



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

# News Release

Eastern States Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Francis Piccoli, 202-604-2269

## **BLM to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for proposed Twin Metals Project**

WASHINGTON – The Bureau of Land Management announced today its intent to prepare an environmental analysis for a proposed mineral lease and mine plan of operations in northeastern Minnesota.

“Under President Trump’s leadership and direction from the Secretary, this proposed mine may reduce the vulnerability to disruption of critical mineral supplies. If the plan of operation is approved, you can rest assured knowing that development and production of critical minerals is done in an environmentally responsible, regulatory-consistent, and economically feasible manner,” **said William Perry Pendley, Deputy Director for Policy and Programs, Exercising the Authority of the Director, BLM.**

Twin Metals Minnesota LLC (TMM) submitted a proposed operations plan for a mine to produce copper, nickel, cobalt, and precious metals. The BLM, in coordination with the U.S. Forest Service, is preparing a detailed Environmental Impact Statement to thoroughly analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed mine.

Public involvement at the scoping and draft EIS phase is an important part of the environmental review process. The Bureau is in the process of determining when and where it will hold public scoping meetings. Once a decision is made, public notifications will be announced in the *Duluth News Tribune* and the *Star Tribune*.

In addition to the proposed mine plan of operations, TMM also has a pending preference-right lease application from existing prospecting permits. The BLM anticipates that the analysis of environmental impacts from issuing or denying this lease will overlap with the analysis of impacts from the development of the mine, and the Bureau will consider both the preference-right lease action and the proposed mine in the same EIS.

The proposed mine plan of operations and maps showing the locations of the proposed mine, existing leases, and requested preference-right lease, and shapefiles showing the locations of areas proposed for development can be found at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/1503233/510>.

“Interior will prepare a detailed EIS to analyze the potential environmental impacts from the proposed mine and the issuance of the new proposed lease,” stated Pendley. “The Bureau is entrusted with managing these onshore federal mineral resources on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield, which includes facilitating their development while also mitigating environmental impacts,” **he added.**

The BLM will be assisted in reviewing these proposed actions by other cooperating agencies, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa; the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa; and the Grand Portage Band of Chippewa.

While the Bureau will not be preparing a joint EIS with the state of Minnesota, which announced on Nov. 22, 2019, that it will prepare an independent, state-only EIS for the proposed project, the Bureau will continue to work cooperatively with the state.

“Reducing potential duplication of effort, as well as coordinating reviews of the project, especially on data submittals, analytic approaches, and public participation will be mutually beneficial,” **Pendley added.**

Consistent with [Executive Order 13817](#), *A Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals*, signed by President Trump on March 26, 2017, and [Secretary’s Order 3359](#), *Critical Mineral Independence and Security*, mining on public lands balances conservation strategies and policies with the need to produce minerals that add value to the lives of all Americans by providing raw materials used in the manufacture of green technologies, medical aids, automobiles, smart phones and computers, and household appliances.

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*The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. In fiscal year 2018, the diverse activities authorized on BLM-managed lands generated \$105 billion in economic output across the country. This economic activity supported 471,000 jobs and contributed substantial revenue to the U.S. Treasury and state governments, mostly through royalties on minerals.*