



# **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency**

## **PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO ISSUE A NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES)/STATE DISPOSAL SYSTEM (SDS) PERMIT**

Draft Permit No.: MN0068241

Name and Address of Permittee:  
Minnesota Steel Industries, LLC  
2550 University Avenue West, Suite 244S  
St. Paul, MN 55114

Facility Name and Location:  
Minnesota Steel Industries, LLC  
State Highway 58  
Nashwauk, Itasca County, Minnesota

Public Notice Issued: June 30, 2007  
Last Day to Submit Comments: July 30, 2007

### Description of Permitted Facility:

Minnesota Steel Industries, LLC (Minnesota Steel) has applied for a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)/State Disposal System (SDS) Permit to construct and operate a taconite mining and steel production facility and associated water treatment/discharge systems.

Minnesota Steel will mine taconite ore from existing Pit 5 and the Draper Annex Pit/Pit 6 using open-pit methods. The ore processing facilities will consist of a crusher, concentrator, pellet plant, and direct reduced iron plant. Nonmagnetic waste (tailings) from the concentrator will be pumped to a thickener and subsequently to a new tailings basin on the site of the former Butler Taconite facility tailings basin. The steelmaking facilities will include two electric arc furnaces, two ladle furnaces, two thick slab casters, two tunnel furnaces, a vacuum degasser, a hot strip rolling mill, and a sheet steel coiler.

Water for the steel making operations will be supplied from stormwater collected from the plant and production/storage areas, and maintenance dewatering of ore mining Pits 5 and 6, as well as the natural ore Ann and Sullivan Pits. Water will also be appropriated from Pits 1 and 2 for use as process water in the processing plant. No discharge is planned. Instead, Minnesota Steel will install a water reuse and recovery system (WRRS). The WRRS will collect and treat process water streams, remove blow-down streams, and receive make-up water, such that undesirable constituents can be removed and disposed, and recovered water can be reused at the facility. Solids generated by the WRRS will be tested and characterized as either hazardous or non-hazardous and will be further evaluated for beneficial use suitability prior to disposal in solid waste management facilities. Seep water from the tailings basin will be collected and returned to the basin. The permit includes requirements to monitor groundwater quality at five monitoring wells in the vicinity of the tailings basin to detect any changes in groundwater chemistry.

For a more detailed description of the proposed facility, the MPCA recommends review of the proposed NPDES/SDS Permit, the application, and technical support documents, including the statement of basis.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has tentatively decided to issue the NPDES/SDS Permit described above for a term of approximately five (5) years. The draft permit and statement of basis are available for review at the MPCA office at the St. Paul address listed below, at the regional office located at 525 Lake Avenue South, Suite 400, Duluth, Minnesota 55802, and on-line at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/news/data/index.cfm?PN=1>. A copy of the permit will be mailed to you if

the MPCA receives your written or oral request at either of these offices. If you have questions about this draft permit or the Commissioner's preliminary determination, please contact Katrina Kessler at 651-296-7376.

There will be a public meeting to discuss the draft NPDES/SDS Permit and the associated draft/proposed air emissions permit on Wednesday, July 11, 2007, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Nashwauk High School gymnasium located at 400 2nd Street in Nashwauk.

The Commissioner's determination to issue the NPDES/SDS Permit is tentative. The purpose of this notice is to obtain public comment on the preliminary determination to issue the permit. There are four formal procedures for public participation in the MPCA's consideration of the permit application. Interested persons may (1) submit written comments on the proposed permits; (2) request that the MPCA hold a public information meeting; (3) request the MPCA hold a contested case hearing; and/or (4) submit a petition to the Commissioner requesting that the MPCA Board consider the permit matter. As noted above, the MPCA has already scheduled a public informational meeting from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on July 11, 2007.

The decision whether to issue the permit and, if so, under what terms, will be presented to the MPCA Board for decision if: (1) the Commissioner grants a petition requesting the matter be presented to the MPCA Board; (2) an MPCA Board member requests to hear the matter prior to the time the Commissioner makes a final decision on the permit; or (3) a request for a contested case hearing on the permit is pending. Otherwise, the Commissioner will make the decision.

Persons who submit comments or petitions to the MPCA must state (1) their interest in the specific permit application or the draft permit; (2) the action they wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to the section of the draft permit they believe should be changed; and (3) the reasons supporting their position, stated with sufficient specificity as to allow the MPCA to investigate the merits of the position.

As described in Minn. R. 7000.1800, persons who submit requests for a contested case hearing must also state the issues they propose to address in a contested case hearing, the specific relief requested or resolution of the matter, and the reasons (which may be in the form of proposed findings) supporting an MPCA decision to hold a contested case hearing. Failure to comply with these rules exactly may result in a denial of the request. The decision whether to hold a contested case hearing will be made under Minn. R. 7000.1900. The preceding description is intended to aid the public in understanding its rights. The Commissioner strongly encourages members of the public to review the law itself carefully before proceeding. Most public libraries in the state have copies of the current Minnesota Rules. They are also available on the Internet at [www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us](http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us).

The public comment period commences June 30, 2007, and terminates July 30, 2007. Comments must be received in writing at the MPCA by 4:30 p.m. on July 30, 2007. Evidence of timely receipt includes a date/time stamp imprinted on the first page of the written comments by the first floor information and reception area of the MPCA or by the Industrial Division support staff, or receipt by fax. Comments will become part of the public record of this proceeding.

Comments, requests, and petitions on the NPDES/SDS Permit should be sent to:

Katrina Kessler  
Industrial Division  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4194

Telephone: 651-296-7376  
TTY: 651-282-5332  
Toll Free: 800-657-3864