



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St Paul District

APPLICANT:

PolyMet Mining, Inc

Supplemental **Public Notice**

ISSUED: 13 DEC 2013

EXPIRES: 13 MAR 2014

REFER TO: MVP-1999-5528-JKA

SECTION: 404 - Clean Water Act

1. APPLICATION FOR PERMIT TO discharge fill material into wetlands adjacent to the Partridge and Embarrass rivers to facilitate the construction and operation of an open pit copper, nickel, cobalt, gold, and platinum group elements (Au/PGE) mine; a railroad connection corridor to transport ore from the proposed NorthMet mine site to the existing LTV Steel Mining Corporation (LTVSMC) plant site; the plant site which includes the processing facilities area, the tailings basin, and the hydrometallurgical facility; Dunka Road and utility corridor; and Colby Lake water pipeline corridor. The proposed NorthMet project is located near Babbitt and Hoyt Lakes, Minnesota.

An earlier public notice was issued on May 10, 2005. Subsequently, on August 19, 2013, PolyMet Mining Inc. (PolyMet) submitted an updated application (Corps of Engineers File # 1999-5528-JKA) for a permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). This updated permit application is available for viewing on the St. Paul District Corps of Engineers web page at:

<http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Portals/57/docs/regulatory/MN-Special/199905528A.pdf>

2. SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

APPLICANT'S ADDRESS: PolyMet Mining, Inc.
P.O. Box 475
Hoyt Lakes, MN 55750

AGENT: Barr Engineering Company
AGENT'S ADDRESS:
4700 West 77th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55435-4803

PROJECT LOCATION: The overall project is located in Sections 5 and 6, Township 58 North, Range 14 West; Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, and 18, Township 59 North, Range 13 West; Sections 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 23, 24, 29, and 32, Township 59 North, Range 14 West; and Sections 32, 33, and 34, Township 60 North, Range 14 West, in St. Louis County, Minnesota.

The proposed mine site is located approximately 6 miles south of the town of Babbitt. Ore processing would be conducted at a currently inactive taconite processing plant located 8 miles west of the proposed mine site and about 6 miles north of the town of Hoyt Lakes. The ore would be transported from the mine site to the plant site via a largely existing railroad line. Ore tailings would be deposited in a currently inactive taconite tailings basin adjacent to the processing plant.

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The site plan, topographic map and other information are shown on the attached figures labeled 1999-5528-JKA, 1 of 21 through 21 of 21.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: The applicant proposes to excavate and process a polymetallic ore deposit known as the NorthMet deposit. Open pit mining and waste rock disposal would occur at the mine site area, and ore processing (beneficiation) and tailings disposal would occur at the plant site, which is the currently inactive Cliffs Erie taconite processing facility and adjoining tailings basin.

The project would produce metal concentrates and precipitates that would be shipped offsite for further refining. The major components include the mining process to remove the ore and associated waste management (waste rock disposal and containment); the processing of the ore into products and associated waste management (tailings disposal and containment); the water collection, containment and treatment systems; the road, railroad and pipeline transportation corridors; and the reclamation plans for the project.

An Adaptive Water Management Plan (AWMP) is also an integral component of the project. The purpose of the AWMP is to describe a system for implementing adaptive engineering controls that would ensure compliance with applicable water quality standards, and document performance standards for these engineering controls. The AWMP would also ensure the mechanical water treatment system is in place and operational to treat water until such a time that a non-mechanical water treatment system can be proven and built for long term site water management.

PolyMet expects to mine a total of 225 million tons of ore and 308 million tons of waste rock over 20 years. Ore would be excavated at the mine site and hauled by railroad approximately 8 miles west to the plant site for processing. Corridors for roads, railroad, utilities and water pipelines would connect the mine site and the plant site.

The project would develop open mine pits (up to 528 acres), stockpiles (up to 740 acres), and supporting infrastructure (up to 451 acres). Mine site environmental controls would include, among other features, liners and containment systems to collect seepage from stockpiles, a cover to limit infiltration through the permanent stockpile after closure, and a wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) to treat water that comes in contact with mining features. Water collected from pit dewatering and stockpile seepage would be treated, and then pumped to the plant site for use in ore processing. During operations, there would be no direct discharge of treated waste water from the mine site to waters of the U.S. or Minnesota public waters.

The plant site is a “brownfield” location which occupies approximately 4,417 acres. At the plant site the project would upgrade existing facilities (Beneficiation Plant, Tailings Basin, Area 1 Shop, Sanitary Treatment Plant, rail connections, access roads) and construct new facilities (Hydrometallurgical Plant, Hydrometallurgical Residue Facility (HRF), Concentrate Dewatering/Storage Building, and plant site wastewater treatment plant (WWTP)) on previously disturbed areas. The Flotation Tailings would be stored atop the existing LTVSMC Tailings Basin by staged construction of new dams.

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Plant site environmental controls during mining operations would include: cover systems to limit infiltration of oxygen and water through the Tailings Basin dams and seepage capture systems to collect seepage from the Tailings Basin. During reclamation and long-term closure these environmental controls would continue to operate, and additional cover systems would be added to the flotation tailings basin (FTB) beaches and pond bottom. Most water used in processing would be recycled from the FTB Pond for use. A plant site WWTP would be constructed to treat any water that cannot be recycled prior to discharge to the environment. If makeup water is needed for processing, it may be provided via the Colby Lake Water Pipeline Corridor.

QUANTITY, TYPE, AND AREA OF FILL: The proposed project would require the discharge of dredged or fill material into an estimated 912.5 acres of wetlands. In addition, 26.9 acres of wetlands would be impacted due to fragmentation. Wetland fragmentation is being accounted for up front, and wetlands were determined to be fragmented and their associated remaining acreage included as an indirect wetland effect if they were small remnants of a directly affected wetland located between NorthMet Project area features. The breakdown of directly impacted and fragmented wetland types is as follows:

Fresh (Wet) Meadow (Type 2 wetland) – 15.8 acres
Sedge Meadow (Type 2 wetland) – 23.9 acres
Shallow Marsh (Type 3 wetland) – 77.0 acres
Deep Marsh (Type 4 wetland) – 73.7 acres
Shrub Carr (Type 6 wetland) – 3.9 acres
Alder Thicket (Type 6 wetland) – 110.6 acres
Hardwood Swamp (Type 7 wetland) – 12.5 acres
Coniferous Swamp (Type 7 wetland) – 84.4 acres
Open Bog (Type 8 wetland) – 7.6 acres
Coniferous Bog (Type 8 wetland) – 530.0 acres

Wetlands are considered directly impacted if they would be excavated or filled by project activities or located between the toe of the FTB and the FTB Containment System. The majority of wetlands directly impacted would occur at the mine site (84%) followed by the plant site (16%). Road, railroad, and utility corridors account for less than 1% of wetland impacts.

VEGETATION IN AFFECTED AREA: Vegetation communities in much of the project area have been altered by previous mining and logging activities. In addition beaver activities have led to the transition of some forested wetlands to open, emergent marshes and wet meadows. Aside from areas disturbed from mining and logging activities, the project vicinity is currently a mosaic of upland and wetland native vegetation community types, which is typical of northeastern Minnesota.

While the mine site is located in an area that has not been directly disturbed by previous mining activities, extensive logging has occurred throughout the area. The United States Forest Service (USFS) owns the surface rights at the mine site, and has managed the area for timber production. The USFS is separately evaluating a land exchange proposal under which title to surface lands at the mine site would be exchanged for other land within the Superior National Forest. Logging activities have changed the vegetative character across the mine site, with shrublands and/or early and mid-successional forest replacing mature upland forest. These logged areas are currently in varying stages

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of regeneration and consist mostly of young aspen stands. Aside from logging and associated roads, the mine site is largely undeveloped, with a variety of natural vegetation communities present. These communities include coniferous and deciduous forests in the uplands and wetlands such as shrub swamps, marshes, forested swamps, and bogs in the lowlands. The more mature upland forested areas at the mine site are dominated by quaking aspen, jack pine, balsam fir, black spruce, and white spruce with lesser amounts of paper birch, red pine, and white pine.

The plant site was previously used as a taconite processing facility by LTVSMC and is largely devoid of natural vegetation. In addition, the road and railroad corridors are existing infrastructure and therefore previously disturbed areas.

Vegetation surveys were conducted across the project area using the MDNR and USFS Ecological Classification System (ECS). These vegetation surveys identified seven ECS vegetation communities across the project area: fire dependent, forested rich peatland, acid peatland, mesic hardwood, marsh, wet forest, and wet meadow. The uplands at the mine site are dominated by fire dependent forested communities, while the wetlands are dominated by acid peatlands (bogs).

SOURCE OF FILL MATERIAL: Local commercial sources and/or on-site material.

SURROUNDING LAND USE: The proposed mine site is currently undeveloped land in the Superior National Forest. The site is a mixture of wetlands and uplands. The mine site is approximately 3,015 acres, within which the applicant would fill or excavate approximately 758 acres of wetlands. The mine site has been primarily used for logging and mineral exploration. It is likely that some recreational use (hunting, fishing, etc.) has also occurred on the site. The headwaters of the Partridge River circle the mine site on the north, east, and south. The Dunka Road, a mining road constructed by Erie Mining Company, and a mining railroad line run from southwest to northeast just south of the proposed mine site. The Peter Mitchell open pit taconite mine operated by Northshore Mining Company is located about two miles north of the proposed mine site. Wetlands and forested lands lie to the immediate east, west and south of the proposed mine site. The existing Cliffs Erie mine /stockpile/plant/tailings basin complex (where the PolyMet processing facility and tailings disposal would be located) is about eight miles west of the proposed mine site.

DESCRIPTION OF DREDGING OR EXCAVATION: Mining activities include overburden removal (pre-stripping), open pit mining, pit dewatering, drilling and blasting, excavation and haulage, stockpiling, ore loading for transport, and temporary ore storage. Development of the mine site features would occur throughout the 20 year life of the mine. Bedrock drilling, blasting, excavation, haulage, and ore loading for transport are mining activities that would not result in wetland impacts, and are not discussed further here. Overburden removal, open pit mining, temporary ore storage, and waste rock and overburden stockpiles would result in wetland impacts.

The marketable timber would be cleared and the overburden removed from the footprints of the mine pits, the temporary ore storage pile, and the waste rock stockpiles, as necessary. Overburden would be stripped incrementally as needed for mine development in order to minimize the amount of bedrock exposed at any one time. After removal of overburden from the initial mining area, additional overburden stripping could take place concurrently with the mining of ore and waste rock. An overburden storage laydown area (OSLA) would be constructed to temporarily store peat and

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unsaturated mineral overburden while it is screened and sorted prior to being used for construction, wetland restoration, or reclamation. Overburden has been defined for this project as the material that lies on top of the underlying bedrock.

The project would use open pit mining methods similar to those currently in use at ferrous mining operations on the Iron Range. The mine site would consist of three separate open pits known as the East, Central, and West pits. For approximately the first 10 years of operations, mining would take place in the East and West Pits simultaneously, with the East Pit mining ending in mine year 11. The Central Pit mining would occur between mine years 11 and 16. During Central Pit mining, the East and Central pits would converge into one pit which would then be referred to as the East Pit.

THE FOLLOWING POTENTIALLY TOXIC MATERIALS COULD BE USED AT THE PROJECT SITE: The NorthMet Project Proposed Action would use, or generate as waste, the following hazardous materials:

- Fuels, equipment maintenance products, and solvents – diesel fuel, gasoline, oils, grease, lubricants, anti-freeze, solvents, and lead-acid batteries used for equipment operation and maintenance.
- Plant reagents – sodium hydrosulfide, sodium hydroxide, acids, flocculants, and antiscalants used in processing plant applications.
- Mine site WWTF chemicals – calcium hydroxide (hydrated lime), sodium metasilicate, ferric chloride, sodium hydroxide, polymer flocculent, carbon dioxide liquid, citric acid, and sodium hypochlorite.
- Plant site WWTP chemicals – potassium permanganate, antiscalant, carbon dioxide liquid and calcium hydroxide (hydrated lime).
- Blasting agents – ANFO, emulsions, emulsion blends (a blend of ANFO and emulsion) blasting caps, initiators and fuses, and other high explosives used in blasting.
- Other materials – assay chemicals, and other by-products characterized as hazardous waste.

THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY HAVE BEEN DESCRIBED BY THE APPLICANT: The Environmental Review Process has resulted in project modifications to avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic resources and other environmental concerns. The project, as initially proposed in 2005, was estimated to result in 1,257 acres of direct wetland impacts. PolyMet has modified the project considerably since that time, incorporating multiple alternatives for avoiding and minimizing wetland impacts. The alternatives incorporated into the refined project include: avoiding wetlands by using brownfield lands at the plant site; avoiding water quality impacts by the collection and treatment of contact waters; minimizing the footprint and optimizing the placement of mining features such as the mine pits, stockpiles, and haul roads; and increased in-pit stockpiling.

Water management at the mine site would include pit dewatering, stormwater dikes and ditches, the stockpile liner, stockpile cover, a Groundwater Containment System, and the mine site WWTF. During operations, the mine site WWTF would treat process water from the waste rock stockpiles, haul roads, ore storage pile, and mine pits. For the first approximately 10 years, all mine site WWTF effluent would be pumped to the plant site FTB Pond for reuse in the beneficiation process. Reuse of the mine site process water after treatment at the mine site WWTF and transporting it to the plant site would

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eliminate the need to discharge any process water to surface waters at the mine site during operations. Starting in mine year 11, some of the mine site WWTF effluent would be sent to the East Pit to augment flooding as the pit is backfilled, with the remainder of the effluent continuing to go to the FTB. The purpose of the mine site WWTF is to maintain the overall water quality in the FTB at or below process water quality targets in order to manage the water quality of groundwater seepage from the FTB.

Mine site water would be managed in accordance with a permit that Polymet would be required to obtain from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). The plant site water would also be managed in accordance with a future MPCA permit.

Water management at the plant site would include the FTB, the HRF, stormwater dikes and ditches, seepage capture systems, the plant site WWTP, and stream augmentation. With the exception of the FTB seepage containment system, all plant site water management features would be located on previously disturbed areas.

The plant site WWTP would treat any water collected by the seepage capture systems. Water would be treated to meet appropriate discharge limits, and then discharged along the west, northwest, and north perimeter of the FTB – beyond the FTB Containment System – and to Second Creek at the south end of the FTB to replenish the flow to the surrounding wetlands. This discharge strategy would limit the potential for indirect wetland impacts due to reduced seepage from the Tailings Basin to the wetlands.

Construction of the FTB seepage capture systems would reduce the amount of seepage that is currently leaving the existing Tailings Basin. Consequently, the stream flow in the four tributaries around the Tailings Basin (Unnamed Creek, Second Creek, Trimble Creek, and Mud Lake Creek) would be reduced from existing levels. Augmentation with other sources of water rather than seepage would be used to maintain stream flow. If the plant site WWTP effluent does not provide adequate water to augment stream flow, water would be transferred from Colby Lake to augment the stream flow and meet the target annual average stream flow.

MITIGATION: Wetland impacts at the Mine Site would be avoided and/or minimized by use of various strategies to minimize the footprint and optimize the placement of mining features such as the mine pits, waste rock and overburden stockpiles, haul roads, water management systems, and supporting infrastructure. Strategies at the Mine Site include, but are not limited to: waste rock being placed back into the East Pit and Central Pit after year 11, thereby reducing the need for additional surface stockpile areas that would otherwise affect wetlands; combining the saturated overburden and temporary stockpiles that contain membrane liners; Category 4 Stockpile would be located at the footprint of the Central Pit, which would be mined later and thus avoid additional direct wetland effects; reactive waste rock stockpiles would be lined, stormwater runoff that contacted reactive rock would be contained to help prevent water quality-related effects on adjacent wetlands; and hydrologic effects would be reduced by the use of seepage control measures, which would be installed at the mine pits to restrict shallow groundwater movement through higher permeability areas and help prevent drawdown of wetland water levels near mine pits. The Plant Site and the Transportation and Utility Corridor would be located on a brownfield site and therefore the reuse of an existing plant site and

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infrastructure also serve as avoidance measures and reduces environmental impacts. Strategies at the Plant Site and along the Transportation and Utility Corridor include, but are not limited to: reusing existing infrastructure; and construction of a containment system to collect current and future surface seepage from around the toe of the Tailings Basin.

Wetland compensatory mitigation proposed by Polymet predominately consists of wetland restoration credits generated at compensation sites located: 1) on-site; 2) off-site, within the same watershed as the project site (St. Louis River/Great Lakes Basin); and 3) off-site, outside of the St. Louis River/Great Lakes Basin. PolyMet proposes to fully compensate for the direct wetland impacts and potential indirect fragmentation impacts, which total 939.4 acres, by generating approximately 1,624 wetland mitigation credits at three off-site mitigation sites, known as the Zim, Hinckley, and Aitkin sites. A description of the mitigation sites is provided in the table below. PolyMet plans to complete initial phases of restoration at the proposed off-site wetland mitigation sites at least one full growing season prior to the occurrence of the wetland impacts for which the mitigation would compensate.

Description of Proposed Compensatory Wetland Mitigation

Mitigation Site	Watershed Name, Bank Service Area (BSA)	County	Township (T), Range (R), Section (S)	Mitigation Method and Estimated Credits
On-Site	St. Louis River #3, BSA #1	St. Louis	T59, R13, S1,2,3,9,10, and 11	Creation 102 Credits
Zim (off-site, within watershed)	St. Louis River #3, BSA #1	St. Louis	T55, R18, S2,3,10,11,26,27, and 34	Restoration/ Preservation 454 Credits
Hinckley (off-site, outside watershed)	Snake River #36, BSA #6	Pine	T39, R22, S5	Restoration 329 Credits
Aitkin (off-site, outside watershed)	Elk-Nokasippi #10, BSA #5	Aitkin	T47, R27, S1; T47, R26, S6	Restoration 841 Credits

Because Polymet's proposal to create on-site wetland mitigation would occur later in time, any compensatory mitigation credits that may be generated on-site are not being considered at this time in determining the sufficiency of the proposed wetland compensatory mitigation. Additional compensatory mitigation may be required for currently estimated potential indirect wetland impacts.

3. REPLIES/COMMENTS.

Interested parties are invited to submit to this office written facts, arguments, or objections through March 13, 2014. These statements should bear upon the suitability of the location and the adequacy of the proposed project and should, if appropriate, suggest any changes believed to be desirable. Comments received may be forwarded to the applicant. The Corps of Engineers will not edit comments to remove any identifying or contact information, and cautions against submitting any information that should not be publicly disclosed.

Replies may be addressed to Regulatory Branch, St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, 180 Fifth Street East, Suite 700, Saint Paul, MN 55101-1678.

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Or, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT, call Douglas Bruner at the St. Paul District office of the Corps of Engineers, telephone number (800) 290-5847.

To receive Public Notices by e-mail, go to:

http://mvp-extstp.mvp.usace.army.mil/list_server/ and add your information in the New Registration Box.

4. FEDERALLY-LISTED THREATENED OR ENDANGERED WILDLIFE OR PLANTS OR THEIR CRITICAL HABITAT.

Wildlife surveys were conducted in the vicinity of the project. The project includes land that is within designated critical habitat for the Canada lynx, a federally listed endangered species. There were Canada lynx sightings within the vicinity (St. Louis, Cook and Lake counties) of the project area between 2000 and 2006. In general, the preferred habitat for the Canada lynx and its primary prey, the snow shoe hare, is mature jack pine forest with dense balsam fir in the understory. No federally listed threatened or endangered plant species are known to occur on the federal lands, including the mine site.

This application is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (U.S. FWS) as part of the Corps of Engineers' permit review and obligations under the Endangered Species Act. Any comments the U.S. FWS may have concerning Federally-listed threatened or endangered wildlife or plants or their critical habitat would be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

5. JURISDICTION.

Jurisdiction for the proposed project is being reviewed in accordance with the practices identified in Regulatory Guidance Letter 08-02 for documenting Corps of Engineers jurisdiction under Sections 9 & 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. We have made an initial 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 and/or Section(s) 9 & 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. The Corps of Engineers will prepare an approved or preliminary jurisdictional determination prior to making a permit decision. Approved jurisdictional determinations are posted on the St. Paul District of the Corps of Engineers web page at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>.

6. THE APPLICANT HAS STATED THAT THE FOLLOWING STATE, COUNTY, AND/OR LOCAL PERMITS HAVE BEEN APPLIED FOR/ISSUED: A table providing key government permits or actions is provided as an enclosure to this public notice.

7. STATE SECTION 401 WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION.

Valid Section 404 permits cannot be issued for any activity unless state water quality certification for the activity is granted or waived pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. The state Section 401 authority in Minnesota is the MPCA. The St. Paul District Corps of Engineers has provided this public notice and a copy of the applicant's Section 404 permit application form to the MPCA. If

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MPCA needs any additional information in order for the Section 401 application to be considered complete by MPCA, the MPCA has indicated that it will request such information from the applicant. It is the permit applicant's responsibility to ensure that the MPCA has received a valid, complete application for state Section 401 certification and to obtain a final Section 401 action from the MPCA.

The MPCA has indicated that this public notice serves as its public notice of the application for Section 401 water quality certification under Minnesota Rules Part 7001. The MPCA has also indicated that the Section 401 process shall begin to commence upon the issuance date of this public notice unless the MPCA notifies both the Corps of Engineers and the permit applicant to the contrary, in writing, before the expiration date of this public notice.

Any comments relative to MPCA's Section 401 Certification for the activity proposed in this public notice may be sent to:

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Resource Management and Assistance Division,
Attention: 401 Certification, 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4194.

8. HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL.

This public notice is being sent to the National Park Service and the State Archaeologist for their comments. The Corps of Engineers is consulting with the Superior National Forest, Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa to identify cultural resources potentially affected by the project and evaluate their eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. As a result, four eligible properties have been identified: a maple sugar camp, a portion of a historic trail corridor, a portion of the Misabe Widjiu (Laurentian Divide), and the concentrator building built by the Erie Mining Company. Consultation is continuing as the identification and evaluation process is being completed and the effects of the NorthMet project are being assessed. The NorthMet project would adversely affect historic properties and those effects would be resolved prior to the issuance of any Department of Army permit for the project.

9. PUBLIC HEARING.

Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations, section 327.4, states that any person may, within the comment period specified in this public notice, request, in writing and with specific reasons, that a public hearing be held to consider the application. Given the level of interest in the proposed project, the Corps of Engineers has decided to hold a public hearing. It is therefore unnecessary to submit a request for a public hearing.

The public hearing, under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, will be held concurrently with the Duluth public meeting for the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Details on the Duluth public meeting are below. The public hearing will consist of an open house, a brief presentation, and an opportunity for the public to make comments. A court reporter will record and transcribe comments made during the oral comment period. Responses to comments will not be provided during the Clean Water Act hearing or public meeting; however, staff from the federal and state agencies will be available to answer questions during the open house. Important facts and statements on the Clean Water Act Section 404 permit application may also be submitted in writing.

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Written statements may be turned in at the meeting or mailed to the attention of Douglas Bruner, 180 5th St. E, Suite 700, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1678. Documents can also be submitted electronically to: mvp-reg-inquiry@usace.army.mil. Details for the public hearing are as follows:

January 16, 2014, DECC – Duluth Entertainment Convention Center, 350 Harbor Drive, Duluth, Minnesota 55802, 5:00 p.m. – Open House, 6:45-10:00 p.m. – Formal presentation for the hearing and SDEIS public comment session.

Members of the public may register to speak at the meeting within 15 minutes of the start of the meeting. Comments will not be edited to remove any identifying or contact information; therefore, the Corps of Engineers cautions against using any information that should not be publicly disclosed.

10. PUBLIC INTEREST REVIEW.

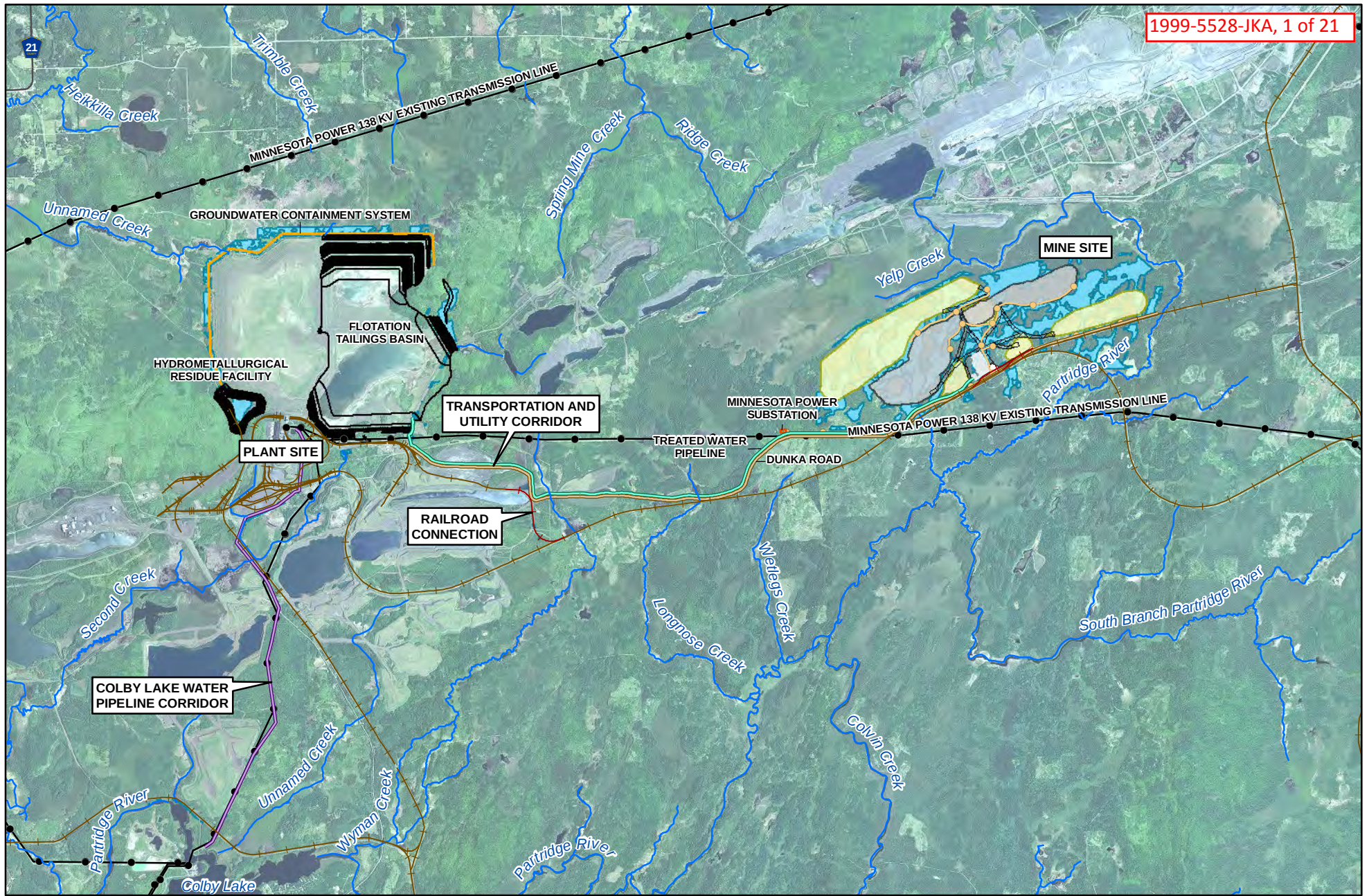
The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Environmental and other documents will be available for review in the St. Paul District Office of the Corps of Engineers and the following website:
<http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/ProjectsStudies/PolyMet.aspx>.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above.

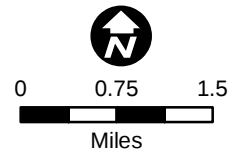
Tamara E. Cameron
Chief, Regulatory Branch

Enclosures

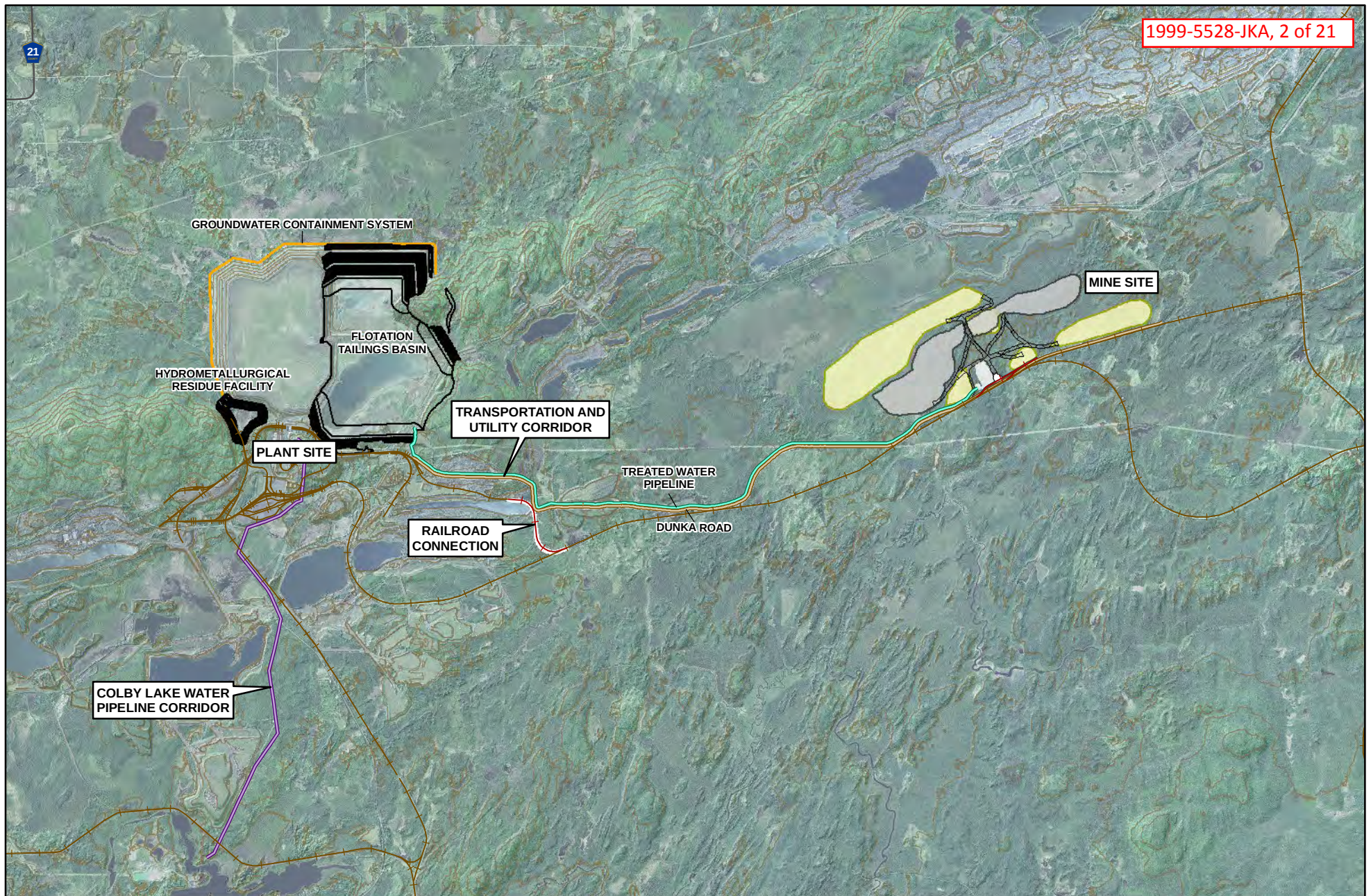
NOTICE TO EDITORS: This public notice is provided as background information and is not a request or contract for publication.



- Proposed Project Features
- Mine Pits
 - Stockpiles
 - Haul Roads
 - Transmission Lines
 - Proposed Railroad Track
- Existing Private Railroad
- Electric Transmission Lines
- Rivers & Streams
- Wetlands

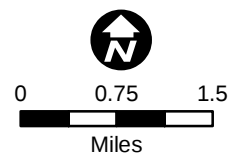


PROJECT OVERVIEW
NorthMet Project
Poly Met Mining, Inc.
Hoyt Lakes, MN



Proposed Project Features

- Mine Pits
- Stockpiles
- Haul Roads
- Proposed Railroad Track
- Existing Private Railroad



PROJECT TOPOGRAPHY
NorthMet Project
Poly Met Mining Inc.
Hoyt Lakes, MN

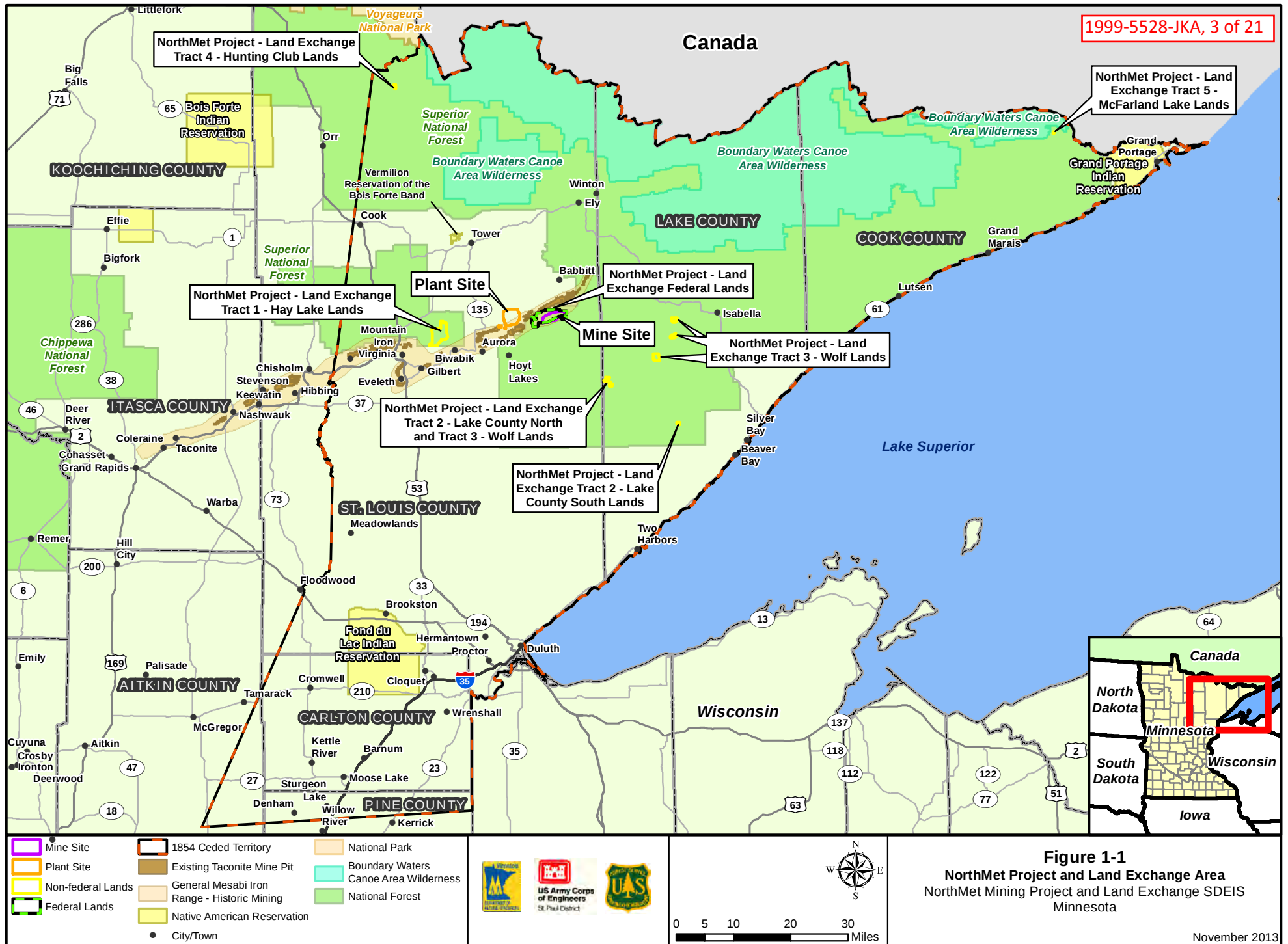
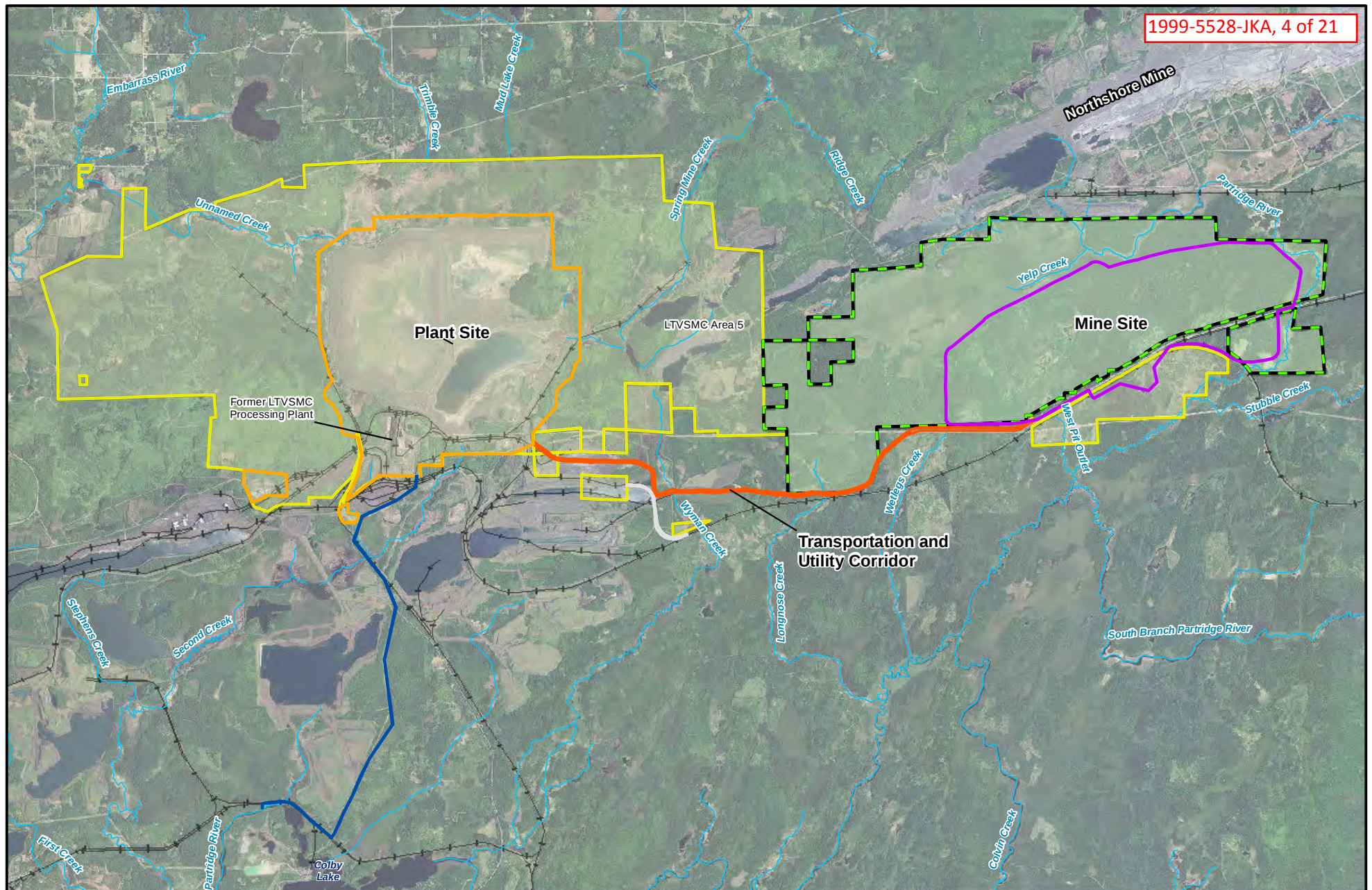


Figure 1-1
NorthMet Project and Land Exchange Area
 NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
 Minnesota



- Federal Lands
- PolyMet Owned/Leased Area
- Mine Site
- Plant Site
- Colby Lake Water Pipeline Corridor
- Transportation and Utility Corridor
- Railroad Connection
- Stream/River

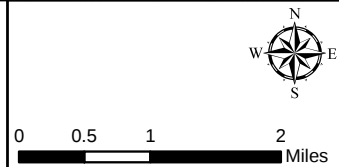
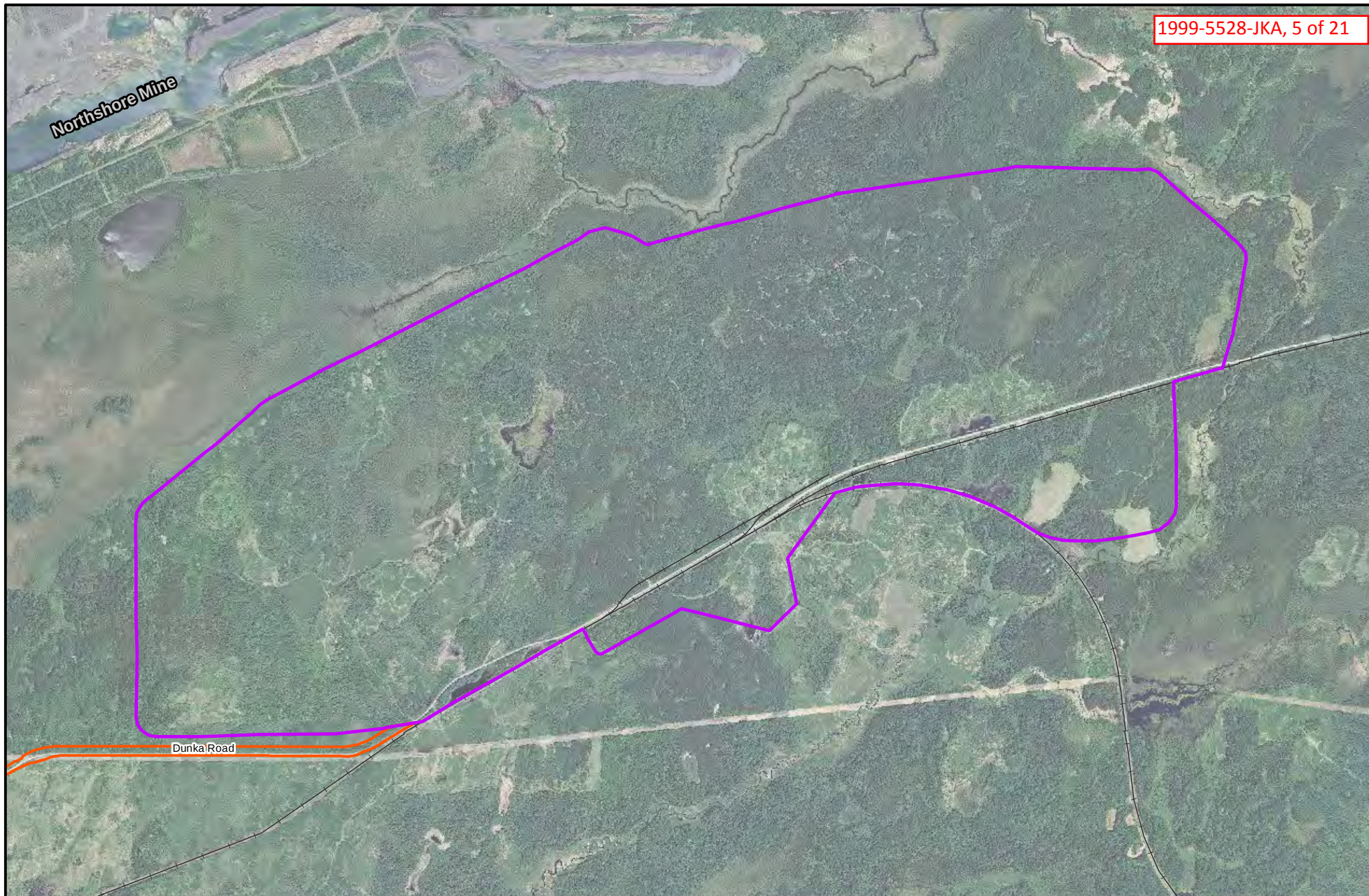


Figure 3.2-1
NorthMet Project Area Surface Rights
 NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
 Minnesota



- Mine Site
- ⚡ Transportation and Utility Corridor
- +— Existing Railroad

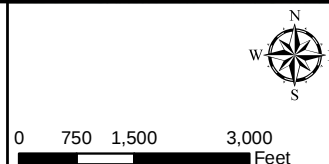


Figure 3.2-4
Existing Conditions at the Mine Site
 NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
 Minnesota

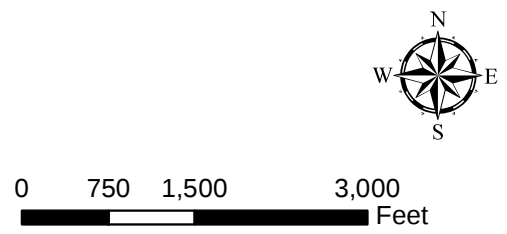
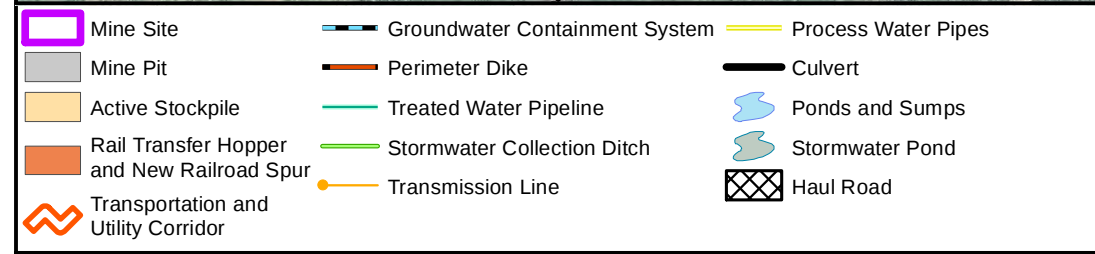
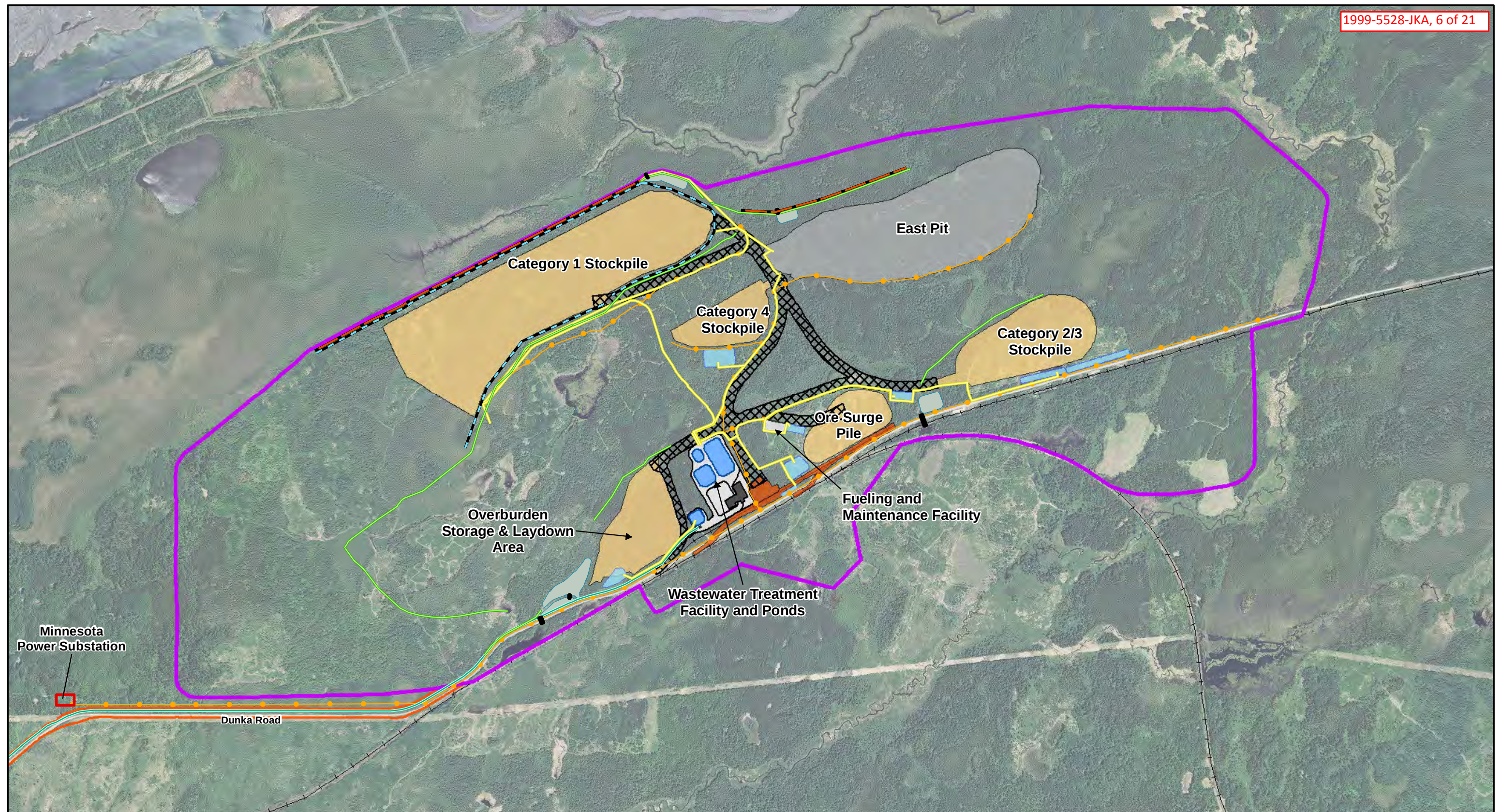
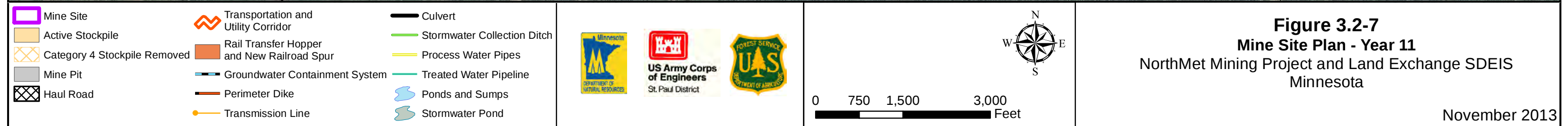
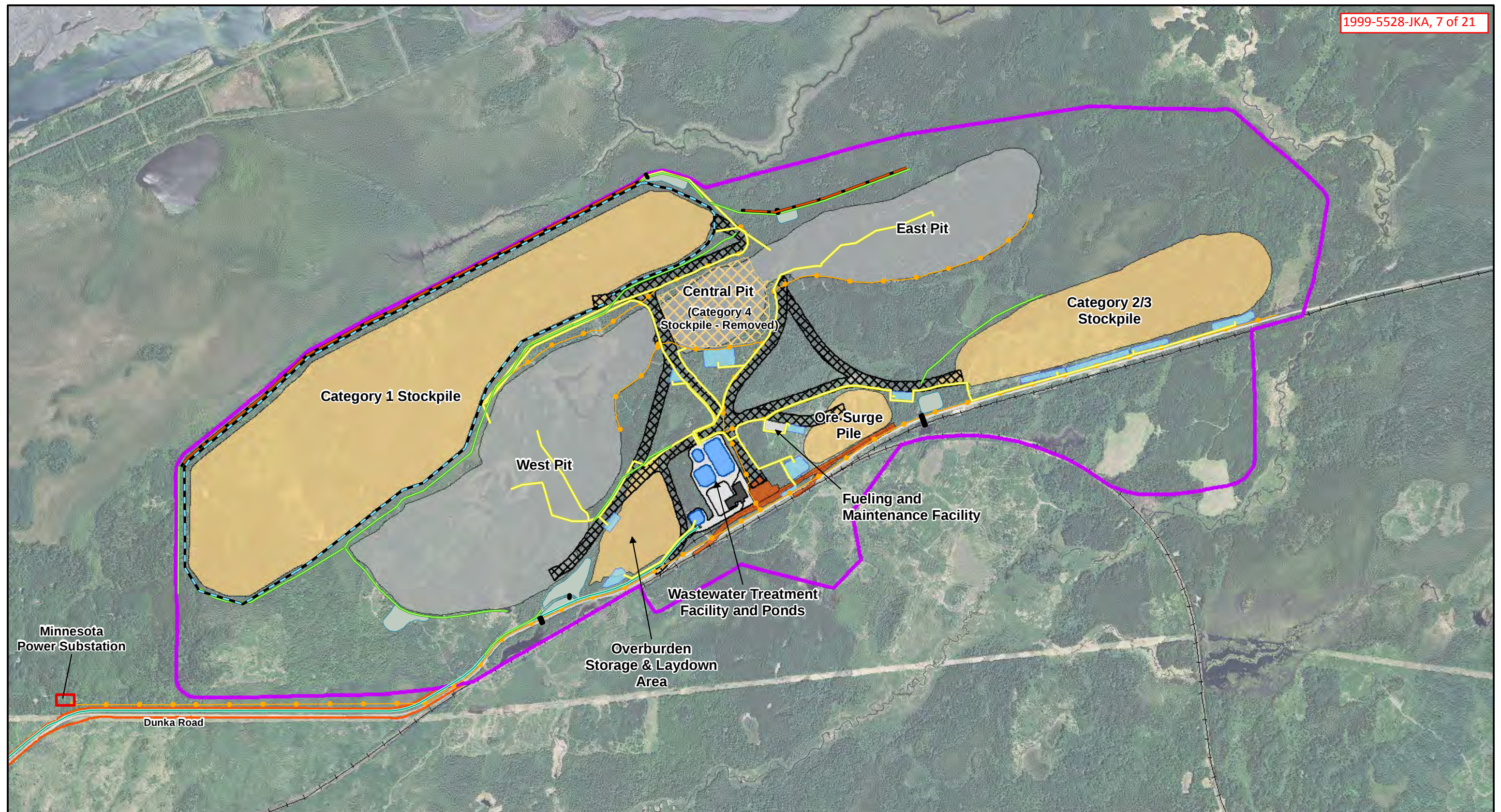
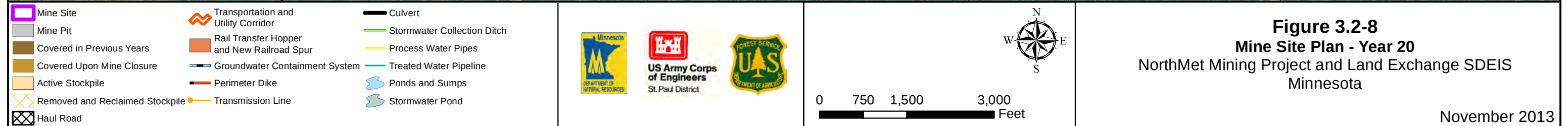
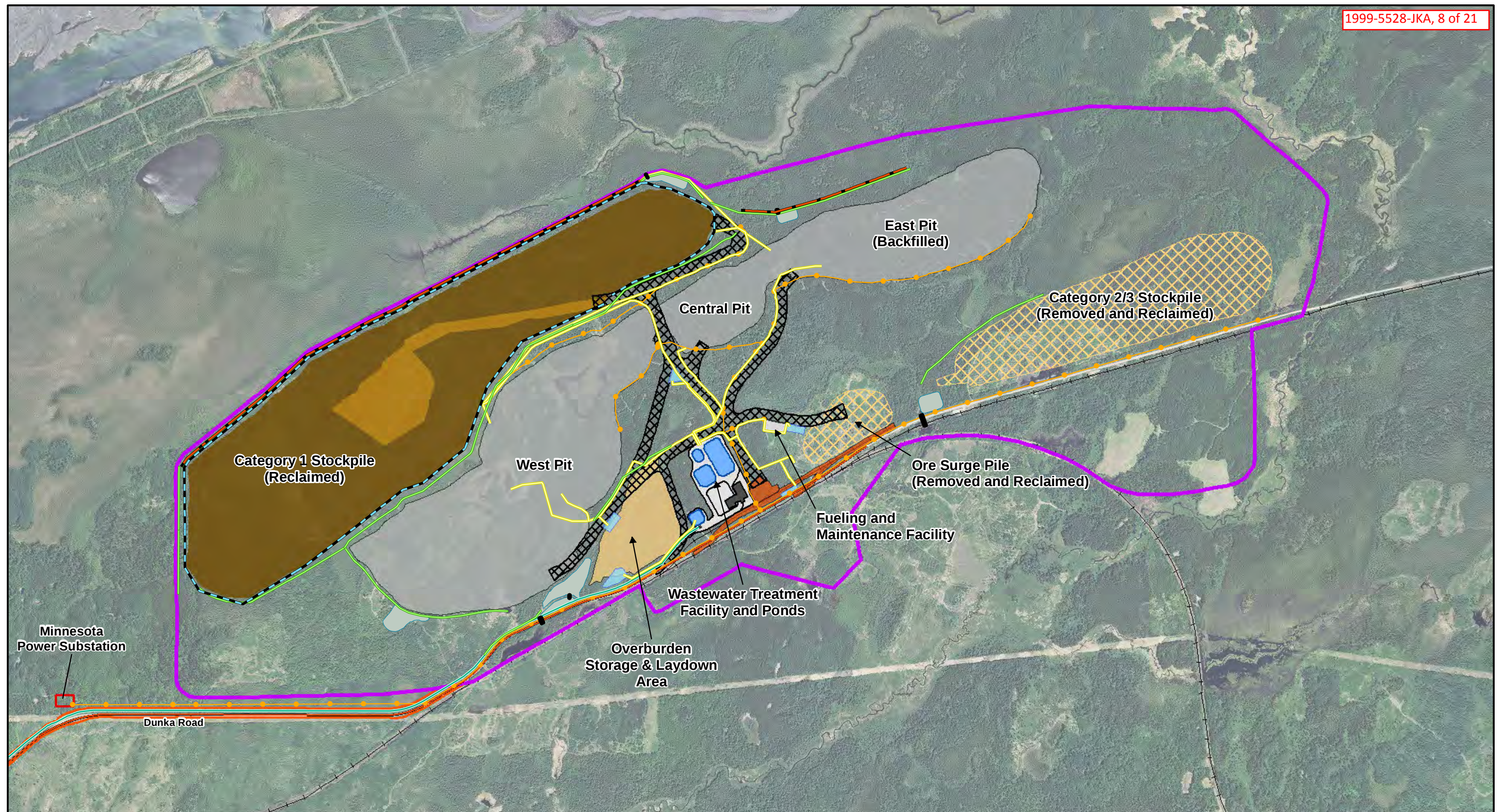
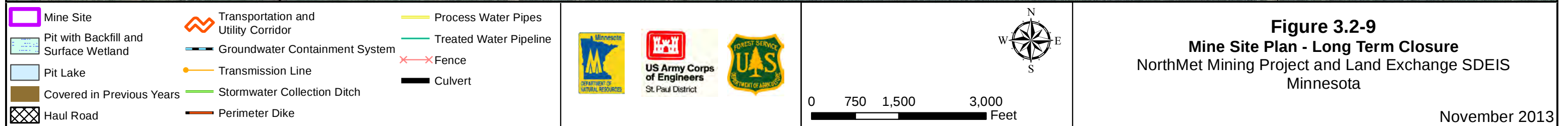
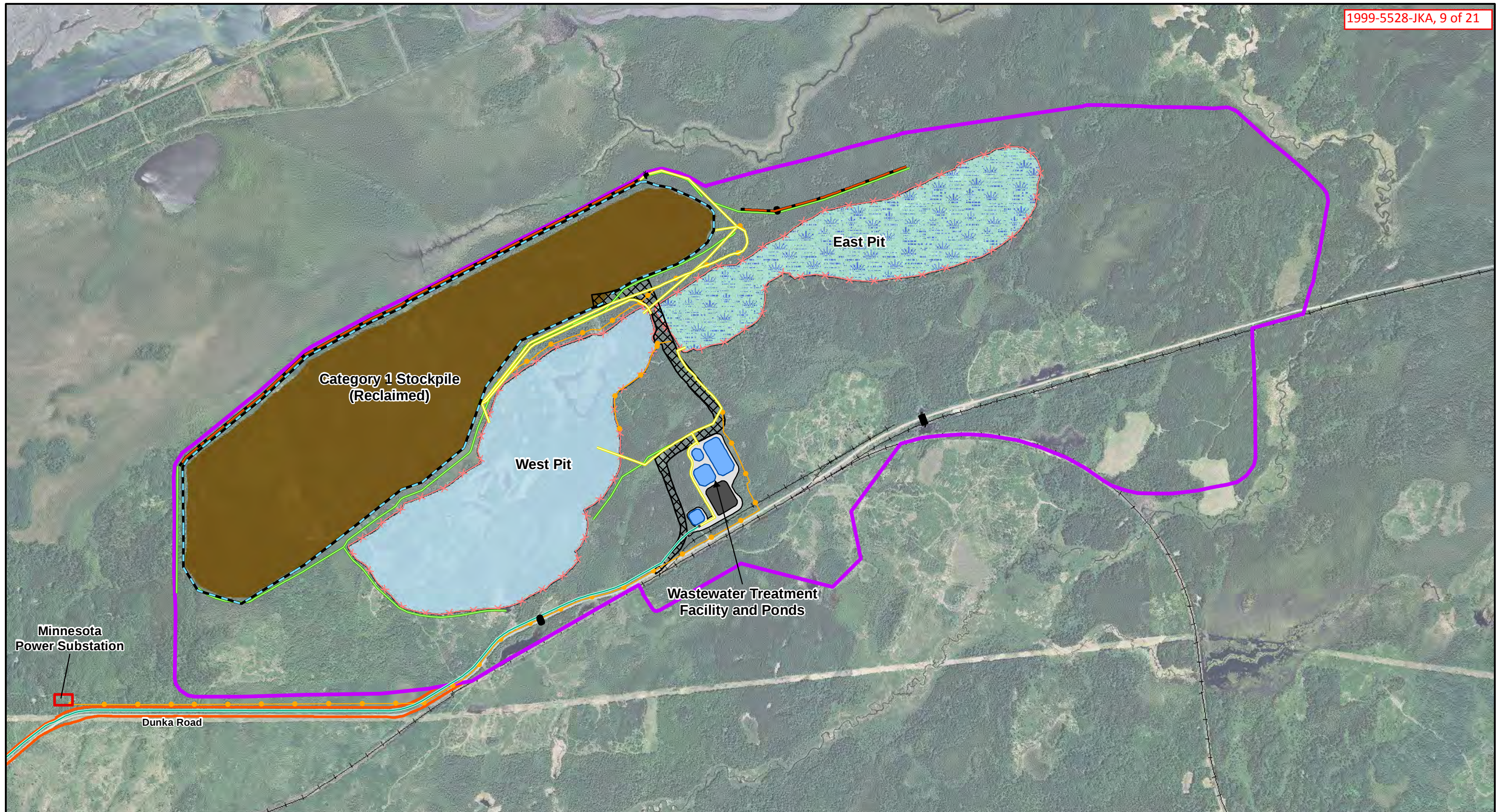
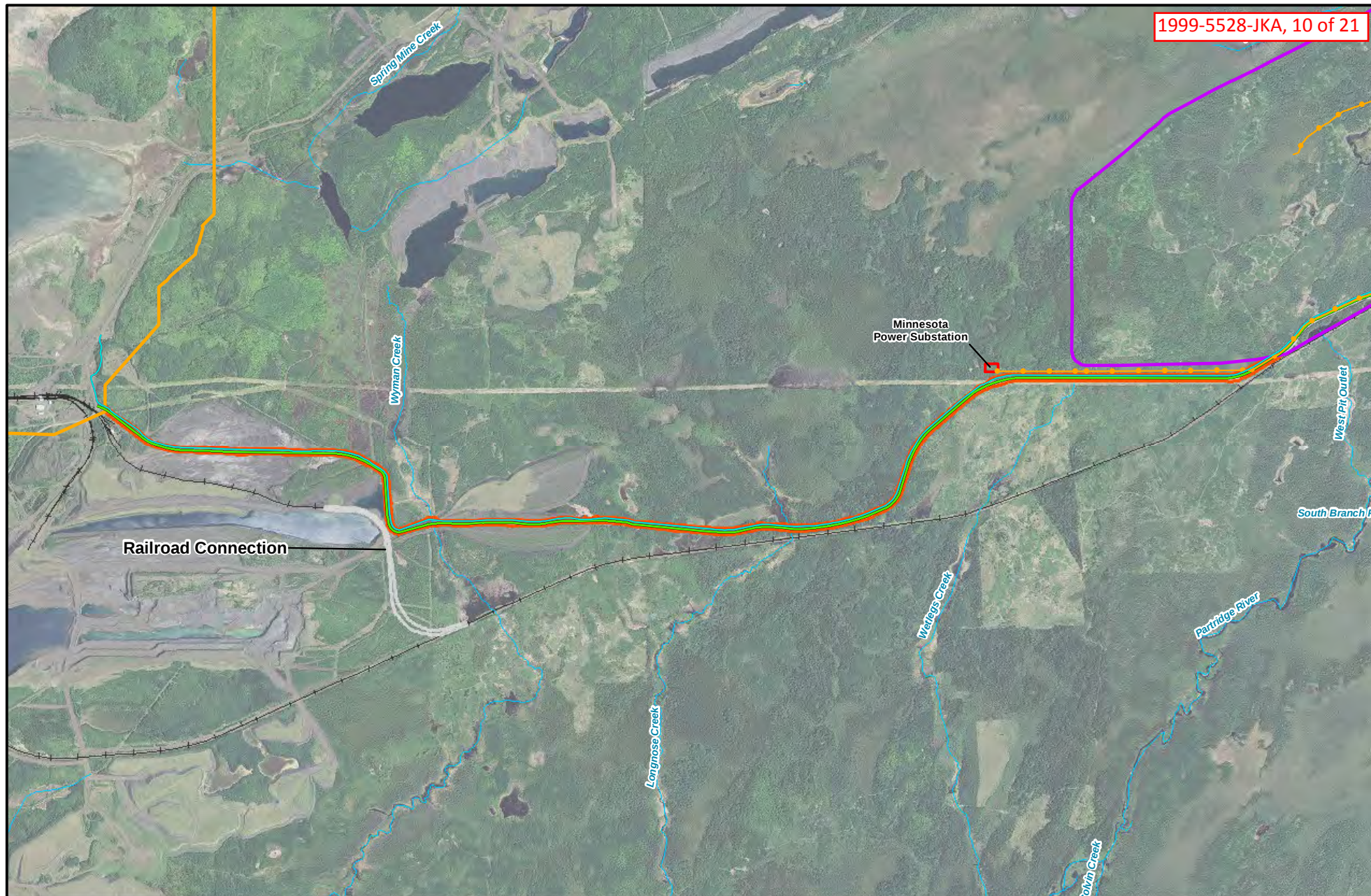


Figure 3.2-5
Mine Site Plan - Year 1
NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
Minnesota









- Transmission Line
- Treated Water Pipeline
- Dunka Road
- Minnesota Power Substation
- ⋈ Transportation and Utility Corridor
- ⋈ Railroad Connection
- Plant Site
- Mine Site
- ~~~~~ Stream/River
- +— Existing Railroad

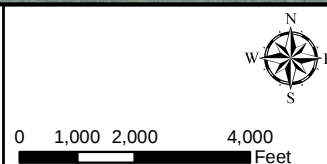
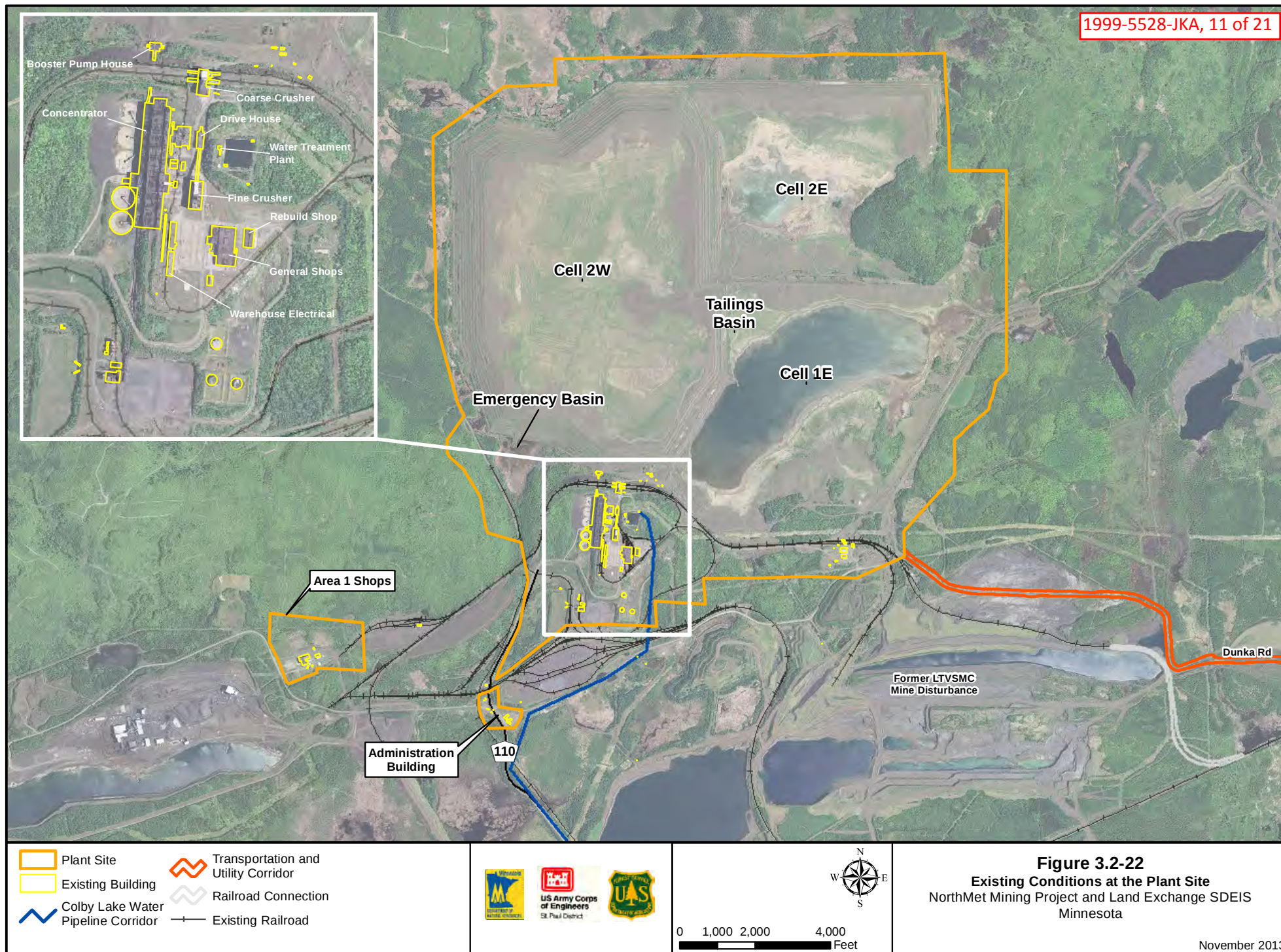


Figure 3.2-20
Transportation and Utility Corridor
 NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
 Minnesota



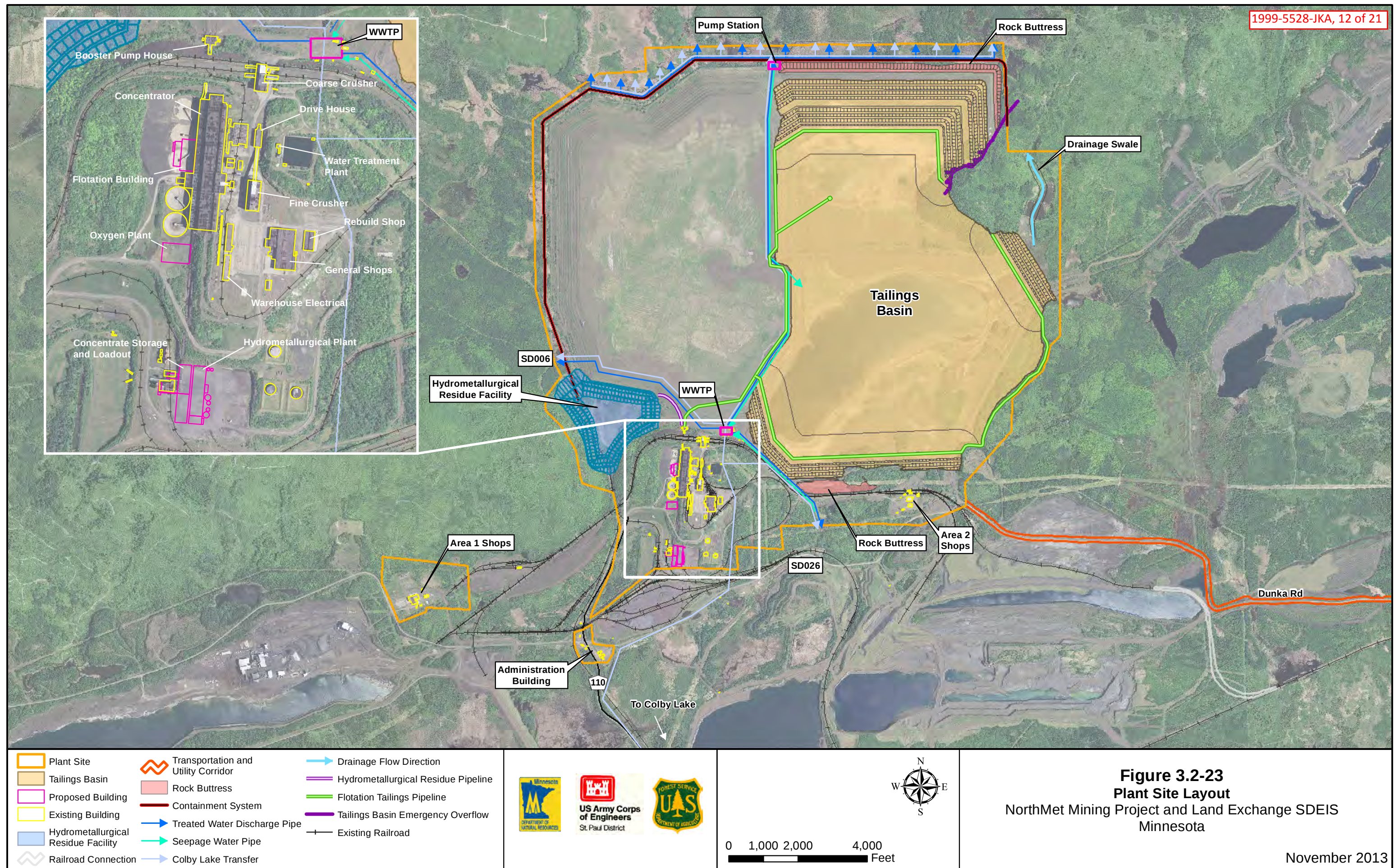


Figure 3.2-23
Plant Site Layout
 NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
 Minnesota

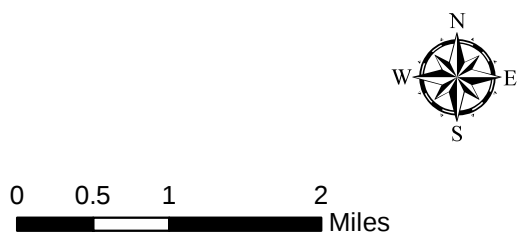
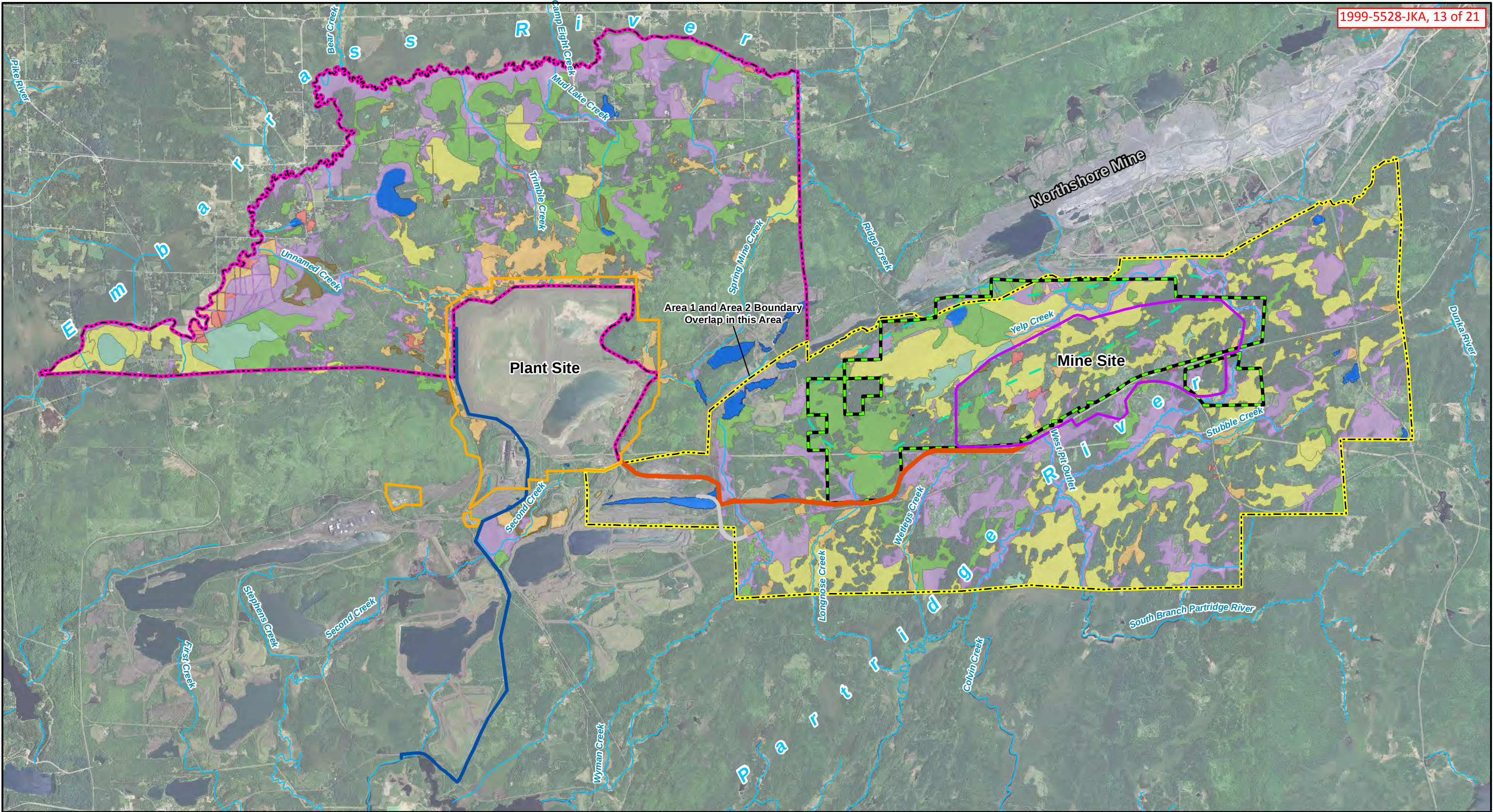
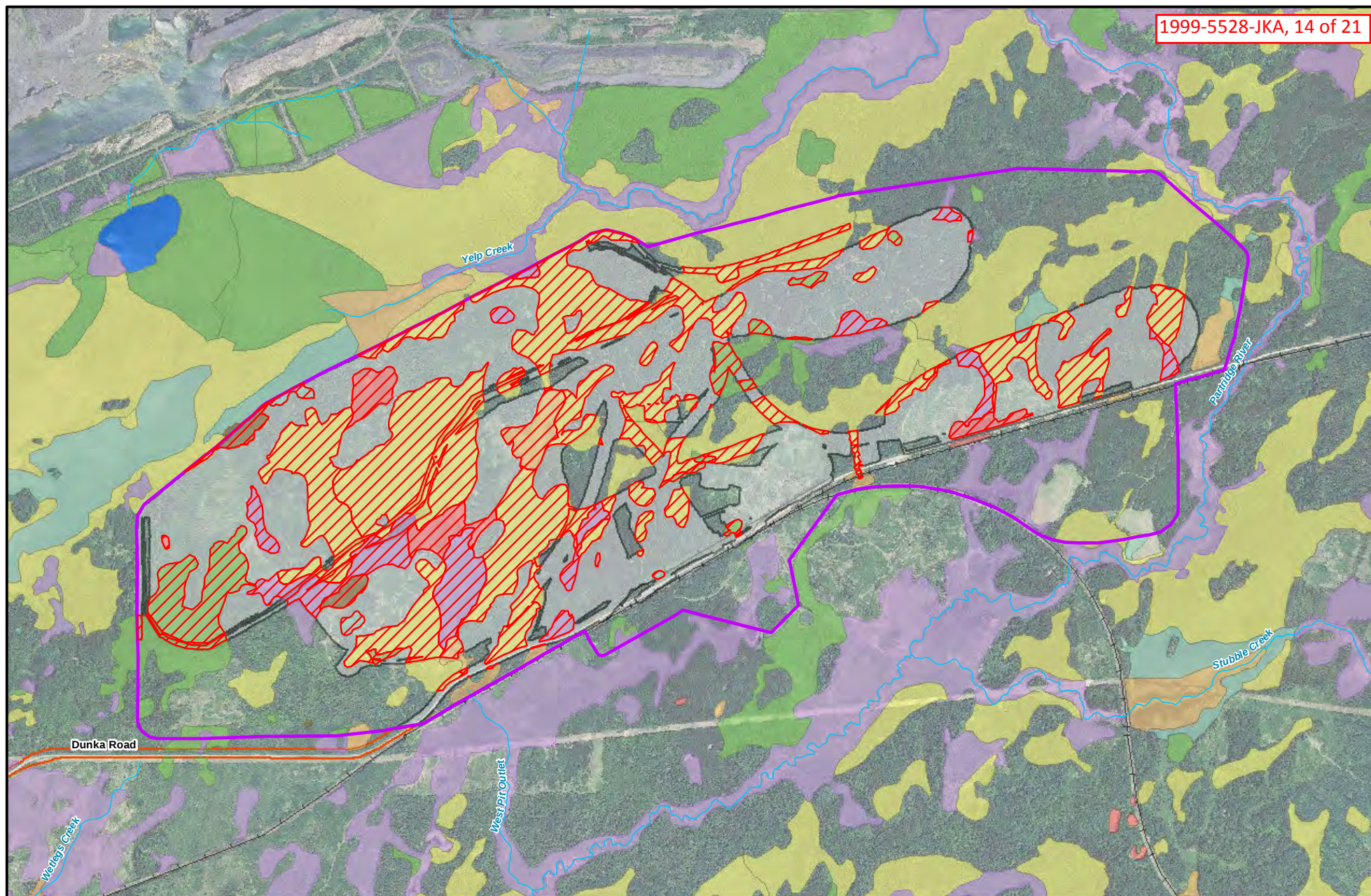


Figure 4.2.3-1
Wetland Community Types
Overview
NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
Minnesota



0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000
Feet

Figure 5.2.3-1
Mine Site Wetlands and Direct Wetland Effects
NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
Minnesota

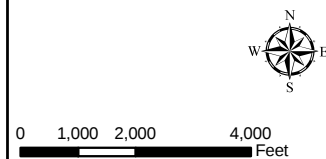
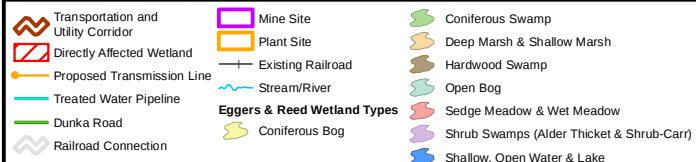
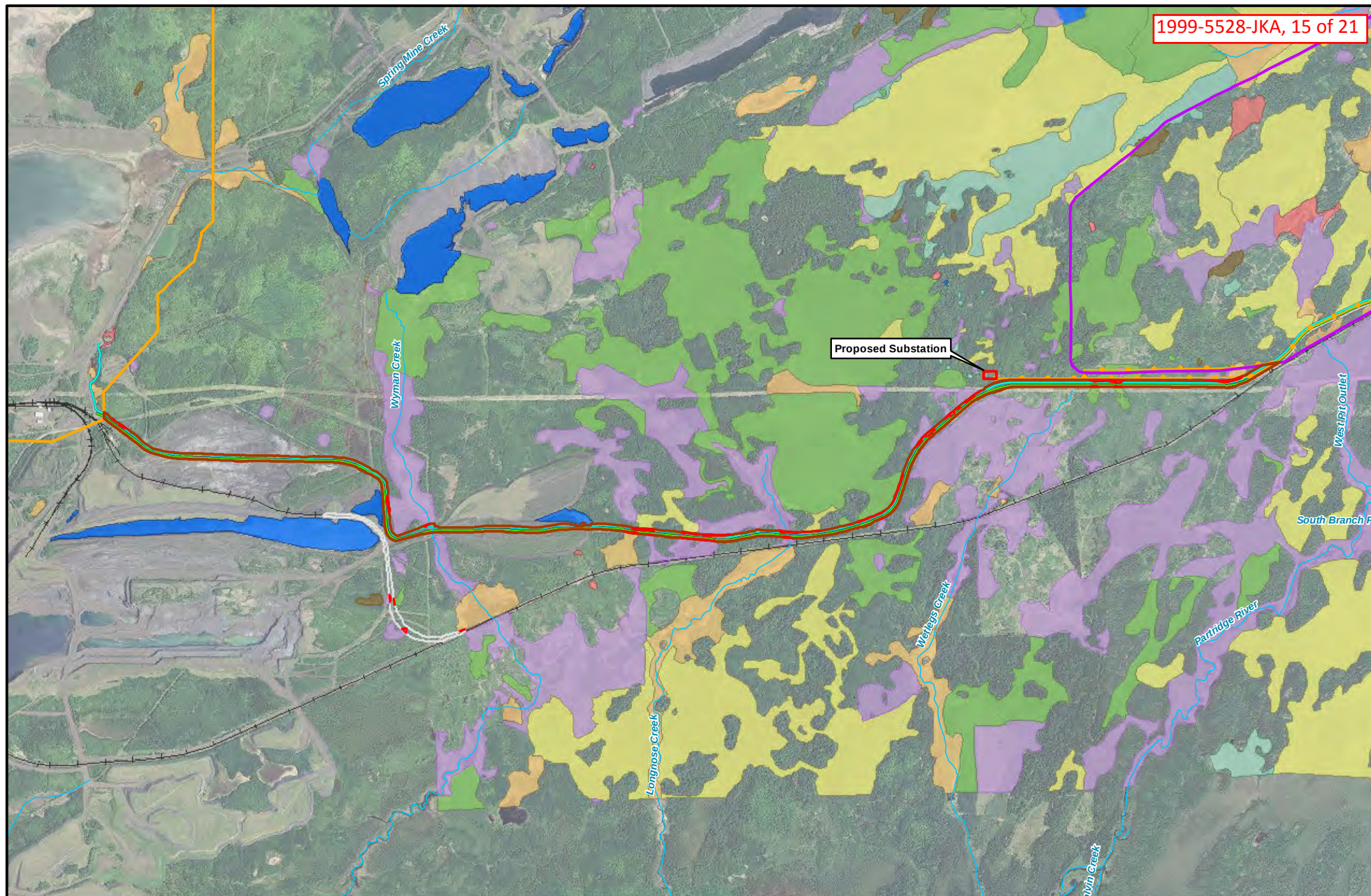
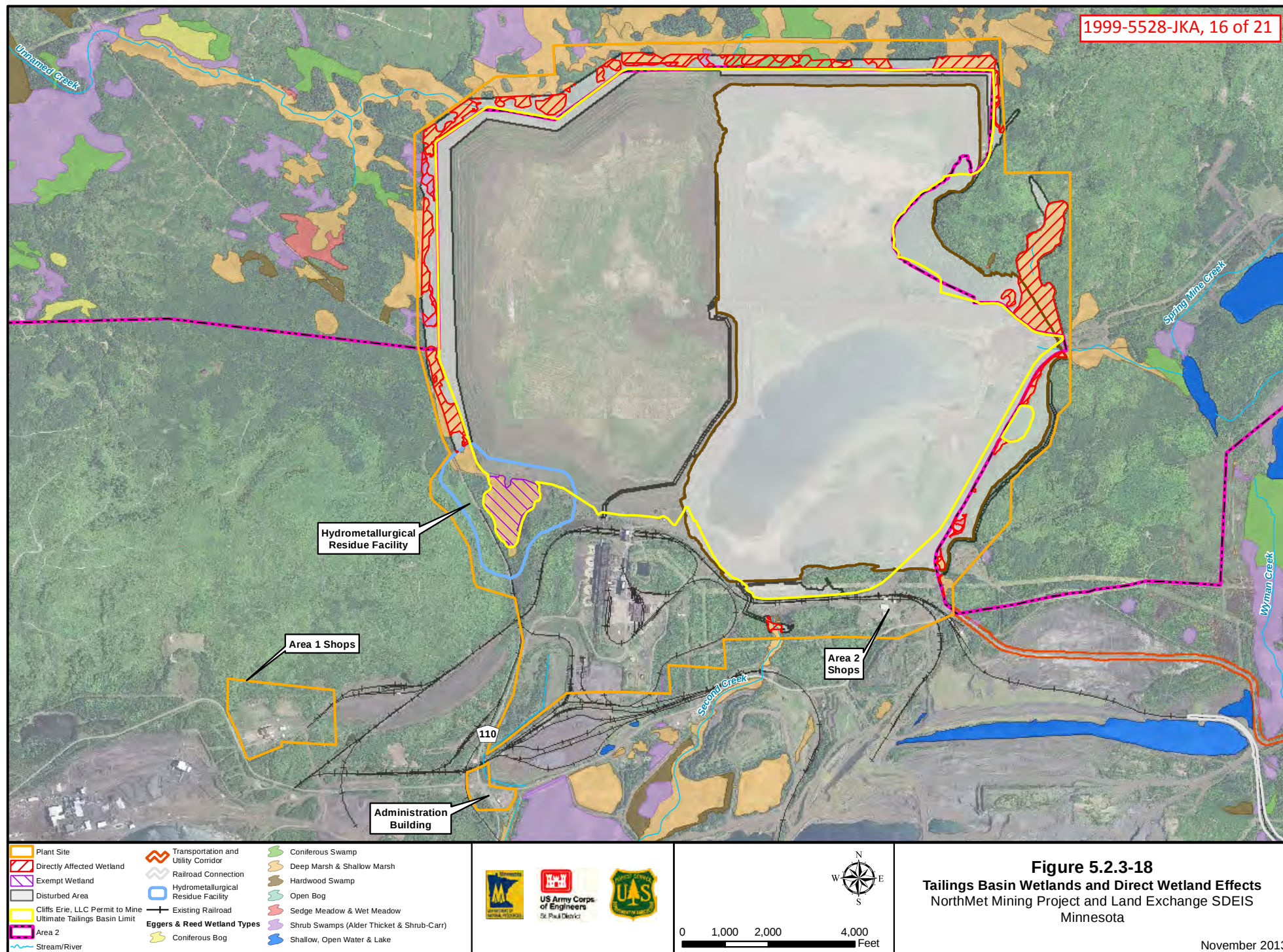
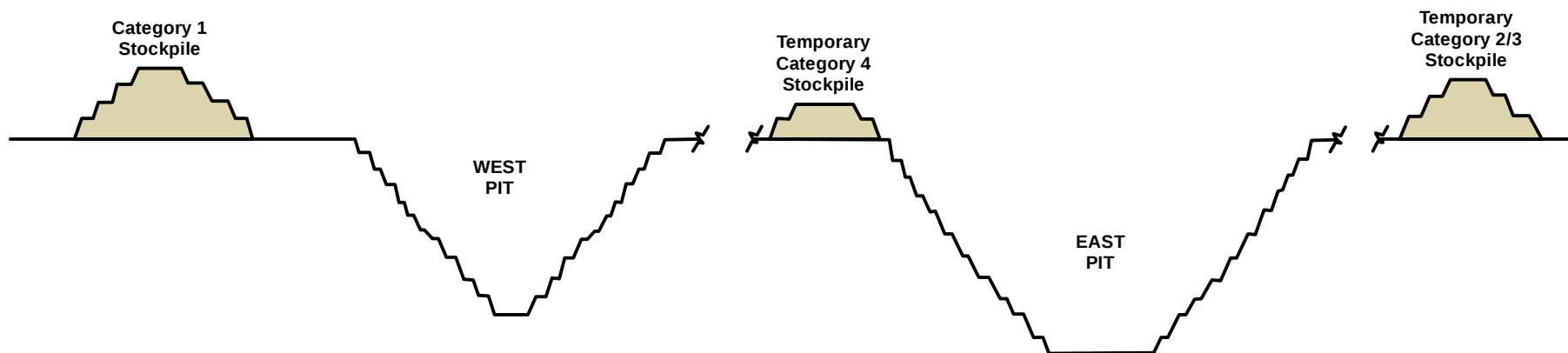


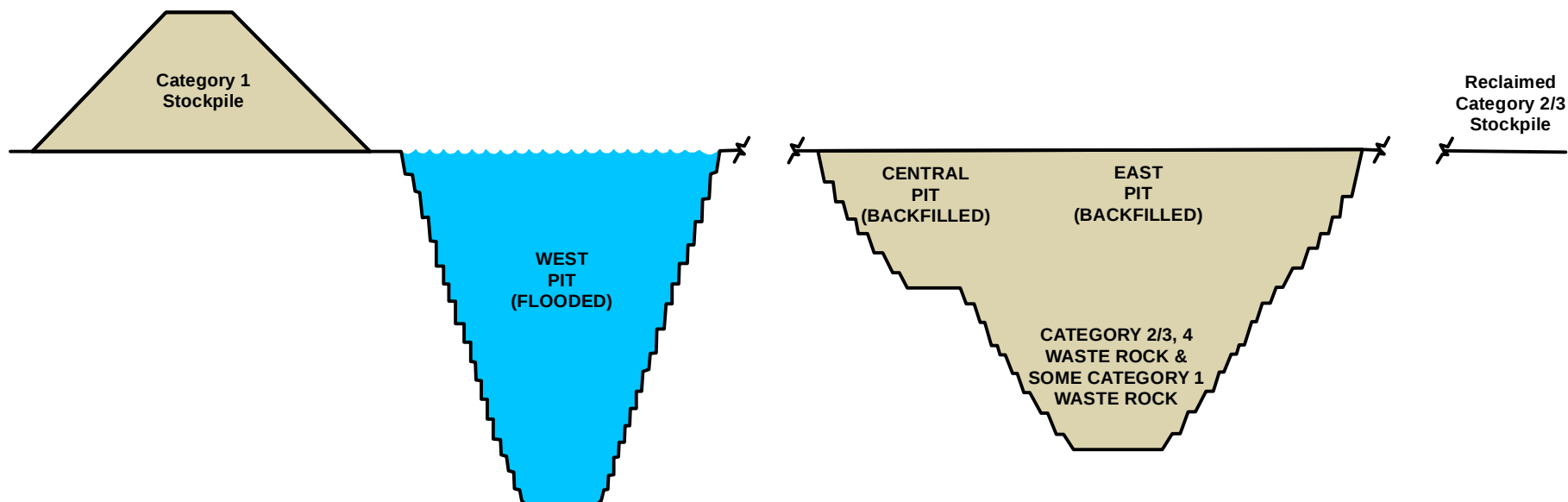
Figure 5.2.3-2
Transportation and Utility Corridor
Wetlands and Direct Wetland Effects
 NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
 Minnesota



YEAR 11



CLOSURE

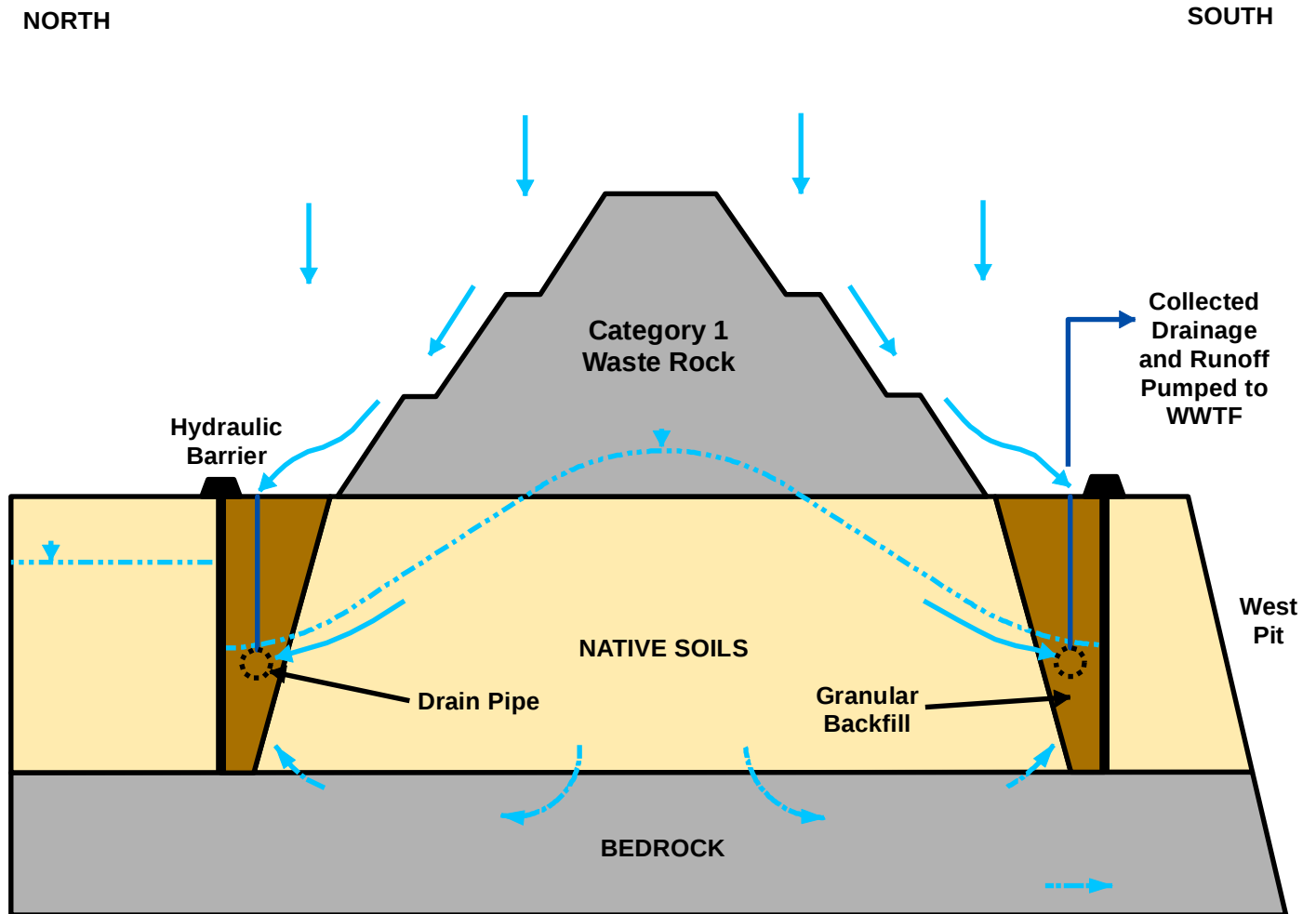


Not To Scale



Figure 3.2-14
Schematic Cross Sections of the Geotechnical Features
at the Mine Site (Year 11 and Closure)
NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
Minnesota

November 2013



Water Flow

Not To Scale



Figure 3.2-11
Conceptual Representation of the Category 1
Stockpile Containment System - Years 1-13
 NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
 Minnesota

November 2013

NORTHWEST

NORTH

Cutoff
Wall

Drain
Pipe

Forcemain (Typ)

WEST

Cell 2W

Part of Collected
Seepage Pumped
to Cell 2E

Bedrock

Cell 1E

Hydrometallurgical
Residue
Facility

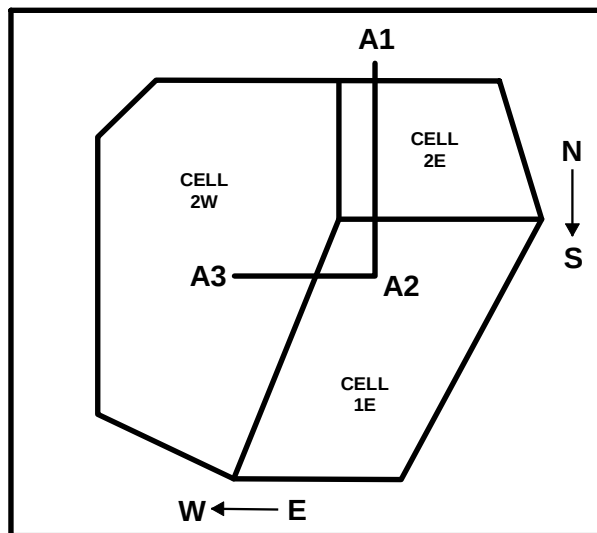
WWTP

Part of Collected Seepage
Pumped to WWTP

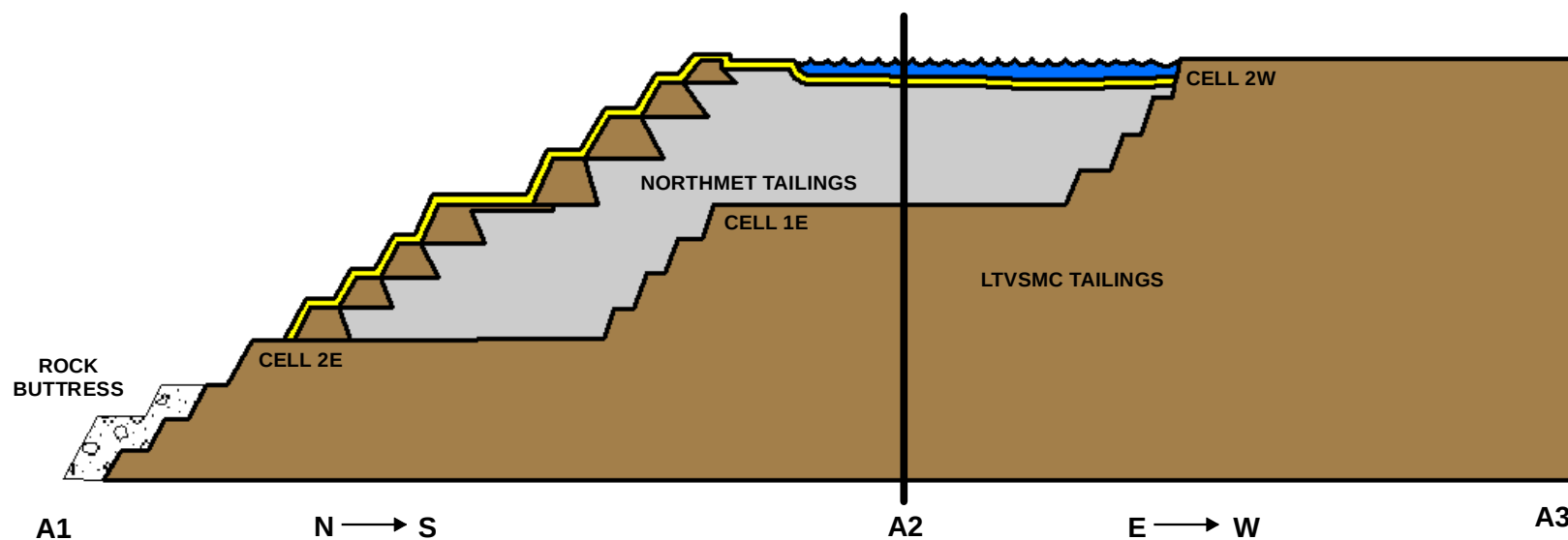
SOUTH



Figure 3.2-27
Conceptual Plan View - Tailings Basin
Groundwater Containment System
NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
Minnesota



TRACE MAP



- LTVSMC Tailings
- NorthMet Tailings
- Bentonite
- Rock Buttress



Figure 3.2-25
Schematic Cross Section of the
Tailings Basin - Post Closure
NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
Minnesota

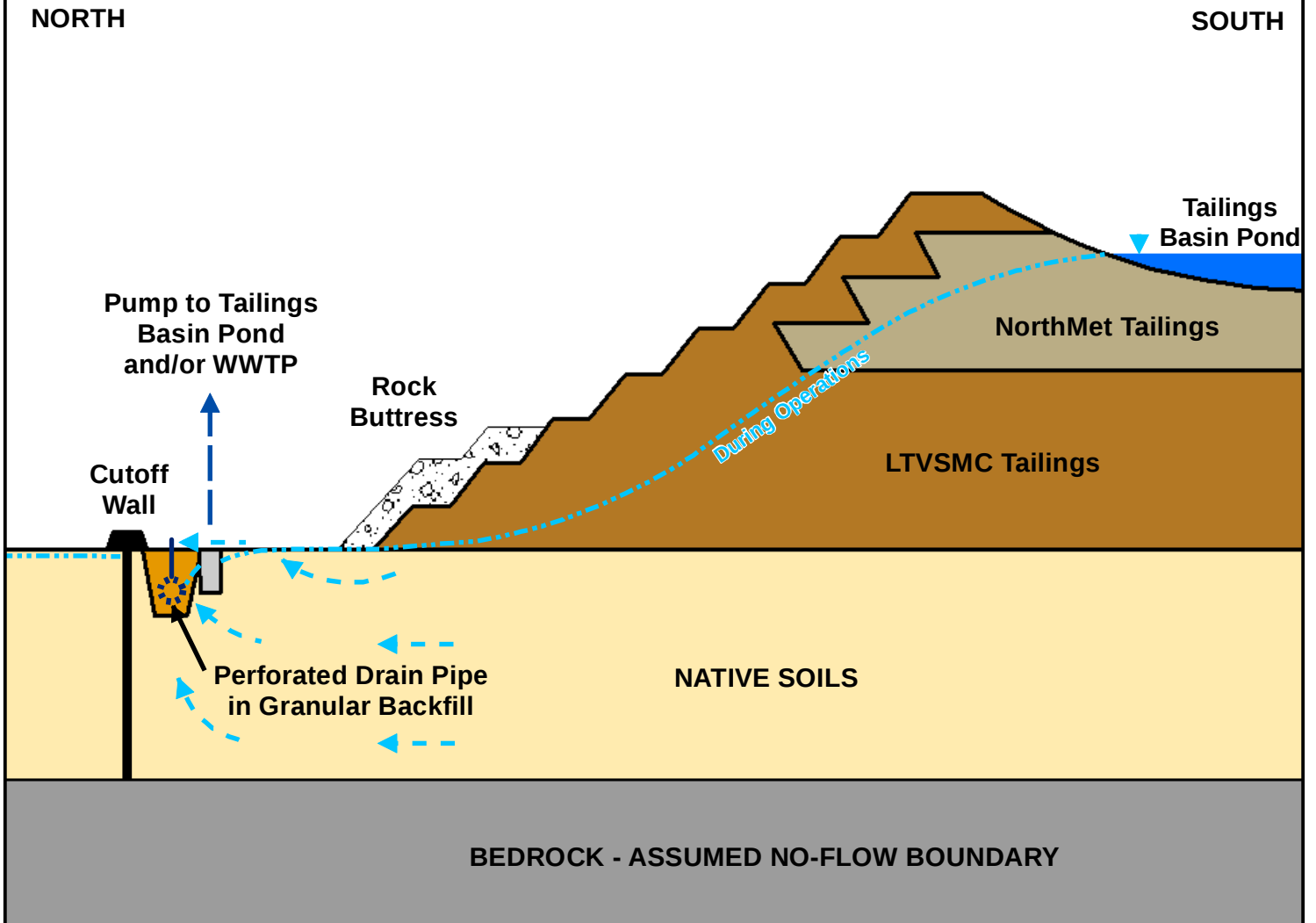


Figure 3.2-28
Conceptual Cross Section - Tailings Basin
Groundwater Containment System
 NorthMet Mining Project and Land Exchange SDEIS
 Minnesota

