



LOCAL UNION 4974

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Press Release

January 23, 2009

From: United Steelworkers Locals 4974 and 4950 representing 1300 plus bargaining unit employees of the Tilden and Empire Mines.

RE: Enhanced Retirement and Voluntary Layoff Option.

The two USW Local Unions announced they have negotiated an agreement with Cliffs Natural Resources to provide for the immediate option of an enhanced retirement for all employees who are currently or will become eligible to retire on or before June 30th, 2009. The agreement also has a voluntary layoff option for up to an additional 124 bargaining unit employees. There will be a temporary recall of an additional twenty maintenance employees who will be able to return on a 32-hour per week schedule, while still maintaining medical and other benefits.

This overall agreement has the potential to offset up to 194 of the current and scheduled layoffs projected to affect 411 bargaining unit members at the Tilden and Empire Mines. It is anticipated that recall of affected employees from layoff could begin the week of February 1st, 2009.

The parties have also negotiated a reduced rate for medical services for those employees on layoff who will be without health insurance benefits. This benefit will be available through the Cliffs Clinic at Bell Hospital, in Ishpeming.

While the Unions believe the agreement is a significant step towards helping Steelworkers affected by the recent Layoffs, the second half of 2009 still remains very uncertain as to what employment levels will be for all Employees of Cliffs Marquette Range operations.

Jim Jarvi
President
USW Local 4974

Steve Laine
President
USW Local 4950

“Some men see things as they are and say, why. I dream of things that never were and say, why not.” RFK