



File Code: 1950
Date: December 14, 2021

Dear Interested Individuals, Governments, and Organizations,

On October 21, 2021, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) [published a notice in the Federal Register](#) initiating a 90-day public comment period on an application from the Forest Service to withdraw 225,378 acres of land from new mineral leasing in the Rainy River Watershed near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) for 20 years. The Forest Service submitted the withdrawal application to the Bureau of Land Management, which manages subsurface rights in the Superior National Forest, on September 28, 2021.

After reviewing the application, the BLM accepted the application and published a notice in the Federal Register, initiating a two-year segregation that temporarily prohibits the issuance of new Federal mineral prospecting permits or leased in the withdrawal area. During the segregation period, the BLM and the Forest Service will seek public comment and complete necessary studies, analysis and reports required to inform the Secretary of the Interior's decision on whether to withdraw the lands from mining laws for 20-years.

We are seeking your comments on the proposal to inform the scope of the environmental analysis. Comments will be accepted through January 19, 2022. Comments must be submitted in writing, or electronically to the Bureau of Land Management for consideration. Comments previously submitted during the 2018 application for withdrawal will be reviewed and considered in the development of the Forest Service's current environmental analysis. Since the Secretary of the Interior will make the decision, the project is not subject to Forest Service objection or appeal procedures.

Comments will be used to determine issues associated with the proposed withdrawal, develop alternatives, determine the scope of analysis, and refine the effects analysis. Comments are most useful and effective if they refer to a specific activity or example, provide a potential solution, or propose mitigation.

Comments regarding this withdrawal proposal should be sent to: F. David Radford, Deputy State Director of Geospatial Services, BLM Eastern States Office, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, Virginia 22041; or by email to BLM_ES_Lands@blm.gov.

All comments received (including names and addresses) will become part of the project record and will be available for public inspection.

The BLM will hold virtual public meetings on the following dates and times via Zoom.

- Wednesday, January 12, 2022, 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM, Central Standard Time
- Saturday, January 15, 2022, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Central Standard Time
- Tuesday, January 18, 2022, 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, Central Standard Time



The Zoom link to register for the meetings will be available at <https://go.usa.gov/xeWCn> no later than two weeks before the first meeting. The Forest Service will be sending a subsequent news release to the public once registration is available.

In order to provide informed comments about this action, commenters should review the following documents, available on the project website <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=60916>:

[BLM First Federal Register Notice](#)

[BLM Second Federal Register Notice](#)

[Letter of application from the Eastern Regional Forester to Bureau of Land Management](#)

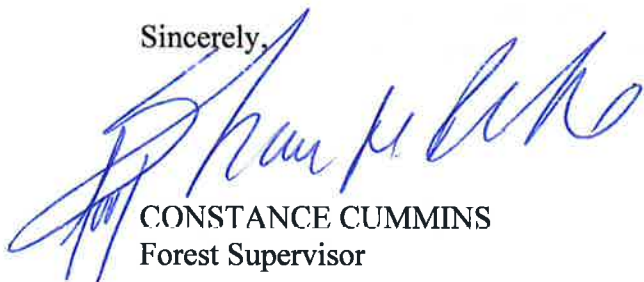
[Forest Service Application for Withdrawal](#)

[Application for Withdrawal Appendix A – land list](#)

[Application for Withdrawal Appendix B – map of proposed withdrawal area](#)

Thank you for your interest and involvement in management of the Superior National Forest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Constance Cummins', is written over the typed name and title.

CONSTANCE CUMMINS
Forest Supervisor