



MININGMINNESOTA

RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT
of NATURAL RESOURCES

May 15, 2024

Superior National Forest
8901 Grand Avenue Place
Duluth, MN 55808

Submitted via online portal only

Subject: Comments on the BWCAW Forest Plan Amendment

To Whom It May Concern:

MiningMinnesota is pleased to submit these comments in response to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (USFS) request regarding the Superior National Forest's (SNF) Wilderness Chapter amendment.

MiningMinnesota is dedicated to promoting sustainable and environmentally responsible mining of copper, nickel, and other non-ferrous mineral resources in the state. Its members form a diverse coalition of organizations, companies, and individuals committed to employing modern exploration and mining practices. By supporting domestic mineral production, MiningMinnesota seeks to reduce dependence on foreign resources, enhance national security, and play a pivotal role in the country's transition to clean energy.

MiningMinnesota and its members are deeply invested in ensuring that exploration and mining activities in the state are carried out in a safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible way. In alignment with the SNF Plan's Desired Conditions for mineral resources, its members had actively and responsibly explored the SNF for decades, until the USFS requested and received a withdrawal for future mineral leasing in January 2023.

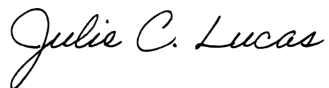
The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) is a national treasure within the SNF that warrants preservation and protection. The 95th Congress underscored this by establishing a Mining Protection Area within the BWCAW Act of 1978. However, outside these protected borders and consistent with the 2004 SNF Plan, environmentally responsible mineral exploration, development, and production remain desired conditions

to support economic growth and national security (D-MN-1 and D-MN-2). The federal Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 further emphasizes the federal government's role in supporting the orderly and economic development of domestic mineral resources to satisfy industrial, security, and environmental needs.

MiningMinnesota acknowledges the need for the USFS to review the status of the BWCAW management area within the SNF. At the same time, we must highlight the critical importance of maintaining the SNF as a multiple-use forest outside of the BWCAW and Mining Protection Area established by Congress. As our nation and the world transition to clean energy, which relies heavily on minerals, it is crucial that we safeguard our ability to source these minerals domestically, including from the SNF.

We appreciate your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie C. Lucas".

Julie Lucas
Executive Director, MiningMinnesota