

## Minnesota DNR News

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **DNR receives mining proposal from Talon Metals**

*Agency launches website with project information*

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has received a proposal from Talon Metals LLC (Proposer) for a new nickel mining project in Aitkin County in central Minnesota. The proposed project, known as the Tamarack Nickel Mine (Project), would involve construction of an underground mine and supporting facilities approximately 1.5 miles north of Tamarack, Minnesota. The Project would have an 80-acre footprint on the surface that would include an access portal to the underground mine, temporary storage for ore and waste rock, and facilities to collect and treat water. The Proposer would mine ore-bearing rock containing nickel and other precious metals at depths of approximately 500-2000 feet below the surface. Mined rock would be transported by rail to a processing facility in Mercer County, North Dakota. Disposal of waste tailings would also occur at the Mercer County facility. Per the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act, the proposed Project requires preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), with the DNR as the designated responsible governmental unit.

“We understand that Minnesotans have widely differing perspectives regarding this proposed project and nonferrous mining more broadly. The DNR, however, must base its decisions on the facts and the law,” said Katie Smith, director of the DNR’s Ecological and Water Resources Division. “I want to assure all Minnesotans that the DNR is committed to a rigorous, transparent, and neutral review of the project, based on science and applicable state law.”

In the near term, DNR will review the Proposer’s submittal to assess whether the basic information is present to begin scoping, the first phase of the EIS process. The purpose of scoping is to identify:

- the potentially significant environmental and socioeconomic issues requiring detailed analysis in the EIS,
- reasonable Project alternatives to be evaluated in the EIS, and
- potential environmental mitigation options to address Project impacts.

Scoping helps the agency focus environmental review on the most important issues and also helps determine alternatives (e.g., alternative sites, technologies, layouts, scales, etc.), timelines, and additional data needs. There will also be at least one public scoping meeting and an opportunity for the public to comment on the draft scope of the EIS prior to DNR finalizing the scope. This public meeting and comment opportunity will be announced at a later date.

The DNR has launched a [webpage for the proposed Tamarack Nickel Mine](#). The page includes basic information about the Project, status updates, and timelines; documents such as information submittals and Proposer-developed data and studies; and DNR fact sheets to help explain the process and summarize complex issues.

Under Minnesota law, the environmental review process informs, but is separate from, the consideration of permit applications. The proposed Project would need permits from local, state, and federal governments prior to construction and operation. No permit applications have been received at this point, and no local or state permits/approvals could be granted until the EIS is complete and deemed adequate by the DNR.

If you would like to receive email updates on the environmental review process for the proposed Project, [please sign up here](#).

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