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DNR considers request for negotiated state minerals leases to explore for manganese

October 1, 2021

Request from North Star Manganese, Inc. for state mineral leases in Crow Wing County

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has received a new request from North Star Manganese, Inc. (North Star) for state mineral leases on 800 acres northwest of Emily, Minnesota in Crow Wing County. North Star is seeking to explore for manganese. The DNR is seeking public comment on this request for state leases through October 30, 2021.

Manganese is a metallic mineral often associated with iron ore. The manganese found in Crow Wing County is the 2nd largest known manganese deposit in the United States. Manganese is an essential alloy used to convert iron into steel, making steel less brittle and adding strength. More recently, manganese has become an increasingly important mineral for the manufacturing of green energy technologies, such as electric vehicle batteries and off-the-grid power systems.

The DNR has posted information on its [website](#) about this new negotiated lease request, including interactive web maps, details for public input opportunities, and additional information about the manganese mineral.

Public input is critical to the DNR's decision

The DNR is seeking public input before we determine whether to negotiate with the company and present proposed leases to the State Executive Council for approval. All interested parties, including local governments, tribal nations, and landowners, are encouraged to review [interactive web maps and data](#) of the areas requested for lease. Written input about the lease request **will be accepted from October 1, 2021 through 4:30 p.m. on October 30, 2021.**

Mail: Minnesota DNR

Division of Lands and Minerals

Attention: Negotiated Metallic Mineral Leases

500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4045

Email: MMLeaseSale.dnr@state.mn.us

Leasing state lands and minerals in Minnesota

Minnesota law gives the DNR the authority to determine which state-owned lands and minerals are available for lease and requires Executive Council approval before leases are issued. A state mineral lease would give North Star authority to explore for manganese.

Before offering state lands and minerals for lease, the DNR collects data on land uses and environmental features. This critical study of the land helps DNR determine whether to offer specific locations for lease and, for areas where leases are offered, set special conditions the company must follow during exploration to protect Minnesota's natural environment. For each lease request, the DNR carefully considers the presence of surrounding trout streams, wild rice waters, state trails and recreation sites, endangered species, native plant communities and other resources. Areas like the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and the Mississippi River headwaters corridor are not available for lease.

Distribution of revenue from mineral leases requested by North Star

If leases of the areas requested by North Star are granted, the revenues will benefit Crow Wing County, the City of Emily, the Crosby-Ironton school district, and public schools statewide. A portion of the revenues would pay costs for the administration and management of state mineral resources.

The State Executive Council approval of negotiated leases

Under Minnesota law, the State Executive Council – the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Auditor, and Minnesota Attorney General – must approve all state metallic minerals leases, including negotiated leases, before DNR can issue them.

The State Executive Council's next regularly scheduled meeting is on December 1, 2021 and is open to the public. It is possible that North Star's lease request will be considered by the State Executive Council at that meeting, if the DNR decides to recommend the leases for approval to the Council. Information about Executive Council meetings involving minerals leasing is posted on both the DNR's [website](#) and the [State Executive Council's website](#)