

(Par. 24) " * * * Surface lands owned by the State in said mining unit are not to be cleared or used for construction or stockpiling purposes unless and until the plan for such use has been approved by the commissioner. The surface use of said mining unit shall be conducted in such manner as to prevent or reduce scarring and erosion of the land and pollution of air and water."

(Par. 30) States that upon termination of the lease " * * * the lessee shall, at its own expense, properly and adequately fence all pits, level banks, and refill all test pits and cave-ins that may be deemed dangerous or are likely to cause damage to persons or property, and the lessee shall do all other work which the commissioner deems necessary to leave the premises in a safe and orderly condition to protect against injury or damage to persons or property, and shall restore the premises as nearly as the commissioner deems practicable to the natural conditions of the surrounding area."

A final example illustrates that Minnesota is aware of, and has shown its concern for the effects of mining on our environment. The Department of Conservation has selected specialists in the fields of minerals, waters, forestry, game and fish, and parks to collectively study the problem for the purpose of making recommendations for the prevention of blight and restoration of mined lands. Meetings have also been held with mine officials and specialists to study and define problem areas.

The study committee is especially concerned with long-range problems relating to mine waste disposal, the stockpiling of lean ores and taconite, and future uses of exhausted pits. These preliminary efforts have been met with cooperation and success and other state agencies have indicated their willingness to assist in studies and research.

PROPOSED FEDERAL RECLAMATION CONTROL—MINNESOTA'S VIEWS

Minnesota's main iron ore reserve, the Mesabi Range, is unique among the Nation's iron ore sources due to its structural uniformity and size. It represents the Nation's largest assured source of this vital raw material. The physical characteristics of the iron formation are such that in the practice of good mineral conservation, open pit mines must remain "open" for greatly extended periods, and lean ore materials stockpiled for future use.

We feel strongly that Minnesota is best qualified among all of the 50 States to cope with the unique problems associated with surface mining of its iron ore, problems which are identified and which are being worked on, and which no other State confronts to the same degree as Minnesota. The State, therefore, agrees with those purposes of S. 3132 found in Sec. 3, clauses (d), (e), and part of (f), which read as follows:

"(d) That, because of the diversity of terrain, climate, biologic, chemical, and other physical conditions in mining areas, the establishment on a nationwide basis of uniform regulations for surface mining operations and for the reclamation of surface-mined areas is not feasible:

"(e) That the initial responsibility for developing, authorizing, issuing, and enforcing regulations for surface mining operations and for the reclamation of surface-mined areas should rest with the States; and

"(f) . . . to assist the States in carrying out such a program."

We strongly oppose any Federal legislation which may result in the iron mining industry of Minnesota being placed at a competitive disadvantage internationally.

We also strongly oppose those portions of S. 3132 which inject the Secretary into the details of State planning, funding, and personnel practices, particularly when the State has recognized the problem and is competently and realistically working on solutions. The involved paperwork connected with Federal programs has become the strangulation of many worthwhile programs and imposes an immense work load on State government. For example, Minnesota recently submitted a report on a \$50,000 Federal assistance program which required many man hours of work and a stack of supporting documents seven inches high.

It is our position that Federal legislation can best assist Minnesota in surface mining reclamation by granting financial assistance and making available technical help as needed. On many occasions we have expressed our strong interest in creative and effective Federal and State relationships built around a "block grant" principle, rather than Federal involvement in the details of State planning and administration. The matters we are concerned with here today could well be served by the application of the "block grant" concept.

In conclusion, the State appreciates the opportunity given to present its concerns in regard to the legislation under consideration. In your forthcoming deliberations we urge you to refer to the material we are supplying you today and invite you to make further inquiry of the State, should the need arise.