

For Immediate Release

May 6, 2021

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SAVE THE BOUNDARY WATERS

Boundary Waters protection aligned with President Biden's "America the Beautiful" report released today

(ELY, MN)--Today the Biden administration [released](#) its "America the Beautiful" report outlining the pathway to achieve the President's bold vision of conserving 30 percent of the nation's land and water by 2030. The initiative is a key part of Biden's plan to address the climate and species extinction crises. The guidelines outlined today in the report indicate protecting and preserving Minnesota's Boundary Waters Wilderness and its surrounding boreal forests from sulfide-ore copper mining is an important part of a climate solution, including carbon sequestration and climate adaptation and resilience. It is also a world-class recreation destination that helps drive hundreds of millions in economic activity and supports thousands of local jobs.

"Today's report is an important roadmap to a more healthy and prosperous world for our children and children's children," said Tom Landwehr, Executive Director of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters. **"Using science-based decision making and inclusive governing principles, the Biden administration has laid out a locally- driven and community-oriented approach to conserving our natural heritage for future generations. Restoration and expansion of protections for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and its watershed by banning sulfide-ore copper mining on nearby public lands fit squarely within the roadmap announced today. Only a ban would guarantee that the Wilderness and the larger 4.3-million-acre Quetico Superior ecosystem remain biologically and ecologically intact. This region has been identified by scientists as crucial to our ability to sustain biodiversity in the face of a changing climate.**

Further it is a critical component to the regional economy sustaining thousands of locals jobs and millions in economic activity.'''

The 4.3 million-acre Quetico-Superior region is primarily waterways and boreal forest. Boreal forests store more carbon than any other terrestrial ecosystem — almost twice as much per acre as tropical forests. Destruction of boreal forest for industrial mining is a double whammy — the release of much of that carbon into the atmosphere and the loss of the capacity of the land to take up carbon in the future. The loss is even greater when wetlands are destroyed. Soil carbon levels in wetlands are nearly double the level in the terrestrial boreal forest.

A recent study by The Nature Conservancy with similar findings underscores the necessity of keeping these areas intact and undeveloped. Consistent with this, The Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, and The Trust for Public Land have acquired large swaths of land across northern Minnesota to keep them protected. Allowing the creation of an industrial mining zone in the watershed of the Boundary Waters would undermine the work that these and other organizations are doing to prepare us for the future.

Minnesotans support protecting the Boundary Waters Wilderness from sulfide-ore copper mining by wide margins. Polling from July 2020 shows that nearly 70% of Minnesotans support a permanent ban on copper mining near the Boundary Waters, including by a 15 point margin in Northeastern Minnesota where the mine would be located.

The report announced today includes announcing principles in theme areas such as outdoor recreation and access, fish and wildlife habitat, and tribally-led conservation. The report also announced a partnership between the Departments of Interior and Agriculture to create an American Conservation Atlas.

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