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SAVE THE BOUNDARY WATERS

Another Day, Another Major Environmental Rollback Threatening the Boundary Waters

*New changes to environmental review rules are the most radical roll back of the Trump
Administration*

*Chilean mining conglomerate Antofagasta's Twin Metals project will be one of the first projects
evaluated under these new, weakened rules.*

ELY, MN--Today the Trump Administration today announced another major environmental rollback as it finalized new rules that gut the 1970 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a bedrock environmental law often referred to as an "environmental bill of rights." This is the most radical rollback of the Administration as the new rules reject the fundamental principles of NEPA: that the federal government and its agencies take a hard look at the environmental impacts of proposed major actions before making decisions and proceeding with projects, and, that we as a nation make better decisions when we first understand the impacts of major actions on the human and natural environment. Citizens will now have much less ability to understand and improve projects that they as taxpayers are funding.

Today's new NEPA rules sharply limit both the scope of environmental review and Americans' ability to comment effectively on proposed actions, and to challenge federal agencies whose decisions appear to violate the law. Specifically, the new NEPA rules:

- prohibit consideration of cumulative effects and climate impacts of projects;
- impose arbitrarily short timelines and page limits on reviews which will prevent thorough analysis of proposed major federal actions and those actions' consequences;
- result in the rejection by federal agencies of many if not most citizens' comments; and,
- bar judicial review of some federal environmental review decisions.

This announcement is just the latest in a series of attacks that undercut the power of the public to impact and challenge major federal environmental actions such as permitting dangerous sulfide-ore copper mining near the Boundary Waters.

In response to today's announcement Becky Rom, National Chair of the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters said:

"The Trump Administration is relentless in its pursuit of delivering America's public lands to the rich, the powerful, and the well-connected. Piece by piece it is stripping away the basic protections that the American people have relied upon for five decades to protect the nation's air, water, land, and human communities. If the Trump Administration has its way, one of the first casualties will be the Boundary Waters. Because the new NEPA rules are to be implemented immediately, Chilean mining conglomerate Antofagasta's Twin Metals project will be one of the first projects evaluated under the new, weakened NEPA rules."

The Trump administration announced on June 30th that it had begun the NEPA review process for Antofagasta's Twin Metals, a sulfide-ore copper mining project that, if built, would pollute the pristine waters of the Boundary Waters, America's most visited Wilderness, and change forever this iconic national treasure.

The Trump administration has weakened or flat-out eliminated over [one hundred](#) environmental protections, many that directly protect the clean air, water, and land of Minnesota and the public health of its citizens. For example, 2020 changes to critical Clean Water Act regulations mean that Minnesota can no longer protect its own lakes, streams, and wetlands from degradation. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency says these weakened regulations would leave the State unable to address potential water quality concerns in or near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness likely to be caused by a Twin Metals mine. Other actions eliminating protections include a recent Presidential Executive Order that directs agencies to waive or restrict environmental laws and reviews of risky projects. Taken together these represent the most sweeping and significant attacks on the environment in American history and leave the Boundary Waters especially vulnerable.

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