

Laurentian Vision Partnership

Meeting XLVI Report

"Planning and Project Implementation 2010"



Laurentian Vision Partnership
Transforming pits and piles into lakes and landscapes

Wednesday, October 20, 2010
Mining and Reclamation Classroom
Chisholm, Minnesota



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Meeting XLVI

Wednesday, October 20, 2010

“Planning and Project Implementation 2010”

Meeting Objectives

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

We will learn about and discuss the Highway 53 relocation planning process and possible use of past Quad Cities Charrette work; see results of the Underground Mine Mapping Phase II Project and plans for the third and final phase of this key inventory effort with both historical and future land use implications; receive an update on the Innovation Grant projects and progress made this past spring and summer; and hear progress reports from Regional Groups and Work Groups on major new and ongoing implementation initiatives underway for 2010 and 2011.

Meeting Summary Laurentian Partnership Debriefing

- Participant introductions and expectations
- Opening comments
- Review of Meeting XLV results and next steps (May 2010)
- Overview of meeting objective and agenda

Underground Mine Mapping Phase II Project Update and Phase III Planning and Funding Development Pete Clevestine P.E. Manager of Engineering and Mineral Development, MNDNR

Pete Clevestine gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Underground Mapping Project and scope and funding needs for the third and final phase of the project. He is seeking LVP support for this third phase completion. Pete highlighted the three phases of the overall project and the status and availability of information from Phases I and II which are fully completed. This information is available at the MNDNR web site http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands_minerals/underground/project.html or can be provided on a CD. The three phases are as follows: Keewatin to Buhl - Phase I; Mountain Iron to Babbitt – Phase II and the proposed third Phase would cover the West Iron Range beginning at Keewatin. In the Phase III area 86 mines operated with 40 of them on State property. The scope of work for Phase III was highlighted and is similar to the work completed in the first two Phases involving mine identification, mapping, GIS coverages and documentation of mine sites and parcels. The total cost for the final phase is \$290,000. Commitments are in place from public and private sources for \$185,000 leaving a gap of \$105,000. Committed funders include MNDNR, private mining companies and MnDOT. Pete will be approaching Iron Range Resources and other sources for the balance of funds. Members expressed their support for this work and the need to complete the third and final phase. Several comments were made about how the information has been used already and the education process of knowing how many underground mines existed across the Range. Access to information is on the LVP and MNDNR sites along with this PowerPoint.

Presentation: Highway 53 Quad Cities Relocation – MnDot Process Brian Larson P.E. MnDOT

Brian Larson is the project leader for MnDOT and will be facilitating the planning and approval process over the next several years. Brian explained the background on the Highway 53 relocation project and the requirement of the State of Minnesota to come up with a relocation plan and approvals to move TH 53 by 2017. This action will be taken to allow mining to occur by United Taconite and RGG. He provided a fact sheet on the project outlining a

brief history, description of project, schedule and benefits and risks involved. He also shared a second handout and explained the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process and a third handout of very preliminary relocation scenarios developed by United Taconite as a starting point for discussion. MnDOT is hiring a consultant to do the environmental work and a public advisory committee will be formed to provide input and guide the process. The planning/EIS process is expected to take three years followed by land acquisition and design and then construction bids by 2015 and a two year completion of the new alignment. Brian commented on ways to be involved in the process and indicated that representatives from the Quad Cities would be involved on the Advisory Committee. The Laurentian Chamber of Commerce has already held meetings and wants to make sure the area is involved and understands the work going on. The cities impacted will be responsible for the relocation of utilities in the corridor and the State expects to use Trunk Highway bonds paid by gas tax receipts to pay up to \$60 million for the project. Members expressed a desire to stay informed about this process and discuss ways to provide input and evaluate key options as they are developed. The meeting handouts will be posted on the LVP web site for future reference.

Presentation: 2001 Quad Cities Charrette Review (Exploring Highway 53 Reroute Opportunities)
Jim Plummer, Iron Range Resources

Jim Plummer briefed the members on the first Laurentian Vision Design Charrette done in the fall of 2001 for the Auburn Pit area. This is the same area to be affected by the relocation of TH 53. Jim had a PowerPoint presentation and handout from the Charrette process highlighting the concepts and ideas developed at that time. He went on to review some of the key concepts, how they were developed and the participants that developed this work. Members felt this work would be very helpful to the State's process and should serve as a starting point for the Advisory Committee and other groups looking at the alternatives with a longer term community and economic development impacts perspective. Jim has been and expects to continue to be a part of the meetings sponsored by the Laurentian Chamber of Commerce and will share this and other information as the process unfolds. Jim went on to share information on a You Tube Video entitled "Thinking Outside the Box". LVP will stay in tune with this process and asked for future updates.

Regional Group Updates

The following Regional Groups were present and provided an update on their major activities related to LVP.

Regional Group	Current Projects
Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board (WMPMB) – Doug Learmont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Itasca County Management Plan is updated every 5-7 years and is to be updated soon. The group will be working with this process as it unfolds. • The area has natural iron ore resources that NRRI has been characterizing. The Board is recommending that more research be done on this valuable resource and is encouraging MNDNR and Iron Range Resources to support this work. • The Board is a partner and supports the Iron Range Brownfields Initiative.
Central Iron Range Initiative (CIRI) – Lory Fedo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIRI has led the effort to resubmit a \$1 million grant request to EPA for a regional Brownfields Initiative. This will be the third submittal. The application now identifies 6-8 sites in multiple communities that will be assisted with this grant fund. Matching funds are being provided by Iron Range Resources. A decision will be made in April 2011.
East Range Community Readiness (ERJPB) – Curt Anttila	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No report
East Central Range Partnership – Jeff Jacobson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No report
Quad Cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No report

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
Targeting Priority Projects	1. Innovation Grants 2010	Jim Plummer, IRR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The FY 2011 budget has \$250,000 available for bricks and mortar related Innovation Grant projects. In June IRR approved two projects totaling \$200,000 in grants for HibbTac projects. Stockpiles 4090 and 5012 and the Pit Lake project. Julie Elkington reported that the UTAC stockpile project was planted in the spring and is doing well. They will have to reseed the grasses due to sumac issues. Approximately 2,000 plants were planted on the site. It was suggested that we make a future presentation on these developing projects to the IMA Environmental Committee and the SME conference in April 2011. We will continue to build on what we have learned in other project areas as we plan and design these innovative projects and incorporate in active mining processes today.
	2. Web Site Improvements	Jim Plummer, IRR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jim distributed the Google Analytics Dashboard summary on site use. Several additions have been made to the site including the acknowledgement of the core sponsors supporting the facilitation of these meetings annually and the addition of the Innovation Grants page. The new page provides the history and intent of the grant program as well as overviews and updates on the various projects funded to date. Staff will be looking into the use of Facebook as a medium to provide exposure and raise awareness of LVP with both younger people and the largest growing user group of Facebook – those between the ages of 40 and 55 years old. Jim also asked for member ideas to include in Lee Bloomquist's Blog on the IRR web site. It was suggested that Underground Mapping might be a good topic to highlight. Any other ideas should be forwarded to Jim.
	3. Aerial Photos	Tim Pastika, MNDNR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tim explained that MNDNR has large aerial photos flown in 2009 that are available and could be linked to the LVP site. He also said that the agency intends to fly again in 2011. It was suggested that the agency contact with the chief mining engineers at the mines to determine their interest in collaborating on these efforts. This was attempted several years ago and did not materialize for a number of reasons. Jim Plummer, Pete Clevenstine and Tim Pastika will approach the engineers to determine their aerial needs and how a collaborative effort might work for Itasca and St Louis Counties.
Delivering Tools & Resources	1. Mesabi Iron Range Large Scale Projects Map – Quarterly Update	Tim Pastika, MNDNR Dan Jordan, IRR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The changes proposed at the May LVP meeting have been made on the Large Scale Project Map including the addition of the smaller area map outside the Mesabi Range current map. Any future updates on projects should be directed to Tim for inclusion each quarter. The current map will be updated and is online at the LVP website.
	2. Wetlands Inventory Update	Dan Jordan, IRR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan distributed a copy of "Northeast Minnesota Wetland Mitigation Inventory and Assessment" – Phase I and II report Executive Summaries prepared for BWSR by Barr Engineering. The report has been submitted to the legislature for consideration. The entire report can be viewed online at www.bwsr.state.mn.us/wetlands/wca/NE_Assessment_Phase_II-Report.pdf. We will continue to monitor legislative action on the findings and recommendations included in the report.

Other Business Updates and Future Topics

A. Range Readiness Initiative (RRI) Update

Randy Lasky, facilitator for Range Readiness Initiative, reported that the RRI Strategy Team met in mid-June and heard major updates by its three active Work Teams including Workforce Development, Housing and Communications; a lot of progress continues to be made in these critical areas. The Work Teams continue to meet and implement the strategies developed in 2009-2010. The Team will be meeting with the leaders of the major large scale projects at a fall meeting. They will hear progress reports on the status of projects, future plans and timing and will discuss how Range Readiness has and can be of further assistance. The future of Range Readiness beyond 2010 will be discussed with these leaders to make sure we are bringing value and addressing their needs.

B. Future Topics

The group discussed a number of possible discussion topics highlighted on the agenda by the Coordinating Committee. They settled on several priorities for the winter meeting and possible priorities for future upcoming meetings:

Winter 2011 meeting topic priorities:

- Overview of Non-Ferrous Mining Development and 2011 Legislative Challenges
- State Environmental Review and Permitting Process
 - Overview of the Process
 - Jennifer Engstrom
 - John Engresser
 - Julie Jordan
 - Other?
 - Update on Projects in Permitting Process Today
 - Mesaba Mining update
 - Minntac East Pit Expansion into Parkville
 - KeeTac EIS
 - Essar EIS supplement modifications
 - PolyMet
 - Excelsior Energy
 - Other?
 - Proposed “Permitting Process Streamlining Initiatives”...what does this mean?
 - Senator Olson Permit Listening Session
 - Legislative Audit being prepared
- Cooperative Minerals Resources Project Overview – Brad Moore, Barr Engineering (when authorized by the company)
- Discharge Water Sulfate Concentrations Study (when information is available)
- Range Readiness Initiative (RRI) update
- Underground Mapping Project Phase III Funding Development Update

Spring/Fall 2011 topic priorities:

- Great River Energy – energy storage pump
- Wind – large scale
 - Minnesota Power project/Minntac
 - Potential sites on the Range
 - Biwabik area project
 - Community level (ARDC study)
- Excelsior Energy update
- Workforce development/Northeast Higher Education District (Roy Smith)
- Enbridge project restoration

Coordinating Committee Meeting

The next Coordinating Committee will be held on December 14, 2010 **from 9:00 A.M. to Noon at the Mining and Reclamation Classroom**, at Ironworld Discovery Center in Chisholm. Work Group and Regional Group representatives will be asked to assist in developing the January 2011 membership meeting agenda.

LVP Quarterly Meeting

The next Laurentian Vision Partnership meeting will be **held on January 20th from 9:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. at the Mining and Reclamation Classroom** at Ironworld Discovery Center in Chisholm.



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MEETING XLVI

Wednesday, October 20, 2010 – 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Mining and Reclamation Classroom
Chisholm, Minnesota

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OBJECTIVE

Learn about and discuss the Highway 53 relocation planning process and possible use of past Quad Cities Charrette work; see results of the Underground Mine Mapping Phase II Project and plans for the third and final phase of this key inventory effort with both historical and future land use implications; receive an update on the Innovation Grant projects and progress made this past spring and summer; and hear progress reports from Regional Groups and Work Groups on major new and ongoing implementation initiatives underway for 2010 and 2011.

AGENDA

- 9:00 Laurentian Partnership Debriefing** *Randy Lasky, Facilitator*
- Participant introductions and expectations
 - Opening comments
 - Review of Meeting XLV results and next steps (5/26)
 - Overview of the meeting objective and agenda
- 9:15 Presentation: Underground Mine Mapping Phase II Project Update and Phase III Planning and Funding Development** *Pete Clevensline and Dale Cartwright, MNDNR*
- 9:35 Presentation: Highway 53 Quad Cities Relocation – MNDOT Process** *Brian Larson, P.E. MNDOT*
- 10:05 Presentation: 2001 Quad Cities Charrette Review (Exploring Highway 53 Reroute Opportunities)** *Jim Plummer, IRR*
- 10:30 Partnership Priorities: Regional Group Action Progress Reports** *Area Representatives*
- Regional Group Updates
 - 1) Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board (WMMPB) *Doug Learmont*
 - 2) East Central Range Partnership *Jeff Jacobson*
 - 3) Central Iron Range Initiative (CIRI) *John Fedo/Jim Plummer*
 - 4) East Range Community Readiness (ERJPB) *Curt Anttila*
 - 5) Quad Cities *TBD*
- 11:00 Break**
- 11:15 Partnership Priorities: Work Group Action Progress Reports**
- 1) Targeting PRIORITY PROJECTS and COMMUNICATION

- Innovation Grants Program Projects Update
 - FY 2011 Innovation Grant Funding Availability and Process *Jim Plummer, IRR*
- Web Site Improvements *Jim Plummer, IRR*
 - Innovation Grants Projects page addition
 - Future blogs by Lee Bloomquist – ideas?
 - Create LVP Facebook page - interest? benefits?
 - Web site use summary
 - Addition of Large Scale Aerial Photos from 2008-2009 *Tim Pastika, MNDNR*
- Future Uses of Iron Range Resources Mining Clips Video *Jim Plummer, IRR*
 - (Process of mining videos)

11:35 Partnership Priorities: Work Group Action Progress Reports

- 2) Delivering TOOLS and RESOURCES
 - Mesabi Iron Range Large Scale Projects Map – Quarterly Update *Tim Pastika, MNDNR*
 - Wetlands Inventory Update *Dan Jordan, IRR*

11:50 Other Business Updates and Future Topics

- Range Readiness Initiative Update *Randy Lasky*
- Future Topics/Presentations
 - Cooperative Mineral Resources, an overview of a new magnesium mining project – Brad Moore, Barr Engineering
 - Non Ferrous Mining Big Picture Overview with a focus on Twin Metals and Franconia projects, PolyMet permitting update and legislative challenges in 2011 and beyond
 - State Environmental Permitting Process – Overview, value in support of “Responsible Growth” and an update on current projects in process today
 - Energy Storage Pump – Hydro Project Study for the Iron Range
 - Discharge Water Sulfate Concentrations and Impacts Study when completed
 - Renewable Energy and the siting of wind projects and aesthetic impacts (i.e. Embarrass project and others)
 - Overview of Innovation Grants – Status and Results of Past and Current Projects
 - Workforce Development – Roy Smith and Jim Plummer
 - State Wetland Inventory Update for Phase I and II
 - Excelsior Energy Project Update
 - Mesabi Nugget Project Update
 - Future Charrettes at KeeTac and PolyMet areas
 - Laurentian GIS Collaborative Update
 - Other?

12:15 What’s Next?

- Meeting Schedule (January and May 2011) *Randy Lasky*
- Next meeting date and agenda
 - **Coordinating Group** –December 2010?
 - Representative from each Work Group and each Sub-Regional Group
 - **Laurentian Vision Partnership** – January ____, 2011?
- Wrap up announcements and conclusions

12:30 ADJOURN



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Meeting Participants - Meeting XLVI
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