



EAW for Northland Constructors

NO FUTURE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW

Jo Ann Hoag, EAW Petitioner Representative

# Impact of the Project

Original Parcel of the 1960 Pit (PIN 400-0010-1710) 30.95 acres

Current CUP Application: Adds 20 acre parcel to 4 others for total of 128 acres

None of parcels exceeds 40 acres individually

1710=30.95

1700=39.31

1670=35.95

1720=1.49

1690=20.00

Other than Parcel 1710 none of the other parcels listed have been listed on any previous applications of CUPs provided to us. Why?



# Impact of the Project

## Well Beyond 20 Acre Proposal

- ▶ No longer a borrow pit, meets definition of a non ferrous industrial mining operation
- ▶ Has never gone through an EAW when it reached 40 acres and beyond as noted on the St. Louis County worksheet stating it is required
- ▶ Wetlands within 300 feet – those wetlands connect to Sunset Lake and Cloquet Watershed
- ▶ Sunset Lake is within 300 feet of the land, thus affected by run off
- ▶ Proposed to mine below the water table for gravel extraction
- ▶ Sunset Lake is spring fed, what will be the effect of water disruption?
- ▶ How will runoff be contained to the pit area?
- ▶ What will be the effect on landowners wells in and around the area?
- ▶ Excavate 75 Acres of gravel down 40 Feet and below the water table
- ▶ Already exceeds the size of Sunset Lake- Industrial scale will have not affect?



# Impact of Project

- ▶ Annual estimated excavation volumes  
1994: approx. 5,000 cubic yards  
2024: 100,000 – 150,000 cubic yards
- ▶ Removing a natural gravel hill barrier between Sunset Lake and the Pit
- ▶ Replacing with an unnatural berm that will not have the same noise dampening affect as the present hill barrier
- ▶ Berms have not been effective dampeners to those in and around Highways 33 and County Highway 8
- ▶ Ordinance notification area of 10 residences within a quarter mile diminishes the impact on those within the site, sound, dust and smell of the operations
- ▶ Sound travels far dependent on wind velocity and direction
- ▶ 9 additional borrow pits are available within 3 miles mitigating the need for expansion of this site



# Water Impact

- ▶ Assumed groundwater is similar to Sunset Lake at 1300 ft. NOT KNOWN
- ▶ Potential hazards due to hot mix production and runoff
- ▶ Excavating below the water table, potential aquifer well disruption
- ▶ Sunset Lake flooded homes and cabins when it overflowed County 872 in 2012. What run off was from Industrial Site?
- ▶ Outlet Creek flows into the Cloquet River and thus Lake Superior
- ▶ Fish, Loon, waterfowl and wildlife potential harm
- ▶ Farming and Farm animals live in close proximity to this site
- ▶ 2011 CUP stated there were no wetlands. Why?

# Noise Impact

- ▶ Nesting Loons on Sunset Lake at NE end, closest to Pit
- ▶ Travels with prevailing wind
- ▶ Travels unimpaired across water and land
- ▶ Disruptive to wildlife and humans with noted negative health impact



# Air Pollution

- ▶ Recycling Concrete creates silica dust known to cause respiratory diseases
- ▶ Where are bituminous millings and chunks, concrete chunks and blast/excavated rock for storage coming from?
- ▶ Hot mix operations create odors, smoke and black residue
- ▶ Asphalt is most hazardous when heated, with the potential to release volatile organic compounds and hydrogen sulfide
- ▶ If it's in the air it's in the lungs – humans and wildlife



# Rationale for EAW

- ▶ Size and Scope of this project meet the MN Environmental Quality Board rule threshold for an EAW
- ▶ CUPs are granted for the life of the borrow pit in St. Louis County
- ▶ Last opportunity to review and determine environmental impact
- ▶ There have been many scientific advances since 1960 when the pit was first authorized
- ▶ This project has underestimated the potential harms due to the focus on only 20 acres, rural location and allowable use
- ▶ The application in its entirety plans for far more industrial activity than just 20 acres and original borrow pit
- ▶ Farming, rural living lifestyle, desire for cabin and lake people to escape urban noise and commotion are impacted daily
- ▶ The pit operation creates dust/pollutants that travels on the wind
- ▶ Hot mix operations generate acrid odor, black residue, and the noise of a jet engine
- ▶ Truck traffic creates noise due to necessary back up alarms, exhaust, increase traffic on school bus routes
- ▶ Future growth is not anticipated per staff report yet there is new housing being built off of County Road 8
- ▶ Challberg Trout stream planned restoration back to original flow after Highway 33 completion places it in proximity to the expanded mine operation
- ▶ **Unanswered questions deserve an EAW**