

Gerald M. Tyler
P.O. Box 4
Ely, Minnesota 55731

January 6, 2022

Deb Haaland, Secretary
Department of Interior
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D C 20240

F. David Radford, Deputy State Director of Geospatial Services
BLM Eastern States Office
RE: Superior National Forest Withdrawal Application
5275 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF LAND MGMT
EASTERN STATES OFFICE
2022 JAN 26 A 9:22

Re: Superior National Forest Withdrawal Application

Dear Secretary Haaland & Mr. Radford:

I write in opposition to the withdrawal, for a 20-year term, of approximately 225,378 acres of U.S. Forest Service lands in the Rainy River Watershed in the Superior National Forest from disposition under the U.S. mineral and geothermal leasing laws. A ban on mining on the U.S. Forest Service lands is clearly and unquestionably contrary to the policies and priorities of Minnesota and the Biden Administration's public policy priorities.

Opposition to copper-nickel mining, and Twin Metals Minnesota's proposed copper nickel mine in the Rainy River Watershed, has been led by three Minnesota based nonprofit, anti-mining organizations whose assertions are based on neither the science nor the facts.

Minnesota has the world's largest undeveloped copper-nickel deposit, known as the Duluth complex. The Twin Metals' project, which is located within the Duluth Complex, hosts 95% of our nation's known nickel resources, 88% of its cobalt, 75% of its platinum group metals, and 34% of its copper. TMM's project has been ranked as both a top 10 global nickel project and a top 10 global copper project. The United States is currently dependent on foreign sources for these minerals and that makes the United States economically and environmentally vulnerable.

Twin Metals Minnesota has spent more than \$500 million dollars prospecting and conducting studies. Several other companies, including *Teck*, a large mining company based in Vancouver, B.C., *Encampment Minerals*, and *Vermillion Gold* are currently conducting exploration studies in the Rainy River Watershed. Well over one billion dollars has been expended by non-

ferrous mining companies to develop copper-nickel mining projects in Northeastern Minnesota. While these projects are not yet operational, the nonferrous industry has the potential to support our families and communities for generations to come, as well as contribute millions of dollars to our state's educational system vis-à-vis the Permanent School Trust Fund.

Permanently banning nonferrous mining within the Rainy River watershed, a watershed that has hosted multiple taconite mines, as well as multiple nonferrous mines that are currently operating on the Canadian side of the watershed, would impair our nation's ability to utilize the resources to meet its national security goals as well as its climate change goals.

The Biden Administration has identified climate change among its top priorities. Addressing climate change issues requires that we transition to utilize energy sources that reduces the carbon we emit into the atmosphere; that means electricity generated with renewable sources and stored in batteries made with nickel and copper.

All mining projects must be evaluated individually and specific to their site, design and geology. We have asked our government officials to not slam the door on a project prematurely and one that is contrary to legal precedents.

We must preserve and not sacrifice our water, the environment, our cultural and historic resources nor the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness for economic development and jobs. Yet, because of project-specific record keeping, modern technology and global industry best practices, we can safely and responsibly do both.

We Support Mining and Clean Water - We Can Have Both!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald M. Tyler", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gerald M. Tyler