



**MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**Wednesday, February 3, 2021**

**10:00AM – 12:00PM**

Meeting was via Zoom Meeting

# MINELAND VISION PARTNERSHIP

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## MEETING OBJECTIVE

The Mineland Vision Partnership (MVP) is a regional collaboration that invests in our diverse community by developing opportunities for changing or dynamic minescapes, preserving lands to sustain current and future mining, and providing resources and education. It recognizes the rich history of mining on Minnesota's Iron Range and opportunities to engage with a changing environment.

Since its formal organization in 2000, MVP has promoted collaboration between mining companies and communities to plan and design future landscapes that can benefit both interests. It builds on extensive past efforts to return minelands to community use, preserve them for future mining uses, shares these best practices, and publicizes their successes to drive further interest. It spreads information to the group and actively engages partners, builds connections with education to generate fresh ideas, engages the media to showcase the value of work completed by MVP, and explores new and existing modes of communication and incorporates them within a plan to disseminate a consistent message for the group.

This meeting seeks to provide an overview of updates from key regional partners including ferrous and non-ferrous as well as updates from the Xcel Energy, Minnesota Power, and NRRI.

## MEETING SUMMARY

- Welcome & Introductions
- Presentation: Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI)
- Presentation: Xcel Update
- Presentation: Minnesota Power
- Presentation: Projects Update
- Presentation: MN Minerals Coordinating Committee
- Presentation: Mineland Reclamation Story
- Presentation: Strategic Plan Update

## WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

### Welcome & Introductions

**Elissa Hansen,**  
President & CEO, Northspan

Elissa Hansen, MVP Facilitator, gave folks a few minutes to join online and welcomed everyone. The meeting began at 9:03AM. Elissa provided a quick recap of zoom meeting essentials and introduced the meeting agenda. Participants were invited to introduce themselves to the group.

## PRESENTATION

**George Hudak,**  
Director – Minerals and Metallurgy Research Group, NRRI

### Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI)

**Dave Dahl,**  
Geologist, MnDNR

**Eric Singaas**  
Initiative Director – Wood Products and Bioeconomy, NRRI

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George Hudak, Director – Minerals and Metallurgy Research Group, began with a presentation on the USGS Earth Mapping Resources Initiative (Earth MRI) Program. This program aims to gain a better understanding of geological resources in the US and identify critical minerals, which are defined as those that have significant economic and national security impacts. To date, NRRI submitted 4 target areas to USGS: Mentor Area (Northwest Minnesota), Cuyuna Area, South Duluth Complex, Iowa

MCR/Phosphate deposit. The mapping process includes airborne magnetic and radiometric surveys to aid in building a new geological map. Next, Dave Dahl, Geologist, MnDNR spoke on the Mentor area in northwestern Minnesota. USGS is interested in seeing which mafic intrusions may be more fertile than others for mineral production. He reiterated that the goal is to evaluate as many different mineral systems within the area, noting the many national and state parks, wildlife refuges and Tribal Nations right outside the area. Again, this would be an airborne geophysical survey of a very compact area.

The presenters paused here to address any questions from participants, and then floor was given to Eric Singaas, Initiative Director – Wood Products and Bioeconomy, NRRI. Eric began his presentation on biochar beginning with an update on challenges specific to Minnesota. Biochar, a nearly pure form of carbon, was biomass, but now is more like charcoal and is distinct from other types of carbon such as decomposing biomass and fossil carbons.

Eric described methods of generating biochar, which include forest fires and artificial production with retort kilns (forest fire in a box), or with an indirect kiln (industrial process). The latter provides high control and consistency, as well as co-product generation, like steam or electricity. NRRI has updated the kiln in the Coleraine labs for char production. Eric described the many potential uses for biochar, such as carbon sequestration or soil amendment, water and air filtration, and mitigation of animal waste emissions. NRRI has 6+ projects in the works currently: ranging from reduction of E. coli in water waste, to erosion control socks, and urban infrastructure. Additionally, they have proposals in to USFS for a landfill capping project.

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## P R E S E N T A T I O N

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### **Xcel Update**

**Tom Hillstrom,**  
Principal Permitting Agent, Xcel

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Tom Hillstrom, Principal Permitting Agent, Xcel Energy, provided an update on the relocation of a transmission line. This specific transmission line is 500 kV, making it the highest voltage line in Minnesota, connecting from Manitoba (near Hudson Bay). Tom began by introducing the project's geography; the existing line runs along Highway 169 between Hibbing and Chisholm and needs to be moved out of the mine pit's blast zone. He noted there were not a lot of options for relocation between the Discovery Center, expanding mine, and Highway 169. Tom described the project's three-year process, which included convening stakeholder meetings to determine the best route. Xcel is now clearing trees on the new route, with the goal to construct new towers during spring and summer 2021. They hope to have the new line complete by October 2021 and have the old line removed by December 2021.

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## P R E S E N T A T I O N

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### **Minnesota Power**

**Arik Forsman,**  
Regional Development Representative, Minnesota Power

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Arik Forsman, Regional Development Representative, Minnesota Power, provided an update on Minnesota Power's new Integrated Resource Plan (IRP).

Arik introduced Minnesota Power's Integrated Resource Plan. Arik described Minnesota Power's clean energy transition, and the milestone of being the first utility in the state to reach 50% renewable; 15 years ago, Minnesota Power operated nine coal units and have since closed or transitioned 7 out of 9 to renewable sources. The long-term goal is to be 100% carbon free by 2050, while maintaining commitments to climate, customers and communities. The four priorities through the transition are to: ensure reliability, manage costs for all customers, provide just transition times for employers and communities, and allow time for technology to develop or advance.

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Arik described the blueprint toward a carbon-free future. First, by adding 400 MW of wind and solar; the next goal is to achieve full coal-free energy supply. He addressed the timeline for transitioning existing coal units. Other priorities during this transition are to strengthen the electric grid, adopt innovative solutions, continue stakeholder engagement, and collaboration with state of MN and others to develop a sustainable transition plan. Arik noted the regulatory process to approve the IRP is expected to take around a year, which was submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities. During that time, there will be opportunities for public participation and written comment periods during the review process.

Nancy Norr provided information about the Midwestern Governors Association and their priority this year discussing how to prepare communities for power plant closures. There are subgroups meeting all year on local community impacts, economic development, workforce/training and energy & environment. Interested participants can learn more and sign up here: <https://midwesterngovernors.org/power-plant-closures/>.

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## P R E S E N T A T I O N

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### Projects Updates

**Julie Padilla,**  
Chief Regulatory Officer, Twin Metals

**Joe Henderson,**  
MN DNR, Mesaba Metallic

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Julie Padilla, Chief Regulatory Officer, Twin Metals provided an update on their project. Twin Metals began working in the Duluth Complex a decade ago, and are now at the beginning of the regulatory process. She noted that current mineral demand would require mining more than 3 billion tons of minerals and metals by 2050 to meet green energy goals. This does not include metals needed to sustain normal growth and consumption needs.

Julie described the underground mining project, noting the dry stack tailings facility and no tailings dam, as well as the plans to store waste rock and tailings underground. There are currently many mining exploration projects throughout the Rainy River Basin, although most are on the Canadian side. Twin Metals is currently working with the new federal administration to promote project and will continue to move through scoping on both Federal and State. They are not expecting to reach the public comments stage until late 2021 or early 2022. Julie noted the final environmental impact study (EIS) is probably 5 years out, with another 3 years for construction. They are hoping for a fair and consistent regulatory process, noting that “prove it first” legislation would hinder investment in the region. Twin Metals has met with each representative in Minnesota’s delegation, and will continue to focus on trying to educate the public.

Joe Henderson, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources gave a brief update on Mesaba Metallic. Two months ago, an amendment was approved for Mesaba Metallics master lease. The Minnesota DNR assembled a team of legal experts to review agreements and identify compliance milestones. Joe confirmed that Mesaba Metallic did make the required \$3M settlement payment to DEED/Itasca County and \$12.5M payment for royalties to the appropriate entities.

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## P R E S E N T A T I O N

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### MN Minerals Coordinating Committee

**Heather Arends,**  
MN Minerals Coordinating Committee

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Heather Arends, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources presented on the Minnesota Minerals Coordinating Committee. Heather shared a brief history of the committee, which was established in State statutes in 1988 to “plan for diversified mineral development.” The committee is made up of number of organizations, such as the DNR and IRRR, as well as industry representatives. The Committee has several accomplishments, including 100+ mineral projects dating back to 1989. Heather described the three goals of the MCC: information, mining, and communication. Each goal has two strategies, which Heather described in detail. More information can be found at: <http://mcc.mn.gov>.

## P R E S E N T A T I O N

### Mineland Reclamation Story

**Jim Plummer,**  
Mineland Reclamation, IRRR

**Jim Paulsen,**  
Mayor, City of Gilbert

Jim Plummer, IRRR and Jim Paulsen, City of Gilbert were invited to share updates on a Mineland Reclamation Grant project. The City of Gilbert was awarded a \$100,000 grant to expand campground utilities, make beach parking area and water access improvements, and prepare a master plan. The City added water, sewer, and electrical service to seven additional sites, which remained at capacity for the duration of summer 2020. The City's match for improvements were made from campground revenue and prove to be a solid economic driver for the City. The final piece of the grant was the creation of a long-range master plan. This plan includes upgrades to entire Lake Ore-be-gone shoreline and downtown Gilbert. The plan will be uploaded on the City of Gilbert's website after March 1, 2021.

Jim Paulsen addressed participant questions after his presentation. Jim Plummer encouraged participants to apply for available grant funding. More information can be found here: <https://mn.gov/irrb/grant-resources/mining-programs/mineland-reclamation.jsp>

## P R E S E N T A T I O N

### Strategic Plan Update

**Jim Plummer,**  
Mineland Reclamation, IRRR

Jim Plummer gave a short update on Mineland Vision Partnership's new logo and website as part of the strategic plan process. The new logo was designed by local firm Art Unlimited out of Angora, MN. The next task is to update the website, which will begin soon. Jim thanked committee members: Cam Trembath, Stephanie Skraba, Pete Karo, Tim Pastika, Sandy Tarnowski, Linda Johnson, Shelly Sallee, and Julie Mariniucci.

## A d j o u r n e d

- The next meeting date is Wednesday, June 9, 2021 between 9:00AM and 12:00PM, and will be held virtually.
- Meeting was adjourned at 11:57AM.

## Regional Group Action Progress Reports

The following Regional Groups were present and provided an update on their major activities related to MVP. Copies of the handouts are available on the MVP website at [www.LVPmn.org](http://www.LVPmn.org).

REGIONAL GROUP	CURRENT PROJECTS
<b>Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board (WMMPB)</b> Doug Learmont, Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· A written update summary report was given and will be available.</li> <li>· Studies and planning to address the issue of rapidly rising waters in the Canisteo and Arcturus-Hill Annex open pit mine complexes including seeking legislative funding for the projects.</li> <li>· Attention to developments related to three significant mining projects in the western Mesabi area: Prairie River Minerals, Mesabi Metallics, and re-start of Keetac.</li> <li>· Seeking to confirm certain arrangements and understandings regarding the future of the Hill Annex Mine State Park and funding for completion of the Cross Range Expressway.</li> <li>· Planning to decide WMMPB's priority activities for 2021.</li> </ul>
<b>East Range Joint Powers Board (ERJPB)</b> Karl Schuettler, Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· A written update summary report was given and will be available.</li> <li>· The ERJPB participated in a strategic directions consensus workshop in January to set priorities for the next 3 years.</li> <li>· ERJPB disaster relief program is now operational, and can disperse funds until June 30, 2021 once they revolve, they become the property of ERJPB.</li> <li>· Blandin Broadband Communities – Regional Feasibility Study: Work continues on a joint feasibility study between the East Range, Laurentian, and Tower broadband groups. The initial round of community-level presentations is now complete. A recording of the East Range presentation is available at <a href="https://erjpb.com/event/east-range-broadband-feasibility-study-presentation/">https://erjpb.com/event/east-range-broadband-feasibility-study-presentation/</a></li> <li>· Secured funding for recreation and trail development mapping and materials for off-road vehicle trails. Launching the bid process for the engineering portion of the contract.</li> </ul>
<b>Quad Cities</b> Erik Holmstrom, Laurentian Chamber President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· A written update summary report was given and will be available.</li> <li>· Our two large construction projects are on pace for completion. We look forward to the grand opening of the MECC in September 2021. The MECC is currently seeking partners for naming rights and other major sponsorship opportunities. You can see more about the project at <a href="http://meccmn.com">meccmn.com</a></li> <li>· Rock Ridge School updates: Eveleth-Gilbert elementary school will open in the fall of 2022. Rock Ridge High School will open in the fall of 2023. Virginia elementary school will open in the fall of 2024.</li> <li>· Virginia is working to start an Art Walk program this summer. They've secured a large portion of the grant funding they need for the project and are awaiting news on one last remaining grant request.</li> <li>· The 2021 Laurentian Leadership Program is running with 11 participants. They have completed 8 of their 20 hours of classroom instruction.</li> </ul>
<b>Central Iron Range Initiative (CIRI)</b> John Fedo, Rick Crum, & Pete Kero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· No report available</li> </ul>
<b>Cuyuna Range Area</b> Michael Burton & Kevin Egan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· No report available</li> </ul>

## Attendance

### Members

1	Aaron Vande Linde	MN Office of School Trust Lands
2	Adam Marks	US Steel
3	Allyz Kramer	SEHinc. (Duluth Office)
4	Arik Forsman	Minnesota Power
5	Becky Lammi	City of Aurora
6	Beth Pierce	Iron Range Tourism
7	Betsy Olivanti	Northeast SBDC
8	Billie Isham	IRRR
9	Bob Wagstrom	Mn Dept. of Revenue
10	Brian Hiti	Citizen
11	Cam Trembath	PolyMet Mining
12	Chris Vreeland	City of Hoyt Lakes Mayor
13	Chrissy Bartovich	US Steel
14	Dave Dahl	MnDNR
15	David Ulrich	Twin Metals
16	Dean DeBelz	Twin Metals MN
17	Dennis Schubbe	Twin Metals MN
18	Derek Harbin	St. Louis County Mine Inspector
19	Don Elsenheimer	Minnesota DNR
20	Doug Learmont	WMMPB
21	Duane Hill	MNDOT
22	Ed LaTendresse	Hibbing Taconite
23	Eric Singsaas	NRRI
24	Erica Herr	MN DNR
25	Erik Holmstrom	Laurentian Chamber of Commerce
26	Evan Shefik	US Steel
27	Frank Ongaro	President, Mining Minnesota
28	Gabe Johnson	Cleveland Cliffs
29	Jamie Johnson	Minorca Mines
30	Jeff Borling	Great River Energy
31	Jeffrey Hanson	Clearwater Biologic, Babbitt
32	Jennifer Tarnowski	ArcelorMittal
33	Jesse Dunsmoor	Cleveland Cliffs
34	Jim Paulsen	City of Gilbert
35	Jim Plummer	IRRR
36	Joe Rokala	MN DNR
37	Joel Asp	SEHinc. (Duluth Office)
38	John Fedo	Ely EDA

39	Julianne Paulsen	City of Virginia
40	Julie Padilla	Twin Metals
41	Karl Schuettler	East Range Joint Powers Board
42	Katie Larson	MnDNR
43	Kelsey Johnson	Iron Mining Association
44	Latisha Gietzen	PolyMet Mining
45	Linda Johnson	IRRR
46	Loren Solberg	Loren Solberg Consulting, LLC
47	Lucinda Johnson	UMD - NRRI
48	Mark Phillips	IRRR Commissioner
49	Mark Weber	St. Louis County
50	Mary Holliday	Yawkey Minerals
51	Matt Shermoen	APEX
52	Meghan Blair	Barr Engineering
53	Michael Kalnbach	MnDOT District 1 Duluth
54	Mike Burton	BLAEDC
55	Mike Liljegen	MnDNR
56	Nancy Norr	Minnesota Power & Jobs for Minnesotans
57	Nick Wogum	MN DNR
58	Patty Thielen	Minnesota DNR
59	Pete Clevenstine	MnDNR
60	Pete Kero	Barr Engineering
61	Rick Crum	NTS
62	Robb Peterson	ArcelorMittal
63	Ryan Sistad	Better in Our Backyard
64	Sandy Karnowski	Cleveland Cliffs
65	Scott Kelling	MN DNR
66	Shannon Kendall	IRRR
67	Shelly Sallee	IRRR
68	Stephanie Skraba	City of Chisholm
69	Steve Giorgi	RAMS
70	Thomas Lee	MnDNR
71	Tim no last name	City admin
72	Tim Pastika	MnDNR
73	Tom Hillstrom	Xcel Energy
74	Vicki Hagberg	Northland SBDC
75	Whitney Ridlon	IRRR

### Consultants

76	Elissa Hansen	Northspan
77	Amanda Vuicich	Northspan

Mineland Vision Partnership thanks its financial contributors



Please visit our website: [www.lvpmn.org](http://www.lvpmn.org)