



Media Contact
Ellie Bayrd Siler
Communications Director
ellie@savetheboundarywaters.org
612-616-2149

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Comment period opens for environmental review of sulfide-ore copper mining threat to Boundary Waters Wilderness

Environmental review will determine whether sensitive lands should be removed from the federal mining program

Ely, MN— [Today](#), the United States Forest Service officially announced a two-year pause on mining activities in approximately 234,328 acres of the Superior National Forest, a vital portion of the watershed of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and Voyageurs National Park. The announcement starts a 90-day period for the public to comment on the Forest Service's application for withdrawal of these lands and minerals from the federal leasing program.

This period will help determine the scope for the two-year science-based environmental study of the unique water-based ecosystem of the Boundary Waters and Superior National Forest. The environmental review will guide the decision by the Secretary of the Department of Interior on whether to approve the U.S. Forest Service's application for a 20-year withdrawal.

A public meeting for citizen input will be held during the 90-day comment period on March 16, 2017, in Duluth, MN, at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center. [Public comments can be made electronically here.](#)

"The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness is beloved by Minnesotans and people all over the country. Americans value the Wilderness for recreation, fishing, and hunting. It is a major economic driver for northeastern Minnesota." said Becky Rom, National Chair of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters. **"Sulfide-ore copper mining near the Boundary Waters is a grave threat. For over a century citizens from all walks of life have repeatedly worked together to address threats and challenges in an effort to gain permanent protection for the Boundary Waters. Thanks to today's announcement, we have an opportunity to determine the fate of the Boundary Waters by ensuring that decisions are based on science, that the focus is on the Boundary Waters, and that Americans have a voice in the decision. We encourage everyone to participate in the environmental review process."**

The Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters is a broad national coalition of business people, sportsmen, veterans, outdoor enthusiasts, conservationists, and others that was founded by residents of Ely, Minnesota in 2013. The Campaign works to protect the interests of the people of the United States in an ecologically healthy Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

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