

1 copy

(2A) \*  
FINAL,

SUPPLEMENTAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(2B) OGLEBAY-NORTON EXPANSION PROJECT

(1) Prepared by: The Minnesota Department  
of Natural Resources

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA

(3) August, 1980

(4) 16 p.

This document is made available electronically by the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library as part of an ongoing digital archiving project. <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/lrl.asp>  
(Funding for document digitization was provided, in part, by a grant from the Minnesota Historical & Cultural Heritage Program.)

TN  
403  
.M6  
F542x

env impact statement



## INTRODUCTION

The draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on Oglebay-Norton's Expansion Project was completed in April 1980. Under regulations established by the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board a public meeting was held to explain the project and receive comments on the draft EIS. Following the public meeting the draft EIS was revised to incorporate comments made by the public and federal and state agencies.

This document is prepared in response to comments received on the draft EIS. It contains written and oral statements received into the record or summaries thereof. Where appropriate, comments are followed by written responses.



At the public meeting held June 30, 1980, in the Leonidas Town Hall numerous people made comments on the project as described in the Draft Supplemental EIS. Subsequent to the meeting the West Side Civic League sent a letter to the DNR reiterating concerns of the areas citizens.

Oral and written comments received at the meeting fall within six broad categories, and are summarized below. The Department's response follows each category of comment. A copy of the letter from the Civic League and other written comments are placed at the end of this document.

#### SNOWDEN CREEK DIVERSION

##### Background

Construction of the south stockpile area as proposed by the draft supplemental EIS will require the relocation of Snowden Creek. The proposed route borders the east and south sides of West Eveleth. On the south side of the village the creek will run along the north toe of the south stockpile. Snowden Creek drains surface water from the Eveleth and West Eveleth areas. In addition, it receives the effluent from the Eveleth sewage treatment plant.

##### Comments

Local citizens are in opposition to the relocation of Snowden Creek as proposed by Oglebay-Norton for the following reasons.

1. The creek water is odorous due to the sewage treatment plant effluent it contains. The close proximity of the proposed diversion to West Eveleth is therefore unacceptable.
2. The diversion will represent a hazard to children of the community due to its proximity to family housing.



3. Subsequent to the completion of mining the village would have to assume the cost of any maintenance of the diversion that may be necessary.
4. The diversion, as proposed, should be rip-rapped where it turns south around the northwest corner of the stockpile.

#### Response

1. The Eveleth sewage treatment plant is scheduled to be upgraded in the near future. The plans and specifications have been approved by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (PCA). Initiation of construction is dependent on the release of federal monies.

Although this is expected to take place sometime this year nobody is certain when funds will actually be available. Effluent standards for the upgraded facility will be 5 mg/l BOD, 5 mg/l TSS, 200 mpn/100 ml fecal coliform, 1 mg/l phosphorus, and a pH of 6.5-8.5. These are stringent standards and should result in a clear, clean effluent.

Notwithstanding the design specifications the citizens have requested a culvert be placed beneath the diverted creek bed to convey the effluent from the plant on its route past West Eveleth. They feel that there is too much risk of the plant periodically breaking down or not functioning at design standards. This would result in the citizens of West Eveleth being periodically or continuously exposed to the odorous and/or toxic water of the creek. According to the residents, the only acceptable alternative to the pipeline would be to leave the creek in its existing location in the south stockpile area. This would require the use of the south alternative stockpile area to make up for storage losses.





Oglebay-Norton feels that it is premature to commit themselves to building a pipeline for the sewage effluent. They point out that Snowden Creek will not be diverted from its present location until 1985. In the meantime it is likely that the new sewage plant will be in operation. If the new plant is installed and operating effectively, Oglebay-Norton feels an alternative to the pipeline would be to build an emergency storage basin for the facility. This would allow temporary storage of by-passed sewage during storms or plant breakdown. If the plant is not constructed and operating at the time the creek diversion is constructed, Oglebay-Norton would then consider the installation of a pipeline or other alternate solutions for the effluent problem.

2. Oglebay-Norton will construct and maintain a fence between the creek and West Eveleth. The Company believes that a fence should prevent children's access to the water.
3. By the time Oglebay-Norton abandons its mining operation the creek will have been in its new location for approximately 50 years. It is the Company's position that in this time period the creek should be stabilized and need no additional maintenance. In the event post-operational maintenance is necessary it can be addressed through the state's new mineland reclamation permit. A condition of this permit requires a detailed description of provisions for continued maintenance prior to the release of the mining company from its permit.
4. Rip-rapping will be a design consideration of the proposed diversion. It will be incorporated where necessary to ensure stability of the rerouted creek.



## RELOCATION OF STATE-AID HIGHWAY #7

### Background

The construction of the south stockpile area will require the relocation of County State-Aid Highway (C.S.A.H.) #7. The proposed rerouting of this highway will be on C.S.A.H. #19 parallel and to the west of the south stockpile area. Where existing C.S.A.H. #19 intersects C.S.A.H. #101 rerouted C.S.A.H. #7 would assume an eastward route on C.S.A.H. #101 through the main street of West Eveleth.

### Comments

The citizens are opposed to the rerouting of C.S.A.H. #7 on C.S.A.H. #101 through West Eveleth, for the following reasons.

1. Playgrounds, skating rinks, houses, driveways and streets are in close proximity to existing Highway 101. Adding the additional traffic of Highway 7 would result in a safety hazard to the citizens of the community.
2. Rerouting Highway 7 on 101 would make it an attractive route for shift-traffic for mine workers. This additional traffic will be a further hazard to the community.
3. Increased traffic will result in increased noise in the community.

### Response

Selecting a new route for County State-Aid Highways is the responsibility of the County Highway Department. Route considerations include the evaluation of factors such as cost , terrain, and traffic. The County



should work with the affected communities to select a route that is mutually acceptable to all parties. The citizens have proposed a more northerly route around Leonidas and West Eveleth. Oglebay-Norton feels the concerns of the citizens on the route through West Eveleth are legitimate and will support an alternative route agreed to by the county and village.

#### STOCKPILE CONSTRUCTION

A number of comments addressed impacts of stockpile construction and location.

##### Comments

1. When completed the stockpiles will interfere with television and radio reception.
2. Construction of the north stockpile will result in a loss of water holding capacity of the area lands and create flooding conditions in the drainage creeks and ditches.
3. Concern was expressed over the long-term impacts of noise and dust from stockpile construction.
4. Questions were raised over who was responsible for the proper design, function and maintenance of the stockpiles.
5. It was requested that Oglebay-Norton strictly adhere to the reclamation scheduled for the stockpiles.
6. It was requested that all lands be ~~clear-cut~~ before stockpile construction begins.

##### Response

1. Oglebay-Norton has engaged a firm to determine television signal strength in the West Eveleth area. Using stockpile design heights, projections



will be made on the effect of the stockpiles on television reception. If reception is impaired, corrective actions will be initiated by the Company. Such activities could include the installation of a booster tower or connection to a cable system.

2. The company feels that loss of retention time will be counteracted by the pervious nature of the waste rock stockpile. That is, more surface area will be available for precipitation to adhere to, slowing downward percolation. Care must also be taken to slope the surface lifts towards the stockpile interior to increase retention time as required by the new rules on mineland reclamation. Finally, vegetation once established, will also slow runoff from benches and slopes. If runoff waters cause an overload of drainage watercourses, perimeter ditches can be extended to collect and direct the flowage. According to Oglebay-Norton this should alleviate any flooding problems of drainage ditches crossing under C.S.A.H. 19 and the DM&IR Railroad.
3. As stated in the Draft Supplemental EIS the stockpiles are being constructed in such a manner that those portions nearest West Eveleth and Leonidas can be completed and reclaimed first. The completed portions will then serve as a buffer area for noise and dust associated with subsequent stockpiling activities. Prompt revegetation of all completed portions of the stockpiles will further lessen the impact of dust. The design, construction and reclamation plans of the proposed stockpiles are consistent with the state's rules on mineland reclamation. These rules are directed at reducing the dust and noise impacts of stockpile construction. Although some dust and noise cannot be avoided these impacts should be at a minimum level.





4. Eveleth Mines' engineers have designed the stockpiles and will supervise their construction, maintenance and reclamation in accordance with the state's mineland reclamation rules. The DNR will also monitor the progress of the reclamation work. The stockpiles are conservative in design with respect to slope and bench height. It is not expected that there will be any structural instability or long-term maintenance problems.
5. The new stockpiles come under the authority of the state's mineland reclamation rules. The Company's reclamation plans and schedules are consistent with these rules and will be governed by them.
6. Timber in the stockpile area will be commercially harvested. Non-commercial timber will be made available to company employees and the public.

#### PROPERTY DEVALUATION

##### Comments

Some citizens were concerned about the effect the proposed stockpiles may have on housing values. The opinion was expressed that the new stockpiles would have a depreciating effect on existing homes in West Eveleth. In addition it was felt that they would act as a deterrent to potential new home builders, and thus interfere with future growth and expansion of the village.

##### Response

The basic economic contribution of the mining industry in general and of Eveleth Mines' operations in particular in the Eveleth area creates the economic base for the property values of the residences and other



properties in Eveleth and West Eveleth. Eveleth Mines provides the direct support for approximately 250 households in Eveleth itself and approximately 180 households in Virginia and others in nearby communities. Oglebay-Norton maintains that the overall contribution to the property valuations from the mining industry thus outweighs the adverse effect of the mining industry upon property valuations.

Secondly, any adverse effect on property valuations which might result from Eveleth Mines' operations should be of short term duration. One of the premises of the stockpile plan is the early completion of portions adjacent to residential areas. These may then be revegetated at an early date and function as a barrier and buffer area to minimize the impacts of dust and noise from the operations, as well as provide an aesthetically pleasing vista. Although stockpile construction in some areas will necessarily be occurring at all times during the mining operations, the lifts adjacent to the West Eveleth and Eveleth residential areas will be active only during a relatively few years of the total projected 65 year mining operation.

#### LAND EXCHANGE

##### Background

The stockpiles as proposed, will require a land exchange between Oglebay-Norton and the State. The following comments were directed at the proposed exchange.



## Comments

1. It was the request of some residents that the north half of the south half of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  Sec. 2, TWP57N, R18W, not be made available to Oglebay-Norton in the State land exchange. They pointed out that these lands are not necessary to the project, as described, and should be retained for the future expansion of West Eveleth.
2. It was requested that the public hearing on the land exchange be held at the Leonidas Town Hall.

## Response

1. Oglebay-Norton proposes to acquire that portion of the south half of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  Sec. 2, T57, R18, that lies east of the Duluth, Winnipeg and Pacific Railroad. However, only the southern 500 feet of these lands are necessary for the stockpile and Snowden Creek diversion. An alternative the Company would consider is to obtain the state lands as proposed and then exchange all but the southern 500 feet with the City of Eveleth. This would then provide West Eveleth with expansion lands.
2. State land exchanges require a public hearing. This hearing should occur in the vicinity of the affected lands and citizens. The Leonidas Town Hall would therefore, be a reasonable location for the land exchange hearing.



## BLASTING

### Comments

Due to the Company's proposed change in the Expansion Pit limits some citizens were concerned that blasting would be occurring closer to West Eveleth than was contemplated by the 1975 Draft EIS on Oglebay Norton's Expansion Project.

### Response

The proposed changes in the Expansion Pit limit will not result in blasting being conducted any closer to Eveleth and West Eveleth than was contemplated by the 1975 EIS.

### AGENCY COMMENT

It was recommended by the Ecological Services Section of the DNR that state losses of water resources and wildlife habitat on the lands proposed for acquisition by Oglebay-Norton be replaced, in kind, through the land exchange.





COMMENTS RECEIVED ON  
THE DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL EIS  
OGLEBAY-NORTON EXPANSION PROJECT



July 18, 1980

Mr. Arlo Knoll  
Mineral Division  
Department of Natural Resources  
Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Mr. Knoll:

This letter is in reference to the proposed stockpile plan by Eveleth Mines and Aglebay-Norton.

At the public hearing held June 30, 1980 many concerns were voiced by us. In this letter some new points are addressed and others are reiterated.

Our first concern is the re-routing of Snowden Creek. If no provision is made for containing waste water from the Eveleth Sewage Plant then we are opposed to the proposed plan. However, we would approve the plan with the provision that Eveleth Mines installs a culvert under the creek bed. The culvert would have to be large enough to contain the daily affluent from the Eveleth Treatment Plant. It also would have to run from the Treatment Plant west to where the proposed creek turns south. We have had informal discussions with company officials and they seem to favor this idea also. The only other alternative we favor is to leave the creek where it is which would divide the proposed south stockpile.

Secondly, we are concerned about the affects of the dump height on radio and television reception. We would like to request that signal strength tests be taken for a one-year period now and put into the record so that future interpretation can be addressed as a problem created by the dump construction. We also want the dump height and the completion date for landscaping strictly adhered to.

The third item of concern is the relocation of County State Aid Highways #101 and 7. As was clearly stated at the June 30th meeting, we are vehemently opposed to the new route as shown running straight through West Eveleth. There are several reasons: 1) playground and skating rinks; 2) residences and driveways too close to the proposed route making its use very unsafe; 3) noise; 4) expected large increase in future traffic. We do favor a more northerly route around Leonidas and West Eveleth.



Mr. Arlo Knoll  
July 18, 1980  
Page II

We are opposed to any land exchanges with Aglebay-Norton until a public hearing is held in the Leonadis Community Center so that local input can become part of the final decision.

Sincerely yours,



Don Dicklich  
President  
West Side Civic League

cc: Representative Joe Begich  
Senator Doug Johnson  
Elwood Rafin, Director, Mineral Division

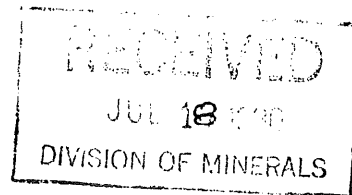
West Eveleth Land Committee

Those Present:

Joe Begich  
Frank Spaeth  
John Uhan  
John Postudensek  
Ray Baribeau  
Don Dicklich

Those Absent:

Ron Hautala







# MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

690 Cedar Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 • 612-296-2747

June 5, 1980

Arlo S. Knoll  
Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources  
Division of Minerals  
Box 45  
Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

MHS Referral File No: K 834

Dear Mr. Knoll:

RE: OGLEBAY NORTON  
EXPANSION PROJECT  
(Draft Supplemental EIS)  
St. Louis County

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the above project. It has been reviewed pursuant to responsibilities given the State Historic Preservation Officer by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the Procedures of the National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36CFR800).

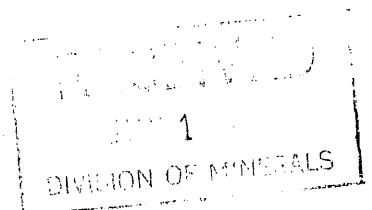
This review reveals the location of no sites of historic, architectural, cultural, nor archaeological significance within the area of the proposed project. There are no sites in the area which are on the National Register nor eligible for inclusion on the National Register, and therefore, none which may be affected by your proposal.

Again, thank you for your participation in this important effort to preserve Minnesota's heritage.

Sincerely,

  
Russell W. Fridley  
State Historic Preservation Officer

RWF/sl









U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
REGION 5  
Suite 490, Metro Square Building  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

July 21, 1980

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Mr. Arlo S. Knoll  
Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources  
Division of Minerals  
Box 45  
Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

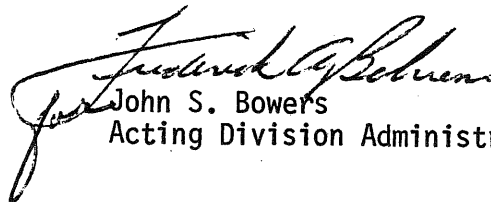
RE: Draft Supplemental EIS  
Oglebay Norton Expansion Project

Dear Mr. Knoll:

We have reviewed a copy of the Draft Supplemental EIS for the Oglebay Norton Expansion Project. While the proposed mining operations will have no major transportation impacts, several roads will be affected.

It appears that the county road on the north side of the north stockpile will have to be vacated and County State-Aid Highway 7 will have to be relocated. If not previously done, these proposed changes should be coordinated with county and local officials having jurisdiction over the roads.

Sincerely yours,

  
John S. Bowers  
Acting Division Administrator

JUL 21 1980  
DIVISION OF MINERALS

