

Richard C. Struck, 40 County Road 44, Grand Marais, MN 55604; 218-387-2608; thelodge@boreal.org

Mr. F. David Radford  
Deputy State Director of Geospatial Services  
BLM Eastern States Office  
5275 Leesburg Pike  
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

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Dear Mr. Radford:

I am pleased to add my comments to the discussion regarding challenges to Minnesota's rules for nonferrous mining near the BWCAW.

Simply stated, I earnestly believe that no such mining deserves to be located near the BWCAW or anywhere in or near the Rainy River Headwaters region. Irregardless of what the mining industry or its many adherents project, no such mining in the nation has proven completely safe and without damage to the natural environment. Can the "gold standard" process be the answer? Nothing to date has shown that whatever the mining industry proclaims to prevent harm to the environment, such extraction produces pollution and this could be a death knell for the pristine BWCAW.

Too, there is another justification for refusing to allow nonferrous mining here. Just leave our outstanding boreal forests, wetlands and rivers intact. As noted in the book "endgame" by Derrick Jensen..."Think about it for a second: what is the real source of our life? Of our food, our air, our water? Is it the economic system? Of course not: it is our land base. The needs of the natural world are more important than the needs of any economic system."

Jensen notes that we are killing our planet. Noting all the pollution globally, the growth of demands presented by unchecked population, overemphasis on corporate profits and economic gains over the needs of our natural world leaves little support for preventing the destruction of our natural wonders. Minnesota's famous BWCAW and our vast forests and water systems deserve equal if not more consideration that what the mining industry suggests.

To nurture nature is to be aware of its awesome beauty, to understand its critical support for all life, and to respect its place above all else in our lives. When we consider our short lived exposure on earth, we should also accept the fact that these natural treasures have long existed, until now. Thus we are at a significant crossroads in determining the value of all life and how easy it is to destroy what sustains us.

It's time to put the true value of our natural assets above man's insatiable drive for economic values. We can't continue to destroy our earth and ignore what is happening, as if life continues without concern. We can do better. And this choice begins by not allowing nonferrous mining near the BWCAW or in our Rainy River watershed.

Thank you for considering my views on this issue.

Sincerely,

  
Richard C. Struck

