

# Speaker's Guide for Public Listening Sessions

In order to speak, **you must sign up with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Forest Service here** and indicate you would like to be given an opportunity to speak:

<https://www.savetheboundarywaters.org/listening-sessions22>

**You must register 48 hours in advance.**

Speakers will be chosen at random and notified 24 hours in advance they have been chosen. You have **no more than 3 minutes to speak** and you will be cut off if you go past this allotted time. It is a good idea to think about what you would like to say in advance and time yourself to make sure you stay in the 3 minutes. It will go by quickly!

Start by introducing yourself and saying where you are from. Say that you support the proposed 20-year mineral withdrawal. The rest is up to you! The most effective speakers will break their remarks into main components:

1) **Your personal story** for why the Boundary Waters and its watershed are important to save and preserve for future generations. The government cares about your personal story and the actual value you place in Wilderness and the communities around it.

Here are a few questions to get you thinking about what you want to cover in your story:

- *When did you first learn about or experience the Boundary Waters?*
- *What's your connection now? Do you live or recreate near the Boundary Waters? Do you visit the Boundary Waters? Who do you go with? What do you do? How do sulfide-ore copper mining projects on the edge of the Wilderness put that all at risk?*
- *Why do you want to help save the Boundary Waters?*
- *What are your main concerns about sulfide-ore copper mining on the edge of the Boundary Waters?*
- *What is your personal stake in the Boundary Waters? Do you own property near Wilderness? Do you have employment that is dependent on the Boundary Waters? Do you eat fish that you catch in the watershed?*

2) **Include Facts.** We have an abundance of resources and factsheets at [www.savetheboundarywaters.org/know-science](http://www.savetheboundarywaters.org/know-science). These provide excellent source material that can be used for your remarks. **Feel free to ask us any questions you may have.** Here are some straightforward facts you can use:

- *Hard-rock mining, which includes sulfide-ore copper mining, is America's most toxic industry.*
- *The Boundary Waters is America's most visited Wilderness area.*
- *Most of the Boundary Waters is in the Rainy River Headwaters. Pollution from a sulfide-ore copper mine in this watershed would flow directly into the Boundary Waters, permanently impairing this Wilderness. The only way to guarantee that the Boundary Waters is not polluted - water, air, light and noise - is to ban sulfide-ore copper mining in the Rainy River Headwaters.*

- *Tourism, recreation, and an outdoor recreation economy cannot coexist with sulfide-ore copper mining. The existing economy depends on a wilderness setting with unpolluted and clean water, clean air, a forested landscape, and quiet spaces.*
- *A Harvard economist conducted a study of the regional economy and found the Boundary Waters' outdoor recreation economy would generate higher income and more jobs than sulfide-ore copper mining in this watershed in the long term.*
- *Mining accidents happen. A mining accident in this watershed would permanently impair the Boundary Waters due to its Wilderness status (no roads, no mechanization, etc).*
- *The Boundary Waters region is vital for carbon sequestration. Boreal forests are highly efficient at trapping carbon. Sequestering carbon in these forests and keeping it out of the atmosphere is a vital part of the fight to keep warming below 2 degrees Celsius.*
- *Deforestation and Endangered Species: Mine construction could lead to severe deforestation, making survival difficult for endangered species like the northern long-eared bat, Canada lynx, and gray wolf - which rely on the Wilderness for their habitat.*
- *93% of copper mines in the U.S. have experienced a spill or accidental release. A study of 15 sulfide-ore copper mines in the United States – representing 99% of current U.S. copper production – found that 14 (93%) experienced accidental releases of pollution that resulted in significant water contamination. ([Earthworks, May 2019](#))*
- *Find more information and facts by topic here:*  
<https://www.savetheboundarywaters.org/100days>

3) **Main message.** Sulfide-ore copper mining in the watershed of the Boundary Waters is the greatest threat our beloved canoe country wilderness has faced. If permitted, this type of mining would irreparably harm the waters flowing into the heart of the Wilderness, putting the ecosystem and everything that depends on it at risk.

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**Here's a sample for a remark. The author wrote out numbers and acronyms so they would not be confused or trip over words. The author counted the words and timed themselves speaking so they know their remarks make sense and they sound confident delivering them.**

*My name is Alex Falconer and I live in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. I also own a cabin outside of Ely, Minnesota on Fall Lake. I strongly support the proposed mineral withdrawal to protect the watershed of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness or "Boundary Waters". The threats posed by sulfide-ore copper mining are unjustifiable in the watershed of such a sensitive and important area.*

*I want the Boundary Waters to be protected because I love the dark night sky. The Boundary Waters was recently named an International Dark Sky Sanctuary - one of only 14 in the world! We need places where we can escape light pollution to see the milky way, northern lights and meteor showers. In my spare time, I am a night sky photographer. I have won awards for my photographs and even sell prints in a small business. Sulfide-ore copper*

*mining in this area near the Boundary Waters would make taking photos at this level impossible.*

*Dark skies are also important for migratory animals and birds who use the moon and stars to coordinate their journey across the continent. A massive sulfide-ore copper mining district directly adjacent to the southern edge of the Wilderness boundary would pollute the night sky with artificial lights.*

*During environmental review of the proposed withdrawal, please be sure to thoroughly address sulfide-ore copper mining's potential negative effects to the dark skies of the Boundary Waters.*

*I am also a father and I bring my three children to the Wilderness regularly as I did when I was a child. Having a quiet, unpolluted Wilderness taught me valuable life lessons about self-reliance, independence and inspired me to be interested in science and care for the world around me. If sulfide-ore copper mining was allowed to happen in the same watershed as the Boundary Waters, my children would not have the benefit of drinking from a lake, eating fish they caught themselves, or see the Northern Lights without worrying about pollution. I want them and future generations to have the ability to learn from the land like I did.*

*I also have concerns about the property I own in Ely that would be impacted by pollution from sulfide-ore copper mining downstream from the lake our cabin is located on. My family chose to buy this land because of Fall Lake's clean water, excellent fishing, peace and quiet, and its location near the Boundary Waters. If sulfide-ore copper mining were allowed to be conducted in the same watershed, everything we love about this area would be impacted by day-to-day mining operations. I am also concerned that the actual value of this property would decline. Not only would this be detrimental to my finances, but declining property values would also harm schools and local units of governments' tax revenues.*

*I urge the Bureau of Land Management to withdraw the two-hundred twenty-five thousand, three hundred seventy-eight ( 225,378) acres of national forest lands to protect the Boundary Waters from the threat of endless sulfide-ore copper mining pollution. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.*