

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 25, 2022

The Honorable Michael Regan
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Regan,

As you know, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently announced that the supplemental environmental assessment for the proposed Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC), failed to properly account for the project's impact on climate change and emissions. In the report, the EPA also stated that NTEC would be responsible for \$2.15 billion in "climate damages" due to emissions from 2025-2040.¹ I find these conclusions deeply troubling and remain concerned that the EPA's unrelenting effort to delay the approval of this vital project based on unsupported ideological considerations is both unfair and dangerous.

The NTEC plant will provide affordable and reliable energy to families and employers in my congressional district as well as the broader region. The 625-megawatt plant would be built by both Wisconsin based Dairyland Power and Duluth Based Minnesota Power, and the project would serve customers across four states. This comes at a time when our region has been put on notice for risk of rolling blackouts this summer and when we could be facing an energy shortage of 2,600 megawatts next year.² Given this alarming reality, it is inexplicable that your agency would actively hamper efforts put more safe and reliable baseload power generation online. Rather than deploying reams of red tape that put the energy security of my constituents at risk, you should be working to streamline planning and analyze requirements to ensure the project's completion as soon as possible, before we find ourselves facing catastrophic energy shortages.

A project like this is not only crucial to the residents who would rely on it to power their homes, but also the many businesses and manufacturing companies that are in the area. This region is also home to the Midcontinent Rift Region, which includes the Duluth Complex in Minnesota and the Mellen Complex in Wisconsin, which contain vast swaths of critical minerals, such as copper, nickel, cobalt, and platinum.³ In order to fuel next generation technology, it will require significant amounts of these resources in order to satisfy ever increasing demand. However, there will be no way the U.S. can increase its domestic mineral production without accessing the resources in this area – something that will require massive amounts of reliable and affordable electricity, which NTEC is perfectly positioned to provide. Simply put, this is not just a matter of energy security, it is a matter of national security – and that is precisely how your agency should treat it.

¹ https://www.wpr.org/sites/default/files/epa_comments_-_nemadji_trail_energy_center_ntec_supplemental_ea_7-26-2022.pdf

² <https://www.misoenergy.org/about/media-center/2023-oms-miso-survey-results/>

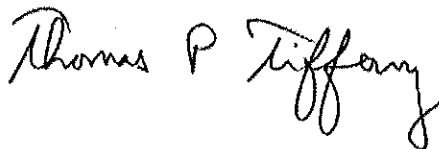
³ <https://mrdata.usgs.gov/earthmri/focus-areas/show-focus.php?id=NC001&f=html>

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While I understand that you are under enormous pressure from the radical environmental lobby to shut down this project completely, I hope you will reject those calls. The cost of acquiescing to the demands of this small but vocal group of "green lobby" agitators will only add to the region's energy shortage, further increase costs for consumers already grappling with generation-high levels of inflation, hamstringing our ability to harvest critical minerals here at home, and deliver a devastating blow to the region's key steel and forestry industries.

Again, the NTEC plant offers a golden opportunity to ensure a supply of clean, reliable, and affordable energy in an environmentally safe way. I urge you to reconsider the EPA's position and do everything in your power to ensure that this project is approved sooner rather than later.

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas P. Tiffany". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Tom Tiffany
Member of Congress