



February 5th, 2020

Dear Representative,

We, the undersigned businesses, urge you to cosponsor H.R. 5598 Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act, introduced by Representative Betty McCollum (D-MN), Representative Francis Rooney (R-FL), Representative Dean Phillips (D-MN), Representative Fred Upton (R-MI), Representative Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ), and Representative Alan Lowenthal (D-CA). This important bi-partisan legislation would permanently protect the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, Voyageurs National Park, and their headwaters in the Superior National Forest from harmful and toxic mineral extraction that would irreparably pollute this pristine watershed for future generations.

Located in Northeastern Minnesota, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness is a national treasure of 1.1 million acres of pristine interconnected lakes and rivers in the Superior National Forest. The Boundary Waters is contiguous with Ontario's Quetico Provincial Park and upstream of Minnesota's Voyageurs National Park. Enjoyed as the most visited Wilderness in the country, generations of Americans have developed a lifelong love of nature through superb camping, fishing, canoeing, and hiking experiences.

The love for the Boundary Waters by Minnesotans and people across this country powers a strong and enduring outdoor recreation economy in Northeastern Minnesota responsible for 17,000 jobs and \$913 million in sales annually. A recent independent study by Harvard economics professor James Stock detailed that protecting the Boundary Waters would produce far greater long-term economic benefit than the proposed Twin Metals sulfide-ore copper mining. Over the projected 20 year lifetime of the mine, the watershed where the mine would be located would see up to \$900 million more income and 4,600 more jobs if the Boundary Waters were protected from sulfide-ore copper mining and copper mining were banned.

This incredible region is now threatened by renewed pressure from a foreign mining company. Antofagasta's Twin Metals proposes to develop a sulfide-ore copper mine in the watershed upstream of the Boundary Waters, Quetico Park, and Voyageurs National Park. The current administration has shown an irrational drive to allow this project to move forward. In September 2018, the U.S. Department of Agriculture cancelled a two year moratorium on mining activity and an accompanying environmental review of the impact of sulfide-ore copper mining in the watershed; the proposal under study was a 20-year mining ban. The administration has subsequently refused to provide the draft reports, likely because the science from the review would show the ban was appropriate. Then this past spring, the U.S. Department of Interior renewed previously cancelled mineral leases to pave the way for Twin

Metals to develop its mine. Late last month, Twin Metals submitted a mine plan, a pivotal step in driving forward a mine that would pollute the Boundary Waters, Quetico Park, and Voyageurs National Park with toxic chemicals and pollutants. Empty promises of environmentally-friendly and modern mining techniques hide the dirty truth about the proposed mine: if this mine is built, there will be no way to avoid irreversible damage to these protected national treasures. This was exactly the finding by the Forest Service when it applied for a 20-year mineral withdrawal in 2016.

Today, our country has the opportunity to permanently protect one of the most pristine ecosystems and the cleanest water in the nation and an important economic driver of Northeastern Minnesota. The Boundary Waters, Quetico Park, and Voyageurs National Park ecosystem are not just places, they are a way of life for scores of thousands of Minnesotans, Americans, Canadians, and visitors from across the globe who come to experience the beautiful lakes and unspoiled rivers. This is why permanent protection has the support of a wide coalition of organizations, individuals, businesses, and elected officials across the political spectrum representing, outdoor recreationists, conservationists, sportsmen and women, businesses, and many others.

As businesses from around the country we recognize the importance of keeping our nation's public lands in the hands of the American people and free from pollution for the benefit of current and future generations. We implore you to cosponsor H.R. 5598 to ensure this incredible region gets the permanent protection it deserves.

Sincerely the undersigned businesses,

Bachmans Photography
Backpacker's Pantry
Blue Lake Studio LLC
Broken Paddle Guiding Company
butter bakery café
c/o Mend Provisions
CONTEMPL8 T-SHIRTS LLC
Craft Construction LLC
Ely Design Works
Ely Outfitting Company
Epicurean
Freemans Explore LLC
General Store of Minnetonka
Gitchi Adventure Goods
Glorud Design
Granite Gear
Humble Apparel Co
Hungry Jack Outfitters
Idea Mountain
Joe's Sporting Goods
Littlbug Enterprises, Inc.
Lucent Blue LLC
McFerson Chiropractic

Nate Ptacek, Photographer and Filmmaker
Natural Home
Northstar Canoes
Outdoor Industry Association
Outdoor Research
Paddle Planner, LLC
Patagonia
performance edge
Pilgrim Paddles
Piragis Northwoods Co
Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI)
Redbudsuds
Sogo Snacks
Stewart River Boatworks
Superior Switchel Company
Terra Firma Building and Remodeling
The Conservation Alliance
Trailtopia
Turin Bicycle, Ltd
Voyager Campervans
Wenonah Canoe Inc
Women's Wilderness Discovery