

VOL. 51 NUMBER 8,

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2022





PEP RALLY for the Ely Nordic skiers going to skate was held Wednesday morning. Seated were Zoe Devine, Phoebe Helms, Ava Skustad, Sydney Durkin, Gracie Pointer, Anna Dunn, Claire Blauch, Rena Johnston, Anna Larson, Gabriel Pointer and Jon Hakala. Photo by Nick Wognum.

## Mask mandate under fire As other districts change course, committee to reconvene

#### by Tom Coombe

After first indicating they'd wait a month, Ely school officials are set to determine the fate of the district's indoor mask mandate.

A special meeting of the school's safe learning advisory committee has been called for Tuesday at 3:30 p.m., when an end to the mask policy the same night, on Luthens, a member of year-long mandate figures to be the only issue up for debate.

The meeting, which may lead to a recommendation for school board action, comes amid public pressure to end the forced masking policy, and while mask mandates at numerous other schools are going by the wayside.

Monday night, when year without a mask edict. school board members in Ely indicated they'd wait were largely silent on the until Mar. 14 to address the issue at Monday's meeting, issue, school board members although they heard from at the newly-formed Rock Ridge district in Virginia and Eveleth rescinded their mask mandate.

as did a slew of other districts across Minnesota and following similar action in many other states.

As of Wednesday, Hibbing and Ely were the only lifted. Asking us for more Iron Range districts to still time is just a slap in the face." require masks while numerous others, including schools at Babbitt, Tower, Cook and Aurora, have gone the entire demonstrate success without

School board members three parents who requested an immediate end to the mandate.

"We need a reasonable Cloquet also ditched its end date," said parent Devthe safe learning advisory group. "Waiting until March 14 is unacceptable. We've been waiting since Sept. 7 for this mask mandate to be

Luthens added "we continue to watch our neighboring school districts

mandates in place," and suggested that high vaccination rates among staff and high school students, combined with over 200 cases reported during the school year, have led to more immunity on campus.

Ely children are masking in no other settings, Luthens told the board, and she pressed for the district to justify its rules and consider adverse affects of masking.

Why do we continue to subject our children to masking when we do not have data that it's working," she said.

A similar charge was leveled by Ely area resident

(Continued on Page 2)

# **Cliffs to idle** Northshore

### Fight over royalty fees intensifies

#### by Lee Bloomquist Mesabi Tribune

Northeastern Minnesota's economy could be in for a rough and tumble ride.

Northshore Mining Co. facilities in Babbitt and Silver Bay will be temporarily idled May 1, Cleveland-Cliffs, Inc. officials announced Friday.

The idling will put 410 Northshore Mining Co. employees out of work.

Babbitt Mayor Andrea Zupancich says fallout from the idling will be felt across the region.

"It's bad all the way around," Zupancich said. "I'm really concerned for the city and for the (Northshore) employees. It's going to trickle down to businesses and the school will be affected as well. I hope this is just a temporary thing and not something that would be permanent. That would be devastating."

The idling comes amid an ongoing dispute between Cleveland-Cliffs and Mesabi Trust over royalty payments

"The results we achieved in 2021 are a clear demonstration of how powerful Cleveland-Cliffs has become, as our revenues grew more than 10 times, from \$2 billion in 2019 to over \$20 billion in 2021."

Lourenco Goncalves -CEO of Cleveland Cliffs

that Cleveland-Cliffs makes to the trust for taconite mined at the Peter Mitchell Mine in Babbitt.

The taconite is shipped by rail to Northshore's processing facility in Silver Bay and turned into iron ore pellets.

"With the use of additional of scrap in our BOF's (basic oxygen furnaces), our iron ore needs are not as high as before and we no longer need to run our mines fullout," Lourenco Goncalves, Cleveland-Cliffs president and chief executive officer said during the company's 2021 year-end earnings call.

(Continued on Page 2)



### Morse-Fall Lake adds members, vehicles

The Morse-Fall Lake fire department and first responders have added members and purchased two new vehicles.

The department is run through a joint powers board made up of the supervisors from Fall Lake Township and the Town of Morse.

Board chair Terry Soderberg said the two actions were tied together.

"I wanted to see our departments add members before we purchased any more vehicles and in the past two months we've hired nine people," said Soderberg.

Both departments were busy in 2021 with the fire department responding to 123 calls and the first responders responding to 152 calls.

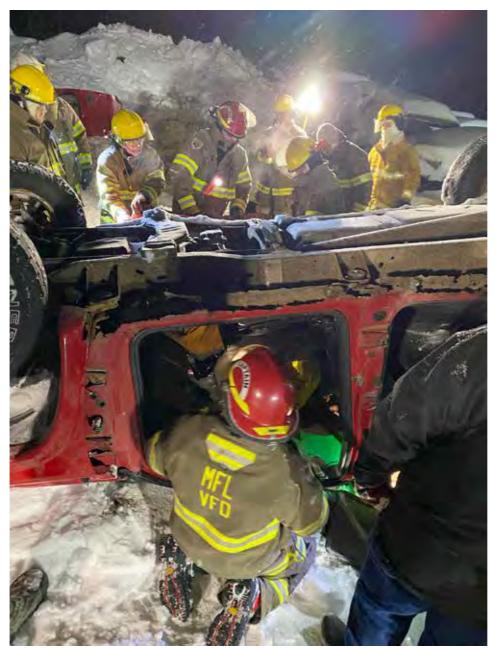
'Plus we had people on the different forest fires over the summer, it was a busy year," said Soderberg.

The windfall from working for the Forest Service will pay for the new vehicles.

The first responders have purchased a Chevy Tahoe that will be used for responding to calls and the fire department just ordered a 2022 Ford F350 4x4 crew cab for hauling hoses, pulling trailers and traveling to classes. It could also hold a small pump unit in the future.

"The Greenwood Fire benefited small departments like ours and allowed us to make these purchases," said Soderberg.

There has been a steady increase in calls for first responders, up from 138 in



The Ely speech team, coached by Donna Kari, competed at the Hibbing Heartbreak speech meet on Feb, 12. Esther Anderson and Maggie Dammann competed in Extemporaneous Reading, with Maggie placing 3rd in the category. Morgan McClelland and Leo Stalmer came to observe and learn, since this is their first year in speech. All four members will compete Feb. 19 at the Cherry Lucky Duck meet. "It's nice to be competing in person, rather than virtual, this year," said Kari.

### Views from the North Country



We checked in with Russ Robertson, who was the first chairman of the Ely Sled Dog Races back in 1971. He's doing well at age 92 and said, "I'm a fugitive from the Ely Cemetery!"

Morse Fall Lake fire department and first responders did a joint training last week along with Tower and Ely Area Ambulance. They worked on auto extrication and thanked Tony's Towing/Mather Recycling for the vehicles.

2020 to 152 in 2021.

Of those calls, 62 were in Morse, 50 in Fall Lake, two good job with the first rein Stony River, 17 in Winton, three in the city of Ely, and 18 in the unorganized townships. The majority of the calls were general medicals, but there were also 15 motor vehicle accidents, 36 rescues (including BWCA jumped from 67 in 2020 to extractions), six lift assists 123 last year with 80 calls

"Mike Harri has done a sponders and it hasn't been easy dealing with Covid guidelines and making sure we always had enough PPE for our people," said Soderberg.

The fire department calls

and eight water emergencies. in Morse, 27 in Fall Lake, six in Winton and 10 in unorganized areas, mainly up the Echo Trail.

"We cover both townships and five unorganized areas for St. Louis County plus the city of Winton so our people cover a lot of ground," said Soderberg.

## ELY ECHO/Page 2

### Cliffs to idle Northshore Mine in Babbitt, Silver Bay; Fight over royalty fees intensifies

#### (Continued from Page 1)

"Because we are now able to produce DR-grade pellets at Minorca and mainly due to the ridiculous royalty structure we have in place with the Mesabi Trust, we will be idling all production at our Northshore mine starting in the spring carrying through at least to the fall period and maybe beyond," Goncalves said. "At Northshore, no production, no shipments, no royalty payments.'

About 330 hourly workers and 80 salaried Northshore employees will be impacted by the idling, according to Pat Persico, Cleveland Cliffs senior director, corporate communications.

Northshore Mining employs about 430 hourly workers and 150 salaried employees.

Some opportunities for workers to temporarily transfer to other operations in Minnesota will be available, she said.

'This adjustment of iron ore pellets reflects our internal use of hot-briquetted iron (HBI) production and increased use of scrap in our steelmaking," Persico said.

The announcement is a major blow to the workers, businesses and communities across the region.

It immediately raised concerns among Iron Range

legislators.

"I'm just pretty disappointed that a dispute between Cleveland-Cliffs and the fee holders ends up as fallout on the Range communities," Sen. Tom Bakk of Cook said.

"I'm a little worried about Cliffs' commitment to the Iron Range. They bought a scrap company and have been threatening to shut Hibbing Taconite down and now this. It has me concerned about their long-term commitment to northeastern Minnesota."

of Chisholm has similar concerns

people are being laid off," Tomassoni said. "Hopefully, it is temporary. Given the rates they're paying and it nature of the steelmaking and the move toward electric arc furnaces, I feat this may not be a favorable situation"

Rep. Dave Lislegard of Aurora, says the idling will be felt across the Iron Range.

"A lot of the people who worked at LTV (Steel Mining Co.) are now working at Northshore," Lislegard said. "They come from Hoyt Lakes, Aurora, Biwabik, and Embarrass. First and be their own pellet supplier foremost, my thoughts are and don't need the iron ore with the employees and their families and the communities that will be affected."

ducer on the Iron Range, the region and state's success relies on Cleveland-Cliffs, he said.

"We as a state and Iron Range delegation need to be sure we are doing everything we can as the company works through this transition," Lislegard said. "Their success has a direct correlation on the success and economic future of the Iron Range and we need to find a way to work through this."

Rep. Julie Sandstede of Hibbing says it's her understanding that the royalty Sen. David Tomassoni rates paid for Peter Mitchell iron ore are "exorbitant."

"I just wish there were "It's not good news as a different solution," Sandstede said. "I believe it has come down to the royalty ends up being Northshore. It makes me even more concerned about what comes next for HibTac (Hibbing Taconite)."

> Rep. Rob Ecklund of International Falls, also expressed disappointment.

"It's disappointing that they can't work out the differences with Mesabi Trust on the royalties," Ecklund said. "Cliffs has moved to pellets."

Adding scrap to BOF's is working extremely well As a major iron ore pro- for the company, meaning



the same tonnage of liquid steel, Goncalves said.

idle could go longer than currently planned, he said.

Mesabi Trust is a New York-based royalty trust that derives income from royalties paid on iron ore mined at the Peter Mitchell Mine.

The mine has the largest reserve of iron ore on Minnesota's Iron Range.

Northshore Mining pays royalties to the trust based on the selling price of iron ore pellets shipped from Northshore's processing plant, according to the Mesabi Trust web site.

Mesabi Trust on Friday would not comment.

Cleveland-Cliffs needs fewer ment to provide," a Mesabi tons of hot metal to produce Trust employee said on the telephone.

It's been expected that As a result the Northshore 2022 would be a strong year of iron ore production at northeastern Minnesota's six taconite plants.

However, the Northshore idling announcement comes days after a pellet conveyor structure collapse at United States Steel's Minntac Mine in Mountain Iron, impacting pellet production at North America's largest taconite facility.

Labor contracts expire late this summer at five of the six taconite plants.

Northshore is a non-union facility.

A microchip shortage and automotive parts shortage "We don't have any com- exacerbated by a U.S.-Can-

ada international bridge blockade by truckers, is impacting the production of new vehicles, resulting in the shutdown of several domestic automobile plants this week.

The taconite plants produce iron ore pellets, the main ingredient used to make steel.

Cleveland-Cliffs on Friday reported record annual revenue of \$20.4 billion in 2021, record annual net income of \$3 billion, record annual adjusted EBITDA of \$5.3 billion, and record annual operating cash flow of \$2.8 billion.

### Mask mandate under fire; As other districts change course, committee to reconvene

#### (Continued from Page 1)

Frank Udovich, who has addressed the board several times since September about the mandate.

why we are masking children after all the data," said Udovich. "The numbers from masking policies and masking optional policies has been almost identical."

Udovich charged the mandate is instead being driven by politics.

'From what I've seen it's become almost cult-like and religious," said Udovich.

He added "there's a vaccine, there's great therapeuthan power and fear."

Anthony Bermel told the pard that the "drawbacks in opposition to the mandate joined the district Jan. 31 also pointed to the shifting and was in just his seventh tide related to Covid-19 restrictions across the nation.

"A lot has changed over "I can not understand the last months but the Ely schools are stuck in the sta- ready yet to make a recomtus quo at the expense of mendation on masks, adding students and families," said he's heard from residents as Bermel.

Bermel charged that there's much "hypocrisy" over masking, pointing to last Sunday's Super Bowl and televised images of thousands of maskless fans as well as celebrities, despite a mask mandate inside the stadium

tics. There's no excuse other most of you are not masking a recommendation." in your work."

ot on Monday's agenda and of masking are the very sole there were no attempts from up on it." discussion.

day on the job on Monday, addressed it briefly during a safe learning plan update.

well as representatives of state and regional entities.

"I'm too new to this district, to Ely, to make a recommendation," said Klarich. "To try to change all the protocols put in place in the past, I'm not saying they're right or wrong I'm not judging anything, but He added "I'm guessing it's too soon for me to make

The mask mandate was board if they could hold off a state and nation shedding been much higher, with 30 little bit. I need time to catch He conceded that "I realize that some of you are at the University of Minnesota trict adopted the mask manwit's end and want to see a moved to eliminate vaccine date just prior to the start of

dressed the board previously tendent John Klarich, who is behind you and some of bars and large gatherings. the science goes the opposite way."

Klarich said he anticipated "a very robust discussion (with the safe learning plan advisory council) on where we are going to go, and what the nation, including in Minare the thoughts and is there a recommendation to change the protocols in place."

At the time, Klarich anticipated that discussion would take place Mar. 7, but the morning following the meeting, and in the wake of the mask decision at Rock Ridge, school officials opted to move the advisory council meeting up by nearly two weeks.

their mask required policies, while the cities of St. Paul last 13 weeks. and Minneapolis as well as

The city of Duluth also allowed citywide indoor mask mandate to expire.

Those developments came amid steep declines in Covid-19 infections across nesota and St. Louis County.

Under the current Ely school safe learning plan, masks would no longer be required on campus once the Ely zip code moves out of a "high" Covid-19 transmission mode, as designated by federal Center for Disease Control guidelines, for three consecutive weeks.

That's defined as six or fewer cases per week among That decision comes with Ely zip code residents, but Klarich said "I asked the numerous schools across the recent local case rates have or more cases in eight of the

sparked differing views and at-times contentious debate.

The decision led to a petition signed by more than 300 opponents and vehement vocal opposition at a Sept. 13 board meeting that was moved to the gymnasium to accommodate an audience of about 250 people.

Numerous other area districts, including the St. Louis County District with nearby schools in Babbitt, Tower and Cook, have not required masks all year. Others in the area without mask mandates include Mesabi East, Mt. Iron-Buhl and Chisholm, with Rock Ridge joining that group earlier this week.

In October, the Ely board rolled back part of its mandate - exempting after-school activities and allowing par ticipants as well as spectators to be unmasked for indoor athletic events.

Klarich said he wasn't

reason we are home-school- the floor to bring it up for ing our three girls."

Bermel, who also ad-

But new interim superin-

Ever since the school dischange. Some of the science requirements for restaurants, the school year, the issue has



### ELY ECHO/Page 3

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2022

## **Ecklund proposes economic assistance** package for Canadian border businesses

and Business Development Committee held a remote hearing Wednesday to discuss legislation authored by Rep. Rob Ecklund (DFL - International Falls) to cre-Counties Economic Relief Program.

Grants under the program would help businesses adversely affected by last year's fires in and around the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and the border closure between March 2020 and July 2021.

long track record of helping resources to help.' out areas of our state when

prolonged border closure have devastated many businesses along the Canadian border," said Ecklund.

reopening, travel and trade ate a new Canadian Border remain extremely difficult. This bill provides needed assistance to businesses along the border, the owners of in the legislation was tarwhich have invested their entire livelihoods so they can be successful. In the face of some unique challenges due to their locations, they have done everything possible to survive this crisis. Right champe from the Grand Por-In Minnesota, we have a now, we should step up with

they experience hardship, \$15 million worth of grants County Economic Devel-

Lake, St. Louis, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods, Roseau, or Kittson counties with a documented revenue "Even after the border decline of at least 10% between 2020 and 2021. The maximum grant award is \$50,000.

> Originally, the funding geted to assist outfitters, but Ecklund worked with other business owners and civic leaders to expand the bill's scope.

Chairman Robert Destage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Paul Nevanen, Ecklund's bill includes Director of the Koochiching

The House Workforce and last year's fires and the for businesses in Cook, opment Authority, Mindy Fredrikson of Gunflint Lodge and Outfitters, Mike Boomer of Ryden's Border Store in Grand Portage, and Eric Johnson of Voyageurs Outfitters in Rainy Lake all provided testimony in support of the bill.

The committee laid the bill over for consideration in a future Workforce and Business Development finance bill. Video of the hearing will be available on House Public Information Services' YouTube channel.

Documents and other information from the hearing will be available on the committee web page.



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## **Broadband expanded in Town of Morse**

Approximately 350 underserved homes and several resorts in Morse Township recently received access to highspeed broadband internet through next generation fixed wireless and millimeter wave technology.

The homes and resorts are located in a coverage area surrounding Ely that includes the shoreline areas of Burntside Lake, Little Long Lake and Wolf Lake.

Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation supported the project with a \$150,000 Community Infrastructure grant to Morse Township. Morse Township invested \$100,000, and total project investment was \$450,000.

The area geology is very rocky with challenging bedrock that drives up the cost of burying fiber. Instead fixed wireless deployments were used which reduces costs by approximately 90% and drastically reduces project timelines.

The work was completed by Treehouse Broadband, an Ely-based internet service provider founded by local resident Isaac Olson.

Treehouse uses fixed wireless technology to beam internet service from towers to homes and businesses, using directional antennas



FROM ON TOP of the Ely water tower, internet services are beamed by Treehouse Broadband to remote homes in the Town of Morse. The system includes relays from boat houses and islands to extend the service on lakes. The Town of Morse project totaled \$450,000 with Morse paying in \$100,000.

and receiver dishes.

The company also installs whole-home WiFi, ensuring high-speed coverage even in the corners of homes and businesses.

"A traditional fiber project to cover these 350 homes would likely cost over \$4 million and take years to deploy. We completed the project for a tenth of that price," said Olson. "Fiber broadband service will allow requires a huge labor and a wave of remote workers to

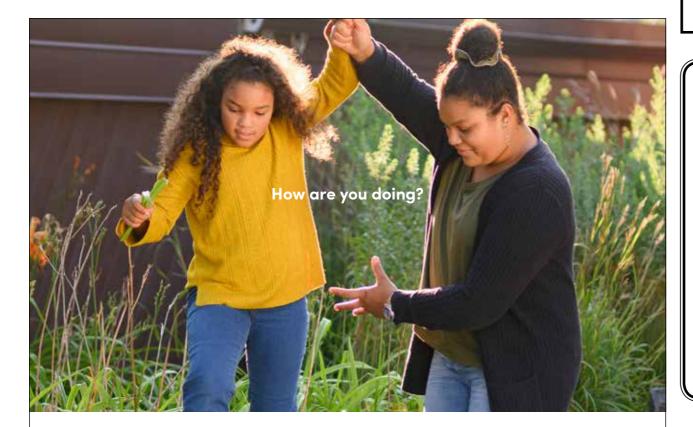
equipment investment. Fixed wireless can provide similar levels of service in a much shorter period of time."

When fully completed, customers will have access to internet speeds of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload. Their previous access was real speeds below 10 Mbps.

"The new coverage and

spend more time at vacation cabins and resorts, which in turn stimulates the local economy," said Nick Wognum, Morse Township clerk. "The project served resorts and homes that were in desperate need of speed and connectivity improvements."

For IRRRB broadband grant information email Whitney Ridlon or call her at 218-735-3004.



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# **State ends Twin Metals review** Fed mineral lease cancellation led to decision

#### by Tom Coombe

In the wake of federal action that has derailed the Twin Metals Minnesota copthe state of Minnesota has followed suit and ended its environmental review of the proposed mine near Ely.

The action was announced Tuesday, with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Sarah Strommen notifying the company that the agency "has directed its staff to stop work on the environmental review for the proposed Twin Metals project."

That decision, which came after consultation between DNR staff and Twin Metals officials, follows a late-January edict by the Biden Administration to cancel two federal mineral leases that are pivotal to the project.

Despite the key blows, Twin Metals is pressing on with its plans to develop an underground mine that promises hundreds of new jobs. Legal action may be next in an attempt to rejuvenate the project.

In a statement released this week, the company said:

"Twin Metals Minnesota is working to determine the next steps to continue to advance our underground copper, nickel, cobalt and platinum group metals project. A pause on the environmental review process is necessary and appropriate while we defend our project and our mineral rights in court. We remain committed to the communities of northeast Minnesota and to advancing a modern mine that will produce the minerals necessary for combating ing domestic supply chains tially to the school trust fund." and creating American jobs."

per-nickel mining project, at least for now closing the forth series of conflicting books on Twin Metals.

In a letter to Twin Metals CEO Kelly Osborne, Strommen said that over the next several weeks, "The DNR will take the necessary steps to assemble the project record to ensure documents and data are appropriately archived. Once that process is complete, the DNR will close the administrative record for this project and manage it pursuant to the agency's record management requirements."

The DNR also indicated that in a separate matter, the agency has concerns about the proposed location for the tailings disposal facility," needed for the mine.

Strommen said the current proposed location would potentially encumber school trust mineral resources and "pose an unacceptable finan-

The decision is the latest The DNR meanwhile, is in what has been a back-andrulings on the project, predicated on political control.

The Obama Administration first pulled the Twin Metals leases in late-2016, and that decision was later reversed by former President Trump, a Republican.

Last fall, the latest ruling was foreshadowed by the Democratic Biden Administration, which rejected preference right lease applications for Twin Metals and announced plans to seek a 20-year moratorium on mining on national forest land near the BWCA.

Twin Metals remains in the development stage and is controlled by Chilean mining giant Antofafasta. The company has pressed for the government to follow existing regulatory processes and has promised to meet and exceed all environmen-

climate change, strengthen- cial risk to the state and poten- tal standards. It contends the minerals it proposes to mine -copper, nickel, cobalt and platinum group metals – are needed for clean energy technologies that are essential to combat climate change and secure domestic supply chains.

Opponents have sought a permanent ban on mining near the BWCA and say the Twin Metals project would destroy the region's water-rich environment and devastate the area's tourism based economy.

The U.S. Forest Service has restarted a previously canceled study of the environmental, cultural and economic impacts of mining near the Boundary Waters.

A public comment period has included a series of recent, remote public meetings on the topic.

Twin Metals Minnesota, which has offices and storage facilities in Ely, formally submitted its mine proposal in late 2019. This proposal was the culmination of more than a decade of engineering, hydro-geological, environmental and engagement work including the evaluation of dozens of project-specific configurations and technologies that maximize environmental protection, according to company officials.



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### ELY ECHO/Page 8

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2022

## Funds sought for ambulance garage

#### by Tom Coombe

Ely area leaders are looking south - to the state capa new garage for the area's ambulance service.

Members of the area's ambulance joint powers board discussed the project Tuesday at Winton's city hall, agreeing to back resolutions of support for a project that could cost as much as \$1.5 million.

The ambulance garage would be located across from Sibley Manor near the campus of Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital.

It's a project that has been in the works for more than a year and gained some steam in late-2021 when it was addressed with area lawmakers during the economic development joint powers board's annual legislative meeting at the Grand Ely Lodge.

powers, made up of representatives from Ely, Winton and both Morse and Fall Lake townships spent much of this week's session talking

funding for the project. Talks with area lawmak-

itol - in their quest to build ers including State Sen. Tom Bakk and State Rep. Rob Ecklund, as well as others including State Rep. and House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt of the suburban Twin Cities, have been productive according to former Ely mayor Chuck Novak.

> "We've got a lot of support at this point," said Nodown there."

Novak said the joint powers needs to further engage engineering and architectural firm TKDA to come up with more detailed cost estimates for construction, and the respective governing bodies are expected to pass resolutions in support of the initiative.

The ambulance joint will earmark capital investment funding for the project.

The joint powers is taking on the project as a result of discussions with Bakk, who indicated that funding would contributes \$10.10 per per-

strategy as they pursue state more likely be funneled to son, but there has been talk a government entity rather than the non-profit Ely Area Ambulance Service.

> Discussion Tuesday centered on the city of Ely serving as the fiscal agent, despite some concerns about staff time needed to coordinate the project. Officials said it's likely Ely's city clerk office would be tasked to take on those duties.

"I feel that we probably vak. "There's a lot of money have enough council support to do this," said council member Al Forsman. "It's not like they're sitting around twiddling their thumbs, but if it's something everybody is for and it's not contentions they're willing to put in the work knowing it's for the good of the whole community.

In other business this Then it's on to St. Paul week, the ambulance joint and hopes that legislators power steered clear of action on what could be a hot-button issue: a funding formula for the ambulance service operations.

Currently, each entity

that the amount may need to be doubled or tripled to meet service needs.

No action was taken at this time as the group awaits budget numbers from the ambulance service.

Earlier discussion had honed in on the need for more money for capital improvement, but for at least three years local officials have haggled over proposed increases.

One idea, which would shift funding from a per person to one that assesses each parcel of property in the area, has been resisted by leaders of Morse Township.

Morse has pressed for a continued per person subsidy, noting Ely's population and that Ely generates most of the ambulance calls.

Supporters say that collecting per parcel is a more fair way to collect money for ambulance operations and allows the service to get tax money from those who are seasonal or temporary residents.



Matthew Janeksela accepts a check from Steve Eisenmenger of the Great Nordic Beardfest.



A \$500 check from the Great Nordic Beardfest was accept by Zoe Lampman, Jill Nocera-Swanson, Julie Hignell and Ryan Stewart of Ely Community Resource.

### **Beardfest gives back**

fest raised \$210 through donations and added another \$500 for a total of \$710 donated to Ely Community Resource. Event organizer Shaun Chosa said next year's designated charity will be Contented Critters.

Also, the first Great Nordic Beardfest Sunrise Scholarship was given to Matt Janeksela. He received \$500.

We sold out the Historic Ely State Theater's 235 seats, plus 37 competitors," said Chosa. "I will need more help and volunteers next year and I need to add a few judges, I would like a lady judge if anyone's interested

The Great Nordic Beard- they can contact me via the GNB Facebook page."

> In the plans for next year will be bringing back the Bearded Dog photo contest and adding the Iced Beard photo contest. Chosa said there will be a Bearded Ladies division in the belt competition, a Gentlemen's Choice category and a Dynamic Duo, a two person paired category.

> "We may also be looking for a venue for a daytime event for kids, a mini competition for kids who can make their beards and moustaches out of whatever they want," said Chosa.



### **Online St. Louis County tax forfeited land** auction results in nearly \$1.25 million in sales

online auction of the year featuring newly offered tax forfeited properties has closed with 33 properties sold back into private ownership for a total of nearly \$1.25 million. The auction, conducted through publicsurplus.com, closed February 10.

Of the properties sold in this most recent auction, nearly half were purchased by adjoining owners or others in the near vicinity. Seventeen properties had competing bids resulting in ing price. The auction fea- ties currently posted on the which the County's Land

property and more. Properties purchased include 12 lots that had been cleaned up and structures razed, a home in Virginia, three lakeshore new tax forfeited properties lots and two with rivers or streams

purchased at the auction are tober. Additional auctions now available for sale on a are offered throughout the first come, first served basis year for properties that rethrough the St. Louis County main unsold from previous Land and Minerals Department until sold or put back on the online auction. There there are nearly 900,000 sales above the original list- are approximately 50 proper- acres of tax forfeited land,

St. Louis County's first tured a variety of properties Available List for purchase. and Minerals Department including recreational land, More information on those buildable lots, waterfront properties, along with results from this latest auction, can be found online at stlouiscountymn.gov/landsales.

> St. Louis County offers for sale by auction three times each year. The others Properties that were not will be held in June and Ocsales.

Within St. Louis County

ton, Cook, Itasca, Kanabec,

Koochiching, Lake, Pine and

present the awards, previ-

ously coordinated by UMD's

with the last awards an-

nounced in 2020.

This is the first year that

St. Louis.

is responsible for managing. Most of the land is maintained for resource management, however, the County is working to sell parcels that are not planned for management as a way to encourage development and increase the property tax base.

For more information about tax forfeited land sales, or to subscribe to receive email notifications about updates and future sales, visit stlouiscountymn.gov/ landsales or call the Land and Minerals Department at (218) 726-2606.

## Do you like to read? Join a reading team to select Northeastern Minnesota Book awards

If you like to read books you could be part of the Northeast Minnesota Book Awards program this year.



This year, the Reading Teams will be looking at books published in 2020-2021, with winners announced in fall of 2022.

Join a NEMBA Reading Team and you could help choose a winning book that captures the spirit of northeastern Minnesota.

Who can serve on a Reading Team? NEMBA is looking for book-lovers to serve on one of the reading teams that will select the winning book in each of the six categories-Nonfiction, Fiction, Art/Photography, Children's Literature, Poetry, and Memoir.

They are not looking for professional literary critics, but rather a group of open-minded readers who represent the different back-Northland.

How does a Reading Team work? Each of the six reading teams will be composed of up to four members

Honoring books that capture the spirit of northeastern Minnesoto

with a designated leader. ing counties: Aitkin, Carl-When you apply, you share your preference as to which team you would like to serve on, and they do their best to place you on the best team Lake Superior Writers will for you.

After receiving their bundles of books, teams will meet several times (meeting by Zoom can be an option) between June and September 2022 to discuss the nominated books, with winners notified on October 1, 2022.

The Northeastern Mingrounds and lifestyles of the nesota Book Awards recognize books that substantially represent the history, culture, heritage or lifestyle of northeastern Minnesota, which includes the follow-

Just about everybody reads the Ely Echo



If you would like to join

a Reading Team, complete an online application form at https://tinyurl.com/bdf54jwf. Applications will be accepted from February 15 to May 1, 2022, and you will be notified of your Reading Team assignment in mid to late May.

For questions contact Kathryn A. Martin Library nemba@lakesuperiorwriters.org.

### College Campus news

The following students are among the 2021 Fall Semester graduates of Vermilion Community College: Annika Bixby, AAS, Veterinary Technician; Matthew Egan-Ostrokol, CERT, Park Ranger Law Enforcement Academy; Kahsha Hyde, CERT, Park Ranger Law Enforcement Academy; Louise Schmitt, AA, Liberal Arts and Sciences; Brandi Smith, AAS, Veterinary Technician.

The following students were named to the Fall 2021 honors List at Vermilion Community College in Ely. Students named to the honors list have attained a GPA as listed below for the semester. From Ely: Elijah Anderson, honors; Alexander Barker, highest honors; Kale Beno, highest honors; Amanda Block, honors; Zoe Devine, highest honors; Kesley Ebbs, highest honors; Chloe Ecklund, honors; Matthew Egan-Ostrokol, highest honors; Dylan Fenske, High honors; Taylor Gibney, highest honors; Phoebe Helms, highest honors; Adam Hornstein, honors; Jonathan Huju, honors; Kahsha Hyde, highest honors; Caleb Janeksela, High honors; Jeremiah Kaercher, honors; Jaicee Krings, honors; Sophia Kurnava, honors; Chelsea Larson, highest honors; Sidney Marshall, highest honors; Brett Moschel, highest honors; Cedar Ohlhauser, High honors; Lauren Olson, High honors; Gabriel Pointer, highest honors; Gracie Pointer, High honors; Lauren Porthan, High honors; Abigail Rehbein, highest honors; Madelyne Roderick, honors; Louise Schmitt, highest honors; Jennifer Shuster, highest honors; Lindsay Sikora, High honors; Brandi Smith, honors; Deborah Spengler, highest honors; Kelly Thompson, highest honors; Nacomis VanMeter, High honors; Kayley Wika, highest honors; Emilie Wojcik, honors; From Soudan: Michael Trucano, highest honors; From Tower: Ethan Zaitz, highest honors; Andrew Zika, honors; From Winton: Elijah Anderson, honors.

Local students attending Bethel University in St. Paul, have been named to the Dean's List for academic excellence for the fall 2021 semester. From Ely: Abigail Schwamm, Senior, daughter of Rebecca Zwolinski and Stephen Schwamm.

PRESENTING a check for \$12,439.68 was Joe Hiller and Amy Consoer of the Morse-Fall Lake Fire Department Relief Association to Morse-Fall Lake board chair Terry Soderberg for the equipment fund. Morse-Fall Lake has turned its relief fund over to PERA.



Congrats to "The Jersey Boys" - Winners of the 2022 Ely Community Resource Broomball Tournament! The winning team included the following players: Ben Bialik, Michael Lah, Bob Kellogg, Max Gantt (not pictured), Billy Bradley, Andy Krunkkala, Louie Gerzin (not pictured).



Ely Community Resource's broomball tournament included the "Broomis Ballis" from Camp Widjiwagan: Top row (I-r): Sophie Klein, Sam Glenn; middle: Sal DiVita, Cooper "Buzzsaw" Sawyer, Ben "Sunshine" Gardner, Spencer WareJoncas. Bottom: Peter Shao

### ELY ECHO/Page 9

## Little change in police activity in 2021

#### by Tom Coombe

A report on police activity in Ely last year looked a lot like it did last year.

And the year before that. Statistics compiled by St. Louis County's 911 emergency dispatch showed that Ely police were called 2,392 times in 2021.

That's 45 more times, or less than once a week, than the 2,347 calls reported in 2020.

dispatches.

Council members reviewed the data presented the year before.

by assistant police chief regular meeting on Tuesday. "Nothing really jumped

out at me as far as a big difference in any type of call," said Lorenz, who filled in for chief Chad Houde at the meeting. "It kind of stayed about the same."

Overall, the numbers encompass more than 100 different case descriptions.

As they were in 2020, In 2019, there were 2,370 traffic stops were most frequent, with Ely officers making 311 last year, up from 274

Medical emergencies activity (59) and child ne-Mike Lorenz during a brief were next with 210 in 2021, compred to 181 the prevous year.

Next up were paper service and public assist calls at 128 each, with general distucances at 111 in fifth place. Rounding out the top 10

were

• Animal disturbance, 89; • Call backs, 86;

• Lock ins/lock outs, 78; • Checking on welfare,

77; • Information, 64.

Right outside the top-10 were reports of suspicious

glect (49) calls.

"There was nothing glaringly obvious as far as a change from year to year," said Lorenz.

Other notable numbers included 43 property damage calls, 31 reports of theft, 32 reports of a person with psychological problem, 29 reports of an unwanted person, 19 domestic incidents, 11 burglaries or burglaries in progress, 18 loud music calls, seven vehicle thefts and three assaults.

## **Minnesota School Board Recognition** Week scheduled for February 21-25

Boards Association has set Feb. 21-25 as Minnesota School Board Recognition Week to build awareness and understanding of the vital function elected school board members play. The Ely school district is joining other public school districts from across the state to celebrate School Board Recognition Week to honor local board members for their of boards is to raise student commitment to Ely and its students.

Strong schools help build strong communities - and the Ely School Board devotes countless hours to

The Minnesota School making sure our schools are helping every child learn at for what students will be the need for continuous ima higher level," said interim expected to learn and be superintendent John Klarich. "School board members make the difficult decisions every month - and spend many hours studying education issues and regulations in order to provide the kind of accountability our citizens expect."

Klarich said the key work reporting results; achievement by:

• Creating a vision for what the community wants the school district to be and for making student achievement the top priority;

• Establishing standards able to do:

• Ensuring progress is measured to be sure the district's goals are achieved and students are learning at expected levels;

• Being accountable for their decisions and actions by continually tracking and

• Creating a safe, orderly climate where students can learn and teachers can teach;

• Forming partnerships with others in the community to solve common problems; and

• Focusing attention on provement by questioning, refining and revising issues related to student achievement.

"Even though we're making a special effort to show our appreciation this month, school board members' work is a year-round commitment," Klarich said.

Ely school board members currently are: Ray Marsnik, chairman; Rochelle Sjoberg, clerk; Tom Omerza, treasurer; Tony Colarich, director; Hollee Coombe, director; Darren Visser, director.



Scenic Rivers is now scheduling appointments for individuals to receive COVID-19 vaccinations at our medical locations following state eligibility guidelines. Supply is limited and call volumes are high, so we appreciate your patience. If you

believe you meet the MN state vaccine eligiblity requirements, please call the number below to schedule an appointment.





group that toured the Ely school buildings project on Tuesday. Phillips said the agency has limited funds available to help with an estimated \$4 million project shortfall after initially putting in \$7 million. Memorial high school principal Megan Anderson explained how replace all of the windows in the Washington building. the new space would be used for a media center,



NO LONGER PART of the school project will be to Elementary principal Anne Oelke showed IRRRB





gymnasium, shop classes, commons area and office space. Photos by Nick Wognum.

Commissioner Mark Phillips how the windows open so far a child could climb out and fall.



WITH THE CLOCK ticking workers were pouring a concrete floor in cold temps Tuesday morning at the Elv school building project. Workers have been battling winter weather conditions to keep the project on track.

## **DNR** Conservation Officer weekly reports

### CO Sean Williams (Ely

1) reports: heavy snowmobile use in the Ely area in spite of lows of -40 and digits. High compliance was seen by most riders, but several groups were contacted driving too fast for the conditions. Violations included: excessive snowmobile speed, angling with an extra line, and failure to display current snowmobile registration.

(Ely) checked anglers and snowmobilers this past week. Fish house owners are reminded that identification in addition to displaying the shelter tag is required on permanent shelters. Cold temperatures reduced activity over the weekend and angling was slow this past week.

CO Thomas Wahlstrom (Grand Marais) spent time working on snowmobile

snow. Enforcement action was taken for snowmobile a snowmobile safety class was taken for snowmobile violations and unattended and field day event. violations.

CO Mary Manning highs only in the single (Hovland) followed up District 5 - Eveleth area on complaints in the state park and reports of (Int'l Falls #1) reports bobcats visiting homes, snowmobiling and ice checked cross country fishing activities continue ski passes, patrolled area to be the main focus in Grant in Aid snowmobile the area, however partrails and checked ice ticipation has been slow anglers. UTV riders are reminded that tracked machines are not allowed class was held with 18 on the CJ Ramstad or GIA area youth getting their CO John Velsvaag snowmobile trails.

(Babbitt) worked snowmobile, fishing, and ski out snowmobiling. trail enforcement throughout the week. Weekend snowmobile traffic was peratures in the area snowhigh. Some groups need mobiling activity remains to slow down and stay to consistent. Increased slush the right. The corners and hills were getting badly blown out from aggressive riding, numerous places were observed where house from the previous people had gone off the day when they initially trails and remote trout trails, and some riders drilled holes. Wild animal lakes. Fishing has been contacted spoke of scary complaints were fielded. slow. The trails have been close calls meeting other CO Slatinski assisted a

lines.

CO Darrin Kittelson with the frigid weather. A youth snowmobile safety safety certificates. People CO Anthony Bermel are reminded that safety should be a priority when (Tower) worked primarily

> CO John Slatinski IV (Ray) Despite arctic temoff trails is causing problems for anglers with one group reporting six inches of slush around their

District 6 - Two Harbors busy due to all the recent sleds. Enforcement action neighboring officer with CO Troy Fondie (Orr)

reports weekend temps at -30 below found a slow start to outdoor activity. Angling activity appeared non-existent. Numerous snowmobile violations were dealt with. Deer appear to be struggling as we approach close to 2 feet of snow on the ground, and a lot of winter left. Wolf activity is plentiful. Administrative tasks were tended to.

CO Aaron Larson angling and snowmobile enforcement. Larson investigated cases relating to the illegal operation of snowmobiles. A reminder to be cautious while traveling on Lake Vermilion and any frozen lakes. The cold temperatures have caused cracks in the ice that could cause dangerous travel conditions.

### Just about everybody reads the Ely Echo



### **Full Time Janitorial Position NorthShore Mine**

Starting at \$13 an hour

Afternoons and weekends Paid time off Contact Cleaning Specialist Inc. 218-749-4235

### HELP WAN

Would you like to work outside? Would you like to work on the lake? Docks on Wheels, Ely Minnesota is looking to fill a variety of positions. All positions require the ability to lift 50 lbs continually. Starting Pay is \$15.00 per/ hr. Stop in and apply or call 218.365.6210 to schedule an interview.



### THE ECHO/Page 12

# WolfTrack **Classic set** for Feb. 27

#### by Micah Larson

Section 1

For the 14th year and runfrom across the continent and spanning all age groups will converge here in Ely, "The Sled Dog Capital," for the annual WolfTrack Classic Sled Dog Race.

The race is back from a COVID-restricted version of the event which completely prohibited spectators and scrapped the musher's dinner which always preceded the event on the day before the race.

All normally scheduled features of the event are back up and running, beginning with the mushers spaghetti dinner on Feb. 26, at Vermilion Community College this year and is sponsored by VCC's Wilderness Club. Both mushers and the public are welcome with tickets available at the door.

Race day is Sunday, Feb. 27 and features around 50 teams participating in both the six and eight-dog team

ning, mushers and their dogs race at the Ely Softball Complex and eight-dog teams will race the 50-mile course which follows the Taconite Trail out of town, crossing both Hwy. 1 and Hwy. 21, and winding through the surrounding Ely woods before returning to the finish line.

races

Six-dog teams will race a similar course, but a shortened 30-mile version and should make their way to the finish line by about noon, all dependent on weather and course conditions.

There are some familiar names taking to the trails next weekend, including the reigning eight-dog Wolf-Track champion, Mike Bestgen, coming off an excellent second place run in munity event unique to Ely. the Beargrease 120 and the Minnetonka Klondike Dog Derby. It will be a tight race for the title, with Nick Turman and Ero Wallin close contenders. Racing alongside the vet-

erans will be some junior Mushers will begin the mushers including 11-yearold Elyite Elena Freking, running a spectacular team of Siberian Huskies. She is looking great going into her second race ever, after a strong performance at the

Minnetonka Dog Derby. She will be running her dogs along with her mom, Dr. Jennifer Freking. 14-year-olds Maddoux Erickson and Kara Granroth will join the junior mushing

> lineup as well. Ely Chamber event director Ellen Cashman stressed the history and one-of-akind spirit of the race, along with the importance to Ely that the race has gained over the years.

> "This is an exciting com-Ely was proclaimed the 'Sled Dog Capital' by Mayor Grahek during the once-famous Ely All American Sled Dog Race. When the All American was at its height, 100 teams arrived from all over the US including many from Alaska.'

> All of these racers need some cheering, and spectators are encouraged to cheer at the start and finish lines, as well as congratulate mushers at the awards presentation at the Grand Ely Lodge, following the races.

> Cashman urged, "Please give the teams a big, warm Ely welcome!"

## **Covid's rapid descent** Case numbers at lowest point since last September in St. Louis County

#### by Tom Coombe

A decline in Covid-19 activity has continued.

Case numbers in St. Louis County have fallen to their lowest level since September, and state totals are in a similar descent.

fueled by the highly conta-Covid-19 has waned and resulted in a rollback of Covid-related restrictions area have been higher the and mitigation measures.

In Ely, the school district's safe learning advisory committee will meet Tuesday and discuss removal of the district's indoor mask mandate. Ely would be foldistricts across Minnesota as well as entire states that have ditched mask mandates in the last two weeks.

Controversial vaccine mandates that were implemented in Minneapolis, St. Paul and the University of Minnesota have also been repealed, and last month the U.S. Supreme Court struck down President Biden's executive order requiring large from roughly 25,000 last employers to implement 'vaccine or test" mandates at work

The shift comes as Covid numbers fall precipitously. In St. Louis County, aver-

age daily case counts fell to 86.9 as of Wednesday, com- the state showing a substanpared to a pandemic high of tial decline in viral loads.

over 400 in early-January. the smallest since Sept. 17, 2021

there were 30 new cases reported this week, up slightly from 26 last week, and 36 Ever since a January peak and 55 the previous two weeks according to data lated hospitalizations last gious and more mild Omi- released Thursday by the cron variant, the impact of Minnesota Department of Health.

Case counts in the Ely last three months than at any extended period during the course of the pandemic.

From March 2020 through October 2021, a 20-month span, there were 367 reported cases in the Ely lowing the lead of numerous area. Since then, that amount has more than doubled.

> Over the last 12 weeks, weekly case counts in Ely have been 50, 37, 24, 20, 13, 20, 37, 35, 55, 36, 26 and 30.

> As Ely's numbers begin to fade the community is falling in line with trends within Minnesota.

> Active cases in the state were listed at approximately 16,500 Wednesday, down week and from just over 64,000 on Jan. 18.

State health officials, have indicated that numbers are expected to fall further, with wastewater testing in the Twin Cities and elsewhere in

Covid-related deaths have The current total is also also reached a plateau, with St. Louis County reporting 11 Covid-related deaths so In Ely's 55731 zip code, far this month, compared to 34 and 38 the previous two months and 52 last November.

There were 275 Covid-remonth, the second-highest total recorded during the pandemic, but those numbers have dropped off to 81 reported so far this month.

Reports indicate that positivity rates for Covid testing have declined substantially.

During the recent wave health officials revised their guidance, recommending that those who test positive isolate for five days rather than 10. The Minnesota Department of Health concurred and the Ely School District last month revised its quarantine policy to mirror those recommendations.

The impact on Elv's school system has lessened, with declines even larger than those seen at the state and county levels.

In January, at one point as many as 46 students and staff were out of school at the same time. Active cases in the school were down to just four early this week.

PEP RALLY for the Ely Nordic skiers going to skate was held Wednesday morning. Playing the school song were band members Leo Stalmer, Izzy Schiltz, Grace LaTourell, Tommy Homer, Jon Hakala, Rachel Coughlin, Gunnar Hart, Charly Flom and Matt Janeksela. Photo by Nick Wognum.

#### VETERINARY *ermilion* TECHNOLOGY **INSTRUCTOR/** PROGRAM DIRECTOR FACULTY - UNLIMITED FULL-TIME START DATE: AUGUST 15, 2022

Vermilion Community College in Ely, MN is seeking applicants who are committed to student engagement and excellence in teaching and learning for our Veterinary Technology Instructor/ Program Director position for the Veterinary Technician AAS Program.

Faculty appointments begin teaching on August 15, 2022.

#### **Minimum Qualifications:**

Education Requirement:

 Associate degree in veterinary technology from an American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) accredited program or doc-torate in veterinary medicine.

Program Director requirement.

o Doctor of Veterinary Medicine/licensed veterinarian are required to be maintained per AVMA program accreditation re-quirements.

Occupational Experience Requirement:

• Three full-time years (or equivalent) of verified related paid work experience in veterinary mediine or technology.



Recency Requirement:

 One year of this work experience shall be within the five years immediately preceding the date of application for the credential field. The recency requirement shall be waived if the individual has two years of successful full-time (or equivalent) postsecond-ary teaching experience in the credential field within the last five years. Professional Requirement:

· Current Minnesota certification as a Certified Veterinary Technician (CVT) or current Minnesota license as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.).

#### **Preferred Qualifications:**

· Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to active and experiential learning strategies.

• Demonstrated familiarity with and commitment to the mission and constituencies of a comprehensive community college.

• Teaching experience with a diverse learner population.

• A commitment to cultural diversity and inclusive teaching.

#### **Application Procedure:**

Applicants must apply online using Vermilion Community College's PeopleAdmin online application system:

https://nhed.peopleadmin.com/postings/1564 Please upload the following information with your application:

- Cover letter
- Current resume
- References

• Unofficial transcript (Official transcripts will be required from the successful candidate prior to appointment.)

#### Deadline to Apply: March 11, 2022

For questions regarding this posting, please contact Kerri Dahl, HR: kerri.dahl@mesabirange.edu

The five colleges of the Northeast Higher Education District are in the process of merging into a single accredited college\* (with six campuses) which will be operational fall 2022. \*Pending HLC and Board of Trustees approval

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is an Equal Opportunity employer/educator committed to the principles of diversity. We actively seek and encourage applica-tions from women, minorities, persons with disabilities and veterans. All applicants must be able to lawfully accept employment in the United States at the time of em-ployment. This document can be made available in alternative formats such as large print, Braille or audio tape by calling Carmen Bradach, Vice President of Human Resources (218) 749-7743. AA/EO, Veteran Friendly

### Mesabi Trust says Cleveland-Cliffs has not engaged in meaningful negotiations

#### by Lee Bloomquist Mesabi Tribune

Mesabi Trust says iron ore and steelmaker Cleveland-Cliffs, Inc., hasn't discussed production adjustments or asked for changes to royalty rates paid for iron ore mined and processed facilities in Babbitt and Silver Bay.

"Cliffs has not notified Mesabi Trust of the aforementioned operational changes," a Mesabi Trust 8-K filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission stated Monday about production changes at Northshore Mining Co. "Further, Cliffs has not recently requested any changes to the royalty structure, which is governed by a 1989 royalty agreement, and Cliffs has historically failed to engage in meaningful negotiations requested by Mesabi Trust to address the interpretations of the royalty structure."

development in a dispute between Cleveland-Cliffs and Mesabi Trust over royalty rates paid primarily on the selling price of iron pellets shipped from Northshore's Silver Bay pellet plant.

Cleveland-Cliffs Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer Lourenco Goncalves announced Friday in the company's 2021 year-end and fourth quarter earnings call that Northshore Mining Co. would be idled in the spring until the fall or beyond.

The dispute over royalties and a reduced need for iron ore pellets due to an increased use of scrap in

the company's steelmaking, Goncalves said a Clevereasons for the idling.

in the company's blast fur- creased amounts of scrap naces, Cleveland-Cliffs' iron to its BOF's, (basic oxygen ore needs are not as high as furnaces) is working well. before. Goncalves said.

at Northshore Mining Co. adjust production, our first tons of hot metal to produce look is at our cost structure the same tonnage of liquid because we are now able to produce DR-grade pellets at Minorca and mainly due to the ridiculous royalty structure we have in place with the Mesabi Trust," Goncalves said. "We will be idling all production at our Northshore mine, starting in the spring, carrying through at least to the fall period and maybe beyond. At Northshore, no production, no shipments, no royalty payments.'

It was the second time in recent months that Cleveland-Cliffs publicly said Northshore production would be adjusted as needed.

In the company's 2021 The filing is the latest third quarter earnings call, Goncalves said that because Cleveland-Cliffs doesn't plan to sell pellets to third parties in coming years, Northshore would become a swing operation to be idled as the company decides to do so.

> Goncalves also said the company would soon be shifting DR-grade pellet production to its Minorca Mine in Virginia where the company would not have to deal with Northshore's "unreasonable" royalty structure.

> DR-grade pellets contain a higher percentage of iron as compared to standard "acid" pellets or "flux" pellets.

In its 2021 year-end call,

stretch its production of By using additional scrap hot metal by adding in-

"When deciding where to BOF's, Cliffs needs fewer steel, he said.

> It all translates to a reduced need for iron ore pellets.

"As a consequence, the Northshore idle could go longer than currently planned," Goncalves said.

About 410 of Northshore's 580 workers would be impacted beginning May 1, according to Cleveland-Cliffs.

About 170 would continue working.

Mesabi Trust, a publicly-held fee holder, is headquartered in New York.

Over the first nine were cited by Goncalves as land-Cliffs' strategy to months of 2021, Mesabi Trust received royalties of \$44,366,650, according to a Mesabi Trust 10-Q SEC filing.

> That compares to With more scrap in the \$10,724,507 reported for the same period in 2020, when pellet production was reduced at all northeastern Minnesota taconite plants.

To amend the royalty agreement would require approval of Mesabi Trust trustees along with approval of 66 2/3 percent of trust certificate holders, according to Mesabi Trust.

Cleveland-Cliffs had no comment on the Mesabi Trust 8-K filing.

In addition to Northshore Mining Co. and Minorca Mine, Cleveland-Cliffs also operates Hibbing Taconite Co., and United Taconite in northeastern Minnesota.



ELY NORDIC ski team members heading to the state meet were given a send off pep rally on Wednesday. Photo by Nick Wognum.