

Site Location: Former Superior Copper Mine

Project Type: Wind

Site Description:

Former copper mine, currently owned by Superior Copper Company. Property is approximately 250 acres in size and located in a rural area on the outskirts of the Town of Bellehaven.

Site History:

More than 30 years ago, Superior Copper closed its underground mining facilities after half a century of operation. The Superior Copper site was listed on the National Priorities List (NPL) about 25 years ago because nearby streams were being adversely impacted by the site's large tailings piles and associated acid mine drainage (AMD). Superior Copper was identified as the Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) and funded the site's cleanup under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)/Superfund program. The cleanup process included conducting an extensive Remedial Investigation and a Feasibility Study to evaluate possible cleanup and risk management options for the contaminated tailings piles and AMD. A Record of Decision (ROD) was signed about 15 years ago and the Remedial Action was completed about 5 years ago. The remedy included capping the contaminated tailing piles and treating the stream affected by the AMD. The site is currently in the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and Long-term Monitoring (LTM) phases of the cleanup process, which includes routine maintenance of the



capped tailings piles and active water quality monitoring of the nearby stream. Several portions of the property, including the capped tailings piles and portions of the site that were not found to be contaminated, have been designated ready for reuse by the EPA.

Current Status:

Superior Copper approached the State about repurposing a portion of the mine property, to generate revenues from the underutilized property. The site is not suitable for future residential or commercial use; however, renewable energy development was identified as a potentially viable option for repurposing the land. In cooperation with the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and EPA, Superior Copper engaged in technical studies to determine wind resource availability. The studies found that the site would be well-suited for wind development. An economic feasibility assessment indicated that the site could produce sufficient wind-generated electricity to justify estimated redevelopment costs, depending upon how the wind project was designed, developed, and operated. The Town also evaluated various land development factors that are important to developing the wind project. The Town is interested in becoming an off-taker of the renewable energy from the installation as it will help the community save money, create jobs, and achieve clean energy goals.

Due to the site's location and size, a utility-scale wind installation (i.e., using individual turbine sizes > 2 megawatt [MW]) would be feasible economically. The size of the turbine would be dictated by availability and contours of the land area and surrounding above-ground infrastructure as well as proximity to population areas. The site is ideal for renewable energy development because it is close to an existing transmission line and in close proximity to the local utility distribution network, so the electricity produced can be distributed to the local area. Current plans for the site involve the construction of 2 turbines with a combined 5 MW (equal to 5,000 kilowatt [kW]) in capacity.

While the area immediately around the former mine is not densely populated, there is still a significant need for community engagement. Thus far, the community has expressed interest in the proposed renewable energy project, but stakeholders do have concerns about how the development will affect community members and resources, including issues such as electricity costs, environmental impacts, and sound and visual impacts.

Superior Copper recently selected a wind project developer after a competitive bid and interview process and is ready to get started with planning its next steps, in cooperation with the Town.

The next step in the planning effort is to conduct a meeting with key stakeholders who have a role in the redevelopment process.

Interconnection Information for Potential Renewable Energy Project:

The former Superior Copper Mine is located in a rural area on the outskirts of the Town of Bellehaven. On-site mining operations are no longer active, and there are no end-users nearby. The east side of the property abuts a high-voltage transmission corridor, while the northeast corner of the property lies adjacent to a local utility distribution feeder.