



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Minnesota State Archives

AUDITOR
Land Department

**An Inventory of Its Reports of Inspectors of State Mines and
Mineral Lands**

OVERVIEW OF THE RECORDS

- Agency:** Minnesota. State Auditor. Land Dept.
- Series Title:** Reports of inspectors of state mines and mineral lands,
- Dates:** 1904-1932.
- Abstract:** Annual and periodic, often weekly, reports of Frank A. Wildes, chief inspector of iron mines situated on state lands, to the state auditor.
- Quantity:** 2.2 cu. ft. (14 v. and 3 folders in 2 boxes and 1 partial box).
- Location:** See Detailed Description section for box locations.

LEGAL BACKGROUND FOR MINES INSPECTION

Revised Laws of Minnesota 1905, section 2491 prescribed the terms of mining leases on state lands. It granted lessees the right to mine and remove the “merchantable shipping iron ore” found on such land; required them to make quarterly royalty payments to the state treasurer, accompanied by an “exact and truthful statement” to the state auditor of the amount of ore removed, as weighed by the railroad company transporting the ore; also required monthly statements to the state auditor of these weights; prescribed the minimum amount of tonnage to be removed annually in order for the lease to remain in effect; and required the mining companies to operate “in such a manner only as is usual and customary in skillful and proper mining operations” and in such a way as not to hinder subsequent operations. A brief enforcement clause authorized the state of Minnesota “to enter upon and into said premises at any time, and to inspect and survey the same, and to measure the quantity of ore which shall have been mined or removed therefrom.”

These provisions, modified and considerably expanded, remained in force throughout the period covered by this set of inspectors’ reports; the enforcement clause remained essentially the same.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE REPORTS

Annual (1904-1932) and periodic, often weekly (1904-1914) reports, with related correspondence, of Frank A. Wildes, chief inspector of iron mines situated on state lands, to the state auditor. They report on field inspections of mines and their operations, on results of ore explorations, on relations with mining companies, on mining policies and problems, and on the general administration of the inspection office. There is also commentary on timber trespass, forest fires, waste dumping, lake levels, leases, squatters, land department personnel, and similar matters concerned with the administration of state-owned lands. Reports of Wildes' deputy inspectors are also included for some years.

ORGANIZATION OF THE RECORDS

These records are organized into the following sections, and within each section are bound chronologically into volumes:

Annual Reports of the Inspector of State Mines, 1904-1932.

Reports of Inspectors of State Mines and Mineral Lands, 1904-1914.

RELATED MATERIALS

A probable successor series to the weekly reports is Correspondence with Hibbing Office, 1912-1934 (cataloged separately).

Reports and Correspondence (a separately cataloged series) includes chief engineer annual reports (1928-1932). Correspondence: Letters Sent, Superintendent of Mines (separate series) includes Mineral Lands Division annual reports (1926-1932, carbon copies).

INDEX TERMS

These records are indexed under the following headings in the catalog of the Minnesota Historical Society. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons or places should search the catalog using these headings.

Topics:

Forest fires--Minnesota.
Inspecting.
Iron mines and mining--Minnesota.
Iron ores--Minnesota.
Lakes--Minnesota--Regulation.
Mine inspection--Minnesota.
Mines and mineral resources--Minnesota.
Mining corporations--Minnesota.
Public lands--Minnesota.
Sand and gravel mines and mining—Minnesota.
Timber lands--Minnesota.

Timber trespass--Minnesota.
Waste disposal--Minnesota.

Places:

Hibbing (Minn.).

Persons:

Barrett, George R.
Deichen, W. A.
Koerner, August T.
Ostrand, P. M.
Stevens, Arthur H.
Wildes, Frank A.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Preferred Citation:

[Indicate the cited volume and page or item and folder title here]. Minnesota State Auditor: Land Department. Clippings relating to state mines and mineral lands. Minnesota Historical Society. State Archives.

See the Chicago Manual of Style for additional examples.

Accession Information:

Accession number(s): none (supplements to reports); 989-10 (reports)

Processing Information:

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE RECORDS

Note to Researchers: To request materials, please note both the location and box numbers shown below.

Annual Reports of the Inspector of State Mines, 1904-1932. 6 volumes and 3 folders.

Annual reports (typewritten) of Frank A Wildes, inspector of iron mines situated on state lands, to the state auditor. All are bound into volumes, except for a few loose supplements that were discovered separately. They review inspection and oversight work in general; comment on mining policies, problems, and prospects, and on relations with mining companies and the general public; and describe the activities of each operating mine and the general administration of the inspection office.

Reports for 1904-1906 are fairly brief; subsequent reports are longer and include lists of contracts and leases and statistics on iron ore production, reserve tonnages, and the like. The reports also comment on sand and gravel pits, squatters, waste dumping, and timber trespass on state mineral lands. The inspector and his assistants were headquartered in Hibbing.

Reports for 1909-1910 are supplemented by Virginia District reports of August T. Koerner. The report for 1917 is supplemented by reports of W. A. Deichen, chief engineer of the state mining department (1915-1917) and P. M. Ostrand, inspector of state mines on the Cuyuna Range (1917).

Location	Box	
106.K.11.4F	1	1904-1915. 1 volume. Supplements to annual reports, 1905, 1909-1910, 1917. 2 folders. Duplicate (more legible) copy of 1914 annual report. 1 folder. 1916-1919. 1 volume. 1920-1923. 1 volume. 1924-1926. 1 volume. 1927-1929. 1 volume. 1930-1932. 1 volume.

Reports of Inspectors of State Mines and Mineral Lands, 1904-1932. 8 volumes.

Periodic reports, often weekly, with related correspondence, from Frank A Wildes, chief inspector of mines of state lands, to the state auditor. All are bound into volumes. Reports of mine inspectors George R. Barrett, August T. Koerner, and Arthur H. Stevens are included also. Most reports and letters are typescript; a few are handwritten.

They report on field inspections of mines, on ore shipments, on results of ore explorations, on mining company agreements, and on actual or proposed operations by mining companies. There is also commentary on timber trespass, forest fires, waste dumping, lake levels, leases, squatters, land department personnel, the Hibbing branch office, and similar matters concerned with the administration of state-owned lands.

Location	Box	
106.K.11.4F	1	1904-1907. 1 volume.
106.K.11.5B	2	1908-1909. 1 volume. 1901. 1 volume. 1911. 1 volume. Includes 1911 annual report. 1912. 1 volume. Includes 1912 annual report. 1913. 1 volume. 1914. 1 volume.
111.B.20.6F	---	Lean Ores, Stockpiles, Trespass of Iron Ore, Sand and Gravel, 1909-1914. 1 volume.