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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Protect Minnesota's Boundary Waters From Copper Mining

I strongly support the proposed 20-year mining ban (also known as "mineral withdrawal") in the Rainy River watershed of northern Minnesota to protect the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Sulfide-ore copper mining poses an unacceptable risk of serious and irreparable harm to this unique and iconic wilderness area.

The Boundary Waters is America's most popular designated wilderness area, visited by more than 250,000 people annually. The 1.1-million-acre wilderness includes nearly 2,000 pristine lakes and more than 1,200 miles of canoe routes. The Boundary Waters must not be put at risk of perpetual pollution from the most toxic industry in America.

During the environmental review of the proposed withdrawal, please thoroughly address the following issues:

WILDLIFE: The Boundary Waters provides refugia for imperiled wildlife species. Due to the anticipated impacts of climate change on this region, the protection of the Boundary Waters is critical to the survival and recovery of threatened and sensitive species, including moose, Canada lynx and wolves.

WATER QUALITY: The lakes, rivers, and streams of the Boundary Waters are among the cleanest waters in North America, and are especially sensitive to acids and heavy metals found in copper mine pollution.

QUIET RECREATION: The Boundary Waters is the most popular wilderness area in the United States, and provides remarkable, world-class opportunities for canoeing, fishing and other recreation.

ECONOMICS: The Boundary Waters helps support a sustainable outdoor recreation and tourism industry in northeastern Minnesota.

I urge the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to adopt the strongest and most expansive mineral withdrawal possible to protect the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness from the threat of sulfide-ore copper mining pollution. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Dr. William 'Skip' Dykoski
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