

## **Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board**

### **Key Activities and Issues Report for June 24, 2020 Mineland Vision Partnership Meeting**

Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board activities since March 2020 have been restricted by state rules related to the health pandemic situation. Activities were primarily focused on three legislative priorities which were also affected by state-level impacts on legislative activity:

1. Legislation to provide funding for the state DNR to study, plan, and construct as needed to address the issue of rapidly rising waters in the Canisteo and Arcuturus-Hill Annex open pit mine complexes, where uncontrolled overflow may occur as early as two years from the present;
2. Legislative action to confirm certain arrangements and understandings regarding the future of the Hill Annex Mine State Park;
3. Legislation for pre-bonding study needed to complete the Cross Range Expressway, which is 40 to 50 years behind plans and restricts economic and other activities in a significant part of northeastern Minnesota.

In other subject areas:

People in the western Mesabi corridor are carefully watching Western Mesabi mining industry developments, which greatly impact the Keewatin to Cohasset area and the broader region, especially with regard to reactivation or other activities involving the former Magnetation facilities, new developments on and near the former Butler site, and progress by Prairie River Minerals, as well as more recent shutdowns of existing mine production facilities.

Encouragement continued with regard to strategic and critical minerals, specifically, establishment of northeastern Minnesota as a special district to protect and better make available for mining its strategic and critical minerals as called for in a WMMPB resolution.