



July 19, 2016

Hon. Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Hon. Sally Jewell
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Secretary Jewell

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness is the most visited Wilderness area in the nation, drawing 250,000 visitors every year. At 1.1 million acres in size, it is the largest Wilderness area east of the Rockies and north of the Everglades. The Boundary Waters offers 1,200 miles of canoe and kayak routes and 2,000 designated campsites, and is home to some of the finest remote angling and hunting our country has to offer. Sportsmen and women venture into the Boundary Waters in pursuit of walleye, bass, pike, trout, bear, deer, grouse, and more.

The Boundary Waters is now jeopardized by recent proposals to bring sulfide-ore copper mining – a risky type of mining that has never before been permitted in Minnesota – to places where pollution will drain into the Boundary Waters. Byproducts of sulfide-ore copper mining (acidic waters, heavy metal contaminants and sulfates) would damage rivers and lakes that flow into the heart of the Boundary Waters, as well as the interconnected waters of Voyageurs National Park, Quetico Provincial Park, and the greater Rainy River Drainage Basin. This could permanently ruin the productive fish & game habitats that make this internationally significant area unique.

Pollution from these mines would flow into the Boundary Waters as well as impact Voyageurs National Park - which help drive the economy of Northeastern Minnesota, where tourism supports nearly 17,000 jobs and brings \$850 million in sales annually to the region. The Boundary Waters and Voyageurs are also significant contributors to Minnesota's outdoor recreation economy, which generates \$11.6 billion in consumer spending and 118,000 direct jobs statewide. The economic health of local communities in northeastern Minnesota, including the region's thriving recreation and tourism industry, depends on the clean water, productive forests, and healthy fisheries and game populations of the Boundary Waters.

We, the undersigned conservation, angling, and hunting organizations and businesses, representing over 6 million members, employees, and customers, support permanent protection for the Boundary Waters watershed from the threat of sulfide-ore copper mining, by preventing

future sulfide-ore copper mining on federal lands in the Rainy River Drainage Basin. Specifically, using the best available science as a basis for action, we urge you to:

- 1) Oppose the renewal of the two federal mineral leases adjacent to the Boundary Waters, which are the only two federal mineral leases in the Superior National Forest and expired on December 31, 2013.
- 2) Support the withdrawal of federally owned minerals within the Rainy River Drainage Basin from the federal mineral leasing program.
- 3) Take any additional measures necessary to protect the Boundary Waters and the Rainy River Drainage Basin from the threat of sulfide-ore copper mining.

Note: Neither of these actions would affect mining on state or private lands, nor would they affect Minnesota's taconite mining industry.

We hope we can count on your support for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness so that this and future generations of sportsmen and women may enjoy the unparalleled angling and hunting opportunities found there.

Sincerely,

NATIONAL

American Fly Fishing Trade Association
Ben Bulis (President)
Bozeman, MT

American Sportfishing Association
Scott Gudes (VP - Government Affairs)
Alexandria, VA

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
Land Tawney (Executive Director)
Missoula, MT

Wildlife Management Institute
Steven A. Williams (President)
Gardners, PA

Bear Trust International
Melissa Reynolds-Hogland, PhD (Executive Director)
Missoula, MT

International Federation of Fly Fishers
Glenn Erikson (Conservation Chair)
Livingston, MT

Izaak Walton League of America
Scott Kovarovics (Executive Director)
Gaithersburg, MD

National Wildlife Federation
Collin O'Mara (President and CEO)
Reston, VA

Orion - The Hunter's Institute
Mark Hirvonen (President)
Trumansburg, NY

Pope and Young Club
Jim Willems (President)
Chatfield, MN

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Whit Fosburgh (President and CEO)
Washington, DC

Wildlife Forever
Pat Conzemius (Conservation Director)
Brooklyn Center, MN

MINNESOTA

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers - Minnesota Chapter
Erik Jensen (Co-Chair)
Minneapolis, MN

Barn Co Entertainment
Joey Klegstad (Chief Operating Officer)
Lakeville, MN

Boathouse Winona
Lyon Smith (Owner)
Winona, MN

Clearwater Historic Lodge & Canoe Outfitters
Erik Danielson (General Manager)
Grand Marais, MN

Double Reed Outdoors
Bradley Schultz (Owner)
Chokio, MN

Ely Outfitting Co. & Boundary Waters Guide Service
Jason Zabokrtsky (Owner)
Ely, MN

Escape MSP
Joey Klegstad (Chief Operating Officer)
Lakeville, MN

Far Out Fly Fishing
Brian Porter (Owner/Guide)
Duluth, MN

French River Muzzleloaders
Brent Gurtek (Owner)
Duluth Twp., MN

Front 20 Outfitters LLC
Doug Harthan (Owner)

Perham, MN

Frost River

David Hoole (Marketing and PR)

Duluth, MN

Full Curl Brand

Will Jenkins (President & CEO)

Andover, MN

General Store of Minnetonka

Gail and Chris Bollis (Owners)

Minnetonka, MN

Great Lakes Fly Company

John Fehnel (Owner)

Duluth, MN

GreenHead Productions

Mark Norquist (Owner)

Minnetonka, MN

Hungry Jack Outfitters

Dave and Nancy Seaton (Owners)

Grand Marais, MN

Izaak Walton League of America - Minnesota Division

Barry Drazkowski (President)

Saint Paul, MN

Izaak Walton League of America - Bush Lake Chapter

John Crampton (President)

Bloomington, MN

Izaak Walton League of America - Cass County Chapter
Jerry Fitzgerald (President)
Hackensack, MN

Izaak Walton League of America - Chapter 10
William C. Buckley (President)
Austin, MN

Izaak Walton League of America - Grand Rapids Wes Libbey Chapter
Bob Scheierl (Chairman)
Grand Rapids, MN

Izaak Walton League of America - W.J. McCabe Chapter
Rich Staffon (President)
Duluth, MN

International Federation of Fly Fishers - Lew Jewett Chapter
Ray Morris (President)
St. Paul, MN

Lakewood Lodge
Alexis Young
Walker, MN

Minnesota Conservation Federation
Gary Botzek (Executive Director)
St. Paul, MN

Minnesota Kayak Fishing Association
Grant Carston (Board of Directors / Sponsorship Coordinator)
Roseville, MN

Minnesota Pro Paintball
Joey Klegstad (Chief Operating Officer)

Lakeville, MN

Modern Carnivore

Mark Norquist (Owner)

Minnetonka, MN

Namebini

Carl Haensel (Owner)

Duluth, MN

North Shore Outdoors

Kelly Shepard

Grand Marais, MN

Northstar Canoes

Bear Paulsen

Princeton, MN

Piragis Northwoods Company

Steve & Nancy Piragis (Owners)

Ely, MN

Rapala

Gregg Wollner (Executive Vice President)

Minnetonka, MN

River Point Resort & Outfitting Co.

Steve & Jane Koschak

Ely, MN

Riverwood Design

Robert & Val Wagner (Owners)

Bemidji, MN

Rockwood Outfitters
Carl Madsen (co-owner)
Grand Marais, MN

Sawbill Canoe Outfitters
Bill Hansen (President)
Tofte, MN

Skirts Plus
Eric Schwartz
Shakopee, MN

Snowshoe Country Lodge
Ron Brodigan
Isabella, MN

Split Rock Ventures
Gerry Brauer & Doug Yates (Partners)
Duluth, MN

Upper Midwest Council of the International Federation of Fly Fishers
Todd Heggstad (President)
Duluth, MN

ALASKA

Heather's Choice LLC
Heather Kelley (Owner)
Anchorage, AK

CALIFORNIA

Abel Automatics, Inc.
Jeff Patterson (Executive Vice President)
Camarillo, CA

Nate Ptacek Photography

Nate Ptacek (Owner)

Ventura, CA

Okuma Fishing Tackle

Douglas Lasko (President)

Ontario, CA

Patagonia, Inc.

Ron Hunter (Environmental Programs Associate)

Ventura, CA

COLORADO

Fishpond USA

John Land Le Coq (Founder)

Denver, CO

Seek Outside

Kevin and Angie Timm (Owners)

Ridgeway, CO

Ross Reels

Jeff Patterson (Director of Sales & Marketing)

Montrose, CO

FLORIDA

Nautilus Reels

Kristen Mustad (President)

Miami, FL

Yo-Zuri America

Buddy Prause (VP Sales & Marketing)

Port St. Lucie, FL

IDAHO

First Lite

Ryan Callaghan (Marketer)

Ketchum, ID

Smith Optics

Peter Crow (Southeast Sales Manager)

Ketchum, ID

Waterworks - Lamson

Jennifer Lavigne (Sales Manager)

Ketchum, ID

ILLINOIS

Chicago Fly Fishing Outfitters

Andy Kurkulis (Owner)

Chicago, IL

Trout Unlimited - Lee Wulff Chapter

Jerry Sapp (Conservation Chair & Illinois National Leadership Council Representative)

Carpentersville, IL

IOWA

Coldwater Guide Service

Rod Woten (Owner / Guide)

Stuart, IA

KANSAS

Heart of America Flyfishers

Kevin Carril (Conservation Chairman)

Overland Park, KS

MASSACHUSETTS

Cheeky Fishing
Ted Upton (Chief Executive Officer)
Arlington, MA

MONTANA

Adipose Boatworks
Justin Waayenberg (General Manager)
Helena, MT

Mystery Ranch
Ryan Holm (Marketing Manager)
Bozeman, MT

Simms Fishing Products
K.C. Walsh (President)
Bozeman, MT

NEBRASKA

HuntingLife.com and Hunting Insider
Kevin Paulson (Founder & CEO)
Lincoln, NE

NORTH DAKOTA

Paddle Planner, LLC
Ben Strege
Ardoch, ND

OREGON

Loon Outdoors
Alan Peterson (President)
Ashland, OR

SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota Wildlife Federation

Chris Hesla (Executive Director)
Pierre, SD

TENNESSEE

Jackson Kayak
Damon Bungard (Product Manager)
Sparta, TN

Orion Coolers
Damon Bungard (Brand Manager)
Sparta, TN

Strike King Lure Company
Allan Ranson (Chief Operating Officer)
Collierville, TN

TEXAS

Temple Fork Outfitters
Rick Pope (President)
Dallas, TX

WASHINGTON

Far Bank Enterprises

- Sage Fly Fishing
- Redington Fly Fishing
- RIO Products

Travis Campbell (President & CEO)
Bainbridge Island, WA

Rajeff Sports, LLC

- Airflo
- ECHO Fly Fishing

Tim Rajeff (President)
Vancouver, WA

WISCONSIN

Athena & Artemis Women's Fly Shop
Geri Meyer (Owner)
Viroqua, WI

Bending Branches
Andrew Stern (Marketing Supervisor)
Osceola, WI

Catch and Capture
Erik Thue (Owner/Guide)
Hayward, WI

Driftless Angler
Mat Wagner (Owner)
Viroqua, WI

Dry Fly Sales
Tony & Kim Ferrie (Owners)
Black Earth, WI

The Morning Rise Fly Fishing Company
Brian Senick (Owner)
Edgerton, WI

St. Croix Rods
Paul Schluter (President)
Park Falls, WI

Vortex Optics
Mark Boardman (Marketing Manager)
Middleton, WI

Wisconsin Trout Unlimited
Linn Beck (State Council Chair)

Oshkosh, WI

CANADA

Northern Edge Travel

Jeremy Capay (Chief Executive Officer)

Lac Seul First Nation, Ontario