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## **Minnesotans overwhelmingly support protecting the Boundary Waters**

*New polling finds more than 70% of Minnesotans are opposed to sulfide-ore copper mining on the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, an 11% increase over last year.*

*Nearly two thirds of Minnesotans support Governor Dayton's decision to block sulfide-ore copper mining near the Boundary Waters*

*By 5 to 1 margin voters would support the candidate who defends the Wilderness*

*Ninety eight percent of unique comments to U.S. Forest on proposed mineral withdrawal near the Boundary Waters support protection*

**Ely, MN**—Today, the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters released the [new polling results](#) from President Trump's chief polling firm, Fabrizio Ward, showing that 70% of Minnesotans are against sulfide-ore copper mining in the areas near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. These results show Minnesotans' continued and growing passion for protecting the Boundary Waters. Opposition to allowing sulfide-ore copper mines near the edge of the Boundary Waters continues to grow: from 59% last year to 70% currently.

“The Boundary Waters is woven into the fabric of Minnesota's traditions and a key economic driver for thousands of people across the Arrowhead,” said Doug Niemela, Campaign Manager for the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters. “All across the state more Minnesotans than ever want to protect the Boundary Waters from the threat of sulfide-ore copper mining, and are prepared to use their vote to protect this priceless Wilderness.”

According to [the poll](#), a majority of voters in the Eighth Congressional District, home of the Boundary Waters, agree and want to keep sulfide-ore copper mines away from areas near the Wilderness.

A [new analysis](#) by Key Log Economics found that of the more than 81,000 unique comment letters submitted to the Forest Service during the public scoping comment period in 2017, 98.2% (79,568) supported a 20-year ban on sulfide-ore copper mining in the watershed of the Boundary Waters. In addition, the Forest Service received petitions and postcards signed by 44,417 people during the 2017 comment period, of which 41,971 supported the mineral withdrawal. Altogether, 121,539 people urged the Forest Service to protect the Boundary Waters. This scoping comment period generated the most participation in an environmental review process in Minnesota history.

On January 26, the [U.S. Forest Service downgraded](#) the ongoing two-year environmental study of risks posed by sulfide-ore copper mining to the Boundary Waters and provided a second comment period that ends today. The study will provide the basis for a decision on a 20-year ban. The Forest Service previously announced that it would prepare a comprehensive, in-depth scientifically-based Environmental Impact Statement. The study will instead be a less rigorous Environmental Assessment. As of today, and in only 30 days, the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters along with like-minded conservation, hunting and angling, and business groups gathered and submitted over 55,700 new comments urging the Forest Service to ban sulfide-ore copper mining on Superior National Forest lands in the headwaters of the Boundary Waters and Voyageurs National Park.

The [new poll](#) from Fabrizio Ward shows that Minnesotans support candidates that protect the Boundary Waters. Voters are nearly five times more likely to support a gubernatorial candidate who will continue Governor Dayton's halt on copper mining near the Boundary Waters rather than a candidate who would allow sulfide ore copper mining to proceed near the Boundary Waters. Polling also found that Governor Dayton's directive to stop state mineral leases and state approvals for copper mining near the Boundary Waters is intensely popular among voters, including those in the Eighth Congressional District. The Fabrizio Ward [poll](#) shows that Minnesotans are overwhelmingly demanding that state leaders and stakeholders stand up to protect the Boundary Waters from sulfide-ore copper mining.

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