

March 30, 2012

21881 Pomroy Avenue North
Scandia, MN 55073

Anne Hurlburt, City Administrator
City of Scandia
14727 209th Street North
Scandia, MN 55073

Dear Ms. Hurlburt:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Zavoral Mining Project. The comments are primarily concerns or issues I have with the DEIS and the claims made.

1. Section ES2.10, “Silica Analysis”, page ES-31:

• **Paragraph 1**

The author starts off the discussion by referencing two occupational exposure limits for crystalline silica. The first reference appears to be the OSHA exposure limit, which actually is called a Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL), not MEL. The PEL of $300 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (actually $370 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) is a calculated value that is dependant on the per cent of silica in the dust, which is claimed to be 25%. The second reference is the ACGIH TLV for crystalline silica that is stated to be “...between $50 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and $100 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$...”. These values are incorrect; the ACGIH TLV for respirable silica is $25 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. In my opinion, these errors reduce my confidence in the qualifications of the author to speak on this matter, and possibly other matters.

I also object to the author applying occupational exposure limits to a residential setting. Occupational exposure limits are based on 8-hour/day, 40-hour/week exposures. In addition, employees in occupational settings are provided training, protective gear where needed, access to medical consultation, etc. This is not the case in a residential setting where the potential exposures are longer term and susceptible individuals are likely nearby.

• **Paragraph 4**

The author makes an assumption that dust from mining will be well controlled. In my experience with aggregate mining, dust control takes a back seat to production and is not applied over every square foot of area. In addition, warm and windy days tend to be dusty despite attempts of dribbling water out the back of a tanker truck.

In my opinion, dust will be a problem for homes near mining operations. Think about how much dust is produced when a farmer prepares a field for planting or during harvest. In this case, there will be several hundred trucks entering and leaving the property plus other dust-producing operations.

2. Noise

The noise level referred to in the DEIS does not appear to consider impact or impulse noise from back-up alarms and dumping gravel into steel truck beds. The impact noise will likely be more disturbing than the type of noise elaborated on in the DEIS.

3. Diesel Exhaust

The DEIS does not appear to consider the impact of diesel engine emissions on air quality in the area. Two of the important diesel exhaust contaminants are diesel exhaust particulate and nitrogen oxides. With several hundred trucks entering and leaving the mining area plus other equipment, local air contamination is an important factor.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has issued Health Risk Values (HRV) designed to protect sensitive individuals. For diesel particulates and nitrogen dioxide, the HRVs are $5 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and $470 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ respectively. Under certain weather conditions, these HRVs could be exceeded, thereby increasing the risk for respiratory problems for nearby susceptible individuals.

4. Diesel Fuel

The DEIS suggests that bulk fuel will be stored on-site. Since this fuel will be stored near a waterway, a Spill Prevention Plan (SPP) may be necessary. The DEIS does not appear to address the need for a SPP.

In conclusion, the DEIS does not appear to be complete, and in my opinion, not totally objective in its findings and conclusions.

Thanks again for providing the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Tom Kapfer