

EI 3004
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MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
State Historic Preservation Office

May 22, 2007

Ms. Victoria Rutson
Section of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423

Re: Itasca County Regional Rail Authority to construct a railroad line to the new
Minnesota Steel Industries Plant to be located in Nashwauk
Itasca County
SHPO Number: 2007-1762

Dear Ms. Rutson:

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

Our office has been reviewing this project in consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Rather than complete the cultural resource work and assessment of effect in advance, the Corps has proposed a programmatic agreement to outline a process for the survey, evaluation, assessment of effects, and consultation to reduce, avoid, or mitigate effects.

It would seem to us that the STB might want to consult with the Corps and consider being added to the Corps agreement. Otherwise, a second programmatic agreement for the STB undertaking may be needed.

We note that if the cultural resource survey work for this project could be completed early in the planning process, it may be possible to reach a Section 106 review finding that would not require any agreements. We are certainly open to this more simplified approach.

Contact us at 651-259-3456 with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dennis A. Gimmestad'.

Dennis A. Gimmestad
Government Programs & Compliance Officer

cc: Brad Johnson, USACE
John Elmore, Minnesota Steel Industries
Amanda Gronhovd, 10,000 Lakes Archaeology
Stephen Thornhill, Burns & McDonnell
John Wachtler, Barr Engineering



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May 22, 2007

Mr. Brad Johnson
Regulatory Branch
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
190 5th Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

Re: 2005-546-JKA, Minnesota Steel Industries, Butler Taconite Mine Reactivation
Itasca County
SHPO Number: 2005-2320

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for forwarding a copy of your proposed Section 106 programmatic agreement for the above referenced project.

As you know, our office has recently received notification from the Surface Transportation Board, initiating Section 106 review for the construction of the railroad line to serve this plant. It would seem to us that it would be most efficient if the Corps' agreement could be modified to include the STB. Otherwise, a separate Section 106 review of that action may be needed. Writing separate but related agreements may be unnecessarily complicated and be difficult to implement.

We do note that if the cultural resource survey work for this project could be completed early in the planning process, it may be possible to reach a Section 106 review finding that would not require any agreements. We are certainly open to this more simplified approach.

We look forward to working with you to complete this review. Contact us at 651-259-3456 with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Dennis A. Gimmestad
Government Programs & Compliance Officer

cc: Victoria Rutson, STB
Stephen Thornhill, Burns & McDonnell
John Elmore, Minnesota Steel Industries
Amanda Gronhovd, 10,000 Lakes Archaeology
John Wachtler, Barr Engineering