



Contact: Chris Duffy
612-599-7982
duffy@goffpublic.com

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Iron Ore Alliance Addresses Rail Delays During Governor's Roundtable

Duluth, Minn. – The Iron Ore Alliance emphasized the importance of fixing the current state of rail service at Governor Mark Dayton's rail delay roundtable in Duluth Tuesday. Larry Sutherland, general manager for Minnesota Ore Operations at U. S. Steel, presented during the roundtable. U. S. Steel's Minnesota Ore Operations are being adversely affected by delayed and inconsistent rail service and congestion. With its Minntac and Keetac facilities located in northeastern Minnesota, U. S. Steel's Minnesota Ore Operations is the state's largest iron ore pellet producer.

More than two million tons of pellets have built up at taconite facilities on the Iron Range because of the significant delays and inconsistent rail service throughout the Upper Midwest. U. S. Steel's Keetac plant is experiencing a backlog of 250,000 tons of pellets and rising, due to the difficulty of getting railcars.

"We must address these backlogs immediately," Sutherland said. "The days are getting colder, and when the Great Lakes close for the winter, rail will be the only available form of shipment. Thousands of workers make their livelihoods in the iron mining industry, which depends on effective transportation."

Sutherland emphasized three concerns at the event Tuesday: the need to improve train scheduling, the necessity of repairing train defects in a timely manner, and the importance of repairing and reopening a major line that was shut down 12 years ago.

"We appreciate Governor Dayton addressing this issue and look forward to working with his office, elected officials, and other stakeholders to effectively solve it," said John Rebrovich, assistant to the director of United Steelworkers District 11 and co-chair of the Iron Ore Alliance.

About the Iron Ore Alliance

The Iron Ore Alliance is a joint initiative of United States Steel Corporation and the United Steelworkers to help educate Minnesotans about the importance of U. S. Steel's iron ore business.

U. S. Steel's Minnesota Ore Operations, with its Minntac and Keetac facilities located in northeastern Minnesota, is the state's largest iron ore producer, and is a critical part of U. S. Steel's North American operations. Minntac, located in Mountain Iron, is the single-largest iron ore pelletizing operation in the United States. For more information, please visit www.ironorealliance.com.

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