

Minnesota Iron Range mineral and energy projects

Aside from a handful of iron ore projects, Minnesota's Iron Range is buzzing with additional proposals for nonferrous mining projects, as well as new energy projects necessary to help meet the energy needs of the region and these mining projects.

1) Minnesota Steel Industries, LLC

(part of Essar Steel Holdings Ltd. Group-proposed iron ore pellet, direct-reduced iron and steel slab mini mill)
 Location: West of Nashwauk
 Status: Environmental permitting complete
 Capital cost: \$1.65 billion
 Estimated permanent employment: 700 in 2011
 Construction jobs: 2,000

2) Mesabi Nugget Delaware LLC

(world's first commercial iron nugget plant)
 Location: Hoyt Lakes
 Status: Under construction
 Capital cost: \$235 million
 Estimated permanent employment: 100 in 2009
 Construction jobs: 500

3) Northshore Mining Co.

(800,000-ton-per-year iron ore pellet expansion)
 Location: Silver Bay
 Status: Due to be operational the first week of April
 Project cost: \$40 million
 Permanent jobs: 30
 Construction jobs: 100

4) KeeTac

(3.6-million-ton iron ore pellet expansion)
 Location: Keewatin
 Status: In permitting process
 Project cost: More than \$300 million
 Permanent jobs: 75
 Construction jobs: 500

5) Taconite Ridge I Energy Center

(25-megawatt wind farm at U.S. Steel Minntac mine)
 Location: Mountain Iron
 Status: Under construction
 Estimated permanent employment: Two
 Construction jobs: 30 to 40

6) Boswell Energy Center Unit 3 environmental retrofit

(to meet Mercury Emissions Reduction Act of 2006)
 Location: Cohasset
 Status: Retrofit under way
 Capital cost: \$200 million
 Estimated permanent employment: None
 Construction jobs: 300

7) Laskin Energy Center

(biomass energy production facility)
 Location: Hoyt Lakes
 Status: Retrofit complete
 Capital cost: Not yet announced
 Estimated permanent jobs: Not yet announced

8) Taconite Harbor Energy Center and Laskin Energy Center environmental retrofits

Location: Taconite Harbor and Hoyt Lakes
 Status: Retrofit complete
 Capital cost: \$40 million (combined)
 Estimated permanent jobs: None
 Construction jobs: 75

9) Mesaba Energy

(coal gasification electrical power generating station)
 Location: Taconite (tentative)
 Status: In environmental permitting process
 Capital cost: \$2 billion
 Estimated permanent jobs: 107 in 2012
 Construction jobs: 1,500 at peak

10) Laurentian Energy Authority

(municipal wood biomass electrical production)
 Location: public utilities in Hibbing and Virginia
 Status: Operational
 Capital cost: \$82 million
 Estimated permanent jobs: 5 to 6
 Construction jobs: 155 in Hibbing at peak construction; 135 in Virginia at peak construction

11) Franconia Minerals Corp.

(proposed copper, nickel and platinum group metals underground mine)
 Location: Babbitt
 Status: Exploratory drilling under way, permitting process yet to be completed
 Project cost: \$616 million
 Permanent jobs: 550 in 2010
 Construction jobs: 800

12) Duluth Metals

(proposed underground copper, nickel and precious-metals mine)
 Location: Ely
 Status: Exploratory drilling under way, permitting process yet to be completed
 Project cost: \$800 million
 Permanent jobs: 500
 Construction jobs: 800

13) PolyMet Mining Corp.

(proposed copper, nickel and precious-metals open pit mine and processing facility)
 Location: Babbitt
 Status: Draft environmental impact statement from Minnesota DNR due before end of second quarter
 Capital cost: \$380 million
 Estimated permanent employment: 400
 Construction jobs: 250 per year for two years

Source: Iron Range Resources

