

Message

From: Small, Jeff [Jeff.Small@mail.house.gov]
Sent: 11/30/2017 8:04:22 PM
To: Small, Jeff [Jeff.Small@mail.house.gov]
CC: Hanson, Tanner [Tanner.Hanson@mail.house.gov]
Subject: House RESTORES Minnesota Mining

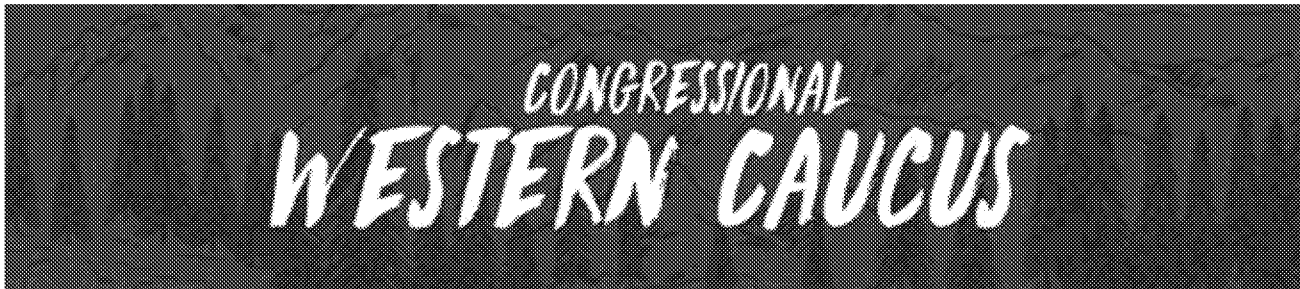
Big win today! See below.

Chairman Gosar is thankful for everyone that had a hand in this victory.

Please share this email and spread the word from our social media pages.

Jeff Small

Executive Director | Congressional Western Caucus
Senior Advisor | Congressman Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
2057 Rayburn HOB | Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-2315 main
jeff.small@mail.house.gov



For Immediate Release
Contact: Tanner Hanson

Date: November 30, 2017
Tanner.Hanson@mail.house.gov

House RESTORES Minnesota Mining



WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congressional Western Caucus Chairman **Paul A. Gosar D.D.S. (AZ-04)**, House Natural Resources Committee Chairman **Rob Bishop (UT-01)**, Chief Forestry Officer **Bruce Westerman (AR-04)**, House Republican Conference Chair **Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA-05)**, Western Caucus Members **Tom Emmer (MN-06)**, **Doug LaMalfa (CA-01)**, **Doug Lamborn (CO-05)**, and Congressman **Jason Lewis (MN-02)** issued statements following passage of H.R. 3905, the "Minnesota's Economic Rights in the Superior National Forest Act":

"Mining has been a way of life for Minnesota since the 1800s and is a crucial part of our state's economy. Unfortunately, this was not a shared interest with the Obama Administration," said **Congressman Emmer**. "In their waning days, the previous administration took unnecessary, politically motivated actions by refusing to renew mineral leases and starting the process to withdraw nearly a quarter million acres of federal land from development. By passing the MINER Act today, we are protecting more than 10,000 jobs, and billions of dollars in revenue and education funding while leaving an extensive process intact to protect and preserve the environment and our beloved Boundary Waters."

"I thank Rep. Emmer for his leadership on this issue and commitment to protecting the economic livelihoods of his constituents. This bill protects jobs for Minnesotans while facilitating future economic opportunities across the state through responsible, environmentally sound mineral development," **Congressman Bishop** said.

"17,000 jobs, \$3 billion for education, \$1.5 billion in annual wages, \$2.5 billion annually for our economy and a total of four billion tons of strategic-and-critical-mineral-containing ore – this is what is at risk if H.R. 3905 is not signed into law. Left unchallenged, the Obama Administration's arbitrary termination of two hardrock mineral leases and politicized mining withdrawal – coming only the day before President Obama left office – sets precedent for a sweeping executive power grab that threatens communities throughout the country," **Congressman Gosar** said. "Congress has already passed two separate laws authorizing mining in the Superior National Forest, and the 1986 Forest Service and 2004 Forest Plans both concluded that mining is 'a desired condition.'

No one is proposing to mine in the 1.1 million acre Boundary Waters Wilderness Area, an area that already has significant buffers, and mining in the forest will occur only after job creators have gone through the full NEPA environmental process. All this bill does is secure the opportunity to present mining plans for an area *already authorized for mining* by Congress. The people of Minnesota should know they have a Representative who will fight for their livelihoods in Congressman Emmer.”

“This is a win for Minnesota and for our country,” said **Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers**. “Mining and developing our minerals here in the U.S. creates jobs and grows our economy. This legislation will continue to uphold our environmental laws, including complying with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), while ensuring that we are responsibly unleashing our natural resources. This legislation also lessens our reliance on foreign countries for natural resources, which in turn strengthens our national security by making the U.S. more self-sufficient. Thank you to Rep. Emmer for your dedication to serving the people of Minnesota and for putting for a bill that helps our economy and our national defense.”

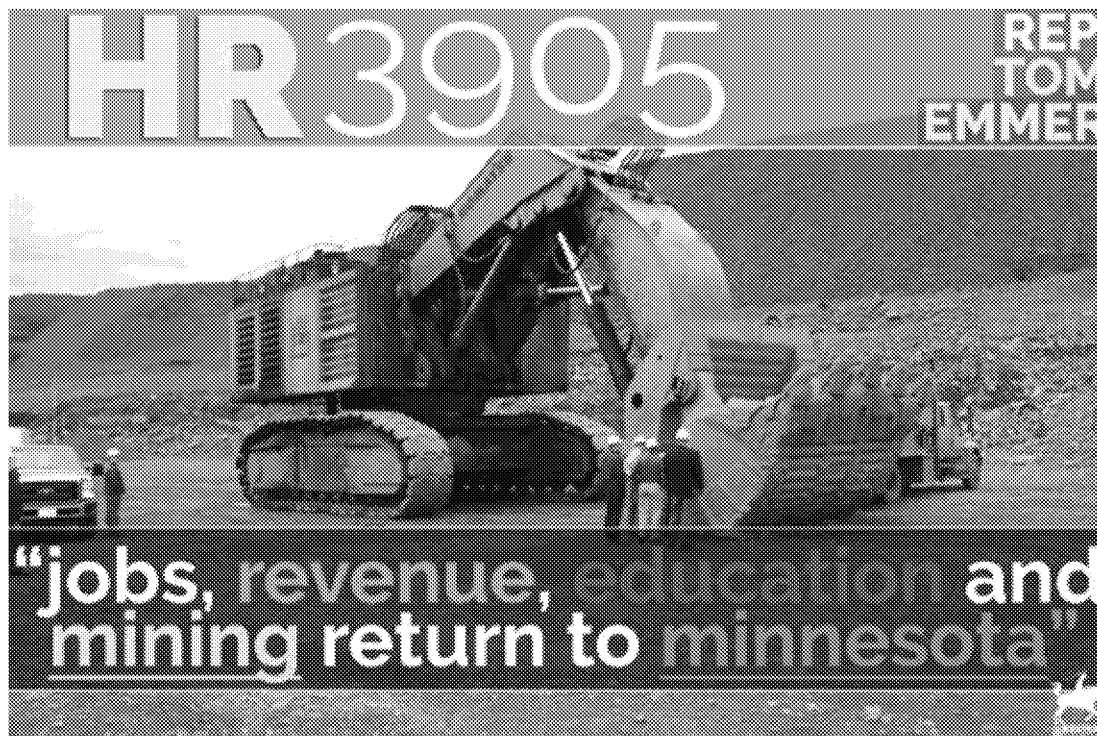
Congressman LaMalfa said, “While this bill addresses a 230,000 acre mineral withdrawal from Superior National Forest in Minnesota, it’s really about jobs, economic growth, and maintaining clear standards for all projects across the nation. The arbitrary decision - the day before Obama left office - halted a \$400 million dollar project, jeopardized 17,000 American jobs, cuts \$3 billion from k through 12 schools, and slashes \$2.5 billion annually from local governments and the state. Mining operations across the country already commit to a strict environmental review process to ensure the safety of the public and the protection of natural resources. This bill ensures that all projects are held to clear, consistent requirements, not arbitrary political decisions.”

“This is a straightforward issue and the answer is clear. The bill rolls back harmful Obama-era mineral withdrawals. Congress has consistently authorized the appropriate legislation to protect our environment and this bill only clears the air when it comes to misconceptions about mining.” said **Congressman Lamborn**.

Congressman Westerman stated, “Earlier this year I had the opportunity to travel to Minnesota with Congressman Emmer and Nolan and others to visit the Superior National Forest in Northeast Minnesota. While Northeast Minnesota is a long way from the Fourth District of Arkansas, the people, areas and economics are somewhat similar. This is a rural area where local economies and constituencies depend on the ability to sustainably and responsibly harvest and mine the natural resources found there. Unfortunately, the extreme partisan politics of the previous administration placed the wants of special interest environmental groups before the needs of Minnesotans and others that depend on natural resources management. This politically motivated decision has the ability to destroy the local economy, kill job creation, and significantly harm education in Minnesota. As someone who represents schools, communities, and counties that depend on programs like SRS and PILT, I know the harm that will be wrought on school districts, specifically rural school districts, should the withdrawal and application rejection go forward. I believe that H.R. 3905 is a vital piece of legislation to not only Minnesota but for other states and communities that depend on natural resource utilization.”

Congressman Lewis said, “The MINER Act gives us the chance to provide good jobs for families in our communities while ensuring we protect the natural beauty that makes Minnesota such a picturesque state. In too many instances we have seen the federal government put roadblock after roadblock in the way of important infrastructure projects nationwide. For years mining and energy sector projects have been stopped before they can even draft a proposal for consideration. The MINER Act addresses this overreach by federal bureaucrats and brings power back to Minnesota. Ultimately, people who live here know best how to protect our land while

providing vital opportunities to use the natural resources we have been blessed with to benefit our citizens and their families.”



Background:

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 total withdrawal application boundary spans approximately 425,000 acres, including 95,000 acres of state school trust fund lands.

In conjunction with this massive mineral withdrawal, the Obama Administration’s Bureau of Land Management inappropriately rejected Twin Metals Minnesota’s application to renew two hardrock mineral leases in Minnesota’s Superior National Forest – leases that were signed in 1966 and renewed without controversy in 1989 and 2004.

These bureaucratic decisions could decimate local economies, stifle job creation as well as cause significant harm to K-12 education and mining in Minnesota. These were political, anti-mining and anti-education actions taken by the Obama Administration.

The University of Minnesota-Duluth estimates the creation of 12,000 construction jobs and 5,000 long-term mining jobs if mining projects already being pursued in Duluth Complex are allowed to move forward. These are good-paying jobs, as the average annual mining wage in Minnesota was \$78,635 in 2015.

Education will be significantly harmed as Minnesota is projected to lose up to \$3 billion in royalty revenues for the State's Permanent School Trust Fund that would support nearly 900,000 K-12 students statewide if the withdrawal application and cancelled leases are not rejected.

To date, Twin Metals has invested upward of \$400 million – a significant investment – in reliance on the two federal mineral leases that the BLM executed with the company's predecessors and renewed each time they expired.

In 1950, Congress took action to make land available for mineral exploration and development within the Superior National Forest. Then, in 1978, Congress passed the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Act, a compromise that prohibited mining within the 1.1 million acre Boundary Waters Wilderness Area but again specifically authorized mining in the Superior National Forest. The 1986 Forest Service and 2004 Forest Plans both concluded mining in this area is “a desired condition.”

The MINER Act halts last-minute political mineral withdrawals by requiring Congressional approval for any future withdrawal actions in Minnesota, renews two mineral leases that were denied for political reasons under the same terms they were renewed twice previously and ensures any future mining projects in Minnesota National Forests will have to satisfy all existing environmental permitting requirements including NEPA.

Article IV of the Constitution vests Congress with authority over public lands. This legislation secures the opportunity for job creators to present mining plans in an area *already authorized for mining* twice by Congress and rejects political and unwarranted actions taken by the previous administration that will harm responsible mineral production, kill jobs and decimate education revenues. No one is proposing to mine in the 1.1 million acre Boundary Waters Wilderness Area, an area that already has significant buffers, and the bill actually protects this area. 17,000 jobs, \$3 billion for education, \$1.5 billion in annual wages and \$2.5 billion annually for our economy are at risk if we don't pass H.R. 3905. Further, there are more than four billion tons of ore containing copper, nickel and other metal resources within the area the previous Administration tried to shut down, which represents the largest known undeveloped deposit of strategic and critical metals in the world.

An awesome video produced by the people of Minnesota on the issues addressed by the bill can be viewed [HERE](#).

Bill text can be found [HERE](#). The Committee Report can be found [HERE](#). The Committee one pager can be found [HERE](#). A printable list of endorsements and supporters can be found [HERE](#).

- A release and letter signed by 26 Members calling for rescission of the 234,328-acre mineral withdrawal application and renewal of two improperly terminated leases can be found [HERE](#).
- The Interior Appropriations Request letter signed by 9 members including House Committee on Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop can be viewed [HERE](#).
- The press release on the hearing on H.R.3905 can be found [HERE](#).
- A press story on the Emmer Interior Appropriations Amendment passing can be found [HERE](#).
- A press release on passage of H.R. 3905 by the Resources Committee can be found [HERE](#).

The bill is endorsed by:

- 53 bipartisan state legislators (including leadership of both parties)
- AFL-CIO International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental, and Reinforcing Iron Workers Local Union 512
- American Energy Alliance
- Agribusiness & Water Council of Arizona
- ALLETE
- American Exploration & Mining Association
- Americans for Limited Government
- Apache County (Arizona)
- Apache Sun Golf Club
- APEX
- Arizona Association of Conservation Districts
- Arizona Cattle Feeders Association
- Arizona Golf Association
- Arizona Pork Council
- Arizona Liberty
- Arizona State Rep. Bob Thorpe
- Associated General Contractors of Minnesota
- AZ BASS Nation
- AZ Deer Association
- The Bass Federation
- Better in our Back Yard
- Cactus and Pine Golf Superintendents Association supports H.R. 3905
- City of Ely
- Colorado Mining Association

- Competitive Enterprise Institute
- Concerned Citizens for America (Arizona)
- Conservatives for Property Rights
- Dena Cordova Jack, Executive Vice President, Mountain States Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association
- Global Minerals Engineering LLC
- Golden Vertex Corporation
- Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
- Hibbing Area Chamber of Commerce
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 31
- International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 49
- The Jamar Company
- Jefferson County Commissioner Donald Rosier, P.E.
- Jobs for Minnesotans
- Laborers District Council of MN & ND
- Laborers International Union of North America
- Laurentian Chamber of Commerce
- Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council
- Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
- MiningMinnesota
- Minnesota Pipe Trades Association
- Minnesota Power
- Minnesota State Rep. Josh Heintzeman
- Montana Mining Association
- National Mining Association
- National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association

- [New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association](#)
- [New Mexico Federal Lands Council](#)
- [New Mexico Wool Growers, Inc.](#)
- [North America's Building Trade Unions](#)
- [Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 589](#)
- [Range Association of Municipalities and Schools](#)
- Scott W. Yates, President, Denver Lumber Co.
- Shake Rattle & Troll Outdoors
- Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative
- [Twin Metals Minnesota](#)
- [United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America](#)
- [Water Resource Institute](#)
- [Women's Mining Coalition](#)
- Yavapai County Cattle Growers
- [Yavapai County Supervisor Board Chairman Thomas Thurman](#)
- Yuma County (AZ) Chamber of Commerce

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