

Art Lind
P.O. Box 337
Hibbing, MN 55746



February 23, 2018

Connie Cummins, Forest Supervisor
U.S. Forest Service-Superior National Forest
8901 Grand Avenue Place
Duluth, MN 55808
Attn: Northern Minnesota Federal Minerals Withdrawal

Dear Connie Cummins, Forest Supervisor,

The U. S. Forest Service and U. S. Department of the Interior should immediately abandon the unnecessary and illegal withdrawal proposal. The USFS has already recognized there are no significant environmental impacts from the withdrawal proposal.

If the Environmental Assessment (EA) moves forward the agencies must provide the needed resources to expedite its completion and address reasonable alternatives, including a legitimate no action alternative.

If the EA moves forward it must not only identify federal mineral potential, it must also include state and private mineral potential within the withdrawal boundaries. State and private minerals are distributed throughout the Superior National Forest and the withdrawal would effectively preclude any development of these state and private minerals. The total impact of the proposed withdrawal is approximately 425,000 acres of lands and minerals.

If the agency moves forward it should make clear that the USFS has already acknowledged that leasing of federal minerals and mineral exploration activities have no significant impact on the environment. The 2012 Hardrock Prospect Permit EIS found no significant impacts on the environment from exploration, and the current Superior National Forest Management Plan lists mineral development as a desired condition.



The EA should acknowledge that any future specific mineral development project proposal will be required to undergo extensive environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act, and this is the appropriate process for protecting environment.

The withdrawal is in direct conflict with President Trump's December 20, 2017, Executive Order on domestic production of minerals and the U. S. Geological Survey 2017 report highlighting the future need and source of critical minerals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Art Lind".

Art Lind

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55808-112201

