

August 6, 2009

Dear Decision Maker:

In spite of a global and national economic downturn that has idled some Iron Range taconite plants and triggered layoffs, I'd like share with you some good reasons to be optimistic about economic growth in northeastern Minnesota.

Steered by a vision of responsible regional growth and a spirit of hope, about \$6.4 billion in large-scale economic development projects remain underway and planned across the region.

These projects will create 6,400 construction jobs, 2,500 new permanent jobs, thousands of spin-off jobs and tens of millions of dollars in new local, state and federal revenue.

Coupled with existing mining activity, these new mining-related projects would create an \$8.7 billion annual economic impact across the state by 2013 and support 20,000 jobs, according to a University of Minnesota Duluth Labovitz School of Business and Economics study.

Leading efforts to plan for the challenges and opportunities associated with multiple large-scale economic development is the Range Readiness Initiative, a collaboration of public and private partners supporting responsible regional growth.

One of the most exciting projects on tap is PolyMet Mining Corporation's proposed non-ferrous minerals mine and processing facility near Hoyt Lakes (see newsletter on the following page). This project alone will require 300 construction jobs over three years, 400 permanent employees, generate \$15 million annually in state and local revenue and \$45 million annually in federal revenue.

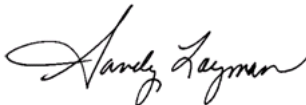
On behalf of the Range Readiness Initiative, please allow me to take this opportunity to invite you to a **PolyMet public open house from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday, August 20, 2009**, at Hoyt Lakes Arena. Detailed information about the project and bus tours of the PolyMet processing facilities will be available.

As these important projects continue to move forward, we invite you as a decision-maker to share our vision of responsible regional growth and to learn more about the major projects underway and planned across northeastern Minnesota.

For further information on northeastern Minnesota economic development projects visit:  
[www.rangereadiness.com](http://www.rangereadiness.com).

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Sandy Layman  
Commissioner, Iron Range Resources  
Chair, Range Readiness Initiative Leadership Team

**What is the Range Readiness Initiative?**

## A Coordinated Regional Response

*Conceived in 2007 under the leadership of Iron Range Resources, the Range Readiness Initiative began as a forum of private and public sector experts from across the region, who gathered to identify the potential challenges, issues and opportunities associated with pending developments planned for the northeast Minnesota's Taconite Assistance Area. The group now meets regularly to develop shared strategies and solutions, and to coordinate technical and financial resources in a more efficient and effective manner.*

*During the first meeting of the Range Readiness Initiative in 2007, this diverse group of community and industry stakeholders set the Initiative's mission to incorporate a team-oriented approach that allows the various entities to pool their resources and work collectively to achieve big-picture results.*

*The Range Readiness Initiative is organized into the following work teams: projects, workforce, housing, community readiness and opportunities development. For more information or to contact the work teams, please visit the RRI website:*

<http://rangereadiness.com/>

**The Latest News in Non-Ferrous Mining**

# PolyMet Invites Public to Open House in Hoyt Lakes

PolyMet Mining Corporation is a North American mine development company with plans to produce gold, copper, nickel, cobalt, platinum and palladium at a mine and processing facility near Hoyt Lakes, representing an investment of approximately \$600 million in northeast Minnesota.

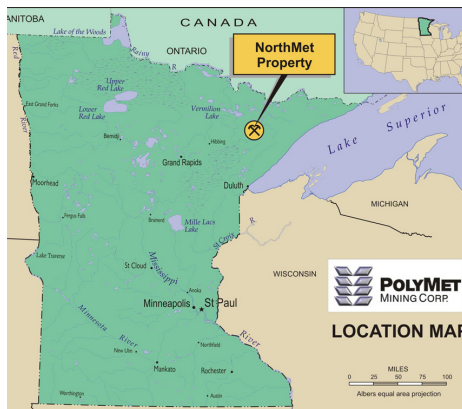


PolyMet plans to generate about 300 construction jobs during three years of construction; 400 permanent jobs with an estimated \$40 million payroll; about 500 spin-off jobs in St. Louis County, \$15 million annually in state and local revenue; \$45 million annually in federal revenue; a \$242 million annual economic impact in St. Louis County; and economic benefits to elementary, secondary and post-secondary schools.

A draft Environmental Impact Statement on PolyMet's project, prepared by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is scheduled to be issued in the third quarter of 2009. PolyMet has so far spent more than \$20 million on its

environmental review process, and plans call for more than \$100 million to be invested in environmental protection to capture and treat waste streams, recycle process water, minimize wetland impacts, replace impacted wetlands, utilize a large brownfield site, and minimize any potential air emissions.

Sulfide minerals will be concentrated and recovered in a flotation system and refined using an advanced metals process that extracts metals from concentrate in a totally-contained pressure vessel known as an autoclave. PolyMet will also be required to provide bankruptcy proof financial assurance up front for reclamation and closure liabilities.



PolyMet is inviting the public to an **open house** at the Hoyt Lakes Arena from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday, August 20, 2009. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.polymetmining.com>