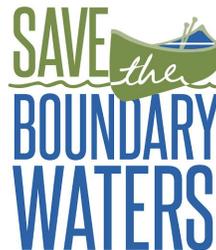


**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **U.S. Senate Shows Strong Bipartisan Support for Boundary Waters Protection**

*U.S. Senators Tom Udall (D-NM) and Lamar Alexander (R-TN) commit to fighting for Boundary Waters in Interior Appropriations Bill*

*Will work with MN Senators Tina Smith and Amy Klobuchar to include language from the House Interior Appropriations Bill compelling the Trump Administration to finish a cancelled environmental study on the impact of copper mining on the Boundary Waters Wilderness and surrounding areas*

**Ely, MN**--Yesterday during the mark-up of the Senate Interior Appropriations Bill Sens. Tom Udall (D-NM) and Lamar Alexander (R-TN) committed to fighting for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness when the bill goes to conference committee, and credited MN Senators Tina Smith and Amy Klobuchar for their leadership. At issue is inclusion of language currently in the House version of the bill that would compel the Trump Administration to finish a cancelled study on the impact of copper mining in the watershed of the Boundary Waters, [America's most popular Wilderness](#).

The cancelled study has become a flashpoint due to the mysterious circumstances of its cancellation and the refusal of the administration to hand over the underlying scientific reports to Congress. Chilean mining conglomerate Antofagasta's Twin Metals is seeking to build a sulfide-ore copper mine on the edge of the pristine Wilderness, and a completed study would complicate those plans.

Senator Udall [praised](#) the US House's efforts to slow the Trump Administration's rush to fast-track Antofagasta's Twin Metals project:

**“There is language in the House bill to stop the administration’s ill-advised decision to allow mining to move forward in the Rainy River watershed. After the administration cancelled environmental studies that would determine the impact on the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, Voyageurs National Park and other pristine areas. This is an example of where this administration is taking a one-sided approach on behalf of the mining industry and it is wrong. I know that in this instance, pushing back on the administration’s actions is a bipartisan priority and I understand that Senator Alexander joins me in supporting this amendment when we go to the conference and that’s a powerful message.”**

Senator Alexander [agreed](#) with his colleague on the specialness of the Boundary Waters and the need to finish the cancelled study before allowing any mining projects to go forward:

**“I agree with Senator Udall. The Boundary Waters Canoe Area is a spectacular wilderness of about 1 million acres, 1,000 lakes, 250,000 visitors a year. And I think it would be a good idea to finish the mining study to see what the impact would be before going ahead with the mining.”**

Senator Udall also gave [credit](#) to the leadership of Minnesota’s two senators, Tina Smith and Amy Klobuchar for fighting to include the language:

**“I believe the Senators from Minnesota deserve a say on the resolution of this matter and I also want to take a moment to acknowledge Senator Smith and Klobuchar for their leadership on this matter and want to let them know they have my full support on this issue as we move forward.”**

The Twin Metals project had previously been terminated after a [thorough scientific review](#) determined the mine posed an almost certain risk of “irreparable harm” to the Wilderness, but the Trump Administration [revived the project](#) after Antofagasta’s owner, Andronico Luksic, bought a Washington, DC, mansion and rented it to Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump. The administration then [cancelled](#) an environmental review at the last minute that would have looked at the impact of copper mining on the Boundary Waters and surrounding areas and refused to hand over the underlying data to Congress.

**“I want to thank the Senators, in particular Tina Smith and Amy Klobuchar, for their leadership on ensuring the science is followed and the Boundary Waters is**

**protected,”** said Tom Landwehr, Executive Director of **the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters**. **“The strong commitment of Senators from both parties and across the country demonstrates the huge national interest in this issue. The Boundary Waters is the people’s Wilderness and it deserves to be protected from copper mining.”**

Dozens of elected officials, including former Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton have spoken out against the project. As Governor, Mark Dayton halted the project due to the threat it posed to the Wilderness. Opposition to the project also includes dozens of conservation and sportsmen groups, hundreds of businesses, tribes, veterans, editorial boards and others. [Seventy percent of Minnesotans](#) oppose sulfide ore copper mining near the Boundary Waters.

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