

**December 12, 2025**

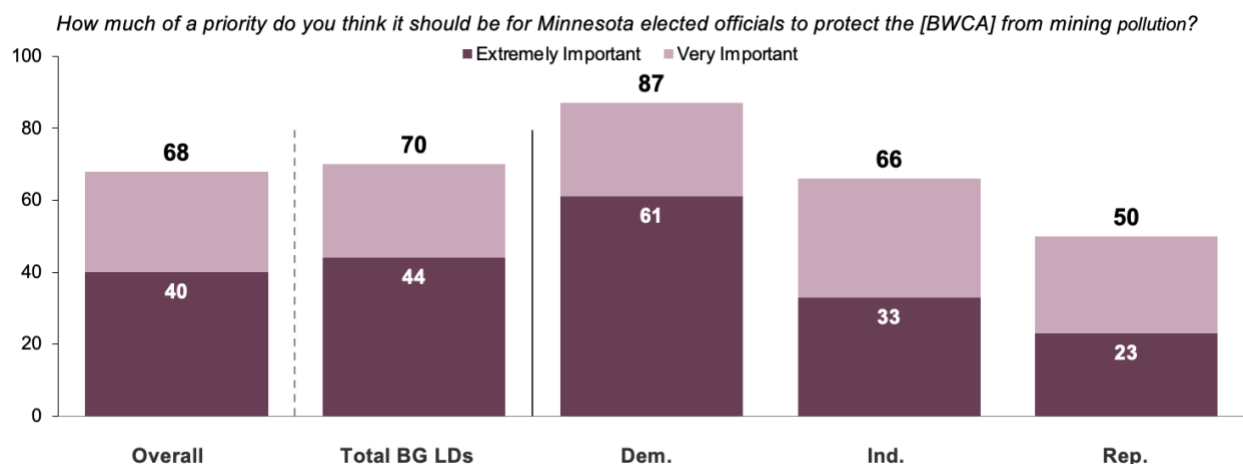
**To:** Interested Parties

**Fr:** Impact Research

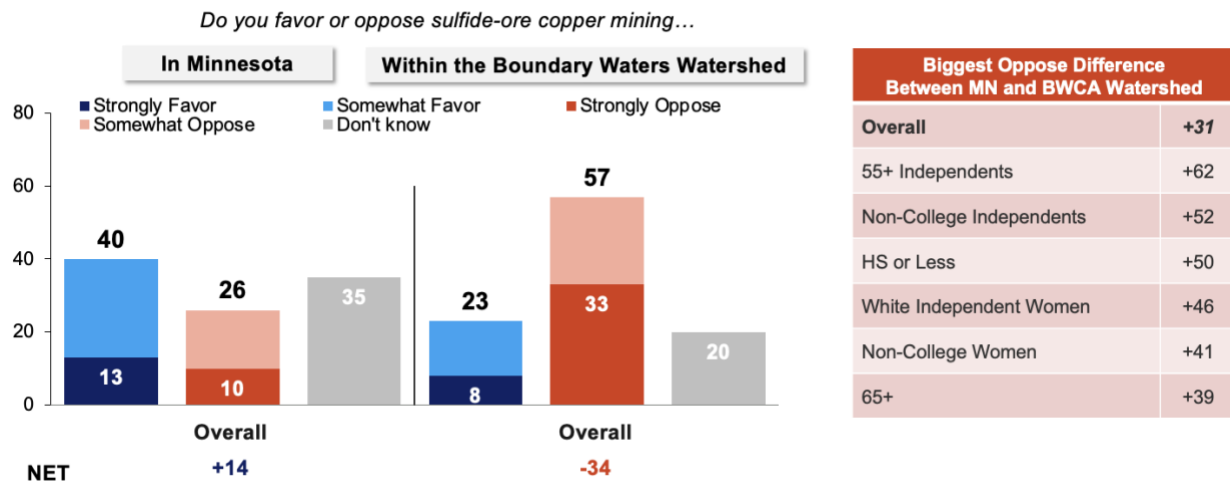
**Re: Minnesotans Want Elected Officials to Protect the BWCA from Mining Pollution**

Minnesotans are deeply connected to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and intensely support its protection. Multiple polls over the past ten years have consistently shown this deep connection among voters across all political alignments. This connection drives opposition to sulfide-ore copper mining within the Boundary Waters watershed by a double-digit margin. Minnesota voters are generally pro-mining (for iron ore, taconite, and copper-nickel) with one important exception; they overwhelmingly oppose sulfide-ore copper mines that would be located in the watershed of the Boundary Waters. This opposition to mining in the watershed of the Boundary Waters translates to voters being more likely to support a statewide candidate who shares this view. In addition, six state legislative battleground districts were oversampled; within these districts, a clear majority of voters support legislation permanently protecting the Boundary Waters by banning sulfide-ore copper mining in the Boundary Waters watershed.

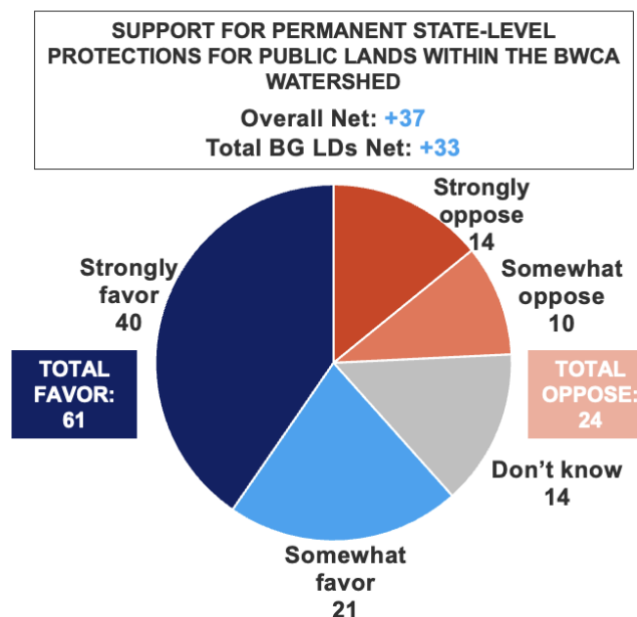
**The Boundary Waters is uniquely popular, and voters across all political parties say protecting it is an important priority.** Sixty percent (60%) of Minnesotans say they have been to the Boundary Waters. The Boundary Waters is viewed favorably by nearly all Minnesotans from across the state; 86% of Minnesotans have a favorable view and 67% of Minnesotans have a very favorable view. This intensely favorable view of the Boundary Waters leads to this result: 68% of Minnesotans from across the state and across political affiliations agree that protecting the Boundary Waters from sulfide-ore copper mining pollution should be a very important priority for elected officials, including Democrats (87%), Independents (66%), and Republicans (50%).



**By more than a 2-1 margin, Minnesotan voters oppose sulfide-ore copper mining in the Boundary Waters watershed (23% favor / 57% oppose).** Opposition is consistent with a poll from 2022 and all prior polls since 2015 when voters were first asked this question. Moreover, support for sulfide-ore copper mining in the Boundary Waters watershed has dropped 8 points over the last three years. This decline in support for mining in the Boundary Waters watershed is a testament to Minnesotans' recognition of the Boundary Waters as a unique natural resource. It is consistent with the view that Minnesotans generally support mining outside the Boundary Waters watershed *by a 14-point margin (40% favor / 26% oppose) AND strongly oppose sulfide-ore copper mining within the Boundary Waters watershed.*

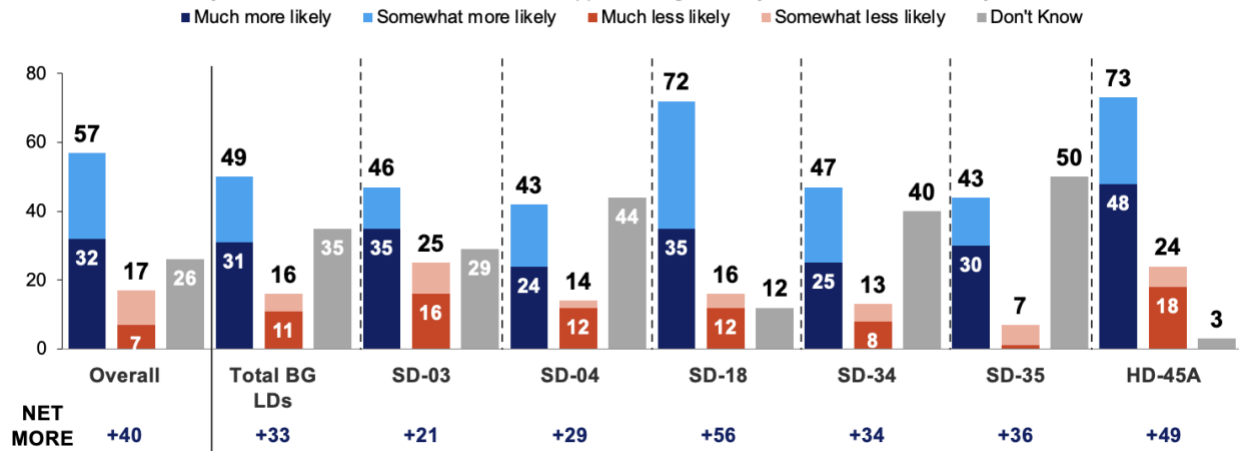


**The majority of Minnesotans favor establishing permanent state-level protections for public lands within the Boundary Waters watershed from sulfide-ore copper mining (61% favor / 24% oppose).** This includes 40% who would *strongly* favor state-level protections.



Permanent protection is also a winning issue in each legislative battleground district that was over-sampled, with 57% supporting vs 17% opposed overall. This double-digit support is reflected in each district, including Senate District 3 which is home to both the Boundary Waters and its watershed (sulfide ore copper mining is proposed in the Boundary Waters watershed).

*If a **candidate for elected office** in Minnesota supported permanent state-level protections for public lands within the Boundary Waters watershed from sulfide-ore copper mining, would you be more or less likely to vote for them?*



The Federal Administration is threatening to revoke the existing 20-year mining ban on federal lands within the Boundary Waters watershed and to grant mining leases to a foreign mining company. **There is a strong appetite among voters to take more concrete steps at the state level to protect the Boundary Waters. There is also political upside for elected officials to do so.**