

Laurentian Vision Partnership

Meeting XLIII Report

"Planning and Project Implementation 2009"



Wednesday, October 14, 2009
Mining and Reclamation Classroom
Chisholm, Minnesota



Laurentian Vision Partnership

Meeting XLIII

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

“Planning and Project Implementation 2009”

Meeting Objectives

The Facilitator reviewed the past meeting results and next steps, highlighted meeting objectives and went over the agenda for today’s meeting.

The primary objective for the meeting was to learn about the major scientific project underway at the Soudan Mine – Underground Lab Project; continue and expand on the discussion of major mineland reclamation projects and new tools to assist in designing and planning for sustainable mining; brainstorm how best to disseminate the fifty year mine plan maps to the region’s communities; hear progress reports from Work Groups and Regional Groups on major new and ongoing implementation initiatives underway for 2009-2010.

Meeting Summary Laurentian Partnership Debriefing

- Participant introductions and expectations
- Opening comments
- Review of Meeting XLII results and next steps (June 2009)
- Overview of meeting objective and agenda for the day

Presentation: Soudan Mine - Underground Laboratory Project Bill Miller, University of Minnesota

Unfortunately due to an unforeseen last minute conflict, Bill Miller was unable to attend this meeting and would like to reschedule his presentation. We will invite him for the next quarterly LVP meeting in 2010.

Presentation: United Taconite/KeeTac Stockpile Projects - FY 1009 Iron Range Resources Innovation Grant

Chris Carlson & John Koepke, U of M; Julie Varichak, United Taconite; MnDNR Lands & Minerals Representative

Chris Carlson, John Koepke and Julie Varichak collaborated on a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the UTAC stockpile reclamation project funded by an Iron Range Resources Innovation Grant. The team described the project and expectations as follows:

- Innovation Grant was provided for two projects involving UTAC and US Steel - KeeTac at two different locations
- These are highly visible projects in those affected communities
- The projects were selected as test sites for stockpile shaping based on the 2009 workshop with engineers last March.
- Specifics on the Eveleth/Virginia site – UTAC project that Julie is responsible for design and implementation
 - 16,000 cars travel past the site on T.H. 53 and is a highly visible site from the highway
 - A number of opportunities and constraints presented themselves on this site
 - Various design devices and ideas were considered in the plan design (our challenge was to meet MnDNR 1980 regulations and not cost the mining companies money)
 - Various concepts were explored
 - We met with MnDNR and the mining companies – grading plan developed and implemented by UTAC
 - Precedence setting effort to change the shape of stockpiles in visible areas to be more appealing – conservation focused and cost effective.

Presentation: Mine Shaping and Vegetation Templates Project Proposal
Chris Carlson & John Koepke, University of Minnesota

Chris Carlson and John Koepke continued with a more in depth presentation on the Design Training Workshops, the value of these tools and the templates being used on the test sites today and the future potential to expand this work with additional template designs and more sites. A PowerPoint was used to guide the discussion and major points highlighted were as follows:

- Over the past nine (9) years we have developed a number of tools to support reclamation objectives for future productive land uses after mining.
- A Design Workshop for engineers that are responsible for mine planning was the target group to share design ideas and options and train them to use basic tools in their land planning decisions
- Atlas Mine Plan needs to be updated
- Other resources to assist communities with their land use planning
- Charrettes to develop visions for change and practical solutions to support productive future land use needs
- Workshop Design Course in March 2009 covered:
 - Design ideas and landscape principals
 - There were 40 attendees having all levels of engineering experience
 - A direct outcome was the UTAC and KeeTac pilot projects
 - We created models/templates to help mine engineers think about how to apply different options using the notion "Nature as the Designer"
 - Simulated conditions and applications
 - Goal was to add value back to the land for productive future uses of value
 - Used ideas from past charrettes
- Two (2) templates were developed as regional models:
 - Called the Lake Superior and Lake Vermilion models
 - Each was a different landscape template
 - Designed to translate features into quantifiable engineering to replicate on the mine sites
 - We will now work on existing stockpiles to reshape based on these template concepts
 - Jerry Dombeck started to do this at a half mile by 200 foot area at USX
 - There are a lot of potential applications across the Iron Range
- We would like to do more with the templates (Tools) and see another phase coming
 - Need to further explore in more detail
 - Work with each community and the companies to identify sites
 - We intend to develop a funding proposal, an Innovation Grant request in 2010 and will work with partners that are interested in developing
 - We will continue to build on the solid MnDNR relationship related to this work
 - Bottom line...we would like to see more local communities get involved
 - The pilots are good for everyone and MnDNR is working with us
 - There is room in the rules to do this
 - A demo/research clause exists
 - Our initial approaches are approved by MnDNR to try different plant materials and design ideas with their guidance

Comments and Feedback:

- These can be important for productive future land use that would add tax value
- Reclamation to a more useable land form with options is important to the Iron Range
- Charrettes will be generated because of this work
- One of the future templates should focus on residential development as a reuse
- Strategically important to the area
- Ownership considerations— fee holders should be tied into this work
- We need to demonstrate value and return to all key stakeholders...these pilots are doing that now

Partnership Priorities: Work Group Action Progress Reports

Individual work group representatives provided the following reports and next steps.

Action Areas	Work Group Priorities	Work Group Representative(s)	Update/Next Steps
Coordinators Report	1. Web Site	Jim Plummer	Jim provided an overview of the LVP web site to remind members of the content and how to access. He maintains monthly numbers on its use.
	2. Mining Brochure 101	Jim Plummer	The draft is being completed with a deadline of October 31 st and will be presented at the next LVP meeting.
	3. LCCMR Visit and Future Funding Opportunity	Jim Plummer	The LCCMR visited the Iron Range in mid-August. Jim provided an overview of LVP and its mission. LCCMR had \$26 million in funding for FY 2010 projects in Minnesota. Action: The Coordinating Committee was asked to assess LCCMR project opportunities and bring this back for more discussion and possible funding project proposal at the next LVP meeting. The deadline for an application for FY 2011 is late spring 2010.
	4. Iron Range Energy Survey	Jim Plummer	Iron Range Resources and ARDC are collaborating on a survey of local units of government on their interest and approaches to energy conservation and sustainability. The deadline for completion of surveys is October 23 rd . Could be a future agenda item if related to our mission.
Targeting Priority Projects	1. Wetlands Update	Dan Jordan	<p>Northeast Wetland Inventory Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearing end of Phase II • Inventory will be available on Web • Next meeting of the Task Force is on October 19th in Grand Rapids Aitkin County development • Moratorium on wetlands proposed • Resolution passed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Meet Rules 84 – 20 then exempt from moratorium – One year moratorium with potential for renewal – Why was this proposed: Wetland Inventory – had impact on Aitkin and Lake of the Woods Counties <p>Floating Islands – Bio Haven new project concept to create wetlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babbitt native developed the idea • Business opportunity for the Iron Range • Create floating islands in mine pits (wetland mitigation) – count as wetland mitigation alternatives? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Corps of Engineers? – MnDNR? <p>Q & A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetlands inventory – NGO? Definition? • Mining companies have been participating with Task Force and will be at this meeting • October 15th – House of Representatives/Federal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rep. Oberstar bill – EPA and Corps of Engineers would have jurisdiction over all watersheds in the nation – Congressional hearing will be held to expand the Clean Water Act to expand to any waters in the U.S. – This action would overturn a Supreme Court past ruling (two of them)
	2. CIRI Brownfield Project Update	Jim Plummer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$54,800 commercial redevelopment grant approved by IRR • Assessment Coalition – approved and is now applying to EPA for \$1 million “Assessment Grant” • Chisholm is the fiscal agent • Baseline S’s – planning/identification of brownfield sites • Five site focus • Competitive grant process nationally • Post mining lands are eligible – haven’t made awards to mines in the past

	3. Fifty Year Mine Plan Maps	Tim Pastika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten years ago we went thru a major research project and identified and mapped future mining impacts for a 50 year planning period Mapped the location of magnetic taconite deposits Rough idea of timing for mining and reclamation Evolution of data is improving with regard to location but timing is still a rough estimate Need to reconvene a technical group to begin process of updating these maps New round to be underway soon Questions: What about non-magnetic and natural ore access and use? Will that be included? Currently we have ten (10) maps for the Iron Range How can we distribute this information better? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask our regional groups to distribute (to their members) Start with Western Mesabi Planning Board Meet with them and bring copies <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconvene the group to begin the next round of planning for an update Distribute what we have (pdf's are free) Eliminate land use conflicts – use overlays
	4. Mesabi Iron Range Large Scale Projects Map	Tim Pastika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have not been any changes to the large scale map since our last meeting. The updated, most current version is on the LVP web site. If you have any new information that meets the criteria for inclusion, please pass on to Tim at any time.
	5. ARDC GIS Collaborative Project Update	Jim Plummer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GIS – report from ARDC at the last meeting Pete Pastika from Babbitt: starting to use it. Not all the bugs have been worked out yet but it's getting better New applications have been developed to make it more user friendly. Jeff Jacobson: we use on regular basis, its taken three years for all of the refinements to be made – has real value now

Regional Group Updates

Two of five Regional Groups were present and provided an update on their major activities related to LVP.

Sub-Regional Group	Current Projects
Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board - Doug Learmont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Itasca County plan is adopted Five community comprehensive plans are be developed and are using Mine Map information for decision making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs to be included at this level and incorporated into zoning ordinances Lot of interest in natural iron ore in the area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping is needed and should be included in the future mine plan mapping Transportation – planning is underway for several projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hwy 169 Rail for Essar Regional Rail Freight Study (public hearings) in process Canisteo Pit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coming to closure amongst local groups and the state 15 year process This will now position the area for a more definitive use
East Central Range Partnership - Jeff Jacobson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water changes occurring to meet future needs Exploring Aurora option again Clearing title on land the city owns for more productive uses Strategic planning process is continuing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land use planning is part of that process Charrette outcomes are included in the strategic plan This Charrette has been the most integrated of the three Charrettes conducted to date

Other Business/Discussion Topics

A. PolyMet EIS Project Update

- Two public hearings – Iron Range, Aurora High School, Wednesday/December 9th; Twin Cities next day.

B. Future Topics

The group discussed a number of possible discussion topics highlighted on the agenda by the Coordinating Committee and settled on six (6) priorities for future upcoming meetings:

- Soudan Mine Project (post mining use)
- UTAC Project Update and Template Proposal
- LCCMR Project Ideas (Coordinating Committee Report) – grant writer
- PolyMet Area Charrette (future topic after the EIS permitting is concluded)
- Visual Impact of Wind Generation Facilities on the region (Gary Cerkvénik)
 - Wind conditions map (general)
 - Wind logistics study done
- Future Mining 2030 – Ten year mine mapping project
 - Map – stockpiles and tailings basins (fine/course)

Coordinating Committee Meeting

The next Coordinating Committee will be held **during the week of December 7th (date TBD) from 9:00 A.M. to Noon at the Mining and Reclamation Classroom**, at Ironworld Discovery Center in Chisholm.

LVP Quarterly Meeting

The next Laurentian Vision Partnership meeting will be **held on January 13th from 9:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. at the Mining and Reclamation Classroom** at Ironworld Discovery Center in Chisholm.



Laurentian Vision Partnership
Transforming pits and piles into lakes and landscapes

MEETING XLIII

Wednesday, October 14, 2009– 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Mining and Reclamation Classroom
Chisholm, Minnesota

“Planning and Project Implementation 2009-2010”

OBJECTIVE

Learn about the major scientific project underway at the Soudan Mine – Underground Lab Project; continue and expand on the discussion of major mineland reclamation projects and new tools to assist in designing and planning for sustainable mining; brainstorm how best to disseminate the fifty year mine plan maps to the region’s communities; hear progress reports from Work Groups and Regional Groups on major new and ongoing implementation initiatives underway for 2009-2010.

AGENDA

- 9:00 Laurentian Partnership Debriefing**
- Participant introductions and expectations *Randy Lasky, Facilitator*
 - Opening comments
 - Review of Meeting XLII results and next steps (6/09)
 - Overview of the meeting objective and agenda
- 9:15 Presentation: Soudan Mine – Underground Laboratory Project** *Bill Miller, University of Minnesota*
- 9:45 Presentation: United Taconite/KeeTac Stockpile Projects – FY 2009 Iron Range Resources Innovation Grant** *Chris Carlson and John Koepke, University of Minnesota
Julie Varichak, United Taconite MnDNR Lands and Minerals Representative*
- 10:15 Presentation: Mine Shaping and Vegetation Templates Project Proposal** *Chris Carlson and John Koepke, University of Minnesota*
- 10:45 Break**
- 11:00 Partnership Priorities: Work Group Action Progress Reports**
- 1) Targeting PRIORITY PROJECTS
 - Wetlands Update
 - Brownfield Project Update
 - 1 – IRR Project
 - 2 – EPA Assessment Grant Application
- Dan Jordan, IRR
Jim Plummer, IRR*
- 11:10 Partnership Priorities: Work Group Action Progress Reports**



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- 2) Delivering TOOLS and RESOURCES
 - Fifty Year Mine Plan Maps Out to Communities *Tim Pastika, MnDNR*
 - Mesabi Iron Range Large Scale Projects Map – Member Quarterly Update and Access *Tim Pastika, MnDNR*
 - Laurentian GIS Collaborative Project Phase II Update *Jim Plummer, IRR*

11:30 Partnership Priorities: Work Group Action Progress Reports

- 3) Facilitating REGIONAL OUTREACH
 - LVP Coordinators Report *Jim Plummer, IRR*
 - Mining Brochure 101 Status
 - LCCMR Presentation/Future Funding Opportunity

11:40 Partnership Priorities: Regional Group Action Progress Reports

- Regional Group Updates
 - 1) Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board (WMMPB) *Doug Learmont*
 - 2) Central Iron Range Initiative (CIRI) *Scott Allison*
 - 3) East Range Community Readiness (ERJPB) *Curt Anttila*
 - 4) East Central Range Partnership *Jeff Jacobson*
 - 5) Quad Cities *TBD*

12:10 Other Business Updates and Future Topics

- PolyMet EIS Project Update *Dan Jordan*
- Range Readiness Initiative Update *Jim Plummer*
- Future Topics? *Randy Lasky*
 - Essar Steel Minnesota, LLC
 - Mesabi Nugget Update
 - Future of Mining 2030 – Larry Lehtinen, Magnetation
 - Hibbing Stockpile Reclamation Project
 - Renewable Energy: LVP Tie to Wind Energy Projects in Region
 - Other?

12:25 What's Next?

- Meeting Schedule (January, May, October 2010) *Randy Lasky*
- Next meeting date and agenda
 - **Coordinating Group** –December or January _____
2009/2010?
 - Representative from each Work Group and each Sub-Regional Group
 - **Laurentian Vision Partnership** – January or February _____,
2010?
- Wrap up announcements and conclusions

12:30 ADJOURN



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Meeting Participants - Meeting XLIII

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

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