

CTA Name: Prove-It First

Date Created: 03.15.2021

Related Legislation (if applicable): HF148, SF59

Description of the Issue:

The DFL Environment Caucus web page on "Prove it First" is here, for background: <https://dflenvironment.org/issues/prove-it-first/>

Excerpts:

Our caucus has long questioned the safety of copper-sulfide mining in the water rich environments of northern Minnesota. Last year we supported a **"Prove it First" resolution**. This involves a moratorium on all copper-sulfide mining projects until unbiased scientific review proves that this type of mining can be done safely in this water-rich environment.

Please note that dangerous mining threatens both the Rainy River and the Saint Louis River watersheds, impacting Lake Superior and the BWCAW and Voyageurs National Park as well as the Mississippi River watershed.

- The laws of the land established to protect the Superior National Forest, including the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, the Lake Superior watershed and the entire State of Minnesota, are being weakened and circumvented by legislation, ignored by governmental agencies, and bypassed through land exchanges. Different laws protect different areas, to different degrees and in different ways, there is little consistency. Federal, state, county managed state lands, School Trust and private lands and waters of the US are threatened.
- The history of sulfide mining is one of toxic environmental degradation with no evidence that mining for copper, nickel, and other non-ferrous metals in the water-rich environment of northeast Minnesota can be done without harming our water resources, our health, and the ecology of our land. Habitat is destroyed, and toxins leach from copper mines for literally centuries.
- Exploration and mining, and the separation of land and mineral rights, decreases property values and can result in condemnation or seizure through eminent domain. Mineral rights run differently from surface rights and it is often difficult to know what mineral estate is linked to what surface estate. Mining displaces existing economic development and diminishes the use of the land for other

purposes in large part due to leases that last 50 years, binding the land to an industry that primarily benefits large corporations.

Now, a **Prove it First Law is being considered in the Minnesota legislature**. We urge our members to contact their representatives to support this legislation. The bill in the Senate is SF 59 (**current version as introduced**). The House bill is **HF 148**.

Script:

What we are asking you to do now, is to call Speaker Melissa Hortman, and leave a message that asks for her to give the Prove it First legislation a hearing in the Minnesota House.

So, dial 651-296-4280,

And say: "I respectfully ask Representative Hortman to see to it that the Prove it First legislation gets a hearing in the house."