



Take Action! Comment on Northshore Mining's proposed pit expansion that will unearth sulfide mineralization at their taconite mine!

The Minnesota DNR is taking public comments on the proposed expansion of the Northshore Mine. This amendment to Northshore Mining's Permit to Mine would, for the first time, allow the company to blast and move rock with a sulfide level above 0.2%. Humidity cell testing done by the company shows that over time, the exposure of rock with this much sulfide results in Acid Mine Drainage, which is low in pH (i.e., acidic) and high in metals.

The public comment period ends **Monday, August 19**. The only public notice of the proposed amendment was in the Babbitt and Virginia newspapers; it is not available on the DNR or Northshore Mining websites. However, pursuant to request, the DNR has made documents available on an ftp site: ftp://ftp.dnr.state.mn.us/pub/outgoing/Nshr%20permit%20amend_2013/

Comment on Northshore Mining's pit expansion that will unearth sulfide bearing rock!

Comments should go to:

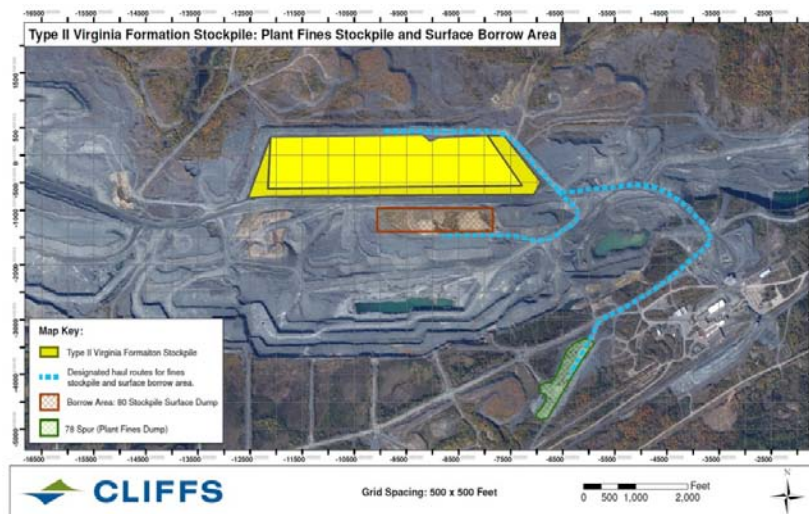
Attn: Julie Jordan
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Lands and Minerals
1525 East Third Street
Hibbing, MN 55746
julie.jordan@state.mn.us

Points you might want to make in your comments:

- Ask that the MDNR do an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the proposed Amendment to Permit to Mine for the Northshore Mining Company, adding 108.33 acres to its Ultimate Pit Limit and disturbing sulfide-bearing rock.
- Northshore Mining plans to move 30 million tons of Virginia Formation rock. It is unclear how much of this is higher than 0.2% sulfide, but the diagrams indicate that it is more than half. For perspective, PolyMet plans to move 50 million tons of rock with this level of sulfides over the life of its mine. In other words, the Northshore Mining proposal is not insignificant. Yet there has been virtually no public information or process around it, and no environmental review documents.
- The timeframes for Acid Mine Drainage stretch over hundreds or thousands of years; the company does not appear to have done any analysis as to what the potential is for impacts to water over that range of time.

- The supporting materials assume that all drainage will be collected in the pit dewatering sump; there appears to be no analysis of the potential for drainage into the ground and groundwater below the stockpile.
- It appears that the pit wall will contain exposed areas of high-sulfide rock. How does the company plan to manage AMD from the pit wall?
- Stockpile covers have not proven sufficient to stop AMD at other mines. The timeframes we are talking about are hundreds or thousands of years long. The length of time that these covers will last is unknown. Furthermore, there is bound to be at least some leakage through the cover.
- What is the predicted water quality of the pit lake in 1,000 years?
- Although we appreciate the effort to provide financial assurance (proposed at about \$26 million), there is a good possibility that active wastewater treatment will someday be needed for the outflow from this pit. Financial assurance should be enough to provide for that contingency.

Northshore Mining Pit Expansion Diagram



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For more information:

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