



December 22, 2014

Mr. Thomas Hingsberger (thomas.j.hingsberger@usace.army.mil)  
US Army Corps of Engineers  
Sibley Square at Mears Park  
190 5th Street East, Suite 401  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Commissioner Thomas Landwehr (commissioner.dnr@state.mn.us)  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Road,  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Mr. Michael Jimenez (mjimenez@fs.fed.us)  
Minerals NEPA Project Manager  
Superior National Forest  
8901 Grand Avenue Place  
Duluth, MN 55808

RE: Meeting request regarding public comment process and timing for next phases  
of the PolyMet NorthMet Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Hingsberger, Commissioner Landwehr, Mr. Jimenez:

I am writing to request a meeting for the Minnesota Environmental Partnership Mining Cluster, a voluntary association of nonprofit organizations working on mining issues in the state. We would like to be able to meet before January 16, 2015 with the co-lead agencies responsible for the PolyMet NorthMet environmental review process.

We understand that the co-lead agencies have begun to address the concerns raised by public comments on the PolyMet Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Recent statements by Commissioner Landwehr have indicated that the next version of the Environmental Impact Statement is anticipated to be complete in the spring of 2015. We request an opportunity for these groups to meet with the co-lead agencies well in advance of this release date to discuss the concerns raised by the organizations within our coalition. These groups represent more than 100,000 citizens across Minnesota, many of whom have expressed specific concerns about potential environmental impacts of Minnesota's first proposed sulfide mining project.

We would like to discuss development and implementation of a process for public review and comment that provides sufficient time and information for the public to understand the voluminous and complicated record, and to secure a meaningful

opportunity to be heard and to hear others' perspectives on the PolyMet Project and its implications for Minnesota's environment and way of life.

The co-lead agencies have a responsibility to ensure that public participation is robust. We wish to express our gratitude to the lead agencies for meeting with our coalition on May 30, 2013, prior to the PolyMet NorthMet Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, to plan for a process of public involvement in that draft. Our organizations are also grateful for the efforts made by the governmental agencies to involve the people of the region in the process of reviewing the most recent draft of the EIS released in November of 2013. As demonstrated by our cooperative efforts with your agencies in the SDEIS comment period, the public has a profound interest in the decisions being made.

We ask that the agencies come to this meeting prepared to share the process and procedures they are using to respond to comments. We would also like to know the method by which comments are being accumulated and stored. We want to ensure complete transparency and accessibility of data to the public and our member groups consistent with the Data Practices Act. Finally, we are interested in the co-lead agencies' plans for public hearings surrounding the release of the preliminary FEIS or FEIS. We would like to provide feedback, based on our experience with the public comment period and hearings for the Supplemental Draft EIS, on achieving a successful public comment period.

Please contact Aaron Klemz, Mining Cluster convener, to schedule this meeting or with questions or ([aaron@friends-bwca.org](mailto:aaron@friends-bwca.org); (612) 332-9630). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Steve Morse  
Executive Director

On behalf of the MEP Mining Cluster:

Audubon Minnesota  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Environmental Law and Policy Center  
Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness  
Friends of the Cloquet Valley State Forest  
Izaak Walton League-Minnesota  
League of Women Voters Minnesota  
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy  
North Star Chapter, Sierra Club  
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness  
Protect Our Manoomin  
Save Lake Superior Association  
Save Our Sky Blue Waters  
Voyageurs National Park Association  
WaterLegacy  
Wilderness Watch