

STRATEGIC METALS ARE VITAL TO INCREASING ENERGY DEMAND

The U.S. Energy Information Administration recently released its Annual Energy Outlook, a report that analyzes factors that will or could affect change in the U.S.'s energy system over the long term. The report is important because it is the basis for examining the nation's future energy needs, market trends, and technologies, and helps shape America's energy policy. This year's report projected a significant increase in energy demand through 2040.



A variety of energy sources will be needed to meet increasing energy demand in the coming decades, including renewable sources such as wind and solar. Currently, wind energy accounts for less than 1 percent of the U.S. energy supply, but could supply up to 20 percent according to projections from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. Here in Minnesota, state law requires investor-owned utilities to produce 1.5 percent of their electricity from solar power by the year 2020. Along with the growing contribution renewables are making to the nation's energy supply, renewables also help reduce carbon emissions, reduce the nation's dependence on imported fuels, and generate new jobs in the "green" economy.

The copper, nickel and platinum group minerals contained in the "Duluth Complex" in northeastern Minnesota, and the target of the Twin Metals Minnesota Project and other emerging mining projects in the region, are vital raw materials for the renewable energy technologies of the growing green energy industry. For example, a single three megawatt wind turbine, which can supply power to more than 1,000 households annually, contains 4.7 tons of copper. Solar panels contain both copper and nickel to ensure the panels can properly withstand the extreme heat they intake.

Mining strategic metals, like the copper and nickel found in northeastern Minnesota, is critical to ensure the U.S. is able to meet its increasing energy demands with sustainable and clean energy sources.

Sources:
Minerals Make Life, <http://mineralsmakelife.org/blog/details/clean-tech-minerals-mining>
U.S. Energy Information Administration, Annual Energy Outlook, <http://www.eia.gov/forecasts/aeo/index.cfm>
Trade Wind Energy, http://www.tradewindenergy.com/windlibrary_sub.aspx?id=136