Exhibit 4(a)

EXECUTION COPY

CREDIT AGREEMENT

Among

CLEVELAND-CLIFFS INC

VARIOUS LENDERS FROM TIME TO TIME PARTY HERETO

and

BANK OF AMERICA, N.A., as Administrative Agent and L/C Issuer

DATED AS OF JULY 26, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1.	DEFINITIONS; INTERPRETATION	Page 1
Section 1.1	Definitions	1
Section 1.2	Interpretation	20
Section 1.3	Change in Accounting Principles	21
SECTION 2.	THE CREDIT FACILITIES	21
Section 2.1	Revolving Credit Commitments	21
Section 2.2	Letters of Credit	21
Section 2.3	Applicable Interest Rates	24
Section 2.4	Manner of Borrowing Loans and Designating Currency and Applicable Interest Rates	25
Section 2.5	Minimum Borrowing Amounts; Maximum Eurocurrency Loans	28
Section 2.6	Maturity of Revolving Loans	28
Section 2.7	Prepayments	28
Section 2.8	Place and Application of Payments	29
Section 2.9	Commitment Terminations	31
Section 2.10	Swing Loans	31
Section 2.11	The Notes	32
Section 2.12	Fees	33
Section 2.13	Hedge Agreements	34
SECTION 3.	CONDITIONS PRECEDENT	34
Section 3.1	All Credit Events	34
Section 3.2	Initial Credit Event	35
SECTION 4.	THE GUARANTIES	36
Section 4.1	Guaranties	36
Section 4.2	Further Assurances	36
SECTION 5.	REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES	37
Section 5.1	Organization and Qualification	37
Section 5.2	Authority and Enforceability	37
Section 5.3	Financial Reports	37
Section 5.4	No Material Adverse Change	38
Section 5.5	Litigation and other Controversies	38
Section 5.6	True and Complete Disclosure	38
Section 5.7	Use of Proceeds; Margin Stock	38
Section 5.8	Taxes	38
Section 5.9	ERISA	38
Section 5.10	Subsidiaries	39

Section 5.11	Compliance with Laws	39
Section 5.12	•	39
Section 5.13	Investment Company	39
Section 5.14	Intellectual Property	39
Section 5.15	Good Title	40
Section 5.16	Labor Relations	40
Section 5.17	Capitalization	40
Section 5.18	Other Agreements	40
Section 5.19	Governmental Authority and Licensing	40
Section 5.20	Approvals	40
Section 5.21	Affiliate Transactions	40
Section 5.22	Solvency	41
Section 5.23	Foreign Assets Control Regulations and Anti-Money Laundering	41
SECTION 6.	COVENANTS	41
Section 6.1	Information Covenants	41
Section 6.2	Inspections	43
Section 6.3	Maintenance of Property, Insurance, Environmental Matters, etc.	43
Section 6.4	Preservation of Existence	44
Section 6.5	Compliance with Laws	44
Section 6.6	ERISA	44
Section 6.7	Payment of Taxes	45
Section 6.8	Contracts With Affiliates	45
Section 6.9	No Changes in Fiscal Year	45
Section 6.10	Change in the Nature of Business	45
Section 6.11	Indebtedness	45
Section 6.12	Liens	47
Section 6.13	Restrictions on Joint Ventures	48
Section 6.14	Consolidation, Merger, Sale of Assets, etc.	49
Section 6.15	Restricted Investments Prohibited	50
Section 6.16	Dividends and Certain Other Restricted Payments	50
Section 6.17	Limitation on Restrictions	50
Section 6.18	OFAC	51
Section 6.19	Financial Covenants	51
Section 6.20	Limitation on Non-Material Subsidiaries	51
Section 6.21	Limitation on Assets and Operations of Cliffs Sonoma Entities	51
SECTION 7.	EVENTS OF DEFAULT AND REMEDIES	52
Section 7.1	Events of Default	52
Section 7.2	Non-Bankruptcy Defaults	53
Section 7.3	Bankruptcy Defaults	54
Section 7.4	Collateral for Undrawn Letters of Credit	54
Section 7.5	Notice of Default	55
Section 7.6	Expenses	55

SECTION 8.	CHANGE IN CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONTINGENCIES	55
Section 8.1	Funding Indemnity	55
Section 8.2	Illegality	56
Section 8.3	Unavailability of Deposits or Inability to Ascertain, or Inadequacy of, LIBOR	56
Section 8.4	Yield Protection	56
Section 8.5	Substitution of Lenders	58
Section 8.6	Lending Offices	58
Section 8.7	Discretion of Lender as to Manner of Funding	58
SECTION 9.	THE ADMINISTRATIVE AGENT	59
Section 9.1	Appointment and Authorization of Administrative Agent	59
Section 9.2	Administrative Agent and its Affiliates	59
Section 9.3	Action by Administrative Agent	59
Section 9.4	Consultation with Experts	60
Section 9.5	Liability of Administrative Agent; Credit Decision	60
Section 9.6	Indemnity	60
Section 9.7	Resignation of Administrative Agent and Successor Administrative Agent	61
Section 9.8	L/C Issuer	61
Section 9.9	Hedging Liability and Funds Transfer and Deposit Account Liability Arrangements	61
SECTION 10.	MISCELLANEOUS	62
Section 10.1	Withholding Taxes	62
Section 10.2	No Waiver, Cumulative Remedies	63
Section 10.3	Non-Business Days	63
Section 10.4	Documentary Taxes	63
Section 10.5	Survival of Representations	64
Section 10.6	Survival of Indemnities	64
Section 10.7	Sharing of Set-Off	64
Section 10.8	Notices	64
Section 10.9	Counterparts	65
Section 10.10	Successors and Assigns; Assignments and Participations	65
Section 10.11	Amendments	67
Section 10.12	Headings	68
Section 10.13	Costs and Expenses; Indemnification	68
Section 10.14	Set-off	69
Section 10.15	Entire Agreement	69
Section 10.16	Governing Law	69
Section 10.17	Severability of Provisions	69
Section 10.18	Excess Interest	69
Section 10.19	Construction	70
Section 10.20	Lender's Obligations Several	70
Section 10.21	USA Patriot Act	70

Section 10.22		Currency	70
Section 10.23		Submission to Jurisdiction; Waiver of Jury Trial	71
Exhibit A		Notice of Payment Request	
Exhibit B		Notice of Borrowing	
Exhibit C		Notice of Continuation/Conversion	
Exhibit D-1		Revolving Note	
Exhibit D-2		Swing Note	
Exhibit E — Compliance Certificate			
Exhibit F		Assignment and Assumption	
Schedule 1		Commitments	
Schedule 5.5		Litigation	
Schedule 5.9		Welfare Plans	
Schedule 5.10		Subsidiaries	
Schedule 5.17		Capitalization	
Schedule 6.11		Existing Indebtedness	
Schedule 6.12		Existing Liens	
Schedule 6.13		Mesabi Joint Ventures	
Schedule 6.13(A)			
Schedule 6.15		Permitted Investments	
Schedule 6.15(A)	hedule 6.15(A) — Existing Investments in Non-Joint Ventures		
		iv	

CREDIT AGREEMENT

This Credit Agreement is entered into as of July 26, 2007, by and among Cleveland-Cliffs Inc, an Ohio corporation (the "*Borrower*"), the various institutions from time to time party to this Agreement as Lenders and Bank of America, N.A., as Administrative Agent and L/C Issuer.

The Borrower has requested, and the Lenders have agreed to extend, certain credit facilities on the terms and conditions of this Agreement. In consideration of the mutual agreements set forth in this Agreement, the parties to this Agreement agree as follows:

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS; INTERPRETATION.

Section 1.1 Definitions. The following terms when used herein shall have the following meanings:

"Acquisition" means any transaction or series of related transactions for the purpose of or resulting, directly or indirectly, in (a) the acquisition of all or substantially all of the assets of a Person, or of any business or division of a Person, (b) the acquisition of in excess of 50% of the capital stock, partnership interests, membership interests or equity of any Person (other than a Person that is a Subsidiary), or (c) a merger or consolidation or any other combination with another Person (other than a Person that is a Subsidiary), provided that the Borrower or the Subsidiary is the surviving entity.

"Adjusted LIBOR" means, for any Borrowing of Eurocurrency Loans, a rate per annum equal to the quotient of (i) LIBOR, divided by (ii) one minus the Reserve Percentage.

"Administrative Agent" means Bank of America, N.A., as contractual representative for itself and the other Lenders and any successor pursuant to Section 9.7 hereof.

"Administrative Agent's Office" means the Administrative Agent's address and, as appropriate, account as set forth on the signature page of the Administrative Agent hereof, or such other address or account as the Administrative Agent may from time to time notify in writing to the Borrower and the Lenders.

"Administrative Agent's Quoted Rate" is defined in Section 2.10(c) hereof.

"Administrative Questionnaire" means an Administrative Questionnaire in a form supplied by the Administrative Agent.

"Affiliate" means any Person directly or indirectly controlling or controlled by, or under direct or indirect common control with, another Person. A Person shall be deemed to control another Person for purposes of this definition if such Person possesses, directly or indirectly, the power to direct, or cause the direction of, the management and policies of the other Person, whether through the ownership of voting securities, common directors, trustees or officers, by contract or otherwise; provided that, in any event for purposes of this definition, any Person that owns, directly or indirectly, 30% or more of the securities having the ordinary voting power for the election of directors or governing body of a corporation or 30% or more of the partnership or

other ownership interests of any other Person (other than as a limited partner of such other Person) will be deemed to control such corporation or other Person.

"Agreement" means this Credit Agreement, as the same may be amended, modified, restated or supplemented from time to time pursuant to the terms hereof.

"Alternative Currency" means any of Australian dollars and Canadian dollars, and any other currency approved by the Administrative Agent, in each case for so long as such currency is readily available to all the Lenders and is freely transferable and freely convertible to U.S. Dollars and the Dow Jones Telerate Service or Reuters Monitor Money Rates Service (or any successor to either) reports a LIBOR for such currency for interest periods of one, two, three, six and twelve calendar months; provided that if any Lender provides written notice to the Borrower (with a copy to the Administrative Agent) that any currency control or other exchange regulations are imposed in the country in which any such Alternative Currency is issued and that in the reasonable opinion of such Lender funding a Loan in such currency is unlawful or subject to unreasonably burdensome legal restrictions, then such currency shall cease to be an Alternative Currency hereunder until such time as all the Lenders reinstate such country's currency as an Alternative Currency.

"Amapa" means MMX Amapá Mineração Ltda., a company organized under the laws of Brazil.

"Amapa Investment" means, collectively, all Investments by the Borrower and its Subsidiaries in Amapa.

"Applicable Margin" means, with respect to Loans, Reimbursement Obligations, and the commitment fees and letter of credit fees payable under Section 2.12 hereof, (a) from the closing date until September 30, 2007, the rates per annum shown below:

APPLICABLE MARGIN FOR BASE RATE LOANS AND REIMBURSEMENT OBLIGATIONS SHALL BE:

APPLICABLE MARGIN FOR
EUROCURRENCY LOANS AND LETTER OF
CREDIT FEE SHALL
BE:

APPLICABLE MARGIN FOR COMMITMENT FEE SHALL BE:

0%

0.50% 0.10%

(b) from October 1, 2007 until the first Pricing Date, the rates per annum shown opposite Level I below, and (c) thereafter, from one Pricing Date to the next, the rates per annum determined in accordance with the following schedule:

LEVEL	TOTAL FUNDED DEBT TO EBITDA RATIO FOR SUCH PRICING DATE	APPLICABLE MARGIN FOR BASE RATE LOANS AND REIMBURSEMENT OBLIGATIONS SHALL BE:	APPLICABLE MARGIN FOR EUROCURRENCY LOANS AND LETTER OF CREDIT FEE SHALL BE:	APPLICABLE MARGIN FOR COMMITMENT FEE SHALL BE:
I	Less than or equal to 1.0 to 1.0	0.0%	0.75%	0.175%

2

LEVEL	TOTAL FUNDED DEBT TO EBITDA RATIO FOR SUCH PRICING DATE	APPLICABLE MARGIN FOR BASE RATE LOANS AND REIMBURSEMENT OBLIGATIONS SHALL BE:	APPLICABLE MARGIN FOR EUROCURRENCY LOANS AND LETTER OF CREDIT FEE SHALL BE:	APPLICABLE MARGIN FOR COMMITMENT FEE SHALL BE:
II	Less than or equal to 1.5 to 1.0, but greater than 1.0 to 1.0	0.0%	1.00%	0.20%
III	Less than or equal to 2.0 to 1.0, but greater than 1.5 to 1.0	0.0%	1.25%	0.225%
IV	Greater than 2.0 to 1.0	0.0%	1.50%	0.25%

For purposes hereof, the term "Pricing Date" means, for any fiscal quarter of the Borrower ending on or after September 30, 2007, the date on which the Administrative Agent is in receipt of the Borrower's most recent financial statements (and, in the case of the year-end financial statements, audit report) for the fiscal quarter then ended, pursuant to Section 6.1 hereof. The Applicable Margin shall be established based on the Total Funded Debt to EBITDA ratio for the most recently completed fiscal quarter and the Applicable Margin established on a Pricing Date shall remain in effect until the next Pricing Date. If the Borrower has not delivered its financial statements by the date such financial statements (and, in the case of the year-end financial statements, audit report) are required to be delivered under Section 6.1 hereof, until such financial statements and audit report are delivered, the Applicable Margin shall be the highest Applicable Margin (i.e., the Total Funded Debt to EBITDA ratio shall be deemed to be greater than 2.00 to 1.0). If the Borrower subsequently delivers such financial statements before the next Pricing Date, the Applicable Margin established by such late delivered financial statements shall take effect from the date of delivery until the next Pricing Date. In all other circumstances, the Applicable Margin established by such financial statements shall be in effect from the Pricing Date that occurs immediately after the end of the fiscal quarter covered by such financial statements until the next Pricing Date. Each determination of the Applicable Margin made by the Administrative Agent in accordance with the foregoing shall be conclusive and binding on the Borrower and the Lenders absent manifest error.

"Application" is defined in Section 2.2(b) hereof.

"Approved Fund" means any Fund that is administered or managed by (a) a Lender, (b) an Affiliate of a Lender or (c) an entity or an Affiliate of an entity that administers or manages a Lender.

"Assignment and Assumption" means an assignment and assumption entered into by a Lender and an Eligible Assignee (with the consent of any party whose consent is required by Section 10.10), and accepted by the Administrative Agent, in substantially the form of Exhibit F or any other form approved by the Administrative Agent.

"Authorized Representative" means those persons shown on the list of officers provided by the Borrower pursuant to Section 3.2 hereof or on any update of any such list provided by the

Borrower to the Administrative Agent, or any further or different officers of the Borrower so named by any Authorized Representative of the Borrower in a written notice to the Administrative Agent.

"Base Rate" means for any day the greater of: (i) the rate of interest announced by the Administrative Agent from time to time as its "prime rate" as in effect on such day, with any change in the Base Rate resulting from a change in said prime rate to be effective as of the date of the relevant change in said prime rate (it being acknowledged that such rate may not be the Administrative Agent's best or lowest rate) and (ii) the sum of (x) the Federal Funds Rate, plus (y) 1/2 of 1%.

"Base Rate Loan" means a Loan bearing interest at a rate specified in Section 2.3(a) hereof.

"Borrower" is defined in the introductory paragraph of this Agreement.

"Borrowing" means the total of Loans of a single type advanced, continued for an additional Interest Period, or converted from a different type into such type by the Lenders on a single date and, in the case of Eurocurrency Loans, for a single Interest Period. Borrowings of Loans are made and maintained ratably from each of the Lenders according to their Percentages. A Borrowing is "advanced" on the day Lenders advance funds comprising such Borrowing to the Borrower, is "continued" on the date a new Interest Period for the same type of Loans commences for such Borrowing, and is "converted" when such Borrowing is changed from one type of Loans to the other, all as requested by the Borrower pursuant to Section 2.4(a) hereof.

"Business Day" means any day (other than a Saturday or Sunday) on which banks are not authorized or required to close in New York, New York and, if the applicable Business Day relates to the advance or continuation of, or conversion into, or payment of a Eurocurrency Loan, on which banks are dealing in U.S. Dollar deposits in the interbank Eurocurrency market in London, England and New York, New York and, if the applicable Business Day relates to the borrowing or payment of a Eurocurrency Loan denominated in an Alternative Currency, on which banks and foreign exchange markets are open for business in the city where disbursements of or payments on such Loan are to be made and, if such Alternative Currency is the euro or any national currency of a nation that is a member of the European Economic and Monetary Union, which is a TARGET Settlement Day.

"Capital Expenditures" means, with respect to any Person for any period, the aggregate amount of all expenditures (whether paid in cash or accrued as a liability) by such Person during that period for the acquisition or leasing (pursuant to a Capital Lease) of fixed or capital assets or additions to property, plant, or equipment (including replacements and improvements) which should be capitalized on the balance sheet of such Person in accordance with GAAP.

"Capital Lease" means any lease of Property which in accordance with GAAP is required to be capitalized on the balance sheet of the lessee.

"Capitalized Lease Obligation" means, for any Person, the amount of the liability shown on the balance sheet of such Person in respect of a Capital Lease determined in accordance with GAAP.

"Cash Equivalents" shall mean, as to any Person: (a) investments in direct obligations of the United States of America or of any agency or instrumentality thereof whose obligations constitute full faith and credit obligations of the United States of America and securities that are the direct obligations of any member state of the European Union or any other sovereign nation, which at the time of acquisition thereof, was not targeted for sanctions by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the United States Department of the Treasury so long as the full faith of and credit of such nation is pledged in support thereof, provided that in each case any such obligations shall mature within one year of the date of issuance thereof; (b) investments in commercial paper rated at least P-1 by Moody's or at least A-1 by S&P or the highest rating available by any other credit agency of national standing or an equivalent rating from a comparable foreign rating agency, in each case maturing within one year of the date of issuance thereof; (c) investments in certificates of deposit or banker's acceptances issued by any Lender or by any commercial bank having capital and surplus of not less than U.S. \$100,000,000 which have a maturity of one year or less; (d) investments in repurchase obligations with a term of not more than 7 days for underlying securities of the types described in clause (a) above entered into with any bank meeting the qualifications specified in clause (c) above, provided all such agreements require physical delivery of the securities securing such repurchase agreement, except those delivered through the Federal Reserve Book Entry System; (e) investments in auction reset securities, which are variable rate securities with interest rates that reset no less frequently than quarterly in each case rated "AA" or better by S&P, "Aa2" or better by Moody's or an equivalent rating by any other credit rating agency of recognized national standing; (f) investments in variable rate demand notes and bonds that are credit enhanced by any commercial bank having capital and surplus of not less than U.S. \$100,000,000; and (g) investments in money market funds that invest solely, and which are restricted by their respective charters to invest solely, in investments of the type described in the immediately preceding subsections (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) above.

"CERCLA" means the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, as amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986, 42 U.S.C. §§9601 et seq., and any future amendments.

"Change of Control" shall mean and include any Person or related Persons constituting a "group" for the purposes of Section 13(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, becoming the beneficial owner or owners, directly or indirectly, of a majority of the Voting Stock (determined by number of votes) of the Borrower (the "Beneficial Owners"); provided that a Change of Control shall not have occurred if the Beneficial Owners include, and are under the general direction and control of, a member or members of the Current Management Group. As used herein, the term "Voting Stock" shall mean Securities of any class or classes, the holders of which are ordinarily, in the absence of contingencies, entitled to elect a majority of the corporate directors (or Persons performing similar functions). As used herein, the term "Current Management Group" shall mean Joseph A. Carrabba, William R. Calfee, John S. Brinzo, David H. Gunning and Donald J. Gallagher and any successors thereto who are appointed by a majority of the Continuing Directors. As used herein, this term "Continuing Director" shall mean any