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Comments: I urge the Forest Service to conduct a thorough and rigorous study that encompasses to the greatest extent possible all of the ecological, social, and economic significances of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and surrounding portion of the Superior National Forest under consideration, and the full range of direct and indirect effects on all these aspects that could result from sulfide-ore copper mining in this area.

The BWCA and SNF have been an integral part of my life for all 29 years of it. My mother was introduced to the BWCA by her freshman college roommate, and went on to work at a wilderness outfitter for multiple seasons, alongside the second generation of the owners' family, who went on to take over the business. I have worked for them, and now for the third generation of the family for over a decade. Not only has this job allowed me to support myself through college and well beyond, but my experiences and relationships from it have been formational, as I have transitioned from high school to college and beyond.

In addition to the broad work and life experience I have gained from my work at the outfitter, my time spent experiencing the Boundary Waters and Superior National Forest has been at least as meaningful. Not only has the wilderness provided me with amazing experiences and solace in difficult times, it has also allowed me to develop the resourcefulness and self-reliance that have enabled me to travel the world as a young woman. Just this week my mother was telling a friend how I've gone on seven overnight paddles solo, for up to a week at a time, and the woman was speechless. Not all visitors may be so ambitious, but these opportunities to push your boundaries, both physically and mentally, and build self-confidence and new skills are just as important as the clean water and pristine habitat that the Boundary Waters provides.

All of these aspects of this special place could be adversely affected not only by water and air pollution caused by sulfide mining, as this study will no doubt conclude, but also by a range of other impacts such as increased noise and light disruption affecting human residents and visitors as well as wildlife, increased heavy traffic on inadequate roads, burdening communities with increased risks and costs, and longterm health impacts from a range of toxins that have raised serious concerns from numerous groups and individuals in medicine.

In order for this study to accurately reflect the impacts of the proposed moratorium on mineral leases, it must encompass all of these aspects. This is a big decision, and in order to make it responsibly, all pertinent information must be taken into account, including not only the direct pollution impacts that can be anticipated from the consistent record of copper mining across the country, and the unique risks it poses to this singular area, but also the impacts to the millions of visitors each year and their experiences, as well as on those of us who call the area home and livelihood. Thank you for providing the public with this opportunity to comment on this matter.

Tess