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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 23, 2016

Year in the Wilderness ends at River Point Resort&Outfitting Co. in Ely, MN

Dave and Amy Freeman spent entire year in the Boundary Waters to protect the Wilderness from the proposed Twin Metals Minnesota sulfide-ore copper mining operation.

Today, Dave and Amy Freeman, wilderness guides and 2014 *National Geographic* Adventurers of the Year, returned from 366 days spent in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Paddling in with dozens of supporters, the Freemans arrived at River Point Resort & Outfitting Company in Ely, MN, to cheers.

"Our exit from the Wilderness today is bittersweet," said Amy Freeman. "We love this place and honestly wouldn't mind staying a bit longer, but we are eager to catch up with family and friends, share the experience with others, and find new ways to contribute to the effort to protect this very special place."

The Freemans greeted their family, friends, wilderness-edge guides and outfitters, as well as supporters from across the country, with tales from their year in the Boundary Waters. The Freemans departed on September 23, 2015, for their journey of adventure advocacy called [A Year in the Wilderness](#). They were able to watch the changing seasons from within its borders, a unique experience designed to help bear witness to this special place and raise awareness about the risks it faces.

The Freemans support the efforts of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters, which is leading the effort to ensure permanent protection for the Boundary Waters Wilderness, America's most visited Wilderness and Minnesota's crown jewel, from proposed sulfide-ore copper mining just outside its borders. The U.S. EPA has identified sulfide-ore copper mining as the most toxic industry in America.

The Freemans previous adventure advocacy effort, the [Paddle to DC](#) in 2014, included paddling and sailing 2,000 miles and 101 days from Ely, MN, to Washington, DC. Since they departed on their Year in the Wilderness, Dave and Amy have camped at approximately 120 different sites, explored 500 lakes, rivers and streams, and traveled more than 2,000 miles by canoe, foot, ski, snowshoe and dog team.

They shared their journey through social media, blog posts for the [Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters](#), [National Geographic Adventure](#) and [Canoe & Kayak](#) magazine, and regular podcasts for [WTIP Radio](#). The Freemans also appeared on the [TODAY Show](#), [Minnesota Bound](#) and [The Current](#).

A documentary film about their Year in the Wilderness, *Bear Witness*, will premiere at the Fresh Coast Film Festival in Marquette, MI, on October 15 ([trailer](#)). Dave and Amy Freeman are writing a book that captures their experience spending A Year in the Wilderness. Their book will be published by Minneapolis' Milkweed Editions in fall 2017.

"We are proud of the momentum that our year of bearing witness to the Wilderness has fostered, but our work will not be complete until the watershed is permanently protected, said Dave Freeman. "We all must continue to speak loudly for this quiet place."

From their campsites in the Boundary Waters Wilderness, the Freemans have watched the seasons change and followed many exciting developments in the efforts to protect the Wilderness they aim to protect. In March, [Governor Dayton expressed](#), "strong opposition to mining in close proximity to the BWCAW." In April, Department of the Interior [Secretary Sally Jewell](#) called the Boundary Waters Wilderness a "special area" that should be re-examined to "better understand the value of the land and water and potential impacts of development." In June, the Bureau of Land Management "requested that the Forest Service provide a decision on whether it consents or does not consent to the renewal of the [Twin Metals] leases." In response, the [United States Forest Service](#) stated the agency is "deeply concerned by the location of the leases within the same watershed as the BWCAW" and initiated a public input period. The input period ran from June 20-July 20 of this year and received [more than 72,000 petition signatures](#) in support of protecting the watershed of the Wilderness from sulfide-ore copper mining.

MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Dave and Amy Freeman will be available for phone and email interviews on Saturday, September 24, and Sunday, September 25. The Freemans will be in the Twin Cities and available for interviews or TV segments in person or over the phone from September 30 to October 7. Please contact Ellie Siler at ellie@savetheboundarywaters.org, 612-616-2149 to set up interviews.

MULTIMEDIA

For information on the Campaign to Save the Boundary, including maps, infographics and scientific reports, please visit our online [Media Kit](#).

For high res images or video of the Year in the Wilderness Exit Party and of Dave and Amy Freeman's yearlong journey, please contact Ellie Siler at ellie@savetheboundarywaters.org, 612-616-2149. Broll of the Freemans from their upcoming documentary *Bear Witness* is available courtesy of Duct Tape Then Beer at <https://vimeo.com/179526240> (password: dttbstbw). Photos from the past year are available [here](#).

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The Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters is a broad coalition of more than 30 partner organizations, including conservation, sportsmen, and veteran's groups. The Campaign is also supported by more than 100 local and national businesses. The Campaign is led by Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness, which is based in Ely, Minnesota. For more information, visit: SavetheBoundaryWaters.org