# UMore Park Sand and Gravel Resources Project

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I. Introduction and Purpose

The University of Minnesota (University) is proposing to open new aggregate mine(s) and ancillary operations on the UMore Park property owned by the University located in the City of Rosemount and Empire Township, Dakota County, Minnesota (see Figures 1, 2, and 3), hereafter referred to as the “UMore Mining Area”. The purpose of the project is to make cost-effective and environmentally-sound usage of regionally significant aggregate resources owned by the University and generate revenues to support the mission of the University. Mining operations and practices are proposed to be located on approximately 1,608 acres and are proposed to be similar to current practices at existing aggregate mines adjacent to and near the UMore Mining Area. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project is mandatory pursuant to Minnesota Rules 4410.4400 Mandatory EIS Categories, subpart 9B, which states:

“For development of a facility for the extraction or mining of sand, gravel, stone, or other nonmetallic minerals, other than peat, which will excavate 160 acres of land or more to a mean depth of ten feet or more during its existence, the local government unit shall be the RGU.”

The Regents of the University of Minnesota is the Responsible Governmental Unit (RGU) for this project pursuant to Minnesota Rules 4410.0500 subp 1 and concurrence of the City of Rosemount and Empire Township (Appendix A). The EIS will meet the requirements of Minnesota Rules 4410.0200 to 4410.7800 (MEQB rules), which govern the Minnesota Environmental Review Program.

The Scoping Decision Document (SDD) is a companion to the Scoping Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) prepared for the project. The purpose of the SDD is to identify the issues and alternatives that will be examined in depth in the EIS. A draft SDD was published and circulated with the Scoping EAW on January 12, 2009 (Appendices B and C). Comments on both documents were accepted through February 16, 2009. This month long Public Scoping Period also included a Public Scoping Meeting that was held on February 5, 2009 (Appendix D). Comments received during the Public Scoping Period and as a result of the Public Scoping Meeting are included in Appendix E of this document and are reflected in this Final SDD, where appropriate. The SDD also presents a tentative schedule of the environmental review process.

II. Project Alternatives

The MEQB rules require EIS studies to include at least one alternative of each of the following categories or provide a description of why no alternative is included in the EIS (MN Rule 4410.2300, Item G).

- Alternative sites
- Alternative technologies
- Modified designs or layouts
- Modified scale or magnitude
- Alternatives that incorporate reasonable mitigation measures identified through the scoping process

UMore Park Sand and Gravel Resources Project - Final Scoping Decision Document
University of Minnesota, May 2009
The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.
UMore Park Sand and Gravel Resources
Scoping Environmental Assessment Worksheet

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Figure 2
USGS Location Map
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Minnesota Rules part 4410.2300, subpart G also states that an alternative may be excluded from analysis in the EIS when it does not meet the underlying need for or purpose of the project, (2) it would likely not have any significant environmental benefit compared to the project as proposed; or (3) another alternative, of any type, that will be analyzed in the EIS would likely have similar environmental benefits, but substantially less adverse economic, employment, or sociological impacts.

**Alternative Sites**

Off-site alternatives are not being investigated because they do not meet the project purpose and need of making use of regionally significant aggregate resources that are found within the UMore Mining Area. Site Alternatives are limited to those where there is the presence of the natural resource, as well as University ownership. This regional resource is well located to cost-effectively serve the long-term needs of the region. A regional study by the Metropolitan Council, Department of Natural Resources and the University of Minnesota in 2002, titled Aggregate Resources Inventory of the Seven-County Metropolitan Area identified significant aggregate resources within UMore Park. In addition, the UMore Park Geological Assessment prepared by ProSource Technologies Inc., dated September 2008, identified the location, quality, and quantity of aggregate on the UMore Park property. The proposed UMore Mining Area comprises approximately the western third of the UMore Park property, and contains substantial quantities of high quality aggregate material.

**Preferred Alternative**

The University is proposing to open new aggregate mine(s) and ancillary operations on the UMore Park property. Based on further analysis conducted during the Scoping Period, the boundary of the UMore Mining Area was modified slightly resulting in a reduction in the total site area. The eastern boundary lying north of County Road 46 (160th Street SW) was shifted approximately 550 feet to the west. This modification was made for a number of reasons which included: the UMore Park Geologic Assessment identified limited quantities of high quality aggregate material in this area, the reduced area would provide further separation from known sites of contamination concern, and the modified boundary eliminate potential overlap with ongoing planning of future development on other portions of the UMore Park property. As a result of this modification, the total area of the UMore Mining Area was reduced from 1,711 to 1,608 acres of land (see Figure 2).

Mining operations and practices are proposed to be similar to current practices at existing aggregate mines adjacent to and near the UMore Mining Area. The project consists of three primary activities/components:

**Mining and Aggregate Processing**

- Clearing and grubbing the site of vegetation and structures, as necessary.
- Removal and/or relocation of infrastructure, as necessary.
- Excavation and transport of the raw aggregate materials.
- Excavation, stockpiling, and transporting of other soils materials, including clay and topsoil, which may be present within the UMore Mining Area for shipment to sites out of the area or for use in future reclamation.
- Washing, grading, and stockpiling aggregate materials for sale or later internal use.
• Transporting and stockpiling waste for potential later use in reclamation.
• Transporting finished aggregate materials internally for subsequent processing and to construction sites beyond the UMore Mining Area.
• Transporting, accepting, and stockpiling clean, compactable fill materials and/or clean organic soil materials for potential later use in reclamation.
• Eventual redistribution, compaction, and grading of overburden and clean fill materials to reclaim the disturbed portions of the UMore Mining Area.

Ancillary Manufacturing:
• Manufacture and transport of various asphalt products.
• Manufacture, stockpiling, warehousing and transporting of ready-mixed concrete, bagged mortar products, concrete block, concrete pavers, concrete pipe, concrete plank, etc.
• Importing, grading, processing, and stockpiling aggregates to be blended with local aggregates in the production of various products which will increase the effective use of the local aggregates and extend the life of the natural resource.
• Transporting, accepting, and recycling products returned from construction sites, including ready-mixed concrete, bagged mortar products, concrete block, concrete pavers, concrete pipe, concrete plank for inclusion in new products.

General Operations and Administrative
• Offices and sales facilities.
• Equipment storage and maintenance facilities.
• Fuel storage and refueling facilities.

The mining season typically extends from late March through mid-December each year and occasionally starts earlier and runs later. Topsoil and overburden stripping is the first step. Initially, as operators begin mining, each open mine may require the stripping of a few dozen acres to provide space for offices, shops, parking, manufacturing facilities, stockpiles, processing and the actual mining face. Then, as the aggregate is harvested and the mine face advances, additional acreage will be stripped. This will be accomplished using several pieces of earth moving equipment including dozers, scrapers, backhoes and haul trucks.

Once the topsoil and overburden is removed and either used for reclamation or stockpiled, extraction of the mineral deposit can begin. The equipment that will be used on this portion of the mine for extraction will include large front end loaders, backhoes, drag lines, dredges, crushers, screens, and conveyor systems. The raw reserves are then transported via a conveyor system or haul trucks to either a dry plant or a wash plant. At the plant the material is fed through a series of crushers, screens, conveyors, wash decks, and classifiers to produce the commercial grade construction aggregates. The finished products are stockpiled adjacent to the plant and sold to contractors for construction jobs. The finished products are hauled off site by trucks to the various construction sites, or internally transported and stockpiled for subsequent production of the various ancillary products (asphalt, concrete, etc.).
Water is an important tool and ingredient to the processes described. As a tool, it is used to wash the aggregate, equipment, and suppress dust. As an ingredient, it is used in the production of the various concrete products. Each operator will require a source of process water that may be secured with wells and/or efficient recycling of water, including storm water runoff, through sedimentation ponds.

The proposed mining operation(s) will result in the lowering and a reconfiguration of the surface topography, and the reconfiguration and redirection of the existing surface drainage system.

In general, reclamation will progress in increments. In the first several years, however, as new mines are opened and plant sites are developed, relatively little reclamation will occur. Exhausted areas of mine floor may have a status of "interim reclamation" since it will be necessary to maintain and relocate conveyor systems and/or haul routes between the mine face and processing areas. Final reclamation efforts would come once the transport is no longer necessary in that area. The perimeter of the UMore Mining Area will be reclaimed at a slope of three to one or flatter. The reclaimed mine floor will undulate according to the bottom of the deposit and to accommodate the new surface drainage. Upon completion of reclamation the property will be suitable for agricultural use.

Operators on the site may also produce asphalt, ready-mixed concrete, and a variety of the ancillary products. Each of these construction material plants will be located in close proximity to the aggregate processing plants to eliminate unnecessary handling and hauling. Ready-mixed concrete production requires a plant capable of storing and mixing the ingredients for the various mix designs. Ready-mixed plant sites will have storage silos for the cementaceous materials; storage tanks for the liquid additives and will have an area for handling comeback concrete and truck wash out. These plants will require staging and traffic flow areas for trucks. There may also be a need for onsite truck maintenance facilities.

Other concrete product manufacturing plants will have similar needs to ready-mixed plants, except they often require a larger plant footprint and substantial outside storage areas.

Asphalt plants will require areas for liquid storage tanks for the various ingredients of their mix designs. These would include tanks for asphalt cement, tack oil, and heating oil.

Concrete materials of various types will be imported for recycling and integration into the variety of products emanating from the project's operations.

The University's goal is to have the site ready for mining operations to commence in the 2010 construction season.

**No-Build Alternative**

The No-Build Alternative will be described and assessed in the EIS. The assessment will describe and analyze the potential impacts, outcomes, constraints, benefits and disadvantages, and economics if the existing land uses were to continue in the proposed UMore Mining Area. The description will be based on the University's existing use of the site for agriculture and research purposes and will make projections or forecasts based on this use to identify No-Build Alternative effects and impacts.
Technology Alternatives
Technology alternatives are not within the scope of the UMore Park Sand and Gravel Resources Project and will not be considered in the EIS. Best practicable technologies for the various activities will be utilized as part of the preferred alternative.

Modified Designs or Layouts
Modified design or layout alternatives were evaluated during the scoping analysis. The UMore Park Geological Assessment was instrumental in defining the UMore Mining Area. The UMore Mining Area presented in the Scoping EAW/Draft Scoping Decision Document has been modified slight as discussed above and illustrated in Figure 3. This modified area represents the Preferred Alternative and could potentially be modified further dependent upon the results of the analysis that will be completed for any required permits for the operations on the site.

Scale or Magnitude Alternatives
Scale and project magnitude were defined in part through the analysis conducted for the UMore Park Geological Assessment Report and the selected scale and magnitude parameters in the Preferred Alternative meet the project purpose and need. Scale and magnitude alternatives will not be addressed in the EIS.

Project Site With Reasonable Mitigation Measures
MEQB rules require consideration of mitigation measures identified through comments on the Scoping EAW or the Draft EIS. The EIS will consider all relevant mitigation measures suggested through public comment and will recommend incorporation of reasonable mitigation measures into project design and permitting as warranted.

III. EIS Issues
MEQB guidance documents state that the purpose of project scoping is to streamline the EIS process by identifying only potentially significant and relevant issues, and defining alternatives to be carried forward into the EIS (see Minnesota Rules 4410.2100, subpart 1). Issues have been identified and described in the UMore Park Sand and Gravel Resources Scoping EAW and are described below. The potential significance of the issues and the extent of analysis needed in order to have adequately addressed the issues in the EIS is also described below. Mitigation measures, permitting and approvals, public comments, and the results of analyses, existing data, and separate studies will all be addressed in the EIS to fully disclose the potential impacts of pursuing the Preferred Alternative.

Scoping EAW Topics Screened and Removed from Further Review
The following topics were adequately assessed in the Scoping EAW and were found to be not relevant or so minor that they will not be addressed in the EIS.

- Water Surface Use (Scoping EAW Item 15)
- Vehicle-Related Air Emissions (Scoping EAW Item 22)
- Scenic Views or Vistas/Other Unique Resources (Scoping EAW Items 25d and 25e only)

EIS Assessment Subjects
The following subjects will be described and analyzed in the EIS.
Land Use/Potential Environmental Hazards (Scoping EAW Item 9)

The EIS will verify and summarize the existing land uses within the UMore Mining Area. The EIS will also address existing land uses adjacent to the site within an approximate half-mile buffer area to the north, west and south of the site. This buffer will serve as a guideline for evaluating land use compatibility and identifying environmental impacts resulting from the proposed gravel mining operations and ancillary uses. The Vermillion Highlands, a Research, Recreational, and Wildlife Management Area and the Vermillion Highlands Regional Park while outside the half-mile buffer, will also be included in the assessment. No additional analysis is planned for the EIS regarding the description of existing land uses within the UMore Mining Area. At this time, the reclamation plan for the proposed mining site will be based upon an agricultural end use. A series of mitigation strategies calculated to avoid and minimize impacts from gravel mining operations on land uses within the area of impact will be explored.

A Phase II, conducted in accordance with a work plan being developed cooperatively by the University and MPCA, will be completed and the results will be reviewed in the EIS. Mitigation measures will be described as appropriate and will be in accordance with MPCA rules and guidance.

Cover Types (Scoping EAW Item 10)

Information pertaining to cover types will be discussed and analyzed in several subjects of the EIS including land use, water quality, farmlands, wetlands, and other subjects that describe before and after cover type acreages.

Fish, Wildlife, and Ecologically Sensitive Resources (Scoping EAW Item 11a)

The EIS will include a discussion of existing wildlife habitat and impacts of habitat changes on Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) as defined by the MNDNR. Habitat availability for SGCN species will be evaluated. The level of impact to SGCN species will be described on the basis of species presence and status of habitat on the project site and in the region.

Threatened and Endangered Species (Scoping EAW Item 11b)

The EIS will address the potential for impacts of the project on state threatened and endangered species, rare plant communities and sensitive ecological resources including: Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), Mesic Prairie, Blanding’s Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*), and the Vermillion River.

The EIS will use species range and distribution maps, scientific literature, and site survey information to determine whether these resources are present in the UMore Mining Area, and if present, the extent of and potential impact to the resource. Potential impacts to these elements will be described at both a local and regional level.

Potential direct and indirect impacts to the Vermillion River trout stream will be evaluated by using stormwater and groundwater modeling (described in the Scoping EAW) and by reviewing existing literature and data pertaining to the trout stream.

Physical Impacts on Water Resources (Scoping EAW Item 12)

The EIS will include an assessment and discussion of existing jurisdictional wetlands on the site, potential wetland impacts and proposed mitigation, impacts of mining below the water table,
and impacts of surface water (e.g., lake) creation during and after the site utilization and reclamation process.

*Water Use (Scoping EAW Item 13)*

Water use will be addressed in the EIS. This will include a description of the planned water supply well location and operations. A groundwater model will be used to demonstrate the likely pumping effects related to the water supply well. The EIS will also include a discussion of the location of existing wells that will be potentially affected by the new well or that will be sealed prior to mining.

*Water-Related Land Use Management Districts (Scoping EAW Item 14)*

The EIS will further investigate the floodplain districts within the UMore Mining Area as shown on Flood Insurance Rate Maps and will evaluate the potential effect of the proposed operations on the floodplain.

*Erosion and Sedimentation (Scoping EAW Item 16)*

The EIS will discuss erosion and sedimentation, including estimates of the number of acres to be graded/excavated and cubic yards of soil to be moved and of the proposed methods of minimization and mitigation.

*Surface Water Quantity and Quality (Scoping EAW Item 17)*

A watershed model will be developed during the EIS process to estimate peak runoff from less frequent events and a water budget model to estimate the long term change in the volume of water contributed to the receiving water bodies. The EIS will summarize the model findings and include mitigation options if impacts are anticipated. In addition, the EIS will address potential for impacts of changes in surface water runoff on the Vermillion River.

*Water Quality - Wastewater (Scoping EAW Item 18)*

Wastewater will be addressed in the EIS. In particular, the EIS will include a discussion of on-site sanitary sewage handling, as well as a more complete discussion of the layout and operation of settling ponds for aggregate production and concrete plant wastewater handling.

*Geologic Hazards and Soil Conditions (Scoping EAW Item 19)*

A Groundwater Assessment will be carried out. The EIS will include a revised geologic model based on results from the Groundwater Assessment. The Groundwater Assessment prepared for this EIS will include documentation for the groundwater flow model that will be used to predict groundwater flow and predictive simulations. The model will be used for the following predictive simulations:

1. Anticipated groundwater head conditions under full mine development based on the calibration of the flow model using field measured water levels collected during the Groundwater Assessment.

2. The anticipated drawdown resulting from a single pumping well operated at 200 gallons per minute.

3. If modeled groundwater flow from the proposed mine pit lakes or ponds is toward the Vermillion River, the model will be used to simulate thermal transport from the mine pit lakes or ponds.
Solid Waste, Hazardous Waste, Storage Tanks (Scoping EAW Item 20)

The EIS will further discuss the anticipated solid wastes and hazardous waste materials produced at the UMore Mining Area and will identify the disposal plan for these materials. A hazardous waste reduction and minimization plan will be discussed as part of the mitigation commitments.

Traffic (Scoping EAW Item 21)

The EIS will include a discussion of the detailed traffic analysis that has begun to be completed and will be finalized with input from the preliminary mining plan. Intersection and roadway operations and safety conditions on the surrounding transportation system will be addressed in the EIS.

Stationary Source Air Emissions (Scoping EAW Item 23)

The EIS will include a description of the equipment and processes that may generate regulated pollutants. Potential emission rates will be estimated for stationary sources and fugitive dust sources associated with the project. Emissions will be calculated for criteria pollutants, greenhouse gasses, and federal hazardous air pollutants. In the EIS, air quality regulations and permitting programs that may apply to the project will be identified.

A summary of the emission limits, pollution control equipment, dust suppression methods and systems, and compliance practices associated with applicable regulations will be included in the EIS. A comparison of air dispersion modeling results and ambient air quality standards will be presented in the EIS.

Odors, Noise, and Dust (Scoping EAW Item 24)

The EIS will include fugitive dust emission calculations for the project and a description of equipment and activities proposed to mitigate the generation of dust. Fugitive dust emissions will be included in the air dispersion modeling described in Scoping EAW Item 23. The noise analysis will address potential impacts associated with the operation of on-site processing facilities, equipment, and trucks hauling the resources from the site via the surrounding roadway system.

Archaeological, Historical, or Architectural Resources (Scoping EAW Item 25a)

The findings from the Phase 1A archaeological (pedestrian) survey will be documented in the EIS along with a summary of any consultation with the State Archeologist and State Historic Preservation Officer.

Prime or Unique Farmlands (Scoping EAW Item 25b)

An assessment of prime and/or statewide important farmlands will be conducted in the EIS.

Visual Impacts (Scoping EAW Item 26)

The EIS will evaluate and summarize the degree of visual impacts on adjacent land uses and lines of sight. Mitigation measures will address site design and landscaping measures to reduce visual impacts over the course of the mines lifespan.
Compatibility with Plans and Land Use Regulations (Scoping EAW Item 27)

Compatibility with plans and land use regulations will be addressed in the EIS. This discussion will be relevant to other EIS sections, including the section on cumulative effects.

Impact on Infrastructure and Public Services (Scoping EAW Item 28)

The EIS will include a description of proposed roadway improvements and additions needed to accommodate and/or mitigate traffic arising from the proposed UMore Park Sand and Gravel Resources Project. Additionally, the EIS will examine the issue of on-site power generation versus extension of existing electrical power lines to serve the proposed project.

Cumulative Effects (Scoping EAW Item 29)

Cumulative potential effects, be they direct, indirect, or cumulative, will be addressed and analyzed in the EIS in compliance with MEQB rules.

EIS Subjects That Were Added In Response to Formal Comments During the Public Scoping Period

Designated Parks, Recreation Areas, or Trails (Scoping EAW Item 25c only)

This item was originally recommended to be removed from further review in the EIS. In response to several public/agency comments, an analysis of potential effects from the UMore Park Sand and Gravel Resources Project on the Vermillion Highlands WMA and the proposed County regional park, will be addressed in the EIS.

IV. Identification of Phased or Connected Actions

There are no phased elements or connected actions associated with the project. The University does not believe that the UMore Park Sand and Gravel Resources Project should be considered as a phased or connected action with regard to urban use land development. Rather, the University commits to discussion and environmental analysis of urban use land development, in conjunction with the City of Rosemount and Township of Empire, in compliance with the Environmental Review Program of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board, Chapter 4410, Minnesota Rules, by way of a separate environmental review document to be prepared at such time as the University has better formulated its plans, the City of Rosemount and the Township of Empire have responded to University future plans for urban use land development by way of any required Comprehensive Plan Amendments, and prior to the commencement of any development or the securing of any regulatory entitlements required for development. No potential significant environmental effect will escape identification and analysis as it relates to possible future urban use land development, but that will occur at a later date in a separate environmental review document.

When it occurs, urban use land development within UMore Park is intended to take place at the outset in areas other than the UMore Mining Area. The University owns approximately 3,000 acres to the east of the UMore Mining Area, no small component of which lies along Dakota County Road 42 (145th Street SW). Urban use land development cannot proceed without comprehensive plan amendments required under the Minnesota Metropolitan Land Planning Act and Municipal Planning Act, and environmental review required by the Environmental Policy Act and Chapter 4410, Minnesota Rules. No urban use land development applications have been submitted by the University to either the City of Rosemount or the Township of Empire. Gravel mining and ancillary uses will occur within the UMore Mining Area for an extended period of
time, and the remainder of UMore Park contains more than sufficient land which can be developed for urban land uses before any compelling reason to consider portions of the UMore Mining Area. There is no current thought to initiate urban use land development in sections of the UMore Mining Area while other areas of the project site continue to be mined.

The nature and timing of urban use land development in sufficient detail as to be the subject of meaningful environmental review will be determined in the future by the University, comprehensive plan amendments by the City of Rosemount and Township of Empire, and future environmental review. While the Board of Regents, University of Minnesota, has favorably acted on a concept master plan for the entirety of UMore Park, much more remains to be done with respect to planning for future urban use land development, including another round of environmental review. Accordingly, the University intends to formulate its aggregate mining Operation, Reclamation, and End Use Plans as part of any required city and township rezoning and mining permit processes without detailed consideration or analysis of urban use land development.

V. EIS Schedule

The following is the anticipated project schedule for completion of the University of Minnesota UMore Gravel Mining Project EIS:

- January 12, 2009: Scoping EAW Noticing
- January 12 – February 16, 2009: Scoping EAW Comment Period and Public Meeting
- February 5, 2008: Public Scoping Meeting
- June 2009: Final Scoping Decision/EIS Notice of Intent
- Fall 2009: Draft EIS Comment Period and Public Meeting
- Winter 2009: Final EIS preparation
- Spring 2010: Final EIS Adequacy Determination

As previously stated, the University's goal is to have the site ready for mining operations to commence in 2010.

VI. Special Studies or Research

Based on the characteristics of the proposed UMore Park Sand and Gravel Resources Project and surrounding area along with the feedback received during the scoping process, the following subject areas have been identified as having the highest potential for substantial concern. As a result, the University will conduct and document special studies for each. The results of these special studies will be summarized in the EIS.

- **Ground Water/Water Quality** - a comprehensive Groundwater Assessment will be completed
- **Environmental Site Contamination** - a Phase II Investigation will be completed for known sites of concern within the project area
- **Traffic/Transportation** - a detailed traffic analysis will be completed taking into account traffic turning movements, peak hours traffic volumes, forecast traffic volumes, and future transportation improvements.
- **Dust and Noise** - fugitive dust emission calculations and potential noise effects associated with the project will be assessed using industry accepted models. The
analysis will include mitigation options and compliance practices that may be incorporated into the design and/or operations of the proposed activities.

VII. Governmental Permits or Approvals

Historically, based on its constitutional autonomy and status as a state entity, the Proposed UMore Mining Area and other property of the University of Minnesota throughout the state have not been subject to local land use controls or permitting requirements. Without waiving its autonomy or unique constitutional status, as a matter of comity and respect for the local jurisdictions in which the proposed Project is situated, and in order to assure that the EIS is complete and adequate, the University will include in the EIS a discussion and analysis of the relevant local ordinances, permits and approvals otherwise applicable to the proposed Project if it were being carried out by a private entity on privately owned land.

Accordingly, the EIS will identify permits and approvals potentially required for this project. While some permit application review may occur concurrently with EIS preparation, the EIS will not necessarily contain all information required for a decision on those permits. No permits have been designated to have all information developed concurrently with the preparation of the EIS; however, the University intends to concurrently gather information needed for receiving any required approvals and/or permits from local, state, and federal agencies. No permits will require the preparation of a record of decision pursuant to Minnesota Rules 4410.2100, subpart 6D. In order to expedite the permitting and approval processes, coordination with the Township of Empire, the City of Rosemount, Dakota County, and other appropriate jurisdictions has already begun and will continue to occur throughout the EIS process.

VIII. Public and Agency Involvement

An Open House Meeting was conducted on November 6, 2008 prior to the start of the scoping period to receive suggestions for the Scoping EAW. On January 12, 2009 the Scoping EAW and Draft Scoping Decision Document (SDD) were circulated to those agencies on the EQB distribution list and other interested parties for their review and comment as required by Minnesota Rules 4410.2100, subpart 3. On February 5, 2009 a Public Scoping Meeting/Public Hearing was held to provide an opportunity for agency and public comments to be submitted for the Final SDD. The availability of the Scoping EAW and draft SDD was published in the January 12, 2009 edition of the EQB Monitor. Press releases were sent to area newspapers including the Rosemount Sun Current, Rosemount Town Pages, Farmington Independent, Minneapolis Star Tribune, St. Paul Pioneer Press, and the internal University media.

Comments received during the Comment Period and at the Public Scoping Meeting are included in Appendix E, along with the University's response to each comment, and were used to shape the scope of the EIS subject areas set out in this Final SDD. The comments and the information collected to address them will be used to prepare a Draft EIS. Once completed, the Draft EIS will be circulated for a 30-day public comment period. A Public Meeting/Public Hearing will be held during the EIS Comment Period to afford opportunity for public comment. The availability of the Draft EIS will be published in the EQB Monitor and in local media sources.

Comments received during the Official Comment Period on the Draft EIS and at the Public Meeting/Hearing will be used to prepare the Final EIS. The Final EIS will be circulated for a 30-day public comment period, after which the University's Board of Regents will determine its adequacy. Notification of the Adequacy Decision will be published in the EQB Monitor and sent to area media sources.