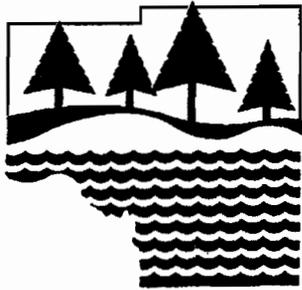


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ITASCA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ITASCA RESOURCE CENTER

1209 S.E. 2nd Ave., Grand Rapids, Minnesota 55744-3983

Hearing Impaired Number TDD: 218-327-5549

218-327-2941

Visit us at: www.co.itasca.mn.us

May 10, 2007

Burns and McDonnell Engineering Company
Attn: Stephen Thornhill
P. O. Box 419173
9400 Ward Parkway
Kansas City, Missouri 64141

Re: Request for Project-Related Comments
STB Finance Docket No. 34992

Dear Mr. Thornhill:

On behalf of the Itasca County Health and Human Services Department, I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the development of this railroad line, as well as the development of the Minnesota Steel Plant, located in Nashwauk, MN, based on the socio-economic impact for residents of Itasca County. It is of my opinion that the socio-economic impact will be very positive for families with the employment opportunities at the Minnesota Steel industry site. These additional employment opportunities for good paying jobs will assist families and children of Itasca County reach self-sufficiency goals for themselves, thereby, not needing to rely on public assistance that is provided through Itasca County Health and Human Services. We do believe that the development of the railroad line into the MSI site, as well as the development of the MSI site itself will provide many construction jobs and employment opportunities to the residents of Itasca County, as well as future positions, once the MSI site is up and operational.

Because of these additional employment opportunities for families of Itasca County, we believe that it will have a long term positive impact upon the economic development and sustainability for all residents of Itasca County.

If I can be of any further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me at 1-218-327-6152.

Sincerely,

Lester L. Kachinske
Director of Health and Human Services

LLK/plc
c: Health and Human Services Board
ICHHS Division Managers