

CHAPTER 298

MINERALS TAXES

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298.01 MINING OR PRODUCING ORES.

Subd. 3. **Occupation tax; other ores.** Every person engaged in the business of mining or producing ores in this state, except iron ore or taconite concentrates, shall pay an occupation tax to the state of Minnesota as provided in this subdivision. The tax is determined in the same manner as the tax imposed by section 290.02, except that sections 290.05, subdivision 1, clause (a), 290.17, subdivision 4, and 290.191, subdivision 2, do not apply. A person subject to occupation tax under this section shall apportion its net income on the basis of the percentage obtained by taking the sum of:

(1) 75 percent of the percentage which the sales made within this state in connection with the trade or business during the tax period are of the total sales wherever made in connection with the trade or business during the tax period;

(2) 12.5 percent of the percentage which the total tangible property used by the taxpayer in this state in connection with the trade or business during the tax period is of the total tangible property, wherever located, used by the taxpayer in connection with the trade or business during the tax period; and

(3) 12.5 percent of the percentage which the taxpayer's total payrolls paid or incurred in this state or paid in respect to labor performed in this state in connection with the trade or business during the tax period are of the taxpayer's total payrolls paid or incurred in connection with the trade or business during the tax period.

The tax is in addition to all other taxes.

[For text of subs. 3a to 3d, see M.S.2004]

Subd. 4. **Occupation tax; iron ore; taconite concentrates.** A person engaged in the business of mining or producing of iron ore, taconite concentrates or direct reduced ore in this state shall pay an occupation tax to the state of Minnesota. The tax is determined in the same manner as the tax imposed by section 290.02, except that sections 290.05, subdivision 1, clause (a), 290.17, subdivision 4, and 290.191, subdivision 2, do not apply. A person subject to occupation tax under this section shall apportion its net income on the basis of the percentage obtained by taking the sum of:

(1) 75 percent of the percentage which the sales made within this state in connection with the trade or business during the tax period are of the total sales wherever made in connection with the trade or business during the tax period;

(2) 12.5 percent of the percentage which the total tangible property used by the taxpayer in this state in connection with the trade or business during the tax period is of the total tangible property, wherever located, used by the taxpayer in connection with the trade or business during the tax period; and

(3) 12.5 percent of the percentage which the taxpayer's total payrolls paid or incurred in this state or paid in respect to labor performed in this state in connection with the trade or business during the tax period are of the taxpayer's total payrolls paid or incurred in connection with the trade or business during the tax period.

The tax is in addition to all other taxes.

[For text of subs. 4a to 5, see M.S.2004]

History: 1Sp2005 c 3 art 3 s 16,17

NOTE: The amendments to subdivisions 3 and 4 by Laws 2005, First Special Session chapter 3, article 3, sections 16 and 17, are effective for tax years beginning after December 31, 2006. Laws 2005, First Special Session chapter 3, article 3, sections 16 and 17, the effective dates.

298.215 IRON RANGE RESOURCES AND REHABILITATION; EARLY SEPARATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION.

(a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation, in consultation with the commissioner of employee relations, may offer a targeted early separation incentive program for employees of the commissioner who have attained the age of 60 years and have at least five years of allowable service credit under chapter 352, or who have received credit for at least 30 years of allowable service under the provisions of chapter 352.

(b) The early separation incentive program may include one or more of the following:

(1) employer-paid postseparation health, medical, and dental insurance until age 65; and

(2) cash incentives that may, but are not required to be, used to purchase additional years of service credit through the Minnesota State Retirement System, to the extent that the purchases are otherwise authorized by law.

(c) The commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation shall establish eligibility requirements for employees to receive an incentive.

(d) The commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation, consistent with the established program provisions under paragraph (b), and with the eligibility requirements under paragraph (c), may designate specific programs or employees as eligible to be offered the incentive program.

(e) Acceptance of the offered incentive must be voluntary on the part of the employee and must be in writing. The incentive may only be offered at the sole discretion of the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation.

(f) The cost of the incentive is payable solely by funds made available to the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation by law, but only on prior approval of the expenditures by a majority of the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board.

(g) This section and section 298.216 are repealed June 30, 2006.

History: 2005 c 156 art 2 s 34

298.216 APPLICATION OF OTHER LAWS.

Unilateral implementation of section 298.215 by the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation is not an unfair labor practice under chapter 179A.

History: 2005 c 156 art 2 s 35

298.22 IRON RANGE RESOURCES AND REHABILITATION.

[For text of subs. 1 to 9, see M.S.2004]

Subd. 10. Sale or privatization of functions. The commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation may not sell or privatize the Ironworld Discovery Center or Giants Ridge Golf and Ski Resort without prior approval by a majority vote of the board.

History: 1Sp2005 c 1 art 4 s 88

298.223 TACONITE AREA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FUND.

Subdivision 1. Creation; purposes. A fund called the taconite environmental protection fund is created for the purpose of reclaiming, restoring and enhancing those areas of northeast Minnesota located within the taconite assistance area defined in section 273.1341, that are adversely affected by the environmentally damaging operations involved in mining taconite and iron ore and producing iron ore concentrate and

for the purpose of promoting the economic development of northeast Minnesota. The taconite environmental protection fund shall be used for the following purposes:

- (a) to initiate investigations into matters the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board determines are in need of study and which will determine the environmental problems requiring remedial action;
- (b) reclamation, restoration, or reforestation of minelands not otherwise provided for by state law;
- (c) local economic development projects but only if those projects are approved by the board, and public works, including construction of sewer and water systems located within the taconite assistance area defined in section 273.1341;
- (d) monitoring of mineral industry related health problems among mining employees.

[For text of subs 2 and 3, see M.S.2004]

History: 2005 c 152 art 1 s 4

298.24 TAX ON TACONITE AND IRON SULPHIDES.

Subdivision 1. Imposed; calculation. (a) For concentrate produced in 2001, 2002, and 2003, there is imposed upon taconite and iron sulphides, and upon the mining and quarrying thereof, and upon the production of iron ore concentrate therefrom, and upon the concentrate so produced, a tax of \$2.103 per gross ton of merchantable iron ore concentrate produced therefrom. For concentrates produced in 2005, the tax rate is the same rate imposed for concentrates produced in 2004.

(b) For concentrates produced in 2006 and subsequent years, the tax rate shall be equal to the preceding year's tax rate plus an amount equal to the preceding year's tax rate multiplied by the percentage increase in the implicit price deflator from the fourth quarter of the second preceding year to the fourth quarter of the preceding year. "Implicit price deflator" means the implicit price deflator for the gross domestic product prepared by the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the United States Department of Commerce.

(c) On concentrates produced in 1997 and thereafter, an additional tax is imposed equal to three cents per gross ton of merchantable iron ore concentrate for each one percent that the iron content of the product exceeds 72 percent, when dried at 212 degrees Fahrenheit.

(d) The tax shall be imposed on the average of the production for the current year and the previous two years. The rate of the tax imposed will be the current year's tax rate. This clause shall not apply in the case of the closing of a taconite facility if the property taxes on the facility would be higher if this clause and section 298.25 were not applicable.

(e) If the tax or any part of the tax imposed by this subdivision is held to be unconstitutional, a tax of \$2.103 per gross ton of merchantable iron ore concentrate produced shall be imposed.

(f) Consistent with the intent of this subdivision to impose a tax based upon the weight of merchantable iron ore concentrate, the commissioner of revenue may indirectly determine the weight of merchantable iron ore concentrate included in fluxed pellets by subtracting the weight of the limestone, dolomite, or olivine derivatives or other basic flux additives included in the pellets from the weight of the pellets. For purposes of this paragraph, "fluxed pellets" are pellets produced in a process in which limestone, dolomite, olivine, or other basic flux additives are combined with merchantable iron ore concentrate. No subtraction from the weight of the pellets shall be allowed for binders, mineral and chemical additives other than basic flux additives, or moisture.

(g)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subdivision, for the first two years of a plant's commercial production of direct reduced ore, no tax is imposed under this section. As used in this paragraph, "commercial production" is production of more than 50,000 tons of direct reduced ore in the current year or in any prior year,

“noncommercial production” is production of 50,000 tons or less of direct reduced ore in any year, and “direct reduced ore” is ore that results in a product that has an iron content of at least 75 percent. For the third year of a plant’s commercial production of direct reduced ore, the rate to be applied to direct reduced ore is 25 percent of the rate otherwise determined under this subdivision. For the fourth commercial production year, the rate is 50 percent of the rate otherwise determined under this subdivision; for the fifth commercial production year, the rate is 75 percent of the rate otherwise determined under this subdivision; and for all subsequent commercial production years, the full rate is imposed.

(2) Subject to clause (1), production of direct reduced ore in this state is subject to the tax imposed by this section, but if that production is not produced by a producer of taconite or iron sulfides, the production of taconite or iron sulfides consumed in the production of direct reduced iron in this state is not subject to the tax imposed by this section on taconite or iron sulfides.

(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subdivision, no tax is imposed on direct reduced ore under this section during the facility’s noncommercial production of direct reduced ore. The taconite or iron sulphides consumed in the noncommercial production of direct reduced ore is subject to the tax imposed by this section on taconite and iron sulphides. Three-year average production of direct reduced ore does not include production of direct reduced ore in any noncommercial year. Three-year average production for a direct reduced ore facility that has noncommercial production is the average of the commercial production of direct reduced ore for the current year and the previous two commercial years.

[For text of subd 2, see M.S.2004]

History: 2005 c 151 art 8 s 18; 1Sp2005 c 3 art 1 s 27

298.28 DIVISION AND DISTRIBUTION OF PROCEEDS.

[For text of subs 1 to 9a, see M.S.2004]

Subd. 9b. **Taconite environmental fund.** Five cents per ton must be paid to the taconite environmental fund for use under section 298.2961, subdivision 4.

Subd. 10. **Increase.** (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), beginning with distributions in 2000, the amount determined under subdivision 9 shall be increased in the same proportion as the increase in the implicit price deflator as provided in section 298.24, subdivision 1. Beginning with distributions in 2003, the amount determined under subdivision 6, paragraph (a), shall be increased in the same proportion as the increase in the implicit price deflator as provided in section 298.24, subdivision 1.

(b) For distributions in 2005 and subsequent years, an amount equal to the increased tax proceeds attributable to the increase in the implicit price deflator as provided in section 298.24, subdivision 1, for taxes paid in 2005, except for the amount of revenue increases provided in subdivision 4, paragraph (d), is distributed to the grant and loan fund established in section 298.2961, subdivision 4.

[For text of subs 11 to 15, see M.S.2004]

History: 1Sp2005 c 1 art 4 s 89,90

298.296 OPERATION OF FUND.

Subdivision 1. **Project approval.** The board shall by August 1 of each year prepare a list of projects to be funded from the Douglas J. Johnson economic protection trust with necessary supporting information including description of the projects, plans, and cost estimates. These projects shall be consistent with the priorities established in section 298.292 and shall not be approved by the board unless it finds that:

(a) the project will materially assist, directly or indirectly, the creation of additional long-term employment opportunities;

(b) the prospective benefits of the expenditure exceed the anticipated costs; and

(c) in the case of assistance to private enterprise, the project will serve a sound business purpose.

To be proposed by the board, a project must be approved by at least eight Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board members and the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation. The list of projects shall be submitted to the governor, who shall, by November 15 of each year, approve or disapprove, or return for further consideration, each project. The money for a project may be expended only upon approval of the project by the governor. The board may submit supplemental projects for approval at any time.

[For text of subs 2 to 4, see M.S.2004]

History: 2003 c 127 art 11 s 12

298.2961 PRODUCER GRANTS.

[For text of subs 1 to 3, see M.S.2004]

Subd. 4. **Grant and loan fund.** (a) A fund is established to receive distributions under section 298.28, subdivision 9b, and to make grants or loans as provided in this subdivision. Any grant or loan made under this subdivision must be approved by a majority of the members of the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board, established under section 298.22.

(b) Distributions received in calendar year 2005 are allocated to the city of Virginia for improvements and repairs to the city's steam heating system.

(c) Distributions received in calendar year 2006 are allocated to a project of the public utilities commissions of the cities of Hibbing and Virginia to convert their electrical generating plants to the use of biomass products, such as wood.

(d) Distributions received in calendar year 2007 must be paid to the city of Tower to be used for the East Two Rivers project in or near the city of Tower.

(e) For distributions received in 2008 and later, amounts may be allocated to joint ventures with mining companies for reclamation of lands containing abandoned or worked out mines to convert these lands to marketable properties for residential, recreational, commercial, or other valuable uses.

History: 1Sp2005 c 1 art 4 s 91

298.298 LONG-RANGE PLAN.

Consistent with the policy established in sections 298.291 to 298.298, the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board shall prepare and present to the governor and the legislature by January 1, 1984 a long-range plan for the use of the Douglas J. Johnson economic protection trust fund for the economic development and diversification of the taconite assistance area defined in section 273.1341. The Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board shall, before November 15 of each even numbered year, prepare a report to the governor and legislature updating and revising this long-range plan and reporting on the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board's progress on those matters assigned to it by law. After January 1, 1984, no project shall be approved by the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board which is not consistent with the goals and objectives established in the long-range plan.

History: 2003 c 127 art 11 s 12