

## Information for File # 2014-00462-DWW

**Applicant** United Taconite, LLC owned and managed by Cliffs Natural Resources

**Authorized Agent** Short Elliott Hendrickson (SEH) Inc., 418 West Superior Street, Suite 200, Duluth, MN 55802-1512

**Corps Contact** Daryl W. Wierzbinski

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Two Harbors, MN 55616

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**Phone** 651-290-5691

**Primary County** St. Louis

**Location** Sec. 19, T. 58N., R. 17W.

**Information Complete On** June 3, 2014

**Posting Expires On** June 16, 2014

**Authorization Type** LOP-05-MN

This application is being reviewed in accordance with the practices for documenting Corps jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act identified in Regulatory Guidance Letter 07-01. We have made a preliminary determination that the aquatic resources that would be impacted by the proposed project are regulated by the Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Our jurisdictional review and final jurisdictional determination could result in modifications to the scope of the project's regulated wetland impacts and compensatory mitigation requirements.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE:** United Taconite (UTAC) has applied for a Department of the Army (DA) permit to work in wetlands at the Thunderbird Mine in Eveleth, Minnesota. The purpose of the work is to relocate a haul road 500 linear feet westward to allow continued mining operations in the north pit. The wetlands were identified in the application as Wetland 1, Wetland 2, Wetland 3, and Wetland 4.

The Corps completed an approved jurisdictional determination (AJD) for an aquatic resource proposed to be impacted within the project review area. As a result of the AJD process, the Corps determined that Wetland 2 is non-jurisdictional. Wetland 2 was determined isolated, which did not support a link to foreign or interstate commerce and, therefore, is not subject to Corps of Engineers jurisdiction. Proposed work in Wetland 2 will not require a Department of the Army permit under Section 404 of the CWA.

**NAME, AREA AND TYPES OF WATERS (INCLUDING WETLANDS) SUBJECT**

**TO LOSS:** The work within the project area for Wetland 1, 3, and 4 would result in the discharge of dredged and fill material into 1.67 acres of shallow marsh (Type 3) and shrub-carr (Type 6) wetlands and would retain fill material in 0.35-acre within these wetlands. The 2.02 acres of wetlands in the review area are adjacent to Manganika Creek, a tributary to the St. Louis River, a Section 10 water of the United States. The work in wetlands would be in the St. Louis watershed in Bank Service Area (BSA) 1.

The wetlands in the review area are used for the mine pit dewatering process with UTAC mine operations. The sources of hydrology for these wetlands are from the mine pit dewatering, precipitation, and runoff from the surrounding slopes. The wetlands are surrounded by coarse rock stockpiles, and there is limited vegetation located on the steep banks adjacent to the wetlands.

**ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:**

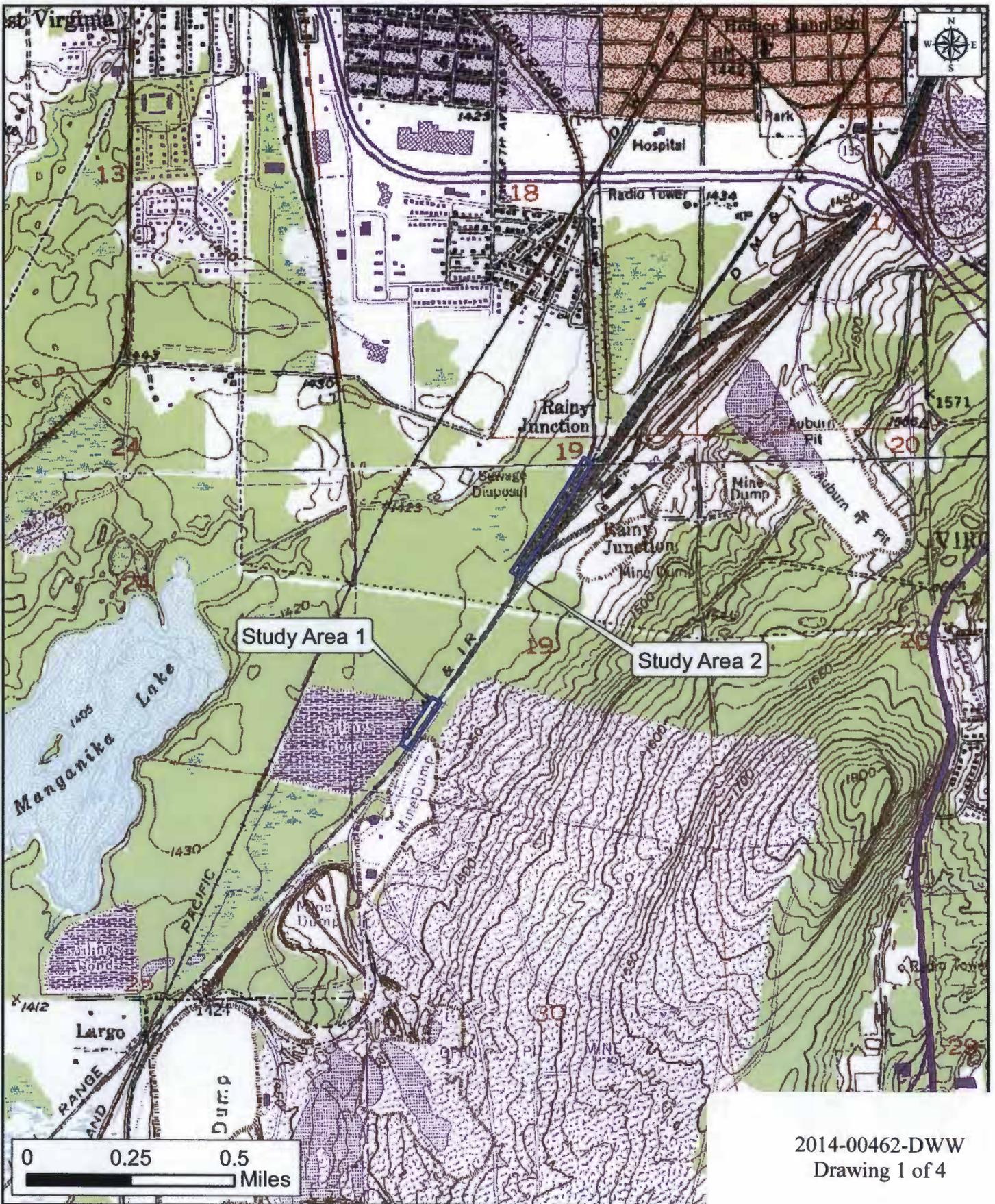
Alternative 1: The No Action or No build. The no-build alternative would not relocate the current haul road westward and would avoid wetland impacts. The alternative would not allow mining operations to continue in the north pit. The no-build alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the project.

**COMPENSATORY MITIGATION:**

UTAC has proposed to purchase 2.53 credits from the Agassiz Wild Rice wetland bank (Account #1266) in the Upper and Lower Red Lake Watershed located in BSA 3.

We would be working with UTAC to see if there would be suitable wetland mitigation within BSA 1 for the proposed 2.02 acres of wetland impact to follow the St. Paul district's regulatory Guidance on the Compensatory Mitigation Siting Sequence in Northeastern Minnesota from Public Notice dated March 9, 2012.

**Drawings** See attached.



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 Drawing 1 of 4

	<p>3535 VADNAIS CENTER DR.        ST. PAUL, MN 55110        PHONE: (651) 490-2000        FAX: (888) 908-8166        TF: (800) 325-2055        www.sehinc.com</p>	<p>Project: UNTAC 125585        Print Date: 1/31/2014        Map by: bpt        Projection: NAD83 UTM15N        Source: MnDNR, SEHinc        Background: USGS 24k Topo</p>	<p><b>Site Location Map</b>        United Taconite, LLC        Eveleth, MN</p>	<p><b>Figure</b>        1-1</p>
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This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey map and is not intended to be used as one. This map is a compilation of records, information, and data gathered from various sources listed on this map and is to be used for reference purposes only. SEH does not warrant that the Geographic Information System (GIS) Data used to prepare this map are error free, and SEH does not represent that the GIS Data can be used for navigational, tracking, or any other purpose requiring exacting measurement of distance or direction or precision in the depiction of geographic features. The user of this map acknowledges that SEH shall not be liable for any damages which arise out of the user's access or use of data provided.

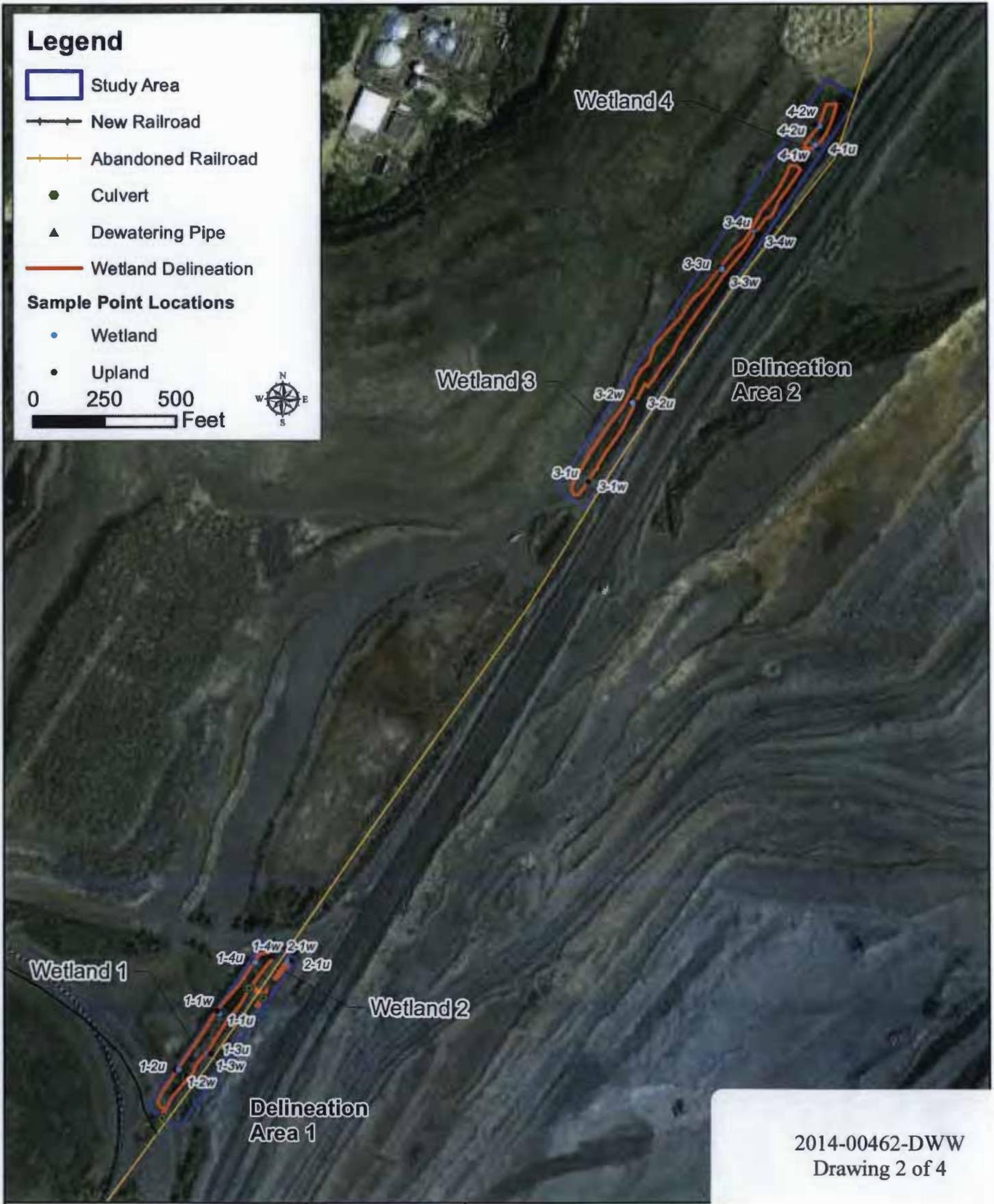
# Legend

-  Study Area
-  New Railroad
-  Abandoned Railroad
-  Culvert
-  Dewatering Pipe
-  Wetland Delineation

## Sample Point Locations

-  Wetland
-  Upland

0 250 500 Feet



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Drawing 2 of 4



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Project: UNTAC 125585  
Print Date: 10/8/2013  
Map by: bpt  
Projection: NAD83 UTM15N  
Source: MnDNR, SEHinc  
Background: 2013 (Google Earth)

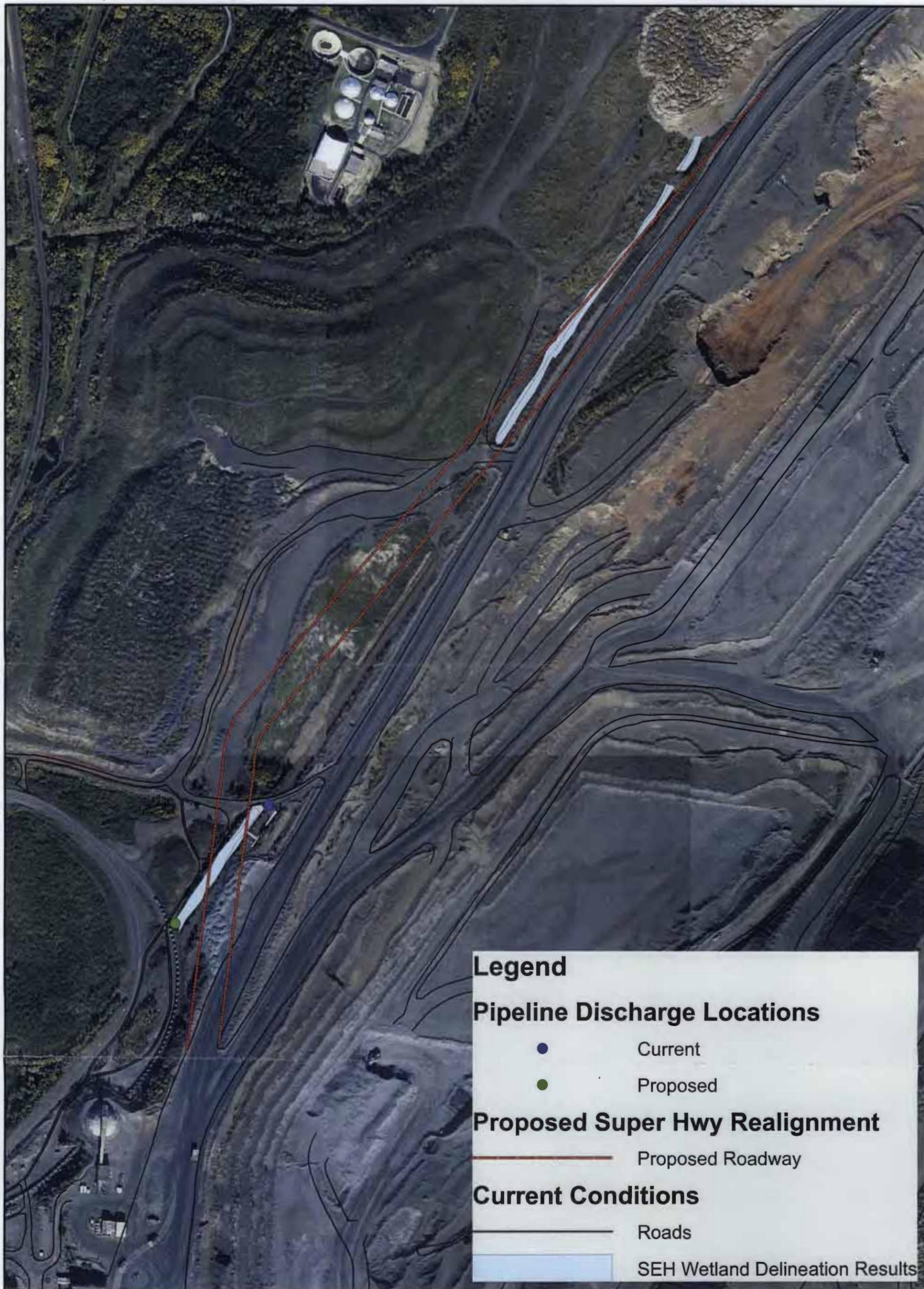
**Wetland Delineation Results**  
United Taconite, LLC  
Eveleth, MN

Figure  
5

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# United Taconite

## Proposed Super Hwy Realignment and Pipeline Discharge Points



**Legend**

**Pipeline Discharge Locations**

- Current
- Proposed

**Proposed Super Hwy Realignment**

- Proposed Roadway

**Current Conditions**

- Roads
- SEH Wetland Delineation Results



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Drawing 3 of 4

Figure 1-2

Aerial Photo: Fall 2013  
Date: 1/27/2014  
Created By: Micah Sheldon

0      400      800      1,600      2,400      3,200  
Feet

Note: Not a survey map and is for reference purposes only.

# Mine Wetland Delineations - Proposed



Map created 06/03/2014  
by J. Ritter  
Aerial Image - Fall 2013

0 280 560 1,120 1,680 2,240  
Feet

## Legend

- Permit to Mine
- Proposed Impacts

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Drawing 4 of 4