



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

STATE OF MINNESOTA

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

INDUSTRIAL DIVISION

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO MAJOR MODIFY NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES)/ STATE DISPOSAL SYSTEM (SDS) PERMIT MN0046981

Public Comment Period Begins: May 9, 2013
Public Comment Period Ends: June 10, 2013

Current Permit Issued: August 11, 2009
Current Permit Expiration Date: July 31, 2014

Name and Address of Permittee:

Northshore Mining Co
10 Outer Drive
Silver Bay, Minnesota 55614

Facility Name and Location:

Northshore Mining Co - Peter Mitchell
County Road 70
T60N, R12W, Section 20,
Babbitt, St. Louis County, Minnesota

Receiving Waters for Major Modification Outfall (SD-014, SD-15 & SD-024): Unnamed creek (Class 2B,3C,4A,4B,5,6 water)

Description of Permitted Facility

The Northshore Mining Co - Peter Mitchell facility (Facility) is located at NE 1/4 of Section 20, Township 60 North, Range 12 West, Babbitt, St. Louis County, Minnesota.

The principal activity at this facility is the open-pit mining of taconite ore for processing into taconite pellets. The facility consists of all excavation areas, mining waste disposal areas, plant areas, material and equipment storage areas, haul roads, railroad yards, and wastewater disposal systems at the mine area and is further described in the draft permit.

The purpose of this major permit modification is to address the replacement of the existing domestic wastewater treatment system. The company is proposing to replace its existing Imhoff tank and trickling filter domestic wastewater treatment systems with a lined three-cell stabilization pond system. The domestic system treats domestic wastewater generated from the crusher buildings and does not include any wastewater from mining activities.

The proposed domestic wastewater treatment system will have a controlled discharge (SD-024) downstream of the existing domestic system discharges to Unnamed Creek which flows to Langley Creek (Class 2B, 3C, 4A, 4B, 5, 6 Water). It is designed to treat an average wet weather flow of 8,850 gallons per day (gpd) with a five-day carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand (CBOD₅) strength of 145 mg/L. The proposed system will consist of two primary cells and one secondary cell. Each of the three cells will have a surface area of approximately 0.48-acres.

The stabilization pond system will provide a total detention time of 210 days at design flow. Upon initiation of operation of the proposed stabilization pond system, the existing trickling filter systems will be abandoned and the discharges from SD-014 and SD-15 will be eliminated.

The Permittee also proposes to install a carbon dioxide injection units at the mine pit dewatering sump corresponding to outfall SD-004. The treatment systems have a design flow of 65 gallons per minute. Water is continuously pumped through the treatment unit while a pH probe analyzes the pH, signaling addition of carbon dioxide as necessary to maintain a set pH range. Treated water is then returned to the sump. When the pH of the sump reaches an upper set point, carbon dioxide is added to the stream using a gas sparger until the pH of the sump reaches the lower set point.

The location of the Facility is shown on the attached map.

Preliminary Determination on the Draft Permit

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Commissioner has made a preliminary determination to major modify this NPDES/SDS permit for a term of approximately five years. The proposed permit modification is described above.

A draft permit and fact sheet are available for review at the MPCA office at the St. Paul address listed below, at the Duluth regional office and on-line at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/news/data/index.cfm?PN=1>.

A copy of the draft permit and fact sheet will be mailed to you if the MPCA receives your written or oral request at this office. If you have questions about this draft permit or the Commissioner's preliminary determination, please contact Stephanie M. Handeland at 651-757-2405.

Written Comments

You may submit written comments on the conditions of the draft permit or on the Commissioner's preliminary determination. Only comments or petitions concerning the proposed modification portions of the permit will be considered.

Written comments must include the following:

1. A statement of your interest in the permit application or the draft permit.
2. A statement of the action you wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to sections of the draft permit that you believe should be changed.
3. The reasons supporting your position, stated with sufficient specificity as to allow the Commissioner to investigate the merits of your position.

Petition for Public Informational Meeting

You also may request that the MPCA Commissioner hold a public informational meeting. A public informational meeting is an informal meeting that the MPCA may hold to solicit public comment and statements on matters before the MPCA, and to help clarify and resolve issues.

A petition requesting a public informational meeting must include the following information:

1. A statement identifying the matter of concern.
2. The information required under items 1 through 3 of "Written Comments," identified above.
3. A statement of the reasons the MPCA should hold a public informational meeting.
4. The issues that you would like the MPCA to address at the public informational meeting.

Petition for Contested Case Hearing

You also may submit a petition for a contested case hearing. A contested case hearing is a formal evidentiary hearing before an administrative law judge. In accordance with Minn. R. 7000.1900, the MPCA will grant a petition to hold a contested case hearing if it finds that: (1) there is a material issue of fact in dispute concerning the application or draft permit; (2) the MPCA has the jurisdiction to make a determination on the disputed material issue of fact; and (3) there is a reasonable basis underlying the disputed material issue of fact or facts such that the holding of the contested case hearing would allow the introduction of information that would aid the MPCA in resolving the disputed facts in making a final decision on the draft permit. A material issue of fact means a fact question, as distinguished from a policy question, whose resolution could have a direct bearing on a final MPCA decision.

A petition for a contested case hearing must include the following information:

1. A statement of reasons or proposed findings supporting the MPCA decision to hold a contested case hearing according to the criteria in Minn. R. 7000.1900, as discussed above.
2. A statement of the issues proposed to be addressed by a contested case hearing and the specific relief requested or resolution of the matter.

In addition and to the extent known, a petition for a contested case hearing should also include the following information:

1. A proposed list of prospective witnesses to be called, including experts, with a brief description of proposed testimony or summary of evidence to be presented at a contested case hearing.
2. A proposed list of publications, references, or studies to be introduced and relied upon at a contested case hearing.
3. An estimate of time required for you to present the matter at a contested case hearing.

MPCA Decision

You may submit a petition to the Commissioner requesting that the MPCA Citizens' Board (Board) consider the permit issuance. To be considered timely, the petition must be received by the MPCA by 4:30 p.m. on the date the public comment period ends, identified on page 1 of this notice. Under the provisions of Minn. Stat. § 116.02, subd. 6(4), the decision whether to issue the permit and, if so, under what terms will be presented to the Board for decision if: (1) the Commissioner grants the petition requesting the matter be presented to the Board; (2) one or more Board members request to hear the matter before the time the Commissioner makes a final decision on the permit; or (3) a timely request for a contested case hearing is pending. You may participate in the activities of the Board as provided in Minn. R. 7000.0650.

The written comments, requests, and petitions submitted on or before the last day of the public comment period will be considered in the final decision on this permit. If the MPCA does not receive written comments, requests, or petitions during the public comment period, MPCA staff as authorized by the Board, will make the final decision on the draft permit.

Comments, petitions, and/or requests must be submitted in writing on or before the end date of the public comment period identified on page 1 of this notice to:

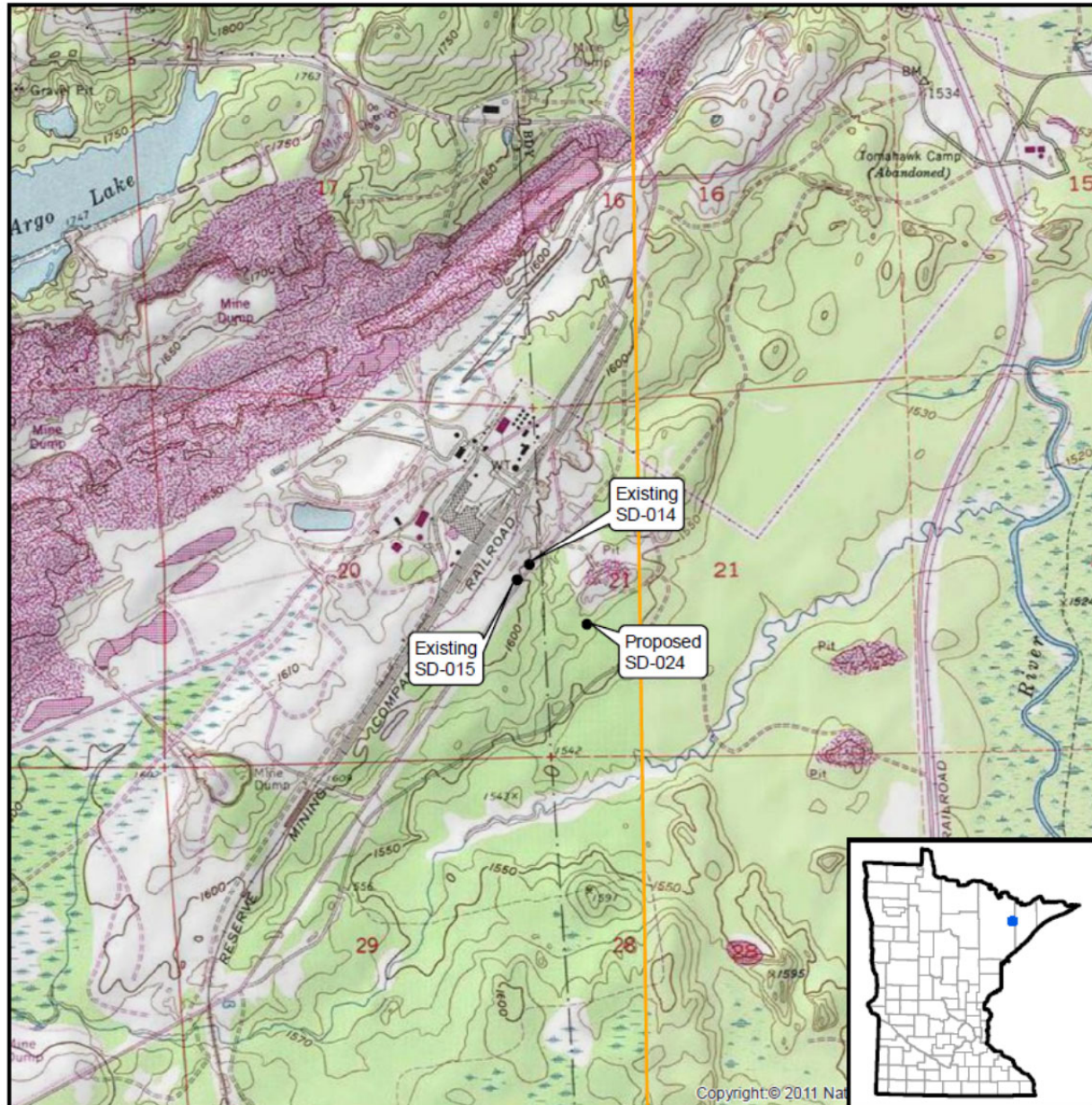
Stephanie M. Handeland – SP5
Industrial Division
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Rd N
St. Paul, MN 55155-4194

Topographic Map of Permitted Facility

MN0046981: Northshore - Peter Mitchell Domestic Wastewater Treatment Facility Replacement Project

T60N, R12W, Section 21

Babbitt, St. Louis County, Minnesota



Map produced by: MPCA Staff, 3/22/13
Source: USGS Quad
Scale: 1:24,000

0 0.25 0.5 1Miles

