

CLIFFS NATURAL RESOURCES INC.

Form S-3ASR

February 09, 2017

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on February 9, 2017

Registration No. 333-

UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549

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FORM S-3  
REGISTRATION STATEMENT  
UNDER  
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

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Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.  
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

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Ohio 34-1464672  
(State or other jurisdiction of (I.R.S. Employer  
incorporation or organization) Identification Number)  
200 Public Square  
Suite 3300  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2315  
Telephone: (216) 694-5700

(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)

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Timothy K. Flanagan  
Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer  
Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.  
200 Public Square, Suite 3300  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2315  
Telephone: (216) 694-5700

(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

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Copies to:

Michael J. Solecki, Esq.  
Jones Day  
North Point  
901 Lakeside Avenue  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114  
Telephone: (216) 586-3939  
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Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: As soon as practicable after this Registration Statement becomes effective.



If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box.

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box.

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer

Accelerated filer

Non-accelerated filer (Do not check if a smaller reporting company) Smaller reporting company

**CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE**

Title of each class of securities to be registered	Amount to be registered(1)	Proposed maximum offering price per unit(1)	Proposed maximum aggregate offering price(1)	Amount of registration fee(1)
Common Shares, par value \$0.125 per share				
Class A Preferred Stock, without par value				
Class B Preferred Stock, without par value				
Depository Shares				
Warrants				
Subscription Rights				
Debt Securities				
Units				

(1) An indeterminate aggregate initial offering price or number of securities are being registered and may from time to time be offered at (i) indeterminate prices or (ii) upon conversion of or exchange for the preferred stock, depository shares, warrants, subscription rights or debt securities registered hereunder that provide for conversion or exchange, or pursuant to the antidilution provisions of any such securities. The registrant is deferring payment of the registration fee pursuant to Rule 456(b) and is omitting this information in reliance on Rule 456(b) and Rule 457(r).

Prospectus

Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.

Common Shares

Preferred Stock

Depository Shares

Warrants

Subscription Rights

Debt Securities

Units

We may offer and sell from time to time our common shares, preferred stock, depository shares, warrants, subscription rights and debt securities, as well as units that include any of these securities.

We will provide the specific terms of the securities to be offered in one or more supplements to this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement carefully before you invest in our securities.

This prospectus may not be used to offer and sell our securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement describing the method and terms of the offering of those offered securities.

We may sell the securities directly or to or through underwriters or dealers, and also to other purchasers or through agents. The names of any underwriters or agents that are included in a sale of securities to you, and any applicable commissions or discounts, will be stated in an accompanying prospectus supplement.

Investing in any of our securities involves risk. Please read carefully the section entitled "Risk Factors" on page 7 of this prospectus and the information included and incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

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Our common shares are listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "CLF." If we decide to seek a listing of any securities offered by this prospectus, we will disclose the exchange or market on which the securities will be listed, if any, or where we have made an application for listing, if any, in one or more supplements to this prospectus.

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Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

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The date of this prospectus is February 9, 2017.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, using a “shelf” registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may from time to time sell the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings at prices and on other terms to be determined at the time of offering.

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell such securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain more specific information about the terms of that offering. For a more complete understanding of the offering of the securities, you should refer to the registration statement, including its exhibits. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with additional information under the heading “Where You Can Find More Information” and “Information We Incorporate By Reference.”

We have not authorized anyone to provide you with any information other than that contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in any prospectus supplement or in any free writing prospectus that we may provide to you. We take no responsibility for, and can provide no assurance as to the reliability of, any other information that others may give you. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement or any document incorporated by reference is accurate as of any date other than the date mentioned on the cover page of these documents. We are not making offers to sell the securities in any jurisdiction in which an offer or solicitation is not authorized or in which the person making such offer or solicitation is not qualified to do so or to anyone to whom it is unlawful to make an offer or solicitation.

References in this prospectus to the terms “we,” “us,” “our” or “Cliffs” or other similar terms mean Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries, unless we state otherwise or the context indicates otherwise.

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WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are subject to the informational reporting requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or Exchange Act. We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available over the Internet at the SEC's website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov). You may read and copy any reports, statements and other information filed by us at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the Public Reference Room.

We make available, free of charge, on our website at [www.cliffsnaturalresources.com](http://www.cliffsnaturalresources.com), our annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K and amendments to those reports and statements as soon as reasonably practicable after they are filed with the SEC. The information contained on or accessible through our website is not part of this prospectus, other than the documents that we file with the SEC that are incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

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**INFORMATION WE INCORPORATE BY REFERENCE**

The SEC allows us to “incorporate by reference” into this prospectus the information in documents we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. Any statement contained in any document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference herein shall be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in or omitted from this prospectus or any accompanying prospectus supplement, or in any other subsequently filed document that also is or is deemed to be incorporated by reference herein, modifies or supersedes such statement. Any such statement so modified or superseded shall not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus.

We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future filings we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act until the completion of the offering of securities described in this prospectus:

• our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016; and  
• the description of our common shares contained in the Current Report on Form 8-K/A filed on May 21, 2008, including any subsequently filed amendments and reports updating such description.

We do not and will not, however, incorporate by reference in this prospectus any documents or portions thereof that are not deemed “filed” with the SEC, including any information furnished pursuant to Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of our Current Reports on Form 8-K unless, and except to the extent, specified in such Current Reports. You may obtain copies of these filings without charge by accessing the investor relations section of [www.cliffsnaturalresources.com](http://www.cliffsnaturalresources.com) or by requesting the filings in writing or by telephone at the following address and telephone number.

Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.

Investor Relations

200 Public Square

Suite 3300

Cleveland, Ohio 44114

Telephone Number: (216) 694-5700

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DISCLOSURE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, including the documents incorporated by reference, contains, and any prospectus supplement may contain, statements that constitute “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements may be identified by the use of predictive, future-tense or forward-looking terminology, such as “believes,” “anticipates,” “expects,” “estimates,” “intends,” “may,” “will” or similar terms. These statements speak only as of the date of this prospectus or the date of the document incorporated by reference, as applicable, and we undertake no ongoing obligation, other than that imposed by law, to update these statements. These statements appear in a number of places in this prospectus, including the documents incorporated by reference, and relate to, among other things, our intent, belief or current expectations of our directors or our officers with respect to: our future financial condition; results of operations or prospects; estimates of our economic iron ore reserves; our business and growth strategies; and our financing plans and forecasts. You are cautioned that any such forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and involve significant risks and uncertainties, and that actual results may differ materially from those contained in or implied by the forward-looking statements as a result of various factors, some of which are unknown, including, without limitation:

- uncertainty and weaknesses in global economic conditions, including downward pressure on prices caused by oversupply or imported products, the impact of any reduced barriers to trade, the outcomes of recently filed and forthcoming trade cases, reduced market demand and any change to the economic growth rate in China;
- continued volatility of iron ore and steel prices and other trends, including the supply approach of the major iron ore producers, affecting our financial condition, results of operations or future prospects, specifically the impact of price-adjustment factors on our sales contracts;
- 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;
- availability of capital and our ability to maintain adequate liquidity;
- our ability to successfully conclude the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (Canada), or CCAA, process in a manner that minimizes cash outflows and associated liabilities;
- the impact of our customers reducing their steel production due to increased market share of steel produced using other methods or lighter-weight steel alternatives;
- uncertainty relating to restructurings in the steel industry and/or affecting the steel industry;
- 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;
- problems or uncertainties with productivity, tons mined, transportation, mine-closure obligations, environmental liabilities, employee-benefit costs and other risks of the mining industry;
- our ability to reach agreement with our customers regarding any modifications to sales contract provisions, renewals or new arrangements;
- our actual levels of capital spending;
- our ability to successfully diversify our product mix and add new customers beyond our traditional blast furnace clientele;
- our actual economic iron ore reserves or reductions in current mineral estimates, including whether any mineralized material qualifies as a reserve;
- our ability to cost-effectively achieve planned production rates or levels;
- our ability to successfully identify and consummate any strategic investments or development projects;
- changes in sales volume or mix;

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- 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;
- our ability to maintain appropriate relations with unions and employees;
  - impacts of existing and increasing governmental 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;
- 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;
- the potential existence of significant deficiencies or material weakness in our internal control over financial reporting; and
- other risks described in our reports filed with the SEC.

These factors and the other risk factors described in this prospectus, including the documents incorporated by reference, are not necessarily all of the important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed in any of our forward-looking statements. Other unknown or unpredictable factors also could harm our results. Consequently, there can be no assurance that the actual results or developments anticipated by us will be realized or, even if substantially realized, that they will have the expected consequences to or effects on us. Given these uncertainties, prospective investors are cautioned not to place undue reliance on such forward-looking statements.

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OUR BUSINESS

Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. is a leading mining and natural resources company. Founded in 1847, we are recognized as the largest and oldest independent iron ore mining company in the United States. We are a major supplier of iron ore pellets to the North American steel industry from our mines and pellet plants located in Michigan and Minnesota. Additionally, we operate an iron ore mining complex in Western Australia. Driven by the core values of safety, social, environmental and capital stewardship, our employees endeavor to provide all stakeholders with operating and financial transparency.

We are organized through a global commercial group responsible for sales and delivery of our products and operations groups responsible for the production of the iron ore that we market. Our continuing operations are organized according to geographic location: U.S. Iron Ore and Asia Pacific Iron Ore.

In the U.S., we currently own or co-own four operational iron ore mines plus one indefinitely idled mine. We are currently operating one iron ore mine in Michigan and three iron ore mines in Minnesota. All four mines are currently operating at or near full capacity. The Empire mine located in Michigan was indefinitely idled beginning on August 3, 2016. We plan to continue shipping Empire's remaining inventory of pellets into 2017. Our Asia Pacific operations consist solely of our Koolyanobbing iron ore mining complex in Western Australia, which is currently operating at or near full capacity.

Also, for the majority of 2015, we operated two metallurgical coal operations in Alabama and West Virginia. In December 2015, we completed the sale of these operations, which marked our exit from the coal business. As of March 31, 2015, management determined that our North American Coal operating segment met the criteria to be classified as held for sale under Accounting Standards Codification, or ASC, 205, Presentation of Financial Statements. As such, all current year and historical North American Coal operating segment results are included in our financial statements incorporated by reference in this prospectus and classified within discontinued operations.

Additionally, we continue to own one non-operating iron ore mine in Eastern Canada that is currently in restructuring proceedings in Montreal, Quebec under the CCAA. Financial results prior to the respective deconsolidations of Bloom Lake General Partner Limited and certain of its affiliates, including Cliffs Quebec Iron Mining ULC, which we refer to herein as the Bloom Lake Group, and Wabush Iron Co. Limited and Wabush Resources Inc., and certain of its affiliates, including Wabush Mines (an unincorporated joint venture of Wabush Iron Co. Limited and Wabush Resources Inc.), Arnaud Railway Company and Wabush Lake Railway Company, which we refer to herein as the Wabush Group, and subsequent expenses directly associated with the Bloom Lake Group, Wabush Group and certain other wholly-owned subsidiaries, collectively referred to herein as the Canadian Entities, are included in our financial statements incorporated by reference in this prospectus and classified within discontinued operations.

Our principal executive offices are located at 200 Public Square, Suite 3300, Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2315. Our main telephone number is (216) 694-5700, and our website address is [www.cliffsnaturalresources.com](http://www.cliffsnaturalresources.com). The information contained on or accessible through our website is not part of this prospectus, other than the documents that we file with the SEC that are incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

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**RISK FACTORS**

Investing in our securities involves risk. Prior to making a decision about investing in our securities, you should carefully consider the specific factors discussed under the heading “Risk Factors” in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K filed with the SEC, in each case as these risk factors are amended or supplemented by subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, which have been or will be incorporated by reference into this document. The risks and uncertainties we have described are not the only ones we face. Additional risks and uncertainties that are not yet identified may also materially harm our business, operating results and financial condition and could result in a complete loss of your investment.

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USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless we inform you otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, we expect to use the net proceeds from the sale of our securities to which this prospectus relates for general corporate purposes. These purposes may include, but are not limited to:

- reduction or refinancing of outstanding indebtedness or other corporate obligations;
- additions to working capital;
- capital expenditures; and
- strategic investments.

Pending any specific application, we may initially invest funds in short-term marketable securities.

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RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND  
RATIO OF EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES  
AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS

The following table sets forth our ratio of consolidated earnings to fixed charges and of consolidated earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends for the periods presented:

	Year ended December 31,				
	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	1.9x	2.0x	—	5.4x	4.3x
Ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends	1.9x	2.0x	—	5.4x	4.3x

“Fixed charges” represent interest expense, capitalized interest, acceleration of debt issuance costs and the interest portion of rental expense. “Earnings” represent the consolidated pretax income from continuing operations before extraordinary items (excluding undistributed earnings of non-consolidated affiliates), net adjustments for capitalized interest and fixed charges deducted from earnings. For the year ended December 31, 2014, there was a deficiency of earnings to cover the fixed charges of \$235.4 million. The insufficient earnings were primarily due to the adverse impact of impairment charges, establishment of valuation allowances against certain deferred tax assets and unfavorable spending, which were partially offset by total increased iron ore and coal production sales volumes in 2014 at most of our operations around the world.

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DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following is a summary of the terms and provisions of our capital stock. The rights of our shareholders are governed by the Ohio Revised Code, our Third Amended Articles of Incorporation, which we refer to as our Articles of Incorporation, and our Regulations, which we refer to as our regulations. This summary is qualified by reference to our governing corporate instruments to which we have referred you and applicable provisions of Ohio law. To obtain a copy of our Articles of Incorporation and regulations, see “Where You Can Find More Information.”

Common Shares

We have authorized 400,000,000 common shares, par value \$0.125 per share. The holders of our common shares are entitled to one vote for each share on all matters upon which shareholders have the right to vote and, upon proper notice, are entitled to cumulative voting rights in the election of directors. Our common shares do not have any preemptive rights, are not subject to redemption and do not have the benefit of any sinking fund. Holders of our common shares are entitled to receive such dividends as our directors from time to time may declare out of funds legally available therefore. Entitlement to dividends is subject to the preferences granted to other classes of securities we have or may have outstanding in the future. In the event of our liquidation, holders of our common shares are entitled to share in any of our assets remaining after satisfaction in full of our liabilities and satisfaction of such dividend and liquidation preferences as may be possessed by the holders of other classes of securities we have or may have outstanding in the future.

The transfer agent and registrar for our common shares is Wells Fargo Shareowner Services.

Preferred Stock

We have authorized 3,000,000 shares of serial preferred stock, Class A, without par value, which we refer to as Class A Preferred Stock, and 4,000,000 shares of serial preferred stock, Class B, without par value, which we refer to as Class B Preferred Stock. Under our Articles of Incorporation, our board of directors can issue, without further shareholder action, up to 3,000,000 shares of Class A Preferred Stock and up to 4,000,000 shares of Class B Preferred Stock, which we refer to collectively as Preferred Stock, in each case, with such rights and restrictions as set forth as the express terms of the Class A Preferred Stock and the Class B Preferred Stock, respectively, in our Articles of Incorporation and with such additional provisions as our board of directors may determine, including dividend, redemption, sinking fund, liquidation and conversion (with respect to Class A Preferred Stock only) rights, and additional restrictions.

In some cases, the issuance of Preferred Stock could delay, defer or prevent a change in control and make it harder to remove present management, without further action by our shareholders. Under some circumstances, Preferred Stock could also decrease the amount of earnings and assets available for distribution to holders of our common shares if we liquidate or dissolve and could also restrict or limit dividend payments to holders of our common shares. In the event that we do not pay dividends or set apart funds therefor in the amount of six full quarterly dividends, whether or not consecutive and whether or not earned or declared, with respect to any outstanding series of Class A Preferred Stock, the holders of shares of all series of Class A Preferred Stock have the right to elect two directors to our board, in addition to the directors elected at the previous annual shareholders meeting. Such directors will serve annual terms, expiring at the earliest of the next succeeding annual meeting of shareholders or whenever the rights of the holders of the Class A Preferred Stock become unvested as a result of satisfaction of the dividend rights to which they are entitled. The holders of Class B Preferred Stock have the same, but distinct, special voting rights.

Class A Preferred Stock

Dividends

The holders of Class A Preferred Stock of each series, in preference to the holders of common shares and of any other class of shares ranking junior to the Class A Preferred Stock, shall be entitled to receive out of any funds legally available therefor and when and as declared by our board of directors, dividends in cash at the rate for such series fixed in accordance with the provisions of our Articles of Incorporation, payable on the dividend payment dates fixed for such series. Accumulations of dividends, if any, shall not bear interest.

Redemption

Subject to the express terms of each series of Class A Preferred Stock and to the provisions of our Articles of Incorporation, we (i) may, from time to time, redeem all or any part of the Class A Preferred Stock of any series at the



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time outstanding at the option of our board of directors at the applicable redemption price for such series fixed in accordance with the provisions of our Articles of Incorporation, and (ii) shall, from time to time, make such redemptions of the Class A Preferred Stock of any series as may be required to fulfill the requirements of any sinking fund provided for shares of such series at the applicable sinking fund redemption price, fixed in accordance with the provisions of our Articles of Incorporation, together in each case with (A) all then accrued and unpaid dividends upon such shares for all dividend payment dates on or prior to the redemption date and (B) if the redemption date is not a dividend payment date for such series, a proportionate dividend, based on the number of elapsed days, for the period from the day after the most recent such dividend payment date through the redemption date.

### Liquidation

The holders of Class A Preferred Stock of any series, shall, in case of our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, our dissolution or the winding up of our affairs, be entitled to receive in full, out of our assets, including our capital, before any amount shall be paid or distributed among the holders of the common shares or any other shares ranking junior to the Class A Preferred Stock, the amounts fixed with respect to shares of such series in accordance with our Articles of Incorporation.

### Voting

The holders of Class A Preferred Stock shall be entitled to one vote for each share of such stock upon all matters presented to the shareholders; and, except as otherwise provided in our Articles of Incorporation or required by law, the holders of Class A Preferred Stock and the holders of common shares shall vote together as one class on all matters presented to the shareholders. If we default in the payment of dividends on any series of Class A Preferred Stock outstanding, in an amount equal to six full quarterly dividends on any such series, whether or not consecutive and whether or not declared, the holders of Class A Preferred Stock will have the right to elect two directors to our board of directors. Such directors will remain until all accrued and unpaid dividends on all series of Class A Preferred Stock then outstanding have been paid or, in the case of non-cumulative dividends, until full dividends on all series of Class A Preferred Stock then outstanding have been paid for one year.

Except as provided in our Articles of Incorporation, the affirmative vote of the holders of at least 2/3 of the Class A Preferred Stock at the time outstanding shall vote separately as a class and shall be necessary to effect any one or more of the following:

- any amendment, alteration or repeal of our Articles of Incorporation or our regulations that adversely affects the preferences or voting or other rights of the holders of Class A Preferred Stock;
- the authorization, creation or increase in the authorized amount of any shares of any class or any security convertible into any class, in either case, ranking prior to the Class A Preferred Stock; or
- the purchase or redemption (for sinking fund purposes or otherwise) of less than all of the Class A Preferred Stock then outstanding except in accordance with a stock purchase offer made to all holders of record of Class A Preferred Stock, unless all dividends on all Class A Preferred Stock then outstanding for all previous dividend periods shall have been declared and paid or funds therefor set apart and all accrued sinking fund obligations applicable thereto shall have been complied with.

The affirmative vote of the holders of at least a majority of the shares of Class A Preferred Stock at the time outstanding shall vote separately as a class and shall be necessary to effect any one or more of the following:

- our consolidation or merger with or into any other corporation to the extent any such consolidation or merger shall be required, pursuant to any applicable statute, to be approved by the holders of the shares of Class A Preferred Stock voting separately as a class; or
- the authorization of any shares ranking on a parity with the Class A Preferred Stock or an increase in the authorized number of shares of Class A Preferred Stock.

### Conversion

The Board may create one or more series of Class A Preferred Stock that may be convertible into common shares, upon the terms as our board of directors may fix, as provided by our Articles of Incorporation.

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Class B Preferred Stock

Dividends

The holders of Class B Preferred Stock of each series, in preference to the holders of common shares and of any other class of shares ranking junior to the Class B Preferred Stock, shall be entitled to receive out of any funds legally available therefor and when and as declared by the board of directors dividends in cash at the rate for such series fixed in accordance with the provisions of our Articles of Incorporation, payable on the dividend payment dates fixed for such series. Accumulations of dividends, if any, shall not bear interest.

Redemption

Subject to the express terms of each series of Class B Preferred Stock and to the provisions of our Articles of Incorporation, we (i) may, from time to time, redeem all or any part of the Class B Preferred Stock of any series at the time outstanding at the option of the board of directors at the applicable redemption price for such series fixed in accordance with the provisions of our Articles of Incorporation, and (ii) shall, from time to time, make such redemptions of the Class B Preferred Stock of any series as may be required to fulfill the requirements of any sinking fund provided for shares of such series at the applicable sinking fund redemption price, fixed in accordance with the provisions of our Articles of Incorporation, together in each case with (A) all then accrued and unpaid dividends upon such shares for all dividend payment dates on or prior to the redemption date and (B) if the redemption date is not a dividend payment date for such series, a proportionate dividend, based on the number of elapsed days, for the period from the day after the most recent such dividend payment date through the redemption date.

Liquidation

The holders of Class B Preferred Stock of any series, shall, in case of our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, our dissolution or the winding up of our affairs, be entitled to receive in full out of our assets, including our capital, before any amount shall be paid or distributed among the holders of the common shares or any other shares ranking junior to the Class B Preferred Stock, the amounts fixed with respect to shares of such series in accordance with our Articles of Incorporation.

Voting

Except as provided in our Articles of Incorporation, or as required by law, the holders of Class B Preferred Stock shall not be entitled to vote. If we default in the payment of dividends on any series of Class B Preferred Stock outstanding, in an amount equal to six full quarterly dividends on any such series, whether or not consecutive and whether or not declared, the holders of Class B Preferred Stock will have the right to elect two directors to our board of directors. Such directors will remain until all accrued and unpaid dividends on all series of Class B Preferred Stock then outstanding have been paid or, in the case of non-cumulative dividends, until full dividends on all series of Class B Preferred Stock then outstanding have been paid for one year.

Except as provided in our Articles of Incorporation, the affirmative vote of the holders of at least 2/3 of the Class B Preferred Stock at the time outstanding shall vote separately as a class and shall be necessary to effect any one or more of the following:

- any amendment, alteration or repeal of our Articles of Incorporation or our regulations that adversely affects the preferences or voting or other rights of the holders of Class B Preferred Stock;
  - the authorization, creation or increase in the authorized amount of any shares of any class or any security convertible into any class, in either case, ranking prior to the Class B Preferred Stock; or
- the purchase or redemption (for sinking fund purposes or otherwise) of less than all of the Class B Preferred Stock then outstanding except in accordance with a stock purchase offer made to all holders of record of Class B Preferred Stock, unless all dividends on all Class B Preferred Stock then outstanding for all previous dividend periods shall have been declared and paid or funds therefor set apart and all accrued sinking fund obligations applicable thereto shall have been complied with.

The affirmative vote of the holders of at least a majority of the shares of Class B Preferred Stock at the time outstanding shall vote separately as a class and shall be necessary to effect any one or more of the following:

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our consolidation or merger with or into any other corporation to the extent any such consolidation or merger shall be required, pursuant to any applicable statute, to be approved by the holders of the shares of Class B Preferred Stock voting separately as a class; or

- the authorization of any shares ranking on a parity with the Class B Preferred Stock or an increase in the authorized number of shares of Class B Preferred Stock.

Conversion

Class B Preferred Stock may not be convertible into common shares or into shares of any other class or series of ours.

Ohio Control Share Acquisition Statute

The Ohio Control Share Acquisition Statute requires the prior authorization of the shareholders of certain corporations in order for any person to acquire, either directly or indirectly, shares of that corporation that would entitle the acquiring person to exercise or direct the exercise of 20% or more of the voting power of that corporation in the election of directors or to exceed specified other percentages of voting power. In the event an acquiring person proposes to make such an acquisition, the person is required to deliver to the corporation a statement disclosing, among other things, the number of shares owned, directly or indirectly, by the person, the range of voting power that may result from the proposed acquisition and the identity of the acquiring person. Within 10 days after receipt of this statement, the corporation must call a special meeting of shareholders to vote on the proposed acquisition. The acquiring person may complete the proposed acquisition only if the acquisition is approved by the affirmative vote of the holders of at least a majority of the voting power of all shares entitled to vote in the election of directors represented at the meeting excluding the voting power of all "interested shares." Interested shares include any shares held by the acquiring person and those held by officers and directors of the corporation as well as by certain others, including many holders commonly characterized as arbitrageurs. The Ohio Control Share Acquisition Statute does not apply to a corporation if its articles of incorporation or code of regulations state that the statute does not apply to a corporation. Neither our Articles of Incorporation nor our regulations contain a provision opting out of this statute.

Ohio Interested Shareholder Statute

Chapter 1704 of the Ohio Revised Code prohibits certain corporations from engaging in a "chapter 1704 transaction" with an "interested shareholder" for a period of three years after the date of the transaction in which the person became an interested shareholder, unless, among other things:

- the articles of incorporation expressly provide that the corporation is not subject to the statute (we have not made this election); or
- the board of directors of the corporation approves the chapter 1704 transaction or the acquisition of the shares before the date the shares were acquired.

After the three-year moratorium period, the corporation may not consummate a chapter 1704 transaction unless, among other things, it is approved by the affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of the voting power in the election of directors and the holders of a majority of the voting shares, excluding all shares beneficially owned by an interested shareholder or an affiliate or associate of an interested shareholder, or the shareholders receive certain minimum consideration for their shares. A chapter 1704 transaction includes certain mergers, sales of assets, consolidations, combinations and majority share acquisitions involving an interested shareholder. An interested shareholder is defined to include, with limited exceptions, any person who, together with affiliates and associates, is the beneficial owner of a sufficient number of shares of the corporation to entitle the person, directly or indirectly, alone or with others, to exercise or direct the exercise of 10% or more of the voting power in the election of directors after taking into account all of the person's beneficially owned shares that are not then outstanding.

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DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

General

We may offer depositary shares representing fractional shares of our preferred stock of any series. The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the depositary shares that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus. The particular terms of the depositary shares, including the fraction of a preferred share that such depositary share will represent, and the extent, if any, to which the general terms and provisions may apply to the depositary shares so offered will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

The shares of preferred stock represented by depositary shares will be deposited under a deposit agreement between us and a bank or trust company that meets certain requirements and is selected by us, which we refer to as the bank depositary. Each owner of a depositary share will be entitled to all the rights and preferences of the shares of preferred stock represented by the depositary share. The depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the deposit agreement. Depositary receipts will be distributed to those persons purchasing the fractional shares of preferred stock in accordance with the terms of the offering. The deposit agreement will also contain provisions relating to the manner in which any subscription or similar rights we offer to holders of the preferred stock will be made available to the holders of depositary shares.

The following description is a general summary of some common provisions of a deposit agreement and the related depositary receipts. The description below and in any prospectus supplement does not include all of the terms of the deposit agreement and the related depositary receipts. Copies of the form of deposit agreement and the depositary receipts relating to any particular issue of depositary shares will be filed with the SEC each time we issue depositary shares, and you should read those documents for provisions that may be important to you. For more information on how you can obtain copies of the forms of the deposit agreement and the related depositary receipts, see “Where You Can Find More Information.”

Dividends and Other Distributions

If we pay a cash distribution or dividend on a series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares, the bank depositary will distribute these dividends to the record holders of these depositary shares. If the distributions are in property other than cash, the bank depositary will distribute the property to the record holders of the depositary shares. However, if the bank depositary determines that it is not feasible to make the distribution of property, the bank depositary may, with our approval, sell this property and distribute the net proceeds from this sale to the record holders of the depositary shares.

Redemption of Depositary Shares

If we redeem a series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares, the bank depositary will redeem the depositary shares from the proceeds received by the bank depositary in connection with the redemption. The redemption price per depositary share will equal the applicable fraction of the redemption price per share of the preferred stock. If fewer than all the depositary shares are redeemed, the depositary shares to be redeemed will be selected by lot or pro rata as the bank depositary may determine.

Voting the Preferred Stock

Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of the preferred stock represented by depositary shares are entitled to vote, the bank depositary will mail the notice to the record holders of the depositary shares relating to the preferred stock. Each record holder of these depositary shares on the record date (which will be the same date as the record date for the preferred stock) may instruct the bank depositary as to how to vote the preferred stock represented by the holder’s depositary shares. The bank depositary will endeavor, insofar as practicable, to vote the amount of the preferred stock represented by such depositary shares in accordance with these instructions, and we will take all action that the bank depositary deems necessary in order to enable the bank depositary to do so. The bank depositary will abstain from voting shares of the preferred stock to the extent it does not receive specific instructions from the holders of depositary shares representing this preferred stock.

Amendment and Termination of the Deposit Agreement

The form of depositary receipt evidencing the depositary shares and any provision of the deposit agreement may be amended by agreement between the bank depositary and us. However, any amendment that materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders of depositary shares will not be effective unless this amendment has been



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approved by the holders of at least a majority of the depositary shares then outstanding. The deposit agreement may be terminated by the bank depositary or us only if:

- all outstanding depositary shares have been redeemed; or
- there has been a final distribution in respect of the preferred stock in connection with any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of us and this distribution has been distributed to the holders of depositary receipts.

**Charges of Bank Depositary**

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of the depositary arrangements. We will pay charges of the bank depositary in connection with the initial deposit of the preferred stock and any redemption of the preferred stock. Holders of depositary receipts will pay other transfer and other taxes and governmental charges and any other charges, including a fee for the withdrawal of shares of preferred stock upon surrender of depositary receipts, as are expressly provided in the deposit agreement to be for their accounts.

**Withdrawal of Preferred Stock**

Upon surrender of depositary receipts at the principal office of the bank depositary, subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, the owner of the depositary shares may demand delivery of the number of whole shares of preferred stock and all money and other property, if any, represented by those depositary shares. Fractional shares of preferred stock will not be issued. If the depositary receipts delivered by a holder evidence a number of depositary shares in excess of the number of depositary shares representing the number of whole shares of preferred stock to be withdrawn, the bank depositary will deliver to the holder at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing the excess number of depositary shares. Holders of preferred stock thus withdrawn may not thereafter deposit those shares under the deposit agreement or receive depositary receipts evidencing depositary shares therefor.

**Miscellaneous**

The bank depositary will forward to holders of depositary receipts all reports and communications from us that are delivered to the bank depositary and that we are required to furnish to the holders of preferred stock.

Neither the bank depositary nor we will be liable if we are prevented or delayed by law or any circumstance beyond our control from performing our obligations under the deposit agreement. The obligations of the bank depositary and us under the deposit agreement will be limited to performance in good faith of our duties thereunder, and we will not be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any depositary shares or shares of preferred stock unless reasonably satisfactory indemnity is furnished. We may rely upon written advice of counsel or accountants, or upon information provided by persons presenting shares of preferred stock for deposit, holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed to be competent and on documents believed to be genuine.

**Resignation and Removal of Bank Depositary**

The bank depositary may resign at any time by delivering to us notice of its election to do so, and we may at any time remove the bank depositary. Any such resignation or removal will take effect upon the appointment of a successor bank depositary and the successor's acceptance of this appointment. The successor bank depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company meeting the requirements of the deposit agreement.

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DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

General

We may issue warrants for the purchase of common shares, preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities. The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the warrants that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus. The particular terms of the warrants and the extent, if any, to which the general terms and provisions may apply to the warrants so offered will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Warrants may be issued independently or together with other securities and may be attached to or separate from any offered securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants and will not have any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants.

A copy of the forms of the warrant agreement and the warrant certificate relating to any particular issue of warrants will be filed with the SEC each time we issue warrants, and you should read those documents for provisions that may be important to you. For more information on how you can obtain copies of the forms of the warrant agreement and the related warrant certificate, see “Where You Can Find More Information.”

Debt Warrants

The prospectus supplement relating to a particular issue of warrants to issue debt securities will describe the terms of those warrants, including the following:

- the title of the warrants;
- the offering price for the warrants, if any;
- the aggregate number of the warrants;
- the designation and terms of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants;
- if applicable, the designation and terms of the debt securities that the warrants are issued with and the number of warrants issued with each debt security;
- if applicable, the date from and after which the warrants and any securities issued with the warrants will be separately transferable;
- the principal amount of debt securities that may be purchased upon exercise of a warrant and the price at which the debt securities may be purchased upon exercise;
- the dates on which the right to exercise the warrants will commence and expire;
- if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of the warrants that may be exercised at any one time;
- whether the warrants represented by the warrant certificates or debt securities that may be issued upon exercise of the warrants will be issued in registered or bearer form;
- information relating to book-entry procedures, if any;
- the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;
- if applicable, a discussion of material United States federal income tax considerations;
- anti-dilution provisions of the warrants, if any;
- redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to the warrants;
- any additional terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the warrants; and
- any other information we think is important about the warrants.

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Stock Warrants

The prospectus supplement relating to a particular issue of warrants to issue common shares, preferred stock or depositary shares will describe the terms of the common shares warrants, preferred stock warrants and depositary share warrants, including the following:

- the title of the warrants;
- the offering price for the warrants, if any;
- the aggregate number of the warrants;
- the designation and terms of the common shares, preferred stock or depositary shares that may be purchased upon exercise of the warrants;
- if applicable, the designation and terms of the securities that the warrants are issued with and the number of warrants issued with each security;
- if applicable, the date from and after which the warrants and any securities issued with them will be separately transferable;
- the number of shares of common shares or preferred stock or depositary shares that may be purchased upon exercise of a warrant and the price at which the shares may be purchased upon exercise;
- the dates on which the right to exercise the warrants commence and expire;
- if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of the warrants that may be exercised at any one time;
- the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;
- if applicable, a discussion of material United States federal income tax considerations;
- anti-dilution provisions of the warrants, if any;
- redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to the warrants;
- any additional terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the warrants; and
- any other information we think is important about the warrants.

Exercise of Warrants

Each warrant will entitle the holder of the warrant to purchase at the exercise price set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement the number of common shares, shares of preferred stock or depositary shares or the principal amount of debt securities being offered. Holders may exercise warrants at any time up to the close of business on the expiration date set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants are void. Holders may exercise warrants as set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants being offered.

Until a holder exercises the warrants to purchase our common shares, preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities, the holder will not have any rights as a holder of our common shares, preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities, as the case may be, by virtue of ownership of warrants.

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DESCRIPTION OF SUBSCRIPTION RIGHTS

We may issue to our stockholders subscription rights to purchase our common shares, preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities. The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the subscription rights that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus. The particular terms of the subscription rights and the extent, if any, to which the general terms and provisions may apply to the subscription rights so offered will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Subscription rights may be issued independently or together with any other security offered by this prospectus and may or may not be transferable by the stockholder receiving the rights in the rights offering. In connection with any rights offering, we may enter into a standby underwriting agreement with one or more underwriters pursuant to which the underwriter will purchase any securities that remain unsubscribed for upon completion of the rights offering, or offer these securities to other parties who are not our stockholders. A copy of the form of subscription rights certificate will be filed with the SEC each time we issue subscription rights, and you should read that document for provisions that may be important to you. For more information on how you can obtain a copy of any subscription rights certificate, see "Where You Can Find More Information."

The applicable prospectus supplement relating to any subscription rights will describe the terms of the offered subscription rights, including, where applicable, the following:

- the exercise price for the subscription rights;
- the number of subscription rights issued to each stockholder;
- the extent to which the subscription rights are transferable;
- any other terms of the subscription rights, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the subscription rights;
- the date on which the right to exercise the subscription rights will commence and the date on which the right will expire;
- the extent to which the subscription rights include an over-subscription privilege with respect to unsubscribed securities; and
- the material terms of any standby underwriting arrangement entered into by us in connection with the subscription rights offering.

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DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the debt securities that we may issue. We will set forth the particular terms of the debt securities we offer in a prospectus supplement and the extent, if any, to which the following general terms and provisions will apply to particular debt securities.

The debt securities will be issued under an indenture, dated as of March 17, 2010, between us and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee. The indenture, and any supplemental indentures thereto, will be subject to, and governed by, the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended. The following description of general terms and provisions relating to the debt securities and the indenture under which the debt securities will be issued is a summary only and therefore is not complete and is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, the terms and provisions of the indenture. A copy of the indenture has been filed with the SEC as an exhibit to the registration statement, of which this prospectus forms a part, and you should read the indenture for provisions that may be important to you. For more information on how you can obtain a copy of the form of the indenture, see "Where You Can Find More Information."

Capitalized terms used in this section and not defined herein have the meanings specified in the indenture. When we refer to "we," "us," "our" or "Cliffs" in this section, we mean Cliffs Natural Resources Inc., excluding, unless the context otherwise requires or as otherwise expressly stated, its subsidiaries.

Unless otherwise specified in a prospectus supplement, the debt securities will be our direct, senior unsecured obligations and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured indebtedness.

General

The terms of each series of debt securities will be established by or pursuant to a resolution of our board of directors and set forth or determined in the manner provided in a resolution of our board of directors, supplemental indenture or officers' certificate. The particular terms of each series of debt securities will be described in a prospectus supplement relating to such series (including any pricing supplement or term sheet).

We can issue an unlimited amount of debt securities under the indenture that may be in one or more series. Debt securities may differ between series in respect to any matter, but all series of debt securities will be equally and ratably entitled to the benefits of the indenture. We will set forth in a prospectus supplement (including any pricing supplement or term sheet) relating to any series of debt securities being offered, the aggregate principal amount and the following terms of the debt securities, if applicable:

- the title of the series of debt securities;
- the price or prices (expressed as a percentage of the principal amount) at which the series of debt securities will be issued;
- any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the series of debt securities;
- the date or dates on which the principal of the series of debt securities is payable;
- the rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable) per annum or, if applicable, the method used to determine such rate or rates (including any commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index) at which the series of debt securities will bear interest, if any, the date or dates from which such interest, if any, will accrue, the date or dates on which such interest, if any, will commence and be payable and any regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date;
- the place or places where the principal of, and interest, if any, on the series of debt securities will be payable;
- if applicable, the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and the terms and conditions upon which the series of debt securities may be redeemed (in whole or in part) at our option;
- any obligation we may have to redeem or purchase the series of debt securities pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provisions or at the option of a holder of the series of debt securities and the terms and conditions of such obligation;

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the dates, if any, on which and the price or prices at which we will repurchase the series of debt securities at the option of the holders of that series of debt securities and other detailed terms and provisions of such repurchase obligations;

- the denominations in which the series of debt securities will be issued, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof;
- the form of the series of debt securities and whether the series of debt securities will be issuable as global debt securities and any appropriate legends if the debt securities are discount securities;
- the portion of principal amount of the series of debt securities payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity date, if other than the principal amount thereof;
- the currency of denomination of the series of debt securities and, if other than U.S. Dollars or the ECU, the agency or organization, if any, responsible for overseeing such currency;
- the designation of the currency, currencies or currency units in which payment of principal of and interest, if any, on the series of debt securities will be made;
- if payments of principal of or interest, if any, on the series of debt securities will be made in one or more currencies or currency units other than that or those in which the series of debt securities are denominated, the manner in which the exchange rate with respect to such payments will be determined;
- the manner in which the amounts of payment of principal of or interest, if any, on the series of debt securities will be determined, if such amounts may be determined by reference to an index based on a currency or currencies or by reference to a commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index;
- any provisions relating to any security provided for the series of debt securities;
- any event of default that applies to the series of debt securities and the rights of the trustee or the requisite holders of the series of debt securities to declare the principal amount thereof due and payable;
- any covenants with respect to the series of debt securities;
- any other terms of the series of debt securities (which may supplement, modify or delete any provision of the indenture as it applies to such series);
- any depositaries, interest rate calculation agents, exchange rate calculation agents or other agents with respect to the series of debt securities, if other than appointed in the indenture;
- any provisions relating to conversion of the series of debt securities (including price, period, whether such conversion is mandatory or is at the option of the holders or at our option, events requiring an adjustment of conversion price, and provisions affecting conversion of the series of debt securities redeemed);
- whether the series of debt securities will be senior or subordinated debt securities and, if applicable, a description of the subordination terms thereof; and
- any trustees, authenticating or paying agents, transfer agents, or registrars or any other agents with respect to the series of debt securities.

In addition, the indenture does not limit our ability to issue subordinated debt securities. Any subordination provisions of a particular series of debt securities will be set forth in the resolution of our board of directors, the officers' certificate or supplemental indenture related to that series of debt securities and will be described in the relevant prospectus supplement.

We may issue debt securities that provide for an amount less than their stated principal amount to be due and payable upon declaration of acceleration of their maturity pursuant to the terms of the indenture. We will provide you with information on the federal income tax considerations and other special considerations applicable to any of these debt securities in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If we denominate the purchase price of any of the debt securities in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units, or if the principal of and interest on any series of debt securities is payable in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units, we will provide you with information on the restrictions,

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elections, general tax considerations, specific terms and other information with respect to that issue of debt securities and such foreign currency or currencies or foreign currency unit or units in the applicable prospectus supplement.

**Transfer and Exchange**

Each debt security will be represented by either one or more global securities registered in the name of The Depository Trust Company, as Depository, which we refer to as the Depository, or a nominee (we will refer to any debt security represented by a global debt security as a book-entry debt security), or a certificate issued in definitive registered form (we will refer to any debt security represented by a certificated security as a certificated debt security) as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Except as set forth under the heading “- Global Debt Securities and Book-Entry System” below, book-entry debt securities will not be issuable in certificated form.

**Certificated Debt Securities.** You may transfer or exchange certificated debt securities at any office we maintain for this purpose in accordance with the terms of the indenture. No service charge will be made for any transfer or exchange of certificated debt securities (except as expressly permitted under the indenture), but we may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with a transfer or exchange.

You may effect the transfer of certificated debt securities and the right to receive the principal of and interest on certificated debt securities only by surrendering the certificate representing those certificated debt securities and either reissuance by us of the certificate to the new holder or the issuance by us of a new certificate to the new holder.

**Global Debt Securities and Book-Entry System.** Each global debt security representing book-entry debt securities will be issued to the Depository or a nominee of the Depository and registered in the name of the Depository or a nominee of the Depository.

The Depository has indicated it intends to follow the following procedures with respect to book-entry debt securities. Ownership of beneficial interests in book-entry debt securities will be limited to persons that have accounts with the Depository for the related global debt security, which we refer to as participants, or persons that may hold interests through participants. Upon the issuance of a global debt security, the Depository will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the participants' accounts with the respective principal amounts of the book-entry debt securities represented by such global debt security beneficially owned by such participants. The accounts to be credited will be designated by any dealers, underwriters or agents participating in the distribution of the book-entry debt securities. Ownership of book-entry debt securities will be shown on, and the transfer of such ownership interests will be effected only through, records maintained by the Depository for the related global debt security (with respect to interests of participants) and on the records of participants (with respect to interests of persons holding through participants). The laws of some states may require that certain purchasers of securities take physical delivery of such securities in definitive form. These laws may impair the ability to own, transfer or pledge beneficial interests in book-entry debt securities.

So long as the Depository for a global debt security, or its nominee, is the registered owner of that global debt security, the Depository or its nominee, as the case may be, will be considered the sole owner or holder of the book-entry debt securities represented by such global debt security for all purposes under the indenture. Except as described below, beneficial owners of book-entry debt securities will not be entitled to have securities registered in their names, will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of a certificate in definitive form representing securities and will not be considered the owners or holders of those securities under the indenture. Accordingly, each person beneficially owning book-entry debt securities must rely on the procedures of the Depository for the related global debt security and, if such person is not a participant, on the procedures of the participant through which such person owns its interest, to exercise any rights of a holder under the indenture.

We understand, however, that under existing industry practice, the Depository will authorize the persons on whose behalf it holds a global debt security to exercise certain rights of holders of debt securities, and the indenture provides that we, the trustee and our respective agents will treat as the holder of a debt security the persons specified in a written statement of the Depository with respect to such global debt security for purposes of obtaining any consents, declarations, waivers or directions required to be given by holders of the debt securities pursuant to the indenture. We will make payments of principal of, and premium and interest, if any, on book-entry debt securities to the Depository or its nominee, as the case may be, as the registered holder of the related global debt security. We, the



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trustee and any other agent of ours or agent of the trustee will not have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in a global debt security or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to beneficial ownership interests.

We expect that the Depositary, upon receipt of any payment of principal of, premium or interest, if any, on a global debt security, will immediately credit participants' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to the respective amounts of book-entry debt securities held by each participant as shown on the records of such Depositary. We also expect that payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in book-entry debt securities held through those participants will be governed by standing customer instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with the securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in "street name," and will be the responsibility of those participants.

We will issue certificated debt securities in exchange for each global debt security only if (i) the Depositary notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as Depositary for such global debt security or if at any time such Depositary ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act, and, in either case, we fail to appoint a successor Depositary registered as a clearing agency under the Exchange Act within 90 days of such event or (ii) we execute and deliver to the trustee an officers' certificate to the effect that such global debt security shall be so exchangeable. Any certificated debt securities issued in exchange for a global debt security will be registered in such name or names as the Depositary shall instruct the trustee. We expect that such instructions will be based upon directions received by the Depositary from participants with respect to ownership of book-entry debt securities relating to such global debt security.

We have obtained the foregoing information concerning the Depositary and the Depositary's book-entry system from sources we believe to be reliable, but we take no responsibility for the accuracy of this information.

**Governing Law**

The indenture and the debt securities will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York.

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DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

We may issue units comprising one or more securities described in this prospectus in any combination. The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the units that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus.

The particular terms of the units and the extent, if any, to which the general terms and provisions may apply to the units so offered will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Each unit will be issued so that the holder of the unit also is the holder of each security included in the unit. Thus, the unit will have the rights and obligations of a holder of each included security. Units will be issued pursuant to the terms of a unit agreement, which may provide that the securities included in the unit may not be held or transferred separately at any time or at any time before a specified date. Copies of the forms of the unit agreement and the unit certificate relating to any particular issue of units will be filed with the SEC each time we issue units, and you should read those documents for provisions that may be important to you. For more information on how you can obtain copies of the forms of the unit agreement and the related unit certificate, see “Where You Can Find More Information.” The prospectus supplement relating to any particular issuance of units will describe the terms of those units, including, to the extent applicable, the following:

- the designation and terms of the units and the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances those securities may be held or transferred separately;
- any provision for the issuance, payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units or of the securities comprising the units; and
- whether the units will be issued in fully registered or global form.

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PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the offered securities in and outside the United States:

through underwriters or dealers;

directly to purchasers;

in a rights offering;

in “at the market” offerings, within the meaning of Rule 415(a)(4) of the Securities Act of 1933, or Securities Act, to or through a market maker or into an existing trading market on an exchange or otherwise;

through agents; or

through a combination of any of these methods.

The prospectus supplement will include the following information:

the terms of the offering;

the names of any underwriters or agents;

the name or names of any managing underwriter or underwriters;

the purchase price or initial public offering price of the securities;

the net proceeds from the sale of the securities;

any delayed delivery arrangements;

any underwriting discounts, commissions and other items constituting underwriters’ compensation;

any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers;

any commissions paid to agents; and

any securities exchanges on which the securities may be listed.

Sale through Underwriters or Dealers

If underwriters are used in the sale, we will execute an underwriting agreement with them regarding the securities. The underwriters will acquire the securities for their own account, subject to conditions in the underwriting agreement.

The underwriters may resell the securities from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale. Underwriters may offer the securities to the public either through underwriting syndicates represented by one or more managing underwriters or directly by one or more firms acting as underwriters. Unless we inform you otherwise in the prospectus supplement, the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the securities will be subject to certain conditions, and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all the offered securities if they purchase any of them. The underwriters may change from time to time any initial public offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers.

During and after an offering through underwriters, the underwriters may purchase and sell the securities in the open market. To the extent expressly set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, these transactions may include over-allotment and stabilizing transactions and purchases to cover syndicate short positions created in connection with the offering. The underwriters may also impose a penalty bid, which means that selling concessions allowed to syndicate members or other broker-dealers for the offered securities sold for their account may be reclaimed by the syndicate if the offered securities are repurchased by the syndicate in stabilizing or covering transactions. These activities may stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the market price of the offered securities, which may be higher than the price that might otherwise prevail in the open market. If commenced, the underwriters may discontinue these activities at any time.

Some or all of the securities that we offer through this prospectus may be new issues of securities with no established trading market. Any underwriters to whom we sell our securities for public offerings may make a market in those securities, but they will not be obligated to do so and they may discontinue any market making at any time

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without notice. Accordingly, we cannot assure you of the liquidity of, or continued trading markets for, any securities that we offer.

If dealers are used in the sale of the securities, we will sell the securities to them as principals. They may then resell the securities to the public at varying prices determined by the dealers at the time of resale. We will include in the prospectus supplement the names of the dealers and the terms of the transaction.

**Direct Sales and Sales through Agents**

We may sell the securities directly. In this case, no underwriters or agents would be involved. We may also sell the securities through agents designated from time to time. In the prospectus supplement, we will name any agent involved in the offer or sale of the offered securities, and we will describe any commissions payable to the agent. Unless we inform you otherwise in the prospectus supplement, any agent will agree to use its reasonable best efforts to solicit purchases for the period of its appointment.

We may sell the securities directly to institutional investors or others who may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act with respect to any sale of those securities. We will describe the terms of any sales of these securities in the prospectus supplement.

**Remarketing Arrangements**

Offered securities may also be offered and sold, if so indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, in connection with a remarketing upon their purchase, in accordance with a redemption or repayment pursuant to their terms, or otherwise, by one or more remarketing firms, acting as principals for their own accounts or as agents for us. Any remarketing firm will be identified and the terms of its agreements, if any, with us and its compensation will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

**Delayed Delivery Contracts**

If we so indicate in the prospectus supplement, we may authorize agents, underwriters or dealers to solicit offers from certain types of institutions to purchase securities from us at the public offering price under delayed delivery contracts. These contracts would provide for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. The contracts would be subject only to those conditions described in the prospectus supplement. The prospectus supplement will describe the commission payable for solicitation of those contracts.

**General Information**

We may have agreements with the agents, dealers, underwriters and remarketing firms to indemnify them against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute with respect to payments that the agents, dealers, underwriters or remarketing firms may be required to make. Agents, dealers, underwriters and remarketing firms may be customers of, engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of their businesses.

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LEGAL MATTERS

Jones Day will pass upon the validity of the securities being offered hereby.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements, and the related financial statement schedule, incorporated in this prospectus by reference from the Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.'s Annual Report on Form 10-K, and the effectiveness of Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.'s internal control over financial reporting have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their reports, which are incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements and financial statement schedule have been so incorporated in reliance upon the reports of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

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## PART II

## INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS

## Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution.

The following are the estimated expenses of the issuance and distribution of the securities being registered, all of which are payable by us.

Securities and Exchange Commission registration fee	*
Trustee's fees and expenses	**
Transfer agent and registrar fees	**
Printing expenses	**
Accountant's fees and expenses	**
Rating agency fees	**
Legal fees and expenses	**
Miscellaneous	**
Total	\$ **

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Because the amount to be registered consists of an unspecified amount of the securities as may from time to time be \*offered at indeterminate prices, in accordance with Rules 456(b) and 457(r) under the Securities Act of 1933, the registrant is deferring payment of the registration fee.

\*\*Estimated expenses are presently not known and cannot be estimated.

## Item 15. Indemnification of Directors and Officers.

We will indemnify, to the full extent permitted by law, any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of Cliffs, or is or was serving at Cliffs' request as a director, trustee, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, domestic or foreign, nonprofit or for profit, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise; provided, however, that we will indemnify any such agent (as opposed to any director, officer or employee) of Cliffs to an extent greater than required by law only if and to the extent that the directors may, in their discretion, so determine. The indemnification we give will not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which those seeking indemnification may be entitled under any law, our Third Amended Articles of Incorporation or any agreement, vote of shareholders or of disinterested directors or otherwise, both as to action in official capacities and as to action in another capacity while such person is a director, officer, employee or agent, and shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a director, trustee, officer, employee or agent and shall inure to the benefit of heirs, executors and administrators of such a person.

We may, to the full extent permitted by law and authorized by the directors, purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any persons described in the paragraph above against any liability asserted against and incurred by any such person in any such capacity, or arising out of the status as such, whether or not we would have the power to indemnify such person against such liability.

Under the Ohio Revised Code, Ohio corporations are authorized to indemnify directors, officers, employees and agents within prescribed limits and must indemnify them under certain circumstances. The Ohio Revised Code does not provide statutory authorization for a corporation to indemnify directors, officers, employees and agents for settlements, fines or judgments in the context of derivative suits. However, it provides that directors (but not officers, employees or agents) are entitled to mandatory advancement of expenses, including attorneys' fees, incurred in defending any action, including derivative actions, brought against the director, provided that the director agrees to cooperate with the corporation concerning the matter and to repay the amount advanced if it is proved by clear and convincing evidence that the director's act or failure to act was done with deliberate intent to cause injury to the corporation or with reckless disregard for the corporation's best interests.

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The Ohio Revised Code does not authorize payment of judgments to a director, officer, employee or agent after a finding of negligence or misconduct in a derivative suit absent a court order. Indemnification is permitted, however, to the extent such person succeeds on the merits. In all other cases, if a director, officer, employee or agent acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, indemnification is discretionary except as otherwise provided by a corporation's articles, code of regulations or by contract except with respect to the advancement of expenses of directors.

Under the Ohio Revised Code, a director is not liable for monetary damages unless it is proved by clear and convincing evidence that his or her action or failure to act was undertaken with deliberate intent to cause injury to the corporation or with reckless disregard for the best interests of the corporation. There is, however, no comparable provision limiting the liability of officers, employees or agents of a corporation. The statutory right to indemnification is not exclusive in Ohio, and Ohio corporations may, among other things, procure insurance for such persons.

## Item 16. Exhibits.

The following documents are exhibits to the registration statement:

Exhibit Number	Description
1.1	Underwriting Agreement*
4.1	Third Amended Articles of Incorporation of Cliffs Natural Resources Inc., as filed with the Secretary of State of the State of Ohio on May 13, 2013 (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.'s Current Report on Form 8-K (File No. 001-08944) filed on May 13, 2013)
4.2	Regulations of Cleveland-Cliffs Inc. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.2 to Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.'s Annual Report on Form 10-K (File No. 001-08944) for the period ended December 31, 2011)
4.3	Indenture between Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee, dated as of March 17, 2010 (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.3 to Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.'s Registration Statement on Form S-3 (Registration No. 333-186617) filed on February 12, 2013)
4.4	Preferred Stock Certificate of Amendment*
4.5	Form of Warrant Agreement*
4.6	Form of Warrant Certificate*
4.7	Form of Deposit Agreement*
4.8	Form of Depositary Receipt*
4.9	Form of Subscription Rights Certificate*
4.10	Form of Unit Agreement*
4.11	Form of Unit Certificate*
5.1	Opinion of Jones Day
12.1	Calculation of Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges and Ratio of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 12 to Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.'s Annual Report on Form 10-K (File No. 001-08944) for the period ended December 31, 2016)
23.1	Consent of Deloitte & Touche LLP, Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm
23.2	Consent of Jones Day (included in Exhibit 5.1 to this Registration Statement)
24.1	Power of Attorney
25.1	Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility under Trust Indenture Act of 1939 of Trustee under Debt Securities Indenture

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\* To be filed either by amendment or as an exhibit to a report filed under the Exchange Act, and incorporated herein by reference.

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Item 17. Undertakings.

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

1. To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:
  - (i) To include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act of 1933;
  - (ii) To reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of the registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the SEC pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than a 20 percent change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the "Calculation of Registration Fee" table in the effective registration statement; and
  - (iii) To include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the registration statement or any material change to such information in the registration statement; provided, however, that paragraphs (1)(i), (1)(ii) and (1)(iii) do not apply if the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the SEC by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in this registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of this registration statement.
2. That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.
3. To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.
4. That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser:
  - (i) Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and
  - (ii) Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by Section 10(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof. Provided, however, that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date.
5. That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:



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- (i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;
  - (ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;
  - (iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and
  - (iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.
6. The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes that, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each filing of the registrant's annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934) that is incorporated by reference in this registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.
7. The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes to supplement the prospectus, after the expiration of the subscription period, to set forth the results of the subscription offer, the transactions by the underwriters during the subscription period, the amount of unsubscribed securities to be purchased by the underwriters, and the terms of any subsequent reoffering thereof. If any public offering by the underwriters is to be made on terms differing from those set forth on the cover page of the prospectus, a post-effective amendment will be filed to set forth the terms of such offering.
8. Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the SEC such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

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## SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of Cleveland, State of Ohio, on the 9th day of February, 2017.

CLIFFS NATURAL  
RESOURCES INC.

By: /s/ James  
D.  
Graham  
James D.  
Graham,  
Executive  
Vice  
President,  
Chief  
Legal  
Officer &  
Secretary

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this registration statement has been signed by the following persons in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

Signatures	Title	Date
/s/ C. L. Goncalves C. L. Goncalves	Chairman, President, Chief Executive Officer and Director (Principal Executive Officer)	February 9, 2017
/s/ T. K. Flanagan T. K. Flanagan	Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer (Principal Financial Officer and Principal Accounting Officer)	February 9, 2017
* J. T. Baldwin	Director	February 9, 2017
* R. P. Fisher, Jr.	Director	February 9, 2017
* S. M. Green	Director	February 9, 2017
* J. A. Rutkowski, Jr.	Director	February 9, 2017
* E. M. Rychel	Director	February 9, 2017
* J. S. Sawyer	Director	February 9, 2017
* M. D. Siegal	Director	February 9, 2017
* G. Stoliar	Director	February 9, 2017
* D. C. Taylor	Director	February 9, 2017

The undersigned, by signing his name hereto, does sign and execute this registration statement on Form S-3 pursuant to a Power of Attorney executed on behalf of the above-indicated officers and directors of the registrant and filed herewith as Exhibit 24.1 on behalf of the registrant.

By: /s/ James D. Graham  
(James D. Graham, as Attorney-in-Fact)

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