

The Ranger

Oct. 5, 2022

October is Manufacturing Month in Minnesota



October is Minnesota Manufacturing Month. The manufacturing industry is an integral part of the region's economy that accounts for direct and indirect jobs, career paths for students and workers, and often higher-than-average wages.

There are a large variety of manufacturers in the Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation service area that have significant economic impacts to the region. They manufacture their

products here in northeastern Minnesota and transport them to state, national and international markets. Below is a sampling of the region's manufacturers.

- [Advanced Machine Guarding Solutions](#) (Hibbing): safety steel wire mesh guarding for the automation industry.
- [ASV](#) (Grand Rapids): compact track loaders and skid steers.
- [Detroit Diesel Remanufacturing](#) (Hibbing): electric vehicle batteries, power inverters and HV products.
- [Floe International](#) (Hoyt Lakes): dock and boat lift systems, utility and recreational trailers, and FLOE CRAFT boats.
- [Heliene USA](#) (Mountain Iron): photovoltaic solar modules.
- [Range Tool](#) (Gilbert): CNC Precision contract machine products.
- [RazorEdge Systems](#) (Ely): industrial knife sharpening systems.

“Northeastern Minnesota has a strong economic core of manufacturing. A large array of products is manufactured in our region and exported throughout the state, nation and world. Heavy industrial equipment, piping, roofing, siding, solar panels, apparel, metals, woods, plastics, fishing lures, canoe stabilizers and docks are only a few of the products made by the people in northeastern Minnesota.” – *Mark Phillips, Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation commissioner.*

The manufacturing sector in Northeast Minnesota is home to over 8,400 jobs at 342 business establishments, operating in 17 different manufacturing subsectors. [Learn more on the Northeast Minnesota Manufacturing Blog](#) and [learn more about job opportunities in Minnesota's manufacturing industry.](#)

PHOTO COLLAGE: top row: Advanced Machine Guarding Solutions and ASV; bottom row: Detroit Diesel Remanufacturing and Heliene USA. Heliene celebrated its fifth anniversary in Mountain Iron, May 2022.

Build What Matters economic tour visits northeastern Minnesota

The Build What Matters economic tour kicked off yesterday. Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is leading state agency commissioners on a tour of northeastern Minnesota. The purpose of the tour is to showcase what makes the state one of the most welcoming and competitive in the country for attracting and growing businesses and to learn what the Walz-Flanagan Administration can do to make it even better.



The 2022 Build What Matters tour includes stops in eight Minnesota communities over three days, visiting companies, schools and public works projects to learn about success stories across the region. Commissioners are meeting with business and civic leaders to hear feedback on strategies to grow Minnesota's economy and create good-paying jobs. Gov. Tim Walz participated in today's leg of the tour with visits to Heliene USA in Mountain Iron and Keetac in Keewatin.

"It was great to be on the Range today to visit two successful companies that are positioning Minnesota as a leader in both the mining and solar industries," said Gov. Walz. "I am committed to working collaboratively with businesses and local leaders across Minnesota to keep our state's economy competitive, innovative and thriving."



Below is a list of stops on the tour.

Tuesday, Oct. 4

- Sappi, Cloquet.
- Leadership Luncheon, Cloquet.
- Rock Ridge Public Schools, Eveleth.
- Bridge View Park, Virginia.
- Komatsu Manufacturing, Virginia.

- Dinner with Tribal Leaders, Tower.

Wednesday, Oct. 5

- Heliene USA, Mountain Iron.
- Keetac, Keewatin.
- Detroit Diesel Remanufacturing, Hibbing.
- Cirrus Aircraft, Duluth.
- Chester Park, Duluth.

Thursday, Oct. 6



- Launch MN Startup Event, Duluth.
- Port of Duluth.
- Build What Matters Tour Capstone Forum, Duluth.



The following commissioners are participating in the tour.

- DEED Commissioner **Steve Grove.**
- Department of Commerce Commissioner **Grace Arnold.**
- Department of Transportation Commissioner **Nancy Daubenberger.**
- Pollution Control Agency Commissioner **Katrina Kessler.**
- Office of Higher Education Commissioner **Dennis Olson.**
- Department of Agriculture Commissioner **Thom Petersen.**
- Department of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation Commissioner **Mark Phillips.**
- Department of Natural Resources Commissioner **Sarah Strommen.**

The tour, an annual DEED event to showcase interagency collaboration in support of businesses and hear feedback from Minnesotans around the state, returned for the first time since before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Snowmobile & ATV bridge rebuilt with trails task force grant

The Ranger ATV Snowmobile Club was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Northern St. Louis County Trails Task Force to help rebuild the Partridge River bridge between Aurora and Hoyt Lakes. The bridge had been identified as a hazard due to worn decking from years of use by snowmobiles, ATVs and grooming equipment.

Over 30 club volunteers rebuilt the bridge decking with new wood on a Saturday in late September. The newly reconstructed bridge will accommodate the snowmobile, ATV and side-by-side UTV traffic during the upcoming peak fall and winter season.





The Ranger ATV Snowmobile Club is based in Hoyt Lakes and grooms the snowmobile and ATV trail from Pequaywan Trail on Highway 16 to Hoyt Lakes, Aurora, Biwabik, Giants Ridge and Gilbert.

The trails grant program was funded at \$100,000 by Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation in fiscal year 2022 and is administered by Northern St. Louis County Trails Task Force and Iron Range Tourism Bureau (IRTB). The task force and IRTB utilize the funding to award grants of

\$10,000 or less to projects that foster the development and long-term sustainability of recreational trails and facilities in Northern St. Louis County.

Each grant requires a 1:1 match that could include cash, in-kind labor, donated materials, donated professional planning and environmental services, and donated land related to the project. Eligible grant applicants include cities, townships, counties, nonprofits and tribal units of government within St. Louis County and the [Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation service area](#).

For more information [email Beth Pierce](#) or call her at 218-749-8161.



Itasca Gun Club relocates to new site and continues its economic impact in the region



Itasca Gun Club (IGC) in Grand Rapids installed electric power at its 300-yard outdoor handicap-accessible shooting range and constructed berms for pistol and rifle shooting. The outdoor range was recently relocated from leased mine tailings land to a new 160-acre site due to mining operations. Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation supported the electrification project with a \$7,500 Culture & Tourism grant. Total project investment was \$30,128.

IGC is a non-profit organization that was incorporated in 1964 and has over 1,000 family members from many counties across Minnesota and other states. Its first shooting range location was adjacent to Grand Rapids High School until development of residential housing forced a relocation in 1984 to the mine tailings area. The club has been self-supporting for 57 years and operates on a debt-free budget through annual fundraising, membership dues and instructional class fees.

Shooting sports, education and training are offered by IGC. Each year over 300 youth and 250 adults are trained there in firearm safety. Other classes offered include conceal carry permit, metical cartridge reloading, range safety officer and NRA instructor training. The club offers specialty classes such as women only permit to carry, home firearm safety and basic pistol shooting. Many law enforcement agencies use the facility for shooting and training. Outdoor events include Itasca Action Pistol, hunter sight-in days, steel silhouette shooting, mini palma, service rifle shooting and special memorial World War II shoots.



An indoor range remains at the mine tailings site and is utilized by many organized groups including a youth rifle team, 4H youth air rifle and several pistol leagues. A “Pistols and Coffee” group meets twice per week there for shooting practice and socializing. Future plans at the new site entail a training/classroom facility, handicap-accessible indoor 50-yard range, outdoor smallbore 100-yard range and outdoor 1,000-yard range. The new range is handicap accessible and will host hunt events for disabled vets.



Once IGC vacates the leased mine tailing site, the classroom building will be moved to the new site and remaining structures will be demolished. The dirt from the face of the berms, which contained lead bullets has been buried at the new site in compliance with Minnesota Pollution Control Agency requirements.

“Our shooting facility and hunting in general have a positive economic connection to the local economy of Itasca County and the state of Minnesota,” said Bob

Ross, IGC treasurer. "Over 1,000 people use the range each fall for hunter sight-in days. They come from all over the state and neighboring states to hunt in Minnesota each year.”

According to IGC Minnesota hunters and shooters spend more than \$400 million annually and support 14,398 jobs that pay more than \$300 million in wages and \$60 million in tax revenue. In addition, local contractors and businesses were used for the work on the outdoor range relocation and electrification project which had a direct and immediate impact to the local economy.

“We are very grateful to Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation for their various grant programs which we have been able to qualify for over the past several years,” said Ross. “Without the agency and their grants, we would not have been able to progress as far or as quickly on relocating and developing our range.”



[Email Danae Beaudette](#) for Culture & Tourism grant information or call her at 218-735-3022.

The Ranger is a publication of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation. Our mission is to invest resources to foster vibrant growth and economic prosperity in northeastern Minnesota.



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