

12/7/2021

### **Superior National Forest Withdrawal Application Comments**

As a cabin owner on beautiful Burntside Lake, which is adjacent to the Superior National Forest and the BWCA in Northern Minnesota, I am deeply concerned about the history of non-safe mining practices by international copper/nickel mining companies.

My husband and I have met hundreds of people from all over the United States plus the occasional international visitor while walking the BWCA's Crab Lake Portage. All of those people make the effort to visit the BWCA for a reason.

The Boundary Waters is unique and should be treasured and protected.

Allowing copper/nickel mining in the Rainy River watershed puts the BWCA at risk.

Please adopt amendments to nonferrous mining rules to prohibit nonferrous mining in the Rainy River watershed. This rule is needed to prevent degradation of waters in BWCA.

- Sulfate from copper-nickel mining would affect sediment chemistry, releasing excessive nutrients and increasing algae blooms in once-clear BWCA lakes.
- Sulfate would decimate wild rice and increase mercury release from sediments and mercury methylation, placing the health of anglers, subsistence fishers, fetuses, infants, and children in jeopardy.
- Nonferrous mines and waste storage would leach dangerous heavy metals including mercury, arsenic, and lead. Copper, nickel, and cobalt leachate would also be directly toxic to BWCAW aquatic life.
- Failure of tailings dams, leaks, and seepage to surface water or groundwater would have catastrophic consequences on BWCAW waters and the ecosystems they support.

**Please conduct a formal rulemaking process to prohibit nonferrous sulfide ore mining in the Rainy River watershed.**

Sincerely,



Jo Ann Morse