

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Jeremy Drucker (612) 670-9650

SAVE THE BOUNDARY WATERS

Save the Boundary Waters Statement on Stauber anti-Boundary Waters Legislation

Ely, MN-- Today the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters Executive Director Tom Landwehr issued the following statement on Rep. Pete Stauber's [anti-Boundary Waters legislation](#) that would bar the Biden administration from protecting America's special places, including the Boundary Waters..

"Last month Pete Stauber and the rest of Minnesota's Republican Congressional delegation signed on to an attempt to invalidate the votes of millions of Americans and overturn a free and fair election, and now have the gall to accuse others of political motivation.

"The truth is no one injected more politics into the issue of Boundary Waters protection than Pete Stauber and former President Trump. At every turn Stauber and the Trump administration bent over backwards to kowtow to a foreign mining company owned by Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump's landlord. Pete Stauber's staff even interfered in the process to guarantee a sweetheart deal for Antofagasta.

"Guarding the Boundary Waters from sulfide-ore copper mining copper mining is imperative to a healthy and thriving Arrowhead region, and at the end of the day science and good governance will lead to permanent protection for America's most visited Wilderness."

Additional background:

In 2016 the chief of the U.S. Forest Service issued the Forest Service's decision that sulfide-ore mining in the watershed of the Boundary Waters would pose an unacceptable risk of irreparable harm to the wilderness area. Accordingly, the Forest Service refused to consent to renewal of two mineral leases formerly held by Antofagasta's Twin Metals and asked that the federal mineral rights in the watershed be withdrawn from leasing for 20 years under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The federal government began work on an Environmental Impact Statement to study the effect of such a withdrawal.

The decisions not to renew the leases and to study mining in the area were at every step based on scientific analysis by the Forest Service, many public- and private-sector scientists, and other professionals. The reports and studies, none of which has been credibly refuted, demonstrate the extensive harm to forests, water, wildlife, and the regional economy of northeastern Minnesota that would be caused by copper mining in the Boundary Waters watershed.

Contrast the Forest Service's rigorous analysis leading to its 2016 decision with Stauber's lobbying on behalf of Antofagasta in its effort to have the Trump administration reverse the process of protecting the Boundary Waters watershed. That the undoing was based on nothing but pure politics is crystal clear — the Trump administration cited no science in support of its action.

E-mails obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests show that, among other things, Stauber's office told Trump's Forest Service that Antofagasta "is getting increasingly concerned about the stipulations put forward by the Forest Service on the up or down vote they require for mineral lease renewals every ten years." Stauber's staff member ended the email with, "Do you mind setting up a quick call next week where we can recenter and get on the same page?" Getting "on the same page" meant satisfying Antofagasta's demand that it not be bothered by the legal requirement that mining leases can only be granted and renewed with the consent of the Forest Service. The Trump Forest Service complied.

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