



# MONTANA MINING ASSOCIATION

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November 28, 2017

The Honorable Rob Bishop  
Chairman, House Natural Resources Committee  
123 Cannon Office Building  
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Paul Gosar  
Chairman, Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee  
2057 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop and Chairman Gosar:

The Montana Mining Association (MMA) supports H.R. 3905, the "Minnesota's Economic Rights (MINER) in the Superior National Forest Act."

On January 19th, 2017, the day before President Trump was sworn in, the previous administration published a 234,328-acre federal mineral withdrawal application in the Federal Register, to restrict for a 20-year moratorium, lands within the Superior National Forest in Northeast Minnesota. This action immediately placed this vast area off limits to future mineral leasing, exploration and potential development for two years while the 20-year withdrawal is being considered. The MMA opposes **all** mineral withdrawals whether here in Montana or elsewhere.

There are valuable mineral deposits in the Superior National Forest that contain more than 4 billion tons of ore containing copper, nickel and other metal resources. Congress has authorized mining in the forest by law two different times, and the 1986 Forest Service and 2004 Forest Plans both concluded mining is "a desired condition" in the Superior National Forest. In 1978, Congress prohibited mining within the region's Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) and an adjacent protective buffer zone, while reaffirming that mining should be allowed and promoted in the remaining area of the SNF.

Rather than unilateral action by unelected bureaucrats, we believe it is important for Minnesotans to have a say in policies affecting its own land. We urge rapid passage of H.R. 3905 through the U.S. Congress. Thank you!

Sincerely yours,

Tamara J. Johnson, Executive Director