

Innovation Grant History

FY 2006-2018

The Iron Range Resources Innovation Grant Program is designed to implement Laurentian Vision Partnership's mission of "transforming pits and piles into living lakes and landscapes...our legacy for the future."

FY06 - Mountain Iron Economic Development Authority: Mesabi Mountain Wind Coalition

The grant was to identify and develop renewable wind generation across the Iron Range at various mining sites.

Grant Amount: \$139,000
Total Project: \$389,467
Project Contributors: Minnesota Power, Mountain Iron Economic Development Authority, MNSCU, Cerkenik, Carrol.

FY07 - MN Extension Service: Biomass Fiber Production for Energy/Fuel on Mine Land Reclamation at United Taconite

The project grew switch grass on a tailings basin to provide an alternative source of biomass for the green energy industry.

Grant Amount: \$53,531
Total Project \$158,099
Project Contributors: MN Extension Service, United Taconite

FY08 – MN Department of Natural Resources: Underground Mine Mapping

The Underground Mine Mapping Project graphically documented the extensive network of sub-surface mines across the Iron Range.

Grant Amount: \$150,000
Total Project \$300,000
Project Contributors: ArcelorMittal, USS Mintac, Cliffs Natural Resources, MNDOT, St. Louis County

FY 09 - University of Minnesota School of Landscape Architecture: United Taconite Stockpile #1406

The United Taconite project innovatively shaped and vegetated a surface overburden stockpile adjacent to the heavily traveled Highway 53 corridor.

Grant Amount: \$72,150
Total Project \$98,870
Project Contributors: U or M School of Landscape Architecture, Cliffs Natural Resources, MNDNR Lands and Minerals.

FY 09 - University of Minnesota School of Landscape Architecture: Keetac Stockpile #43

The project will shape and vegetate a rock stockpile. Rock stockpiles are significantly more challenging to contour and vegetate than overburden stockpiles.

Grant Amount: \$51,490

Total Project \$82,440

Project Contributors: U of M School of Landscape Architecture, Cliffs Natural Resources, MNDNR Lands and Minerals.

FY10 - City of Hibbing: Hibbing Taconite: In-Pit Shoreland Development Project

The project will design and build new mine pit lake shoreline, shallow pit lake areas suitable for aquatic life, fish spawning areas, islands and usable upland areas.

Grant Amount: \$100,000

Total Project \$107,920

Project Contributors: Cliffs Natural Resources, City of Hibbing, MNDNR Lands and Minerals, Architectural Resources, Inc., Applied Insights North, Braun Intertech, Inc.

FY 10 - University of Minnesota School of Landscape Architecture: Hibbing Taconite - Stockpiles 4090 and 5012

The project will build, reshape, and vegetate two stockpiles adjacent to Kleffman Road, a busy county road three miles east of Hibbing and one mile north of Kelly Lake.

Grant Amount: \$100,000

Total Project: \$341,210 (Project totals includes FY 10 and FY 11)

Project Contributors: U of M School of Landscape Architecture, Cliffs Natural Resources, MNDNR Lands and Minerals.

FY 11 – City of Hibbing: Hibbing Taconite – In-Pit Shoreland Development Project Phase II – Redevelopment through Reclamation Site Selection Project

The grant is for two separate projects. One involves the implementation of the vegetation plan through the installation of vegetation materials on the In-Pit Shoreland site. The second involves identifying in-pit and stockpile mining sites for reclamation and near-term development across the Iron Range.

Grant Amount: \$99,200

Total Project: \$164,200

Project Contributors: Cliffs Natural Resources, City of Hibbing, MNDNR Lands and Minerals, Architectural Resources, Inc., Applied Insights North, Braun Intertech, Inc

FY 11 - University of Minnesota School of Landscape Architecture: Hibbing Taconite Stockpiles 4090 and 5012 Phase II

The project involves monitoring, evaluating and recording Phase I of the project. It also includes developing land-shaping templates for use by mining engineers.

Grant Amount: \$50,400
Total Project: \$341,210 (Project totals includes FY 10 and FY 11)
Project Contributors: U of M School of Landscape Architecture, Cliffs Natural Resources, MNDNR Lands and Minerals.

FY 11 - University of Minnesota School of Landscape Architecture: Northshore Mining: Peter Mitchell pit Master Landscape Concept Plan. Phase I

The master plan for Northshore Mining's Peter Mitchell Mine for future uses and multiple landscape opportunities for the mine once closed, including vegetation enhancement, littoral zones, islands, wetlands, and shoreland.

Grant Amount: \$100,400
Total Project: \$178,560
Project Contributors: U of M School of Landscape Architecture, City of Babbitt, Cliffs Natural Resources, MNDNR Lands and Minerals.

FY12 - City of Hibbing: Redevelop a Rock Stockpile into an International Mountain Bike Association Designed Mountain Bike Park. (WITHDRAWN)

The project will transform a 116 acre parcel of mining disturbed land into a city mountain bike park that will both serve community residents and act as a tourist destination.

Grant Amount: \$250,000
Total Project \$275,000
Project Contributors: City of Hibbing, Cliffs Natural Resources, International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA), Barr Engineering, Architectural Resources, Inc.,

FY 13 - University of Minnesota School of Landscape Architecture: Northshore Mining: Peter Mitchell pit Master Landscape Concept Plan Phase II

The project will use the concepts from Phase I and produce the preferred working schematic plans for implementation by mine engineers.

Grant Amount: \$75,000
Total Project: \$254,100
Project Contributors: U of M School of Landscape Architecture, City of Babbitt, Cliffs Natural Resources, MNDNR Lands and Minerals.

FY 13 – East Range Joint Powers Board – Sulfate Reducing Bioreactor

The project is to conduct an on-site field test to evaluate whether a biological sulfate reduction system could be designed and deployed to address the volume of sulfate reduction needed at an economically viable cost.

Grant Amount: \$125,000
Total Project: \$369,500
Project Contributors: East Joint Powers Board, Clearwater Layline LLC. Cliffs Natural Resources, PolyMet Mining, NRRI, Lemna Technologies, Premier Plastics, Apex Engineering

FY 14 – East Range Joint Powers Board – Sulfate Reducing Bioreactor Phase II

The project is to conduct continued field testing of the floating sulfate reducing bioreactor to prove the performance and scalability of this concept for large scale sulfate reduction in mining impaired waters.

Grant Amount: \$70,000
Total Project: \$390,000
Project Contributors: East Joint Powers Board, NRRI, PolyMet Mining, Cliffs Natural Resources, Clearwater Layline LLC.

FY 14 – City of Eveleth – United Taconite Spruce Stockpile and Truck Shop Embankment

This is for two separate mineland reclamation projects at the Cliffs Natural Resources Taconite Mine in Eveleth, MN. The Spruce Surface Stockpile project would entail preparing a grading plan that naturally contours the stockpile as well as preparation of a planting plan that enhances the appearance of the stockpile. The Truck Shop Embankment project is for a planting design that will create a more natural, pleasing landscape that will screen some of the mining operations from the nearby neighborhood.

Grant Amount: \$83,280
Total Project: \$158,285
Project Contributors: City of Eveleth, United Taconite, MnDNR Mineland Reclamation, LVP, Prairie Restorations, LLC, Architectural Resources

FY 15 – City of Silver Bay – Black Beach Public Beach Area

The project is to prepare 31.6 acres of beach and park area for public use and to delineate boundary limits. The funding is used to install fencing, signage, picnic site areas, public lavatory vaults, campground planning, parking and pathway areas.

Grant Amount: \$125,000
Total Project: \$1,143,100
Project Contributors: City of Silver Bay, Northshore Mining Company, MN Department of Natural Resources

FY 15 – City of Hibbing – Scram Tailings Mineland Reclamation Study

This project is a collaboration between SEH and Mining Resources, LLC to develop an innovative research program to investigate and determine successful reclamation strategies to reclaim scam mining tailings.

Grant Amount: \$60,000

Total Project: \$76,200

Project Contributors: Mining Resources, LLC, City of Hibbing, Prairie Restorations Inc., SEH

FY 17 – City of Buhl – Judson Mine Recreation Project

The project will transform mine lands into living recreational landscapes. The project entails development of low maintenance, all-season, multi-use recreational facilities. Plans include a championship caliber 18-hole disc golf course, hiking trails, cross country and snowshoeing trails, and mountain biking opportunities adjacent to the Mesabi Trail.

Grant Amount: \$38,250

Total Project: \$76,500

Project Contributors: City of Buhl, MN Department of Corrections, Sentence to Service Program, Local Logger/Woodworker, Hibbing Disc Golf Association, Construction/Concrete Contractors, Mining Company, Airborn Disc Golf

FY 17 – City of Virginia – UTAC Barrier Berm

The project is for the design and installation of two barrier berms, approximately 16 acres total, along the abandoned TH Hwy 53 corridor. United Taconite is planning to construct the berms to serve as a barrier between the mine and community to provide noise relief and create a visually appealing landscape along the new TH Hwy 53. The berms will be near the community of Midway and also at the intersection of Virginia's 2nd Avenue entrance.

Grant Amount: \$112,250

Total Project: \$353,725

Project Contributors: United Taconite LLC, City of Virginia, RGGGS, Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH), Prairie Restorations, Inc. (PRI), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Division of Lands & Minerals

FY 18 – Iron Range Tourism Bureau – Bridge View Park

This project will result in a “Bridge View” pocket park along the Mesabi Trail in Virginia overlooking Rouchleau mine pit. It will be one of the few places to view the new Highway 53 bridge in its entirety.

Grant Amount: \$14,500

Total Project: \$46,000

Project Contributors: Iron Range Tourism Bureau, ReVive Virginia, Lake and St. Louis County Regional Railroad Authority (Mesabi Trail), City of Virginia

FY 18 – City of Chisholm – Planning and Design for the Redhead Mountain Bike Park

The Redhead Mountain Bike Park project will transform an inactive iron mine pit and surrounding property covering approximately 650 or more acres near Chisholm into a municipally sanctioned mountain bike park that will both serve community residents and act as tourist destination.

Grant Amount: \$28,900
Total Project: \$376,765
Project Contributors: City of Chisholm, St. Louis County Land Department, Mesabi Trail/St. Louis and Lake County Regional Rail Authority, Minnesota Discovery Center, Barr Engineering Company, Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation, Professional Trail Design-Build Contractor, Schoenbauer Consulting, LLC, Chisholm Community Foundation, Independent Contractor, Iron Range Off-Road Cyclists (IROC), Hibbing Community College

FY 18 – City of Cohasset – Tioga Mountain Bike Park and Recreational Area

This grant will leverage other funding to construct Mt. biking trails, improvements to parking, a swimming beach, fishing pier, signage, development of a trailhead, a day use area, and bike repair station.

Grant Amount: \$25,000
Total Project: \$1,250,000
Project Contributors: Itasca County, The Grand Rapids Itasca Mountain Bicycling Association (GRIMBA), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, The Minnesota Office of School Trust Lands, The City of Grand Rapids, Gift Fit Itasca, Visit Grand Rapids, The Forest History Center, The Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, Mobility Mania, The Itasca Trails Taskforce, The Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation, The Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

FY 18 – City of Hibbing – Tails Reclamation Study, Phase II – Year 3 Extension

This grant gives the opportunity to complete a final year of data collection for monitoring of native vegetation. This third year of data collection and monitoring would model the state's minimum vegetation establishment standards for achieving 90 percent vegetative cover within three (3) years of a site's facility, infrastructure, surface areas, or other mine site elements that are no longer scheduled to be disturbed or used in a way that would disrupt vegetation establishment.

Grant Amount: \$10,375.00
Total Project: \$12,375.00
Project Contributors: Mining Resources

FY 18 – City of Nashwauk – Nashwauk Disc Golf

This grant will pay for the design and installation of an 18-hole disc golf course in the City of Nashwauk, located on City land overlooking the Larue Mine Pit.

Grant Amount: \$13,475.00
Total Project: \$23,950.00
Project Contributors: Nashwauk, various sponsorships

FY 18 – Chisholm Beautification Association – Bruce Mine Park

This grant will pay for the design and first phase of development the “Bruce Mine Park” in Chisholm. It is a memorial park to recognize the sacrifice, dedication and loyalty to the United States by the thousands of immigrant miners.

Grant Amount: \$99,700.00
Total Project: \$108,325.00
Project Contributors: Chisholm Community Foundation, Gornick Family Fund, Bruce Quick

FY 19 – City of Hibbing – Hibbing Mine View Phase II

This grant will pay for phase II of the relocation of the Hibbing Mine View. This will consist of foundation and infrastructure costs, electrical and solar power along with a ramp to the buildings.

Grant Amount: \$150,000.00
Total Project: \$1,190,197.00
Project Contributors: Cleveland Cliffs, The City of Hibbing, Komatsu Mining Corporation

FY 19 – City of Mountain Iron – Northern Sun Solar Project Phase I

This grant will utilize a mine tailings basin in the City of Mountain Iron. A renewable energy solar development will be constructed along with a walking trail for education purposes. This grant will pay for the site design, engineering and planning for the project.

Grant Amount: \$50,000.00
Total Project: \$495,255.00
Project Contributors: City of Mountain Iron