



MINERAL INDUSTRY SURVEYS

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF MINES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20241



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Iron Ore, Monthly

IRON ORE IN APRIL 1988

U.S. mine production of iron ore was 11% more than that of March, according to the Bureau of Mines, U.S. Department of the Interior. The increase in production reflected a pickup of activity at four of the six active pelletizing plants on the Mesabi Range. Mine shipments increased more than threefold with the arrival of spring and resumption of ore shipping on the upper Great Lakes. All six of the active U.S. loading docks on the Lakes were in operation by April 2. Dock shipments totaled 5.1 million long tons for the month and were 37% greater than those of April 1987. Imports rose 89% between March and April, with 83% of the material entering through Gulf or mid-Atlantic ports. Exports to Canada increased more than fivefold, a normal event linked to the opening of the Soo Locks and the Welland Canal for the new navigation season. Consumption of ore and agglomerates declined slightly during the month. However, total consumption through April reached 22.9 million tons, up 26% from the 18.1 million tons for the same period in 1987. On April 30, 50 blast furnaces were in operation, the same number as on March 31.

In mid-April, Cleveland-Cliffs Inc. raised its 1988 production goal for the Tilden Mine near Ishpeming, MI, to meet increased pellet orders. The mining operation is expected to produce between 6 and 7 million tons of pellets this year, instead of 4.8 million tons as was originally planned. Recent steps taken to improve productivity and lower operating costs have made Tilden's pellets more competitive. Two grades of fluxed pellets are being made in addition to the traditional acid pellets. The mine has an annual capacity of 8.0 million tons, but produced only 4.7 million tons in 1987 because of depressed demand. To meet the revised goal, Cliffs has recalled about 75 employees, bringing total employment to about 850. Ten of the twelve grinding lines at the concentrator are now on stream, up from six at the beginning of the year. One of the two remaining lines is being used to grind fluxstone. The second of two pelletizing lines has also been put into operation. The production increase should not interfere with the company's ongoing project to develop the Cliffs Drive III magnetite ore body.

Eveleth Mines also has revised its 1988 pellet production goal upward. To meet the new goal of 4.4 million tons, the company has had to recall 80 employees and reactivate the second of two pelletizing lines at its Fairlane plant, about 10 miles south of Eveleth, MN. This older line, which had been idle since July 1982, gives Fairlane a total effective capacity of 6.1 million tons per year. In 1987, the mining operation produced 3.5 million tons of partially-fluxed pellets using an organic binder and a 1% limestone additive. Eveleth presently employs about 565 hourly and 215 salaried personnel.

Last winter, Oglebay Norton Co., manager and part owner of Eveleth, filed an environmental assessment plan with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, seeking approval to expand the north pit of the Thunderbird Mine toward the City of Virginia. Under the long-term plan, Eveleth would expand the pit by 400 acres and create three new stockpiles. One of these stockpiles would be located in the old Rouchleau Pit on the southeastern edge of Virginia.

Update: The second pelletizing line at Eveleth became operational on July 1 and will be run on a continuous basis for a minimum of 4 months.

U.S. IRON ORE

MONTHLY PRODUCTION AND SHIPMENTS

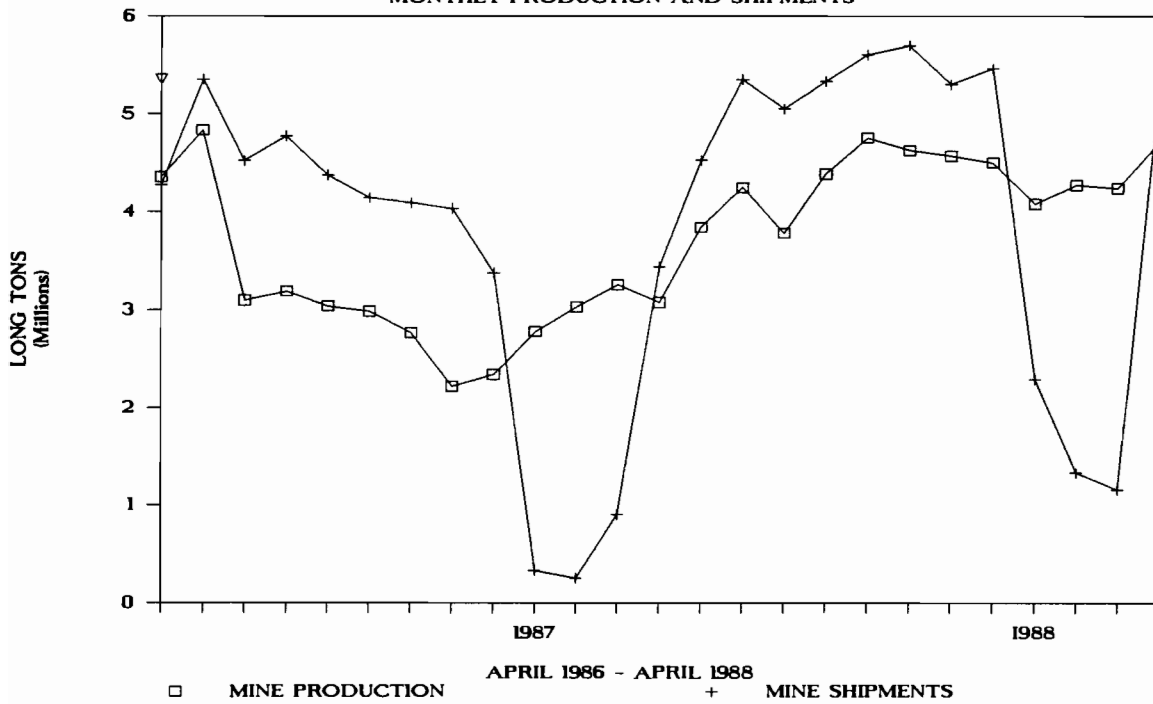


Table 1. - U.S. production and shipments of iron ore, by districts 1/
(Exclusive of ore containing 5% or more manganese)
(Thousand long tons)

Period	Lake Superior	Other U.S.	Total <u>2/</u>	
			1988	1987
Production:				
1987 p/-----	46,194	700	--	46,894
1988:				
1st Quarter-----	12,396	211	12,607	9,069
April-----	4,655	63	4,718	3,076
Shipments:				
1987 p/-----	46,523	734	--	47,257
1988:				
1st Quarter-----	4,557	212	4,769	1,484
April-----	5,225	57	5,282	3,437

p/ Preliminary.

1/ Excludes byproduct ore, except where noted.

2/ Data may not add to totals shown because of independent rounding.

Table 2. - U.S. mine production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore 1/
 (Exclusive of ore containing 5% or more manganese)
 (Thousand long tons)

District	Production April		Shipments April		Mine Stocks April 30	
	1988	1987	1988	1987	1988	1987
Lake Superior:						
Michigan-----	1,054	737	1,573	1,190	2,289	3,060
Minnesota-----	3,600	2,283	3,652	2,176	7,330	6,801
Other U.S.-----	63	56	57	70	215	264
Total <u>2/</u> -----	4,718	3,076	5,282	3,437	9,834	10,124

1/ Excludes byproduct ore.

2/ Data may not add to totals shown because of independent rounding.

Table 3. - U.S. exports of iron ore
 (Thousand long tons)

Period	Canada	Other	Total <u>1/</u>	
			1988	1987
1987 <u>p/</u> -----	5,011	2	--	5,013
1988:				
1st Quarter-----	334	1	335	92
April-----	548	(<u>2/</u>)	548	440

p/ Preliminary.

1/ Data may not add to totals shown because of independent rounding.

2/ Less than one-half unit.

Source: Bureau of the Census.

Table 4. - Canada: Shipments of iron ore
(Thousand dry long tons)

Period	Newfound- land	Quebec	Ontario	British Columbia	1988 Total 1/	1987 Total 1/
1987 p/----- 1988:	18,368	15,621	3,184	33	--	37,206
1st Quarter---	2,710	3,413	812	6	6,941	6,081
April-----	1,656	1,418	123	2	3,200	3,115

p/ Preliminary.

1/ Data may not add to totals shown because of independent rounding.

Source: Energy, Mines, and Resources Canada.

Table 5. - U.S. imports for consumption of iron ore, by country
(Exclusive of ore containing 10% or more manganese)

Country of origin	April 1988		Year to date 1988			Year to date 1987 (thousand long tons)
	Thousand long tons	Value 1/ (thousand dollars)	Thousand long tons	Value 1/ (thousand dollars)	Value 1/ (dollars per ton)	
Australia-----	123	1,706	366	6,235	17.04	--
Brazil-----	466	10,271	1,221	22,692	18.58	1,338
Canada-----	808	25,347	2,483	85,258	34.34	758
Chile-----	--	--	54	1,235	23.00	329
Liberia-----	126	1,460	126	1,460	11.58	313
Mauritania-----	68	1,072	131	2,076	15.90	66
Peru-----	--	--	78	1,308	16.76	41
Spain-----	--	--	--	--	--	1
Sweden-----	(2/)	3	(2/)	3	31.25	55
Venezuela-----	--	--	506	10,440	20.64	528
Other-----	55	1,336	3/55	3/1,337	24.17	58
Total 4/-----	1,646	41,195	5,019	132,045	26.31	3,486

1/ Customs value. Excludes international freight, insurance, and other c.i.f. charges.

2/ Less than one-half unit.

3/ Excludes 28,466 tons of crude iron sulfate crystals reported in March from the Federal Republic of Germany. The material had a customs value of \$318,651.

4/ Data may not add to totals shown because of independent rounding.

Source: Bureau of the Census data reported under item 601.24 of the Tariff Schedules of the United States.

Table 6. - U.S. consumption and stocks of iron ore and agglomerates
at consuming plants and production of pig iron
(Thousand long tons)

State or Region	Consumption			Stocks	
	April 1988	Year to date		April 30	
	1988	1988	1987	1988	1987
Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, and Missouri-----	315	1,289	1,257	701	795
California, Colorado, and Utah- Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia-----	NA	NA	--	NA	--
Illinois and Indiana-----	688	2,790	2,504	1,215	1,323
Michigan and Minnesota-----	2,285	9,234	6,979	3,166	3,555
New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Rhode Island-	510	1,989	1,895	2,455	1,323
	1,909	7,562	5,457	2,048	2,207
Total 1/-----	5,707	22,864	18,090	9,585	9,204
Stocks at U.S. receiving/transfer docks-----				1,023	557

Consuming Sector	Consumption by process			Pig iron produced		
	April 1988	Year to date		April 1988	Year to date 2/	
	1988	1988	1987	1988	1988	1987
Blast furnaces-----	5,109	20,249	15,802	4,196	16,667	12,697
Steel furnaces-----	33	87	19	--	--	--
Agglomerating plants 3/--	565	2,528	2,256	--	--	--
Miscellaneous 4/-----	(5/)	(5/)	13	--	--	--
Total 1/-----	5,707	22,864	18,090	4,196	16,667	12,697

NA Not available.

1/ Data may not add to totals shown because of independent rounding.

2/ Includes revisions for previous months.

3/ Iron ore and iron ore concentrates consumed in agglomerating plants not located at the mine site.

4/ Sold to nonreporting companies or used for purposes not listed.

5/ Less than one-half unit.

Source: American Iron Ore Association (consumption of iron ore).
American Iron and Steel Institute (production of pig iron).

Table 7. - U.S. imports for consumption of iron ore, by customs district
 (Exclusive of ore containing 10% or more manganese)
 (Thousand long tons)

Customs district	April 1988	Year to date	
		1988	1987
Baltimore-----	930	2,446	1,199
Buffalo-----	--	--	(1/)
Charleston, SC-----	50	118	110
Chicago-----	161	226	222
Cleveland-----	127	149	143
Detroit-----	1	31	26
Houston-----	--	--	(1/)
Los Angeles-----	--	--	--
Milwaukee-----	--	--	--
Mobile-----	107	342	406
New Orleans-----	52	2/475	502
New York-----	(1/)	(1/)	(1/)
Philadelphia-----	219	1,228	878
San Juan, PR-----	--	(1/)	1
Wilmington, NC-----	--	--	--
Other-----	--	5	--
Total 3/-----	1,646	5,019	3,486

1/ Less than one-half unit.

2/ Excludes 28,466 tons of crude iron sulfate reported for March.

3/ Data may not add to totals shown because of independent rounding.

Source: Bureau of the Census.