



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BRANDENBURG

Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters

WHAT: The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in northeastern Minnesota is being threatened by a proposed sulfide-ore copper mining operation. Sulfide-ore copper mining is a risky type of mining that has never before been permitted in Minnesota. The Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters was organized in 2013 by local residents of the Ely, Minnesota, area and has grown into a national coalition of non-profit organizations and allies committed to the goal of keeping sulfide-ore copper mining out of the watershed of the Boundary Waters. This would protect the watershed of this national treasure and support the stable and sustainable economy of its wilderness-edge communities.

The Boundary Waters is America's most-visited Wilderness and is comprised of 1.1 million acres of pristine lakes and lush forests. The Boundary Waters has been managed as wilderness since 1926 to preserve its primitive character. Formal designation of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness occurred in 1964 under the Wilderness Act.

WHO: The Campaign is a collaboration between residents and business owners in the Ely, Minnesota, area and partners representing a myriad of interests including: wilderness edge residents, Boundary Waters users, youth groups, hunters and anglers, faith groups, wilderness edge businesses, outdoor retailers, and Native American people and tribes. Campaign partner organizations include Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness, Boundary Waters Trust, Sierra Club, American Rivers, Center for Biological Diversity, Izaak Walton League of America, Defenders of Wildlife, Earthworks, Ernest C. Oberholtzer Foundation, Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, Environment Minnesota, Minnesota Conservation Federation, National Wildlife Federation, National Resources Defense Council, The Wilderness Society and Wilderness Watch.

WHY: By-products of sulfide-ore copper mining include hazardous pollutants such as sulfuric acid and heavy metals, which could permanently pollute the pristine water and unspoiled forests of the Boundary Waters and damage the sustainable economy of the wilderness-edge communities in the area. The proposed sulfide-ore copper mines are not within the Boundary Waters itself but their pollution will flow into the Wilderness, causing direct damage. The mining industry has a long history of major infrastructure failures with catastrophic environmental impacts.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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