From: shanpatty@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Shannon Patty-Stoddard
To: Lands, BLM_ES
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Superior National Forest Withdrawal Application
Date: Saturday, December 18, 2021 8:26:30 AM

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Dear State Director of Geospatial Services F. David Radford,

Dear Bureau of Land Management ("BLM"),

I strongly support the proposed mineral withdrawal to protect the watershed of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness ("Boundary Waters"). We need to preserve America's natural resources- both in terms of ecosystem function, a benefit that cannot be replaced or manufactured, and the beauty and enjoyment it offers for our own and future generations' enjoyment, which cannot be quantified. No amount of corporate profit or economic growth can ever justify the losses that sulfide-ore copper mining poses to this sensitive and important watershed.

I recall an experience as a young adult viewing the night sky without the haze of light pollution- a night of staring at the universe with awe contemplating it's grandeur and my own insignificance. I realized how small but connected I was to the whole. The Boundary Waters offers this kind of sublime experience in addition to is other attractions: abundant trails, rivers and open space for all Americans to enjoy. Priceless and irreplaceable, the Boundary Waters must not be put at risk of perpetual pollution from the most toxic industry in America.

During environmental review of the proposed withdrawal, please be sure to thoroughly address the following:

· Cleanest water quality in North America - The lakes, rivers, and streams of the Boundary Waters watershed are among the cleanest waters in North America and are especially sensitive to acids and heavy-metals found in copper mine pollution;

·America's most visited & accessible wilderness destination - The Boundary Waters is the most popular Wilderness Area in the U.S., and the largest east of the Rockies and north of the Everglades. Visitors travel through it by boat or canoe, and can choose routes to avoid having to carry their gear, making the Boundary Waters more accessible to families, children, and people with physical limitations; and

· Economics - The Boundary Waters supports a strong, sustainable, growing outdoor recreation industry in Minnesota. It is a principal driver of the $850 million, 17,000-job recreation economy in Northeastern Minnesota, it contributes to hundreds of manufacturing jobs, and it helps keep and attract talent to Minnesota.

I urge the BLM to withdraw the 225,378 acres of national forest lands to protect the Boundary Waters from the threat of endless sulfide-ore copper mining pollution. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,
Shannon Patty-Stoddard
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