 step forward.

25 But it should be noted that all of these

56

1 numbers and all the numbers that are in the report,
2 they don't take in the great potential for growth to
3 the local area by bringing production of steel to the
4 Iron Range. The follow-along business development
5 will be unlimited, and that impact has not yet been
6 included in any of the aforementioned estimates.

7 The local economy is depressed. It is in
8 dire need of economic boost, as illustrated by the
9 number of elementary school children that qualify for
10 free and reduced lunches. During the current school
11 year, 2006-2007, 46 percent of our children qualify for
12 free or reduced lunches. This is significantly higher
13 than the state average of 35 percent. To qualify for
14 free or reduced lunches, you have to have income above
15 130 percent or 185 percent of poverty level.

16 I'll just finish it up. I've gotten the 30
17 second warning.

18 We believe that the management of Minnesota
19 Steel, who we've worked with since 2004 on this
20 project, is forthright, focused and community-minded.

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21 We also recognize that the Longyear and Bennett
22 families' commitment to the Mesaba Range since the
23 early 1890s, and their commitment to reactivate the
24 former Butler Taconite mine and tailings basin
25 construction for the new facilities.

57

1 Last, but not least, I'd like to thank the
2 MPCA and all the people involved in the EIS. I think
3 they've done a great job. It's a comprehensive
4 approach. We've all seen the book. It's almost 400
5 pages. We live here, and we want the quality of life,
6 and so we're happy that they're doing that. But I
7 happened to ask Scott at the time, I said, please
8 expedite this project, I know time is of the essence,
9 and we need to get to the finish line and we need to
10 get the financial close to this project. Thank you.
11 (Applause)

12 BRIAN STENQUIST: Thank you, sir. Is there
13 anyone else? (No response). All right. This brings
14 to close the oral presentations of public comment. We
15 still do have staff who are ready to engage you in
16 particular questions you might have at the individual
17 tables.

18 On behalf of all of us who were a part of
19 putting this public information meeting together,
20 thank you very, very much for your time, energy and
21 commitment to Minnesota resources, Minnesota's economy

22 and our quality of life. Thank you very much. Drive
23 carefully when you leave.

24 (Meeting adjourned to open house.)

25 (Meeting concluded at 9:00 p.m.)

58

1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2 I, Kathleen M. Undeland, do hereby certify
3 that the foregoing pages of typewritten matter to be a
4 true and correct transcript of my stenotype notes taken
5 on the date indicated.

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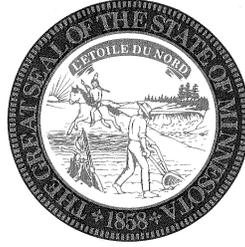
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22

Comment Letters received from
Elected Officials

Tom Anzelc
State Representative

District 3A
Itasca, Koochiching and
Lake of the Woods Counties



Minnesota House of Representatives

COMMITTEES: COMMERCE AND LABOR
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES FINANCE DIVISION
K-12 FINANCE DIVISION

March 13, 2007

Scott E. Ek
Principal Planner
Environmental Policy and Review
Division of Ecological Services
500 Lafayette Rd, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Mr. Ek,

I am writing this letter in support of the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by you and your colleagues relating to the Minnesota Steel Industries, LLC, proposed project in Nashwauk, Itasca County.

As a first term member of the Minnesota Legislature, I am proud to be able to help advance this project. I was born and raised near the project site and I graduated from Nashwauk-Keewatin High School. This is very special to me, personally.

I sincerely appreciate the MN Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and Minnesota Steel for diligently working together over the past two years. They resolved the need to meet stringent environmental standards in a timely and professional manner. As this project moves forward I am certain that Minnesota Steel will address any other identified issues of concern in a timely manner.

This project is extremely important to northern Minnesota, specifically the Iron Range area. Hopefully the symbiotic relationship between the workers of the Iron range and Minnesota Steel will benefit us all. Therefore, it is with great pride that I look forward to Minnesota Steel becoming a major contributor to our area by the project moving forward.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Tom Anzelc
State Representative



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2307

<http://coleman.senate.gov>

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
RANKING MEMBER
PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS
RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

COMMITTEE ON
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

March 30, 2007

Scott Ek
Principal Planner
Environmental Policy and Review
Division of Ecological Services
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4025

Dear Mr. Ek,

I am writing to you in order to voice my strong support for the proposed Minnesota Steel taconite mine and mill project in Itasca County.

Minnesota Steel is an extremely important project to the Iron Range and the rest of Northern Minnesota. It will provide a much needed boost to the area economy which will be sustained for generations with over 700 full time employees, 2,000 construction jobs and an expected 2,100 spin-off jobs. This translates into an economic impact of over \$500 million for the region.

The Minnesota Steel project has been designed with an eye on the future by providing environmentally sound mining solutions. It makes use of the best commercially available technology which meets or exceeds all governing rules and regulations.

It is a smart, responsible decision to utilize the vast iron ore deposits of Northern Minnesota to return economic vitality to this area of the state.

The potential of the Minnesota Steel project is limitless and I again wish to voice my strong support for its development.

Sincerely,



Norm Coleman
United States Senator

THOMAS W. SAXHAUG

State Senator District 3
 124 State Capitol Building
 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
 St. Paul, MN 55155-1606



Senate

State of Minnesota

March 12th, 2007

Jon K. Ahlness
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineer
 190 Fifth Street East, Suite 244S
 St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

Dear Jon,

I am writing this letter in support of the proposed Minnesota Steel project. This initiative is critical for the continuing economic development of Northern Minnesota.

Minnesota Steel would create 700 high paying, full time jobs that are desperately needed in Itasca County. In addition, 2000 construction jobs and 2000 spin off jobs would be created because of the project.

I have been working closely with the State, the local units of government and Minnesota Steel to make sure that all legislative needs are met. I look forward to seeing this project completed.

Best Regards,

Senator Tom Saxhaug



THOMAS W. SAXHAUG
 State Senator District 3
 124 State Capitol Building
 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
 St. Paul, MN 55155-1606



Senate

State of Minnesota

March 12th, 2007

Scott E. Ek
 Principal Planner
 MN Department of Natural Resources
 500 Lafayette Road
 St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Dear Scott,

I am writing this letter in support of the proposed Minnesota Steel project. This initiative is critical for the continuing economic development of Northern Minnesota.

Minnesota Steel would create 700 high paying, full time jobs that are desperately needed in Itasca County. In addition, 2000 construction jobs and 2000 spin off jobs would be created because of the project.

I have been working closely with the State, the local units of government and Minnesota Steel to make sure that all legislative needs are met. I look forward to seeing this project completed.

Best Regards,

Senator Tom Saxhaug



Loren A. Solberg
State Representative

District 3B
Aitkin and Itasca Counties



Minnesota House of Representatives

COMMITTEES: CHAIR, Ways and Means
Capital Investment
Taxes
Rules and Legislative Administration
Finance
Local Government and Metro Affairs
Ex-officio Member of Finance committees

March 13, 2007

Scott E. Ek
Principal Planner
Environmental Policy and Review
Division of Ecological Services
500 Lafayette Rd, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Mr. Ek,

I am writing this letter in support of the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by you and your colleagues relating to the Minnesota Steel Industries, LLC, proposed project in Nashwauk.

During my twenty-six years in the Minnesota Legislature, this impact statement is by far the best I have seen. Your diligence and dedication to provide us with the most complete and comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement is commendable and appreciated. I acknowledge the hard work and time it took over the last two years to accomplish this goal.

I commend the MN Department of Natural Resources and Minnesota Steel for diligently working together over the past two years. They resolved the need to meet stringent environmental standards in a timely and professional manner. As this project moves forward I am certain that Minnesota Steel will address any other identified issues of concern in a timely manner.

This project is extremely important to northern Minnesota, specifically the Iron Range area. Therefore, it is with great pride that I look forward to Minnesota Steel becoming a major contributor to our area by the project moving forward.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,



Loren Solberg
State Representative



Comment Letters received from
Businesses

April 2, 2007

Mr. Scott Ek, Principal Planner
Environmental Policy & Review
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Re: Minnesota Steel Project

Dear Mr. Ek:

AMEC submits the comments provided herein for the subject project. AMEC personnel have reviewed the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS). We believe that our experience in mining and in solving environmental problems in several industries provides a knowledgeable perspective relevant to the DEIS.

AMEC concludes that the DEIS is a thorough and comprehensive document. AMEC believes that the DEIS satisfactorily addresses the issues defined by the scoping Environmental Assessment Worksheet. Therefore, the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act have been satisfied.

AMEC believes that the regional economy of the Iron Range and specifically Itasca County will benefit greatly by the successful completion of this project. AMEC believes that the environmental impacts related to this have been identified by the DEIS and that the impacts and other effects will be successfully resolved. The mining and mineral processing technologies proposed for this project are well understood by local Iron Range experience. The proposed iron reduction and steel making processes are well understood by experience in other regions of the United States.

AMEC supports the conclusion that the DEIS has met the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act.

Very sincerely yours,



Tony Wedell
Director of Operation
AMEC E&C Services

cc: Ed Welsh - AMEC
Stuart Innes - AMEC
Greg Brown - AMEC
Deb McGovern - Minnesota Steel Industries
Jon Ahlness - USACE

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