

December 7, 2009 Update

The Environmental Responsibility Committee that meets to insure that all concerns are aired and addressed has not met since October 14.

The past two months have been spent completing the background studies necessary to support and develop the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW). That work is now complete. Cooperative Mineral Resources has submitted: 1) The draft EAW to the Department of Natural Resources; 2) The application for a State Disposal System Permit for waste water discharge to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency; 3) The federal Underground Injection Control (UIC) permit to the Environmental Protection Agency; and, 4) The Operation and Reclamation Plan to the DNR. In addition, MnDot has been contacted to conduct a traffic study on highway 6, as requested by the committee.

In terms of next steps, staff from the three agencies will determine the completeness of these documents and determine if additional information is needed from Cooperative Mineral Resources. This review effort is expected to run into January 2010 and is a normal part of the process. As such, the information submitted may require revision.

When the state and federal agencies are satisfied that the information submitted is complete and meets requirements, the agencies will prepare an official EAW and draft permits for public notice and review. We do not yet know when this notice will occur because the agency review is just underway.

Once we know when the documents submitted are ready for public comment, it is our intent to schedule a meeting with the Environmental Responsibility Committee to discuss the official EAW and permit applications. This meeting will be designed to provide committee members with a thorough understanding of the project and potential environmental impacts. Each committee member will have an opportunity to comment on the EAW and associated permits as a part of the official public comment process.

When the DNR places the draft EAW on public notice, the project time line will be updated. For example, we will be able to work with the City of Emily to schedule a public meeting, follow-up on topics related to transportation, and in general, develop an accurate project timeline for 2010.

If you have questions regarding the process to date and what we expect will happen next, please contact Jim Agre and Char Kinzer at agre@cwpower.com and kinzer@cwpower.com.