



Monday, May 15th, 2023

Dear Members of the United State House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee,

On behalf of the 65 undersigned organizations, representing tens of millions of members and supporters from across the country, we respectfully request that you oppose U.S. Representative Pete Stauber's newly introduced bill, H.R. 3195, to overturn Public Land Order 7917—the Biden administration's science-based 20-year mining ban in the watershed of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and Voyageurs National Park. It is critical for elected officials like you to lead the fight to protect the Boundary Waters by opposing this harmful, unpopular legislation.

Representative Stauber's bill puts America's most popular wilderness at risk by opening the headwaters of the Boundary Waters and Voyageurs to sulfide-ore copper mining—a destructive and poisonous type of mining that has never been done before in Minnesota. The U.S. Forest Service released an Environmental Assessment comprising all the available science, economics, public health, and public opinion, and found that this type of mining would cause irreversible damage to the Boundary Waters and Voyageurs National Park and proposed a 20-year mineral withdrawal on federal lands and minerals in the watershed.

Since 2015, numerous polls—from firms used by both Former President Trump and President Biden—have found that Minnesota voters overwhelmingly support protecting the Boundary Waters from sulfide-ore copper mining. In what we all recognize as a highly polarized political climate, finding an issue that has this level of consistent support over the span of multiple years, through major events like the pandemic and economic uncertainty, and genuinely cuts across party lines, is extremely rare.

These efforts to undo the Department of Interior's ban on sulfide-ore copper mining go directly against the robust science, favorable public opinion, and the sound legal basis of Secretary Haaland's decision. Considering this legislation also sets a very dangerous precedent for our nation's cherished places.

Protecting the Boundary Waters and Voyageurs is the right thing to do. This beloved place deserves the protections set out by the Biden administration, but clearly, Representative Stauber's resolution and legislation make the necessity of permanently protecting the Boundary Waters watershed through an Act of Congress more critical than ever. Our groups stand by to support you in opposing Representative Stauber's bill and ensuring the Boundary Waters and Voyageurs can be protected for all generations to come.

Sincerely,

A.C.E.S.
American Canoe Association
American Rivers
Big City Mountaineers
Black Hills Clean Water Alliance
The Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters
Cass County Chapter, Izaak Walton League of America
Center for Biological Diversity
Conservation Minnesota
Crow River Trail Guards
CURE MN
Earthjustice
Environment America
Environmental Action
Friends of MN Scientific and Natural Areas
Girl Scouts Minnesota and Wisconsin Lakes and Pines
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Hastings Environmental Protectors
HBCUs Outside
Heartland Rewilding
Indigenous Environmental Network
IWLA-Prairie Woods Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America
Jeff Pike
Kids For the Boundary Waters
League of Conservation Voters
League of Women Voters of the US
Minnesota Division - Izaak Walton League of America
Minnesota Ornithologists Union
Minnesota Well Owners Organization
MN Center for Environmental Advocacy
MN Wild Waters Broadband, Chapter of ational Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Natural Resources Defense Council
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness
Oberholtzer Foundation
Outdoor Alliance
Outdoor Industry Association
Owatonna Chapter Izaak Walton League of America
Pollinate Minnesota
Project Coyote

Renewing the Countryside
Rochester MN Chapter Izaak Walton League
Save The Scenic Santa Ritas
Sierra Club
Soul River Inc and Love is King
St. Croix Oak Savanna Chapter, Wild Ones Native Landscaping
St. Paul Audubon Society
The Coalition To SAVE The Menominee River
The Conservation Alliance
The Kokoro Project
The Rewilding Institute
The Wilderness Society
Voyageur Outward Bound School
Voyageurs Conservancy
W.J. McCabe Chapter - Izaak Walton League of America
WaterLegacy
Waterway Advocates
Wilderness Watch
Will Dilg Chapter, Izaak Walton League of America
Winter Wildlands Alliance
YMCA Camp du Nord
YMCA Camp Menogyn
YMCA Camp Northern Lights
YMCA Camp Widjiwagan
YMCA of the North