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Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. to Restart Production at Northshore Mine in Minnesota

CLEVELAND, March 14, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.**(NYSE: CLF)** announced today that it will be restarting iron ore pellet production at its Northshore Mining operation in Minnesota by May 15, 2016. The Company is taking such action based on its domestic customers' demand for iron ore pellets and consistent with its previously announced production plans for the year.

Cliffs' Northshore Mining iron ore operation is comprised of a mine and a taconite pellet processing facility located in Minnesota. The operation employs approximately 540 employees. Cliffs is also operating at normal rates at its Hibbing Taconite mine in Minnesota, as well as the Tilden and Empire mines in Michigan. Cliffs' United Taconite operations in Minnesota are currently idled.

Lourenco Goncalves, Cliffs' Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, stated, "The avalanche of unfairly traded steel hitting the U.S. since last year negatively affected our clients' production levels and, as a consequence, affected us. At this time, with the trade cases approaching their final stages and preliminary duties being announced, the volume of unfairly traded steel is starting to subside. As our clients' order books improve and their need for pellets approach more normal levels, we are pleased to announce that we are bringing back to work our dedicated employees at Northshore." Mr. Goncalves added: "In 2015, Cliffs developed at Northshore Mining a new product, the DR-grade pellets used as feedstock to DRI production. As we restart operations at Northshore in May, we will also resume the production of DR-grade pellets destined to EAF clients."

In accordance with Cliffs' 2016 full-year anticipated USIO production volume of 16 million tons, the Company is maintaining its previous cash production cost per ton expectations for 2016 at $50 to $55 per ton and its cash cost of goods sold expectation is $55 to $60 per ton.

About Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.
Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. is a leading mining and natural resources company in the United States. The Company is a major supplier of iron ore pellets to the North American steel industry from its mines and pellet plants located in Michigan and Minnesota. Cliffs also operates an iron ore mining complex in Western Australia. Driven by the core values of safety, social, environmental and capital stewardship, Cliffs' employees endeavor to provide all stakeholders operating and financial transparency.

Forward-Looking Statements
This release contains statements that constitute "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the federal securities laws. As a general matter, forward-looking statements relate to anticipated trends and expectations rather than historical matters. Forward-looking statements are subject to uncertainties and factors relating to Cliffs' operations and business

environment that are difficult to predict and may be beyond our control. Such uncertainties and factors may cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements. These statements speak only as of the date of this release, and we undertake no ongoing obligation, other than that imposed by law, to update these statements. Uncertainties and risk factors that could affect Cliffs' future performance and cause results to differ from the forward-looking statements in this release include, but are not limited to: trends affecting our financial condition; results of operations or future prospects, particularly the continued volatility of iron ore prices; availability of capital and our ability to maintain adequate liquidity, in particular considering borrowing base reductions from the sale of non-core assets such as North American Coal; our level of indebtedness could limit cash flow available to fund working capital, capital expenditures, acquisitions and other general corporate purposes or ongoing needs of our business, which could prevent us from fulfilling our debt obligations; continued weaknesses in global economic conditions, including downward pressure on prices caused by oversupply or imported products, including the impact of any reduced barriers to trade, recently filed and forthcoming trade cases, reduced market demand and any change to the economic growth rate in China; our ability to reach agreement with our iron ore customers regarding any modifications to sales contract provisions, renewals or new arrangements; uncertainty relating to restructurings in the steel industry and/or affecting the steel industry; our ability to maintain appropriate relations with unions and employees and enter into or renew collective bargaining agreements on satisfactory terms; the impact of our customers reducing their steel production or using other methods to produce steel; our ability to successfully execute an exit option for our Canadian Entities that minimizes the cash outflows and associated liabilities of such entities, including the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (Canada) process; our ability to successfully identify and consummate any strategic investments and complete planned divestitures; our ability to successfully diversify our product mix and add new customers beyond our traditional blast furnace clientele; the outcome of any contractual disputes with our customers, joint venture partners or significant energy, material or service providers or any other litigation or arbitration; the ability of our customers and joint venture partners to meet their obligations to us on a timely basis or at all; the impact of price-adjustment factors on our sales contracts; changes in sales volume or mix; our actual levels of capital spending; our actual economic iron ore reserves or reductions in current mineral estimates, including whether any mineralized material qualifies as a reserve; events or circumstances that could impair or adversely impact the viability of a mine and the carrying value of associated assets, as well as any resulting impairment charges; the results of prefeasibility and feasibility studies in relation to projects; impacts of existing and increasing governmental laws and regulation and related costs and liabilities, including failure to receive or maintain required operating and environmental permits, approvals, modifications or other authorization of, or from, any governmental or regulatory entity and costs related to implementing improvements to ensure compliance with regulatory changes; our ability to cost-effectively achieve planned production rates or levels; uncertainties associated with natural disasters, weather conditions, unanticipated geological conditions, supply or price of energy, equipment failures and other unexpected events; adverse changes in currency values, currency exchange rates, interest rates and tax laws; risks related to international operations; availability of capital equipment and component parts; the potential existence of significant deficiencies or material weakness in our internal control over financial reporting; problems or uncertainties with productivity, tons mined, transportation, mine-closure obligations or costs, environmental liabilities, employee-benefit costs and other risks of the mining industry; and the risk factors identified in Part I - Item 1A of our Annual Report on

Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2015. The information contained herein speaks as of the date of this release and may be superseded by subsequent events. Except as may be required by applicable securities laws, we do not undertake any obligation to revise or update any forward-looking statements contained in this release.

To view the original version on PR Newswire, visit:http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/cliffs-natural-resources-inc-to-restart-production-at-northshore-mine-in-minnesota-300235198.html

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