

## The Green Steel Mile

Today, corporations of every size in every corner of the world are taking action to address what is arguably the most pressing and inexorable “projects” humankind has ever faced: the need to achieve net zero in time to ward off irreversible damage from climate change. The journey is complex, multifaceted, and largely uncharted, and the bullseye we’re aiming for is not only encircled by countless other targets, it is also at the nexus of a complex web of supply chain providers, end users, and countless upstream and downstream contributors who all have a hand in producing scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions.

In other words, just as no single company or product caused the current environmental crisis, no single company or product can remediate it. If ever there was a we’re-all-in-this-together moment, this is it, which is why we all need to contribute whatever tools we have at our disposal that are best equipped for the job at hand. At U. S. Steel, that tool is steel.

Adaptable, infinitely recyclable, and essential to so many industries and products vital to leading the charge to net zero (think solar panels and electric vehicles, just as a start), we have been reimagining “green steel” for years. We know that it is a transformative improvement that will help others meet their own decarbonization objectives, and that steel, and green steel in particular, has a tremendous role to play in furthering the sustainability goals of companies across the globe.

We also know that strategic, purposeful partnerships are crucial to our collective success. Some are obvious. They develop organically from mutually beneficial relationships already in place, such as the one we have with GM. As a long-time U. S. Steel customer seeking to meet their own ESG goals, when they approached us about green steel, we saw it as a game-changing first step in automotive manufacturing. Now we are providing them with hundreds of thousands of tons of verdeX® green steel, which is produced with far fewer emissions and comprised of almost exclusively recycled content.

There are also the less obvious alliances that yield no-less profitable results, which is why we need to be relentlessly creative in how we perceive and initiate associations that support our overarching common goal, extending them beyond familiar partner companies and organizations in the supply chain. One example of that at U. S. Steel is the impactful collaboration we’ve established with Purdue University Northwest. Together, we are working on a project that has significant potential to reduce CO2 emissions and has garnered attention and support from the U. S. Department of Energy.

Still, given supply constraints, right now there is only so much green steel that can be produced; that makes it incumbent upon us to plan carefully and forecast wisely because meeting the need for green steel is one of the biggest challenges we face. The limited amount of this product available in the marketplace, particularly as customers from across industries need more of it to meet their own commitments to reduce carbon emissions and achieve net zero: automobile manufacturers, renewable energy suppliers, and other manufacturers who are looking for low-carbon-based products and sustainable solutions and supply chains, requires us to think differently and partner differently.

Steel has been around since the bronze age. It is wholly integral to human society, and it is essential to our future. Naturally, then, as chief commercial officer of a steel manufacturing corporation, I ponder the future state of a steel industry that is carbon neutral. I am certain we must start with judicious planning, long-term conversations, strategic partnerships, and a determined, righteous view of where we want to be in the future. We must make public, bold statements about our intentions and steadfast commitments to the environment and sustainability. We must set up new supply arrangements, find

capabilities that allow us to work together, make changes from what we've known and done to what is new, and adapt emerging technologies that support the journey we must make for the sake of humankind and our shared planet. Our customers and partners expect these kinds of solutions from us, and the world deserves for us to answer that charge.

At U. S. Steel, we vigorously employ what we call our Best for All® strategy. It focuses on delivering profitable steel solutions because we are first and foremost a business, but it derives from a deep understanding that being profitable and doing what is right for people and the planet can – and must! – exist in harmony with each other. We believe the continued health and success of our business depends on it, but we also believe a sustainable, global, Best-for-All future depends on it as well.