

# THE U.S. DOES NOT NEED COPPER

## Don't Risk the Watershed of the Boundary Waters

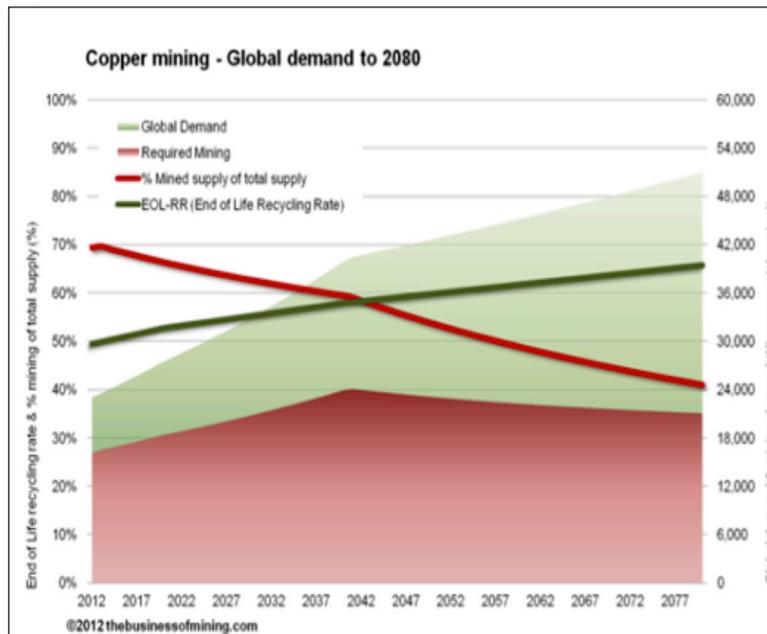
**Copper is a commodity destined for world markets, especially China.**

The argument by sulfide-ore mining supporters that mining copper in the Duluth Complex is important to the national interest of the United States is not true. The United States ships a great deal of copper to China, where it is being stockpiled for future sale on world markets as either a commodity or in finished products. The U. S. Geological Survey, an agency of our federal government, said the following in its January 2013 Mineral Commodities Summaries:

*“Copper: 80% year-on-year increase in China’s net imports in the first half of 2012, well in excess of industrial demand. U.S. exports of refined copper through June were nearly four times those for all of 2011, and domestic stocks declined to about one-half those at yearend 2011.”*

**Recycling meets an increasing amount of the demand for copper; by 2042 recycling will exceed new mined copper.**

New copper products contain 30% recycled material. By 2042, recycled copper will exceed mined copper in meeting U.S. needs; a fundamental shift in copper source is taking place in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



## Recycling is better than mining

“Recycling supply of metals is more sustainable than mined supply. Recycling does not require the destruction of natural environments...Recycled supply is not only more sustainable, but is also fundamentally cheaper than mined supply.”

## United States copper demand could be met with recycling and keeping copper from U.S. mines at home.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS), an agency of our federal government, said the following in its January 2013 Mineral Commodities Summaries:

### **“China’s Copper Waste/Scrap Imports and the Connection with the United States**

China has increasingly depended on copper waste/scrap as an alternative to copper ores. In 2011, China imported nearly twice as much copper waste/scrap by volume than in 2000; the value was 15 times as much, owing to dramatic price increases during that time interval. U.S. copper waste/scrap exporters are among the beneficiaries of China’s rising demand for this commodity. Between 2000 and 2011, the value of U.S. copper waste/scrap exports to China grew nine-fold, from \$304 million to \$2.8 billion, making it China’s largest copper waste/scrap supplier (Figure 3). In 2011, China represented the largest (37%) market for U.S. copper waste/scrap exports, and this commodity became the third-largest U.S. export to China.”

The United States should address its demand for copper by retaining recycled copper at home.