



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
St Paul District

**APPLICANT: United States Steel  
Corporation Minnesota Ore  
Operations – Minntac**

# **Special Public Notice**

**ISSUED: December 18, 2015**

**EXPIRES: December 28, 2015**

**REFER TO: MVP-2011-00832-JCB**

**SECTION:404 - Clean Water Act**

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U.S. STEEL CORPORATION HAS REQUESTED A MODIFICATION TO PERMIT 2011-00832-JCB.

A one-year extension of the expiration date of Department of the Army (DA) permit MVP-2011-00832-JCB to December 31, 2016 will be issued by the Corps to U.S. Steel prior to December 31, 2015.

The purpose of the one-year extension is to allow additional time for the Corps to evaluate a request by U.S. Steel to extend the permit expiration date to December 31, 2025, and to review proposed revisions to the performance standards and crediting at the Palisades wetland mitigation site and to review project impacts to wetlands associated with the completed No. 6 Sump Dewatering Flow Alternative Process Make-up Water Source Project at the Minntac mine site.

#### **PROJECT LOCATION:**

Minntac - The project site is located in Sections 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, and 9 of Township 58 North, Range 18 West and Sections 11 and 12 of Township 58 North, Range 19 West, Mountain Iron, St. Louis County, Minnesota.

Palisades I - NW ¼ of SW ¼ of Section 27, Township 49 north, Range 24 west; S ½ of the S ½ of Section 28, Township 49 north, Range 24 west; Portions of the NE ¼ of Section 32, Township 49 north, Range 24 west; N ½ of Section 33, Township 49 north, Range 24 west; Portions of the SW ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 34, Township 49 north, Range 24 west; and W ½ of the SW ¼ of Section 34, Township 49 north, Range 24 west.

**BACKGROUND:** DA permit MVP-2011-00832-JCB, originally issued on December 10, 2012, authorized discharges of dredged and fill material into 75.41 acres of wetlands for the expansion of the Minntac western mine pit, and into 0.37 acres of wetlands for the construction of Number 6 Sump project. Compensatory mitigation for the permanent loss of wetlands was provided via withdrawal of wetland credits from USS's project-specific Palisades mitigation bank located in Aitkin County, Minnesota. The expiration date of the existing permit is December 31, 2015.

**STATUS:** U.S. Steel Corporation (USS) has requested an extension of the permit expiration date for DA permit MVP-2011-00832-JCB to December 31, 2025. In addition to the extension request, USS has requested modifications to a number of their permit conditions regarding:

- Hydrology and vegetation performance standards of the Palisades I, II, and III mitigation sites to include interim standards that more closely align with the expected wetland types

**Operations - Regulatory (MVP-2011-00832-JCB)**  
**SUBJECT: Notice of Request to Modify a Permit**

- Project location coordinates for the Palisades mitigation site to more accurately reflect the project location
- The incorporation of additional as-built permanent and temporary wetland impacts and a corresponding increase in compensatory mitigation resulting from the construction of the Sump No. 6 Dewatering Flow Alternative Process Makeup Water Source Project
- The wetland credit release schedule and escrow account adjustments for the Palisades mitigation site

As part of the one-year extension, the Corps will include a special condition to prohibit the alteration of Northern long-eared bat habitat (a federally-listed threatened species).

No changes to the terms and conditions of the permit are under consideration for the one-year extension of the permit expiration date.

The requested revisions to the Palisades mitigation site performance standards and crediting, project impacts, compensatory mitigation, and the extension of the permit expiration date to December 31, 2025 will be evaluated in the coming year.

If you have questions about the permit modification, call Tom Hingsberger at the St. Paul office of the Corps, telephone number (651) 290-5367.

Ben Cox  
Chief, Northwest Section