



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Ottawa National Forest
Ontonagon/Bergland Ranger
District

1209 Rockland Road
Ontonagon, Michigan 49953
(906) 884-2411
(906) 884-4830 (FAX)
(906) 884-6577 (TTY)

File Code: 1950/2820

Date: September 21, 2012

Dear Interested Party

Enclosed is a copy of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Trans Superior Resources, Inc. – Federal Hardrock Minerals Prospecting Project. This EA is being provided to individuals who provided input on the initial scoping document and to those who have requested to receive copies of project proposals on the Bergland District, in Ontonagon County, or projects that are related to minerals exploration.

This EA describes the effects for the potential issuance of a prospecting permit for federal minerals on the Bergland Ranger District of the Ottawa National Forest. A prospecting permit is issued by the Department of Interior – Bureau of Land Management (BLM) based upon Forest Service recommendations identified during the course of this EA. Since the targets for this analysis are federal minerals, the Forest Service and BLM are cooperating agencies in this process.

There are two alternatives that were evaluated in detail in this EA. Alternative 1 (No Action) does not propose any changes from the existing condition: no mineral exploration would take place, and routine activities on the Ottawa National Forest would continue to occur. Alternative 2, which is the proposed action would include the recommendation for consent to the BLM to issue a Prospecting Permit to Trans Superior Resources, Inc. to conduct exploration and prospecting activities for gold, nickel, cobalt, and platinum associated minerals. Specifically, the proposed action includes providing the recommendation of consent to the Forest Service Regional Office. The Regional Forester would then make a recommendation to the BLM, who would then incorporate the Forest Service's requirements directly into the permit. A detailed set of stipulations have also been developed as a part of this EA and are a part of the proposed action. Alternative 2 would also include the issuance of necessary special use permits for occupancy of the land surface and the use of roads if they are not open on the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM).

Your input is important to the Forest Service. I encourage you to examine the enclosed document and provide us with your feedback and thoughts. To ensure that I have an opportunity to consider your comments before I make my final decision, they must be postmarked or received within 30 days beginning the day after publication of the legal notice in the Ironwood Daily Globe. Should the comment period end on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, comments will be accepted until the end of the next federal working day.

Please address your comments to Susanne M. Adams, District Ranger, Bergland and Ontonagon Ranger District, 1209 Rockland Road, Ontonagon, Michigan 49953. The office hours for those who wish to hand deliver or provide oral comments are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST), Monday through Friday (excluding Federal holidays). Oral comments must be



provided to the above listed office or by telephone at 906-884-2411 during the above listed hours. Alternatively comments may be submitted by facsimile at 906-884-4830, or by email at comments-eastern-ottawa@fs.fed.us (please put "Comments on the Federal Hardrock Minerals Prospecting Project" in the subject line). In accordance with 36 CFR Part 215.6, in order to receive standing to appeal, comments have to be received by 11:59 p.m. EST on the closing date of the comment period.

The final decision on this project will be subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.11 unless no comments expressing concern are received during this 30-day comment period. In order to have standing to appeal, each individual or representative of a group or organization that submits comments must sign or provide for verification of identify according to the requirements of 36 CFR 215.6(3)(iv) and (v). Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Part 215.

Only those who provide comments or otherwise express interest, through one of the above described methods during this comment period, will have standing to appeal. Comments that are received on this proposal are part of the public record and therefore, they are available for public inspection upon request.

If you wish to reference scientific literature in your comment letter, I request that you send a copy of the reference you have cited and include rationale as to how you feel it is pertinent to the specific project at hand. This will allow me to fully evaluate your comments; if I do not receive a copy of the literature I may not be able to utilize that information in making my decision.

Copies of the decision will be mailed to those who request it and those who comment on the project. More information is also available on the Forest's website: <http://fs.usda.gov/goto/ottawa/projects>. If you should need further information, please contact LeAnn S. Colburn, Interdisciplinary Team Leader, at the Kenton Ranger District Office at 906-852-3500, ext. 21, or by email at lscolburn@fs.fed.us. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Sincerely,



/s/ Susanne M. Adams
SUSANNE M. ADAMS
District Ranger

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