



# A Guide to the SDEIS Document

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Forest Service (collectively known as the Co-lead Agencies) jointly prepared the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). The SDEIS describes the process these state and federal agencies undertook and the results they used to evaluate the effects of the proposed NorthMet mining project, land exchange, and alternatives.

The Supplemental Draft EIS adheres to the organization recommended in Title 40, Part 1502.10, of the *Code of Federal Regulations* and content requirements of Part 4410.2300 of the *Minnesota Administrative Rules*. The Supplemental Draft EIS contains the following chapters:

- Executive Summary, which summarizes the Supplemental Draft EIS, including the issues and predicted effects of the proposed project, land exchange, and alternatives.
- Chapter 1.0 (Introduction), which provides an overview and describes the purpose of and need for the proposed project and land exchange. The chapter also discusses the state and federal regulations that apply to the project, the roles and responsibilities of state and federal agencies, and the organization of the Supplemental Draft EIS.
- Chapter 2.0 (EIS Development), which describes the steps in the development of the Draft EIS and Supplemental Draft EIS. The chapter also discusses changes in the project since the Draft EIS and how various groups — including the state and federal agencies and the public — influenced the development of the Supplemental Draft EIS.
- Chapter 3.0 (Proposed Action and Project Alternatives), which describes the proposed project and land exchange, as well as their alternatives, including the “no action” alternative and alternatives considered, but eliminated from detailed analysis.
- Chapter 4.0 (Affected Environment), which summarizes the existing conditions of the area where the proposed project would be located, as well as the surrounding environment, and the existing conditions of the parcels included in the proposed land exchange. The discussion includes physical, biological, cultural, socioeconomic, and recreational resources.
- Chapter 5.0 (Environmental Consequences), which presents the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, land exchange, and alternatives. It also identifies measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential adverse impacts.
- Chapter 6.0 (Cumulative Effects), which describes the potential cumulative effects of the proposed project and land exchange on the surrounding environment, when considered together with other relevant past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects.

- Chapter 7.0 (Comparison of Alternatives and Other Considerations), which presents a comparison of the potential effects across the proposed project, land exchange, and alternatives. This section also addresses other NEPA considerations, including irretrievable and irreversible effects, short-term uses versus long-term productivity of the environment, and unavoidable adverse effects.
- Chapter 8.0 (Major Differences of Opinion), which describes major differences of opinion between the Tribal Cooperating Agencies — including the Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, and Grand Portage Bands of Chippewa; the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission; and the 1854 Treaty Authority — and the Co-lead Agencies regarding aspects of the Supplemental Draft EIS.
- Appendices, which provide additional supporting materials to help the reader better understand the process leading to the publication of the Supplemental Draft EIS, including:
  - Appendix A – Thematic Responses to DEIS Comments;
  - Appendix B – Underground Mining Alternative Assessment for the NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange Supplemental Draft EIS; and
  - Appendix C – Tribal Agency Position Supporting Materials.

**For more information about the organization of the SDEIS for the NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange, see the Executive Summary and Chapter 1 (Introduction) of the SDEIS. Also, refer to additional Fact Sheets about the NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS:**

- 1. What is the Environmental Review Process?**
- 2. Effective Commenting**
- 3. A Guide to the SDEIS Document**
- 4. What's Changed Since the DEIS?**
- 5. Project & Land Exchange Overview**
- 6. Land Exchange**
- 7. Reclamation and Financial Assurance**
- 8. Water Quality**
- 9. Wetlands**
- 10. Air Quality**
- 11. Wild Rice**
- 12. Mercury**
- 13. Threatened & Endangered Species**
- 14. Cumulative Effects**
- 15. Cultural Resources**
- 16. Water Quantity**