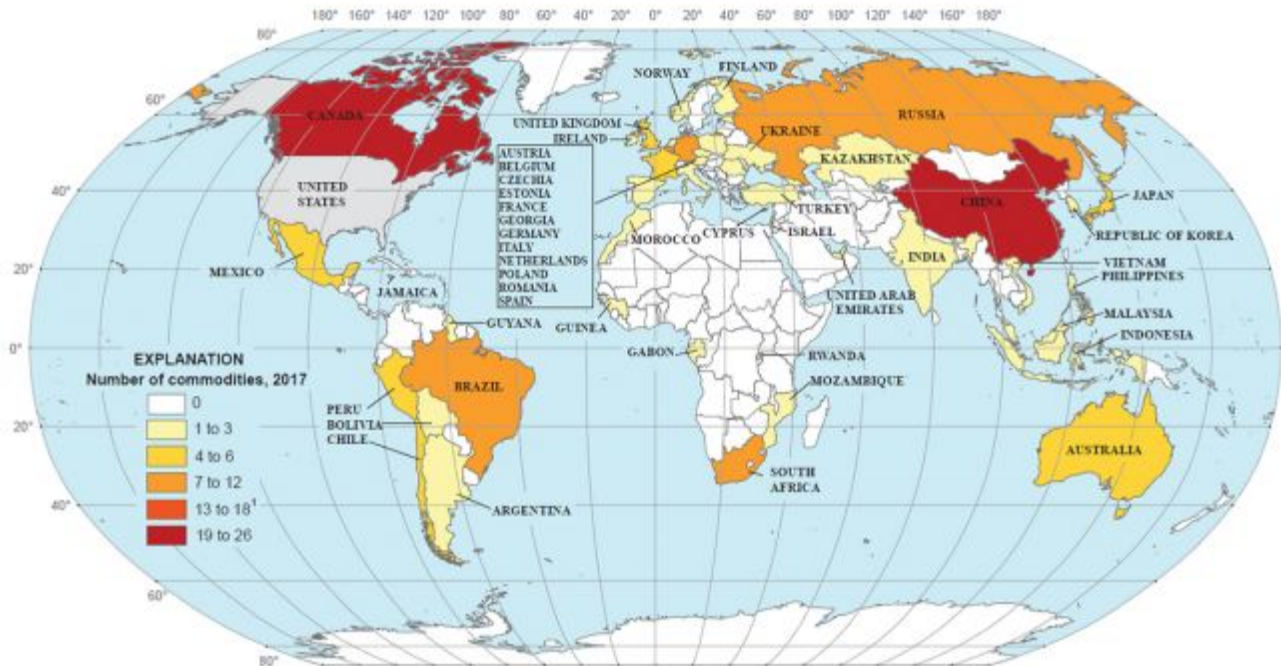


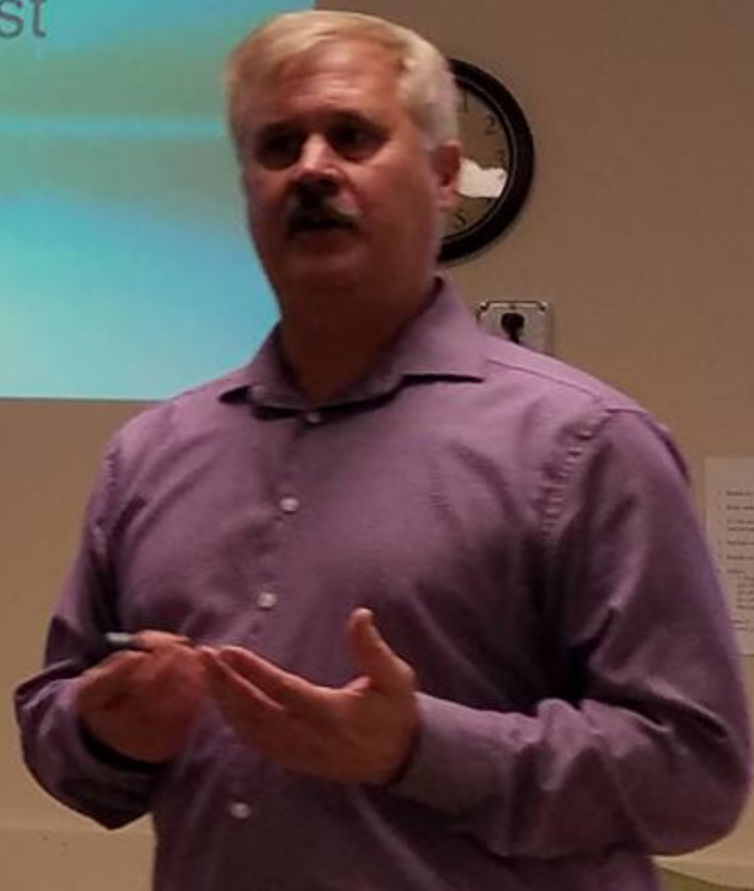
# MAJOR IMPORT SOURCES OF NONFUEL MINERAL COMMODITIES FOR WHICH THE UNITED STATES WAS GREATER THAN 50% NET IMPORT RELIANT IN 2017



# Copper-Nickel-Precious Metal Mining in the Superior National Forest

In my Backyard or Not in my Backyard?

Steve Spear  
Env 1205: Intro to Natural Resources  
Vermont Community College



## Current Status-Agencies Involved

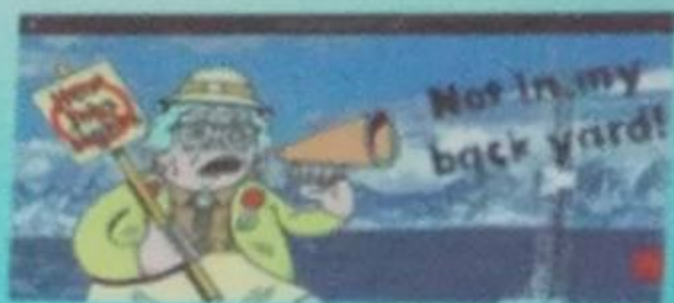
- USFS - Controls Surface Rights within boundaries of SNF
- BLM - Controls mineral rights below surface
- MN DNR- State Surface and Minerals within SNF
- MN Department of Health
- US Army Corps of Engineers (wetlands)
- Fight for Mining MN-Social Media, 12,000+ NE MN members
- Minnesota Miners-Iron Range Area
- Save the Boundary Waters "Campaign"-NE MN's for Wilderness
- Friends of the Boundary Waters, Minneapolis based
- Up North Jobs, Inc.
- Conservationists With Common Sense
- Twin Metals Minnesota (subsidiary of Antofagasta, Chile/England)
- Local and State Governments

## Individual Opinions on the Issue (PRO)

- Declining economy and population in NE MN-Few good jobs
- Schools & Hospitals struggling – 147 to 36, since 1978 Wilderness Act (EHS graduating Seniors)
- US and Minnesota have some of highest Environmental Standards in the World – we can keep the water clean. 130+ years so far
- Iron Range Income barely half of State average (US Census)
- Businesses closing – 2 restaurants closed this winter, 20+ for sale in Ely currently
- Mining is an allowed use of SNF, this is not in the BWCAWI
- Provides increase in local tax base(s)-State, County, Local, School
- Provides increase in School Trust Fund assets for ALL MN Schools

## Individual Opinions on the Issue (Against)

- A mine here will devastate the entire BWCAW
- Preserve the "pristine" nature of the BWCAW
- Twin Metals will cause acid mine drainage (AMD) as compared to acid rock drainage (ARD)-Natural
- Tourism can sustain the economy
- NIMBY or BANANA attitude
- All "Sulfide" Mining is unsafe
- Most against - live in urban areas, and see their vacation destination being threatened by a "foreign mining conglomerate"
- Some Local Tourism based businesses worried about mining effects



## Legislative/Political Status

- Current 2 Year Moratorium on exploration (Federally withdrawn minerals)
- MINER Act of 2017 Status (**M**innesota's **E**conomic **R**ecovery of the **S**uperior National Forest)
- Intense Lobbying on both sides of issue in Congress
- Federal Court Case on lease denial-USFS EIS in 2012 concluded "NSF" of environmental harm due to mineral exploration (USFS)
- Currently the EIS (Obama's) has been changed to an EA (Environmental Assessment)
- Most local/County/NE MN State Legislators are pro development
- Many Twin Cities legislators are against
- Liberal Democrats generally against, Conservative Range Democrats pro. Generally more Republicans are for then are against.

## Future Predictions

- Much less of a global environmental impact by mining here vs overseas
- Just about everything you have has originated or been helped to be produced by mining. Cell phones, cars, food, clothing, medical devices and instruments, etc. Where should we expect these metals should come from? In my backyard or NIMBY?
- I support Mining AND Clean Water... We Can Have BOTH!
- I Love the BWCAW tool! Just because I support mining, doesn't mean I hate the environment. We need compromise, let them keep exploring and come up with a Mine Plan. Then, NEPA, and the associated EIS process, and State of Minnesota permitting processes can be analyzed. There will be multiple opportunities for continued public input. (A mine operation would take at least 10 years from mine plan submittal) More time passed just increases safety and technology.