

**For Immediate Release**

February 3, 2021

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# SAVE THE BOUNDARY WATERS

**ICYMI:**

## **MCCOLLUM REQUESTS PRESIDENT BIDEN TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT BOUNDARY WATERS**

Yesterday U.S. Rep. Betty McCollum (MN04) sent a letter to President Biden asking that his administration take action to protect Minnesota's Boundary Waters Wilderness from sulfide-ore copper mining. Rep. McCollum's letter recounts the extreme political interference by the Trump administration in fast-tracking highly risky mining next to America's most visited Wilderness.

"Rep. McCollum is a great champion for the Boundary Waters and is spot on in her letter," said **Tom Landwehr, Executive Director of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters**. "The Trump administration's actions to fast-track risky mining near the Boundary Waters was political from start to finish. The Trump administration ignored credible science and bypassed legally required processes, instead bowing to crass political and industry influence. Americans who care about the Boundary Waters are hopeful that a Biden-Harris administration will restore science-based decision making and good governance to the regulatory process, which we know will lead to protection of this priceless national treasure."

The letter reads, in part:

**Dear President Biden: As your administration begins to restore the American people's trust in our federal government, we share the priority of ensuring that government policies and decisions about America's public lands are rooted in sound science and the public good. Under the previous administration, there was an extreme politicization of these decisions and a push to exploit our nation's**

**natural resources by private interests, without regard to sound science or the long-term environmental consequences.**

**The American people deserve a federal government that works to protect our public lands on their behalf, not one that pushes policies on behalf of corporate interests or to curry political favor. I look forward to engaging with your senior policy staff in the White House and the relevant departments to ensure protections for one of our country's most precious federal treasures: the 1.1 million-acre Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA) Wilderness in Northeastern Minnesota. With more than 2,000 pristine lakes and interconnecting rivers, the BWCA is at the heart of the Superior National Forest's priceless clean water supply, which provides over twenty percent of the fresh water in our entire National Forest system.**

**Under the Obama-Biden Administration, the former Forest Service Chief, Thomas Tidwell, issued a record of decision denying consent for the renewal of two expired mineral leases in the Superior National Forest and within the watershed of the BWCA Wilderness. This denial of consent was based on scientific evidence that a sulfide-ore copper mine within the Rainy River Watershed posed an unacceptable risk of "harm to this unique, iconic, and irreplaceable wilderness area." The Forest Service subsequently applied for a mineral withdrawal of federal lands within the Rainy River Watershed, which launched a two-year mineral segregation and a deliberative, science-based environmental review.**

**The Trump Administration overturned these decisions, without any scientific evidence to justify its actions, and instead allowed corporate and political influence to drive forward plans to mine in this pristine and vulnerable area – threatening waters in both the U.S. and Canada.**

You can read the full letter [here](#).