Paddling to the Nation’s Capital to Save America’s Boundary Waters Wilderness

The untamed natural beauty of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness has inspired awe for generations. The Boundary Waters Wilderness is among the United States’ most accessible Wilderness areas, and for 50 years has remained America’s most visited Wilderness. It is also a crucial driver of the economy in Northeastern Minnesota, where tourism supports 18,000 jobs and $800 million in sales annually.

Now this priceless landscape is jeopardized by a new and dangerous threat.

A Wilderness for Everyone

- The Boundary Waters Wilderness is more than one million acres of pristine water, unspoiled forests, and abundant fish and wildlife in the Superior National Forest in Minnesota, flush against the Canadian border.

- The Boundary Waters Wilderness offers 1200 miles of canoe and kayak routes, 12 hiking trails, 2,000 designated campsites, and an evening canvas of infinite starlight.

- More accessible than most Wilderness areas, the Boundary Waters Wilderness attracts people of all ages and abilities.
Paddling for 100 Days to Spread the Word

• Paddle to DC is a celebration of the rich cultural and economic relationship people have to the pristine water, unspoiled forests, and abundant fish and wildlife of the Boundary Waters Wilderness.

• The 100-day Paddle to DC is a journey by two Minnesotans, Dave and Amy Freeman, who were named National Geographic Adventurers of the Year for 2014. They will paddle and sail from the Boundary Waters Wilderness to Washington D.C. to celebrate the Boundary Waters Wilderness and the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

• Along the 2,000-mile journey, the Freemans will collect signatures on their ‘floating petition’ canoe, “Sig,” to stop sulfide-ore mining within the watershed of the Wilderness. Amy and Dave hope to present the petition to a representative of President Obama’s administration in early December 2014.

A New Threat on the Horizon

• Lands and lakes that now form the heart of the Boundary Waters Wilderness were set aside in 1926 to preserve their primitive character and formal designation of the Boundary Waters Wilderness occurred 50 years ago under the Wilderness Act of 1964. Now this special place is jeopardized by proposals for sulfide-ore mining for copper and nickel – a risky type of mining that has never before been permitted in Minnesota. By-products of sulfide-ore mining include hazardous pollutants such as sulfuric acid and heavy metals, which could permanently ruin the pristine water and unspoiled forests of the Boundary Waters Wilderness.

• While the proposed sulfide-ore mines are not within the Boundary Waters Wilderness itself, their pollution will flow into the Wilderness and directly damage the Wilderness.

• Maintaining the health of the Boundary Waters Wilderness and the thriving tourism economy in neighboring communities requires that we keep areas near the Boundary Waters Wilderness permanently off limits to sulfide-ore mining.

You Can Help!

• To keep the Boundary Waters Wilderness a wild landscape of pristine water and healthy forests for our children and grandchildren, you can show your support:

• Sign the Paddle to DC petition at www.savetheboundarywaters.org to declare the Boundary Waters Wilderness watershed permanently off limits to sulfide-ore mining;

• Like our Facebook page at www.facebook/savetheboundarywaters;

• Follow us on Instagram at www.instagram.com/savethebwca and Twitter at www.twitter.com/savethebwca.