

- Technology 7A
- Business Law 4B
- Coach's Corner 8B
- Newsmakers 9B

To subscribe, call us at 800-777-7306
or order online at BusinessNorth.com.

PRSRT STD
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 PERMIT NO. 492
 DULUTH, MN

BusinessNorth
 101 W. 2nd St., Ste 202
 Duluth, MN 55802-2086

Change Service Requested



And to describe the relationship between the mines and the partisan DFL Range delegation as anything but dysfunctional would be an understatement.

lion shortfall, this regional crisis is resonating. "Fact is, the economic vitality of Northeastern Minnesota is important to the

problems in the northeast affect the state's business climate.

Iron Range continues on page 5A

Transportation 'cluster' takes shape

By Pamela Rust

Lake Superior's finger points directly at Duluth/Superior. And it should — the area is the hub of a bustling commercial transportation industry.

Building on that strength, three local innovators — an educator, an economic developer and a trucking company president — have created a "transportation cluster" in the region. Tentatively known as the Lake Superior Transportation Cluster, the group recently received a \$20,000 grant from the Wisconsin Department of Commerce to organize the cluster, develop a plan to address transportation sector needs and help it grow.

With trucking, rail, marine, aviation and pipeline carriers, the Twin Ports area is home to a thriving transportation industry with an economic impact pushing \$1 billion in annual revenue. That's about half the size of the wood products or taconite

industries.

Economists reiterate that building upon a region's established products or services is key to ensuring a stronger economic future. A powerful transportation cluster will encourage all transport modes to work together to reduce costs and build supportive networks of suppliers and competitors.

In the long run it also will provide customers — manufacturers, suppliers and service industries — the most cost-effective and efficient transport system.

Cluster development also will help transportation companies increase their industry knowledge as well as their ability to compete. And that encourages more economic development.

Andy Lisak, one of the cluster founders, heads the Development Association, a non-profit economic developer in Superior and Douglas County.

Cluster continues on page 9A



photo courtesy of Development Association

Andy Lisak, executive director of the Superior-based Development Association, is one of the cluster founders. The firm will manage the grant.