



NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

State and federal environmental review of the proposed PolyMet Mining Inc. project

Overview

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Forest Service are Co-lead Agencies for the joint state-federal environmental review of Minnesota's first proposed copper-nickel mine. The Co-lead Agencies are responding to comments received on the 2013 Supplemental Draft EIS and preparing the Final EIS. As part of this process, the Co-lead Agencies are working with four Cooperating Agencies (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Bois Forte Band, Fond du Lac Band, and Grand Portage Band) to review the Preliminary Final Environmental Impact Statement (PFEIS).

[Preliminary Final Environmental Impact Statement Fact Sheet](#) 

Remaining Steps in the EIS Process

June 22, 2015 - PFEIS Provided for Internal Agency Review

June 22, 2015 to Early November 2015

Co-lead and Cooperating Agencies review PFEIS (6 weeks)

Technical engagement between Co-lead and Cooperating Agencies (*concurrent with PFEIS review*)

Co-lead Agencies consider agency PFEIS comments (5 weeks)

Co-lead Agencies revise EIS (3 weeks)

Final EIS publication - final proofing, Co-lead Agencies confirm Final EIS contents, printing and pre-publication deadlines (6 weeks)

Early November 2015 - Final EIS Published

Early November 2015 to Early February 2016

30-Day Public Review Period (*Early November to early December*)

Co-lead Agencies consider comments received (4 weeks)

State and Federal EIS processes separate at this point

State (DNR) develops Record of Decision (4 weeks)

Early February 2016 - State Issues Record of Decision on EIS Adequacy

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

After publication of the Final EIS, the public will have 30 days to comment to DNR on the adequacy of the document. Under state law, the criteria for determining adequacy are whether the environmental review addressed the issues identified in scoping, met EIS procedural requirements, and responded to substantive comments received on the Draft and Supplemental Draft EIS. To be relevant to the state's adequacy decision, public comments on the Final EIS should address these three adequacy criteria. After considering comments on the Final EIS, the DNR issues a Record of Decision on the adequacy of the EIS. If the EIS is determined adequate, the environmental review process is complete. The adequacy decision does not authorize or approve the project. The project would still need to receive local, state and federal approvals and permits in order to proceed.

2016 - Federal Agencies Issue Records of Decision

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Notification of the availability of the Final EIS is published in the Federal Register. The Final EIS is provided for Cooperating Agency review, and is available to the public for information and disclosure. There is no formal public comment period associated with the Final EIS document.

U.S. Forest Service

After the Notice of Availability for the Final EIS is published in the Federal Register, the USFS will prepare a draft Record of Decision for the land exchange. A 45-day objection period will begin after the USFS issues the draft Record of Decision. At the end of this period, the USFS has 45 days to consider objections and issue a final Record of Decision. The 45 days may be extended for 30 additional days. The final Record of Decision describes the USFS decision on the land exchange.

Earlier stages in the development of the EIS - Read about the 2009 Draft EIS and 2013 Supplemental Draft EIS and supporting documents.

[View archives »](#)



Email Updates

Sign up to receive updates regarding the EIS process, new information posted on the web page, news releases, and availability of materials, such as the Final EIS.