



March 7, 2023

Dan Colton, CEO/President
GreenLight Metals
2 Eastview Lane
North Oak, MN 55127

Subject: Notice of Intent to Drill - Bend Deposit, Taylor County

Dear Mr. Colton:

We have completed our review of the Notice of Intent to Drill (NOI) submitted by GreenLight WI (GLW) dated February 15, 2023 and received by the Department of Natural Resources (department or DNR) on February 20, 2023. This NOI supersedes previous NOI submittals dated September 3, 2022 and November 30, 2022. The NOI was submitted to comply with the notification requirements of s. NR 130.109, Wis. Adm. Code.

The NOI outlines an exploratory drill program that includes up to 8 drill holes at 6 drilling sites with a total drilled footage of up to 7,190 feet. The program is located on the Soo Line mineral parcel in the NW¼ of the SW¼ of Section 35 (T33N, R2W), in Taylor County.

Based on your submittal, department permits or approvals may be required. Please read the following sections carefully to ensure the proposed activities comply with department requirements. You are also responsible to obtain all permits and approvals for your project before you begin work.

WPDES – Wastewater - Sheri Snowbank (sheri.snowbank@wi.gov)

The proposal requires a dewatering permit for wastewater discharge from the drilling sumps. Information available at: [Wastewater General Permits | Wisconsin DNR](#)

Waterways and Wetlands - Lane Loveland (lane.loveland@wi.gov)

Wetlands were delineated within the project area and the NOI describes compacting snow in Wetland W01 to create a snow bridge for access to Drill Sites #1 and 2. If constructed, removal of this compacted snow and ice from Wetland W01 is not required. Based on the NOI, the activities described will not result in a discharge of fill material to wetlands. As such, no permit authorization is required under s. 281.36, Wis. Stats.

The NOI describes withdrawing water from the North Branch of the Yellow River. The North Branch of the Yellow River is designated as an Area of Special Natural Resource Interest (ASNRI) Priority Navigable Water (PNW) for sturgeon. As such, the placement of an intake structure on the bed of the waterway is not exempt from department permit requirements found in [intake/outfall structure exemption checklist](#). However, if the water withdrawal does not remove bed material (i.e., dredging), and the intake for the water withdrawal does not include the placement of a structure on the bed of the waterway, no permit authorization is required under ss. 30.20 and 30.12, Wis. Stats.

In order to confirm department jurisdiction for the water intake, additional details must be provided. Describe how the intake will be placed in the waterway, including details on the proposed intake screening and flow rate to prevent impacts to aquatic organisms.

Stormwater – Erosion Control – *Samantha Whitens* (samantha.whitens@wi.gov)

The proposed site disturbance associated with access clearing, drill site preparation, sump excavation, and soil stockpiling will be kept under one acre. As such, coverage for a construction site erosion control permit is not required under chapter NR 216, Wis. Adm. Code.

The NOI describes installing best management practices (BMPs) after clearing for access roads and constructing sumps. BMPs must be installed prior to disturbance. Additionally, the NOI describes monitoring BMPs periodically. BMPs must be inspected and maintained on a weekly basis, and after rain events of ½-inch or more.

Endangered Resources - *Stacy Rowe* (stacy.rowe@wi.gov)

Based on the Endangered Resources Review (ERR) completed, there is 1 required action and 3 recommended actions.

Exploration Surety

A cost estimate of \$48,715.00 was provided to cover termination of the drilling sites, including filling holes and reclaiming the site. GLW provided a bond in the amount of \$5,000.00 when submitting the exploration license renewal on June 28, 2022.

In accordance with s. 293.21(3)(b), Stats. and s. NR 130.05(2)(b)3, Wis. Adm. Code, the department has determined that \$50,000.00 is necessary to adequately fund the termination of all drill holes and restoration of the drill sites. GLW can either, A) increase the amount of the existing surety bond that was previously submitted for the exploration license, or B) submit an additional bond for \$45,000.00 to account for the updated total \$50,000.00 bond requirement.

Drilling Fluid

The NOI states that GLW intends to use bentonite and EZ-MUD® and will notify the department prior to using anything other than bentonite or EZ-MUD® for the drilling program. Please ensure that all drilling muds and additives considered are found on the department list:

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Wells/documents/DrillAbandonProducts.pdf>

Drillhole and Sump Abandonment, Reclamation, and Site Restoration

The NOI describes disposing of cuttings in a different sump if a drillhole is located in an area where the groundwater level prohibits the use of sumps. You must accurately track the quantity of cuttings generated in such instances in order to calculate the appropriate cement / cuttings ratio. In addition, you must record and report the precise location of drilling sumps under s. NR 130.111(2), Wis. Adm. Code.

Please submit the dewatering application, water withdrawal intake details, and surety bonding as soon as possible. The department will review the updated information provided to determine if it can issue an authorization under s. 130.109(4), Wis. Adm. Code.

Feel free to contact Molly Gardner or me with any additional questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B Callan', is positioned above the printed name.

Benjamin Callan

Integration Services Section Manager

cc: Ted DeMatties, 34898 University Avenue, Cambridge, MN 55008
Eric Quigley, 220 W. Washington Street, #310, Marquette, MI 49855
Kyle Noonan, Taylor County
Megan Luick, US Forest Service
Molly Gardner, WDNR
Larry Lynch, WDNR
Greg Pils, WDNR