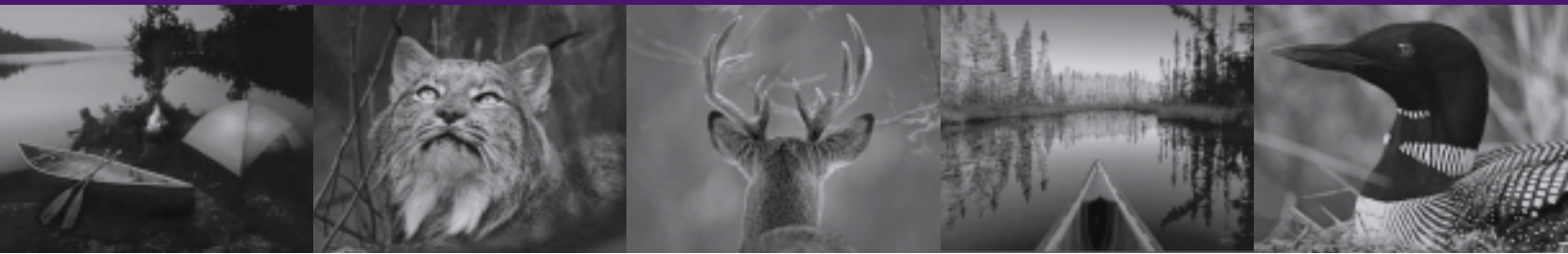


FRIENDS of the BOUNDARY WATERS WILDERNESS



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www.friends-bwca.org

The Friends' mission is to protect, preserve, and restore the wilderness character of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) and the Quetico-Superior Ecosystem. The organization was founded in 1976 and is joined by its tax-exempt sister organization, the Boundary Waters Wilderness Foundation.

Masthead Photos: JimBrandenburg.com

Legislature to Debate School Trust Land in Boundary Waters

The Friends' work on school trust lands in the BWCAW progressed in February with the introduction of bills in the Minnesota Senate and House. The bills are non-binding measures expressing support for a \$3 increase to the Boundary Waters reservation fee, and asking Congress to reallocate the revenue to Minnesota's Permanent School Fund. The resolution also urges the federal government to work with the State of Minnesota to reach a permanent solution. Both bills are awaiting hearings in their respective bodies.

The House bill, HF 2242, is sponsored by Reps. Barb Sykora (R-Excelsior), David Dill (DFL-Orr), Alice Seagren (R-Bloomington), and Tom Rukavina (DFL-Virginia). The Senate bill, SF 2222, is sponsored by Sens. Steve Kelley (DFL-Hopkins), LeRoy Stumpf (DFL-Thief River Falls), Becky Lourey (DFL-Kerrick), and Carrie Ruud (R-Breezy Point).

When the BWCAW was created, the state's policy was to be a partner with the federal government in the management of the wilderness. In 1977, during Congressional hearings on the BWCAW, then-DNR Commissioner William Nye testified: "The past history of state effort to protect the BWCA proved the wisdom of leaving intact this dual jurisdiction." The school trust lands within the wilderness, not being the issue they are today, were not mentioned.

While concern over trust lands in the BWCAW is relatively recent, questions about how to generate revenue are appropriate given the state's fiduciary obligations to the trust. The state's goal is "to secure the maximum long-term economic return from the school trust lands consistent with sound natural resource conservation and management principles and specific policy as provided by state law."

The Friends' interest, however, is to ensure that this issue doesn't become one more debate over the Boundary Waters. We want to ensure that discussions remain focused on the state's trust responsibilities. We believe the solution proposed in HF 2242 and SF 2222 achieves that goal and is consistent with the state's statutory goal for school trust lands.

Additionally, the fee generates a reasonable amount of revenue for the Permanent School Fund. The estimated \$93,000 of revenue per year is comparable to returns from forestry, and surpasses other recreation-related revenues.

Finally, the fee structure proposed in HF 2242 and SF 2222 enjoys support from diverse parties. The Friends hopes that our work on these bills will help foster conversation and collaboration between all sides as we work toward a permanent solution for the school trust lands in the BWCAW.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

I always like it when things happen in my life that create clarity. Recently, it was two events involving the Roosevelts - Teddy, our 26th president (1901 - 1909), and his great, great grandson, Theodore Roosevelt IV, better known as "T4." Let me explain.

One of my favorite places is the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming. In January, I spent a day at the museum where I read a quote by President Roosevelt. He wrote, *"We are ... still in that low state of civilization where we do not understand that it is also vandalism wantonly to destroy or to permit the destruction of what is beautiful in nature, whether it is a cliff, a forest or a species of mammal or bird."*

My first thought was that this could have been written today - not 100 years ago! More striking, however, was something I had forgotten: our first conservationist president was a Republican who was passionate about protecting our environment. Roosevelt established 16 national monuments, five national parks, and set aside 235 million acres as national forests, including the Superior National Forest.

Several weeks later, I am standing before T4, an investment banker who considers himself a moderate Republican. He's in the Twin Cities as a guest of The Wilderness Society where he serves as the Vice Chair of the Governing Council. T4 is giving remarks in which he both denounces and praises Republicans for their environmental records.

Both of these events were strong reminders that there are people of all party affiliations who support environmental causes. Each of us, regardless of party affiliation, must work especially hard this year to ensure that we elect leaders who best represent our individual and collective interests. We have an obligation to become educated, well-informed voters and ensure that the BWCAW and all of our country's wild places are permanently protected.

This year, I encourage you to work with us and other organizations and get involved in voter registration, education, and mobilization efforts. It's a call to action that all of us must answer. And certainly, it is a call to action that Teddy and T4 would want us to heed. ●



Melissa Lindsay

Foundation Targets New Companies for Workplace Giving

Nearly 100 Minnesota companies offer their employees the chance to make gifts to environmental organizations through payroll deductions. Is your company providing such an option?

If not, we ask you to help initiate this program which benefits 18 Minnesota conservation and environmental organizations, including the Boundary Waters Wilderness Foundation. This excellent workplace giving program is run by the Minnesota Environmental Fund (MEF). Thanks to employee donations in 2003, the Boundary Waters Wilderness Foundation received more than \$32,000.

The more employers which offer workplace giving programs for the Minnesota Environmental Fund, the more money the Boundary Waters Wilderness Foundation will receive. The Foundation receives the second highest amount of money from MEF, thanks in part to the high number of donors who designate their gifts to the Foundation. Donors may also choose to have their gift evenly distributed to all member organizations, including Audubon Minnesota, Clean Water Fund, Friends of the Mississippi River, Izaak Walton League, Sierra Club Foundation, and The Nature Conservancy.

"Eighty-five cents of every dollar is distributed directly to environmental work in Minnesota. It's the easiest, most effective way to strengthen environmental protection, conservation and restoration in our state," said Ed Marek, executive director of MEF.

Take Action

If your company is not currently offering you workplace giving through the Minnesota Environmental Fund, please contact human resources or the department or individual who handles your United Way campaign. You may also contact Melissa Lindsay of the Boundary Waters Wilderness Foundation at (612) 332-9630 or melissa@friends-bwca.org. ●





Untamed, Unspoiled, Unprotected

Grassroots and communications efforts are currently underway to help permanently protect nearly 90,000 acres of roadless areas adjacent to and near the BWCAW. These areas are "untamed, unspoiled, and unprotected," which is the slogan for the campaign designed to create greater public awareness of the value of these roadless areas.

Friends' Board Member Gus Axelson and Executive Director Melissa Lindsay are assembling a team of advertising and media professionals to help develop the campaign, which will include media, lobbying, and grassroots activities, including opportunities for Friends' members and allies to volunteer in the field. The design team will work with staff on the development of brochures, stickers, posters, banners, media placements, and print and radio public service announcements. According to Lindsay, the campaign will emphasize that without permanent protection these wild places could be threatened by logging, road-building, mining, and off-highway vehicles.

To further help the Friends in this effort, the Heritage Forests Campaign, a conservation alliance based in Washington, D.C., has offered to hire a field organizer to work in the Friends' office. In addition to raising awareness about Minnesota's roadless campaign, the field organizer will focus on roadless area protection in Wisconsin and Michigan, and build support among hunters, anglers, paddlers, hikers, bird and wildlife viewers, churches, civic organizations, and colleges and universities.

Current efforts to protect Minnesota's roadless areas began more than two years ago with comprehensive inventories conducted by volunteers. The inventories were followed by the submission of hundreds of comments by Friends' members and others to the Forest Service, asking that the agency protect these roadless areas in Superior National Forest's new management plan.

To further build and demonstrate Minnesotans' support for protecting wild places, allies are encouraged in the coming months to join Friends' staff, members, and volunteers and attend local environmental and community events, meet with state and federal elected officials, and explore select roadless areas on guided hikes. ●

Take Action

- Adopt-A-Wilderness by volunteering to maintain up-to-date information on one of the 24 roadless areas. Please see the story on volunteer opportunities on page 4.
- Hike through the Baldpate Lake Unit with forest ecologist Lee Frelich, June 12.
- Experience the Mine Lake Unit with plant biologist Chel Anderson, July 10.
- Visit the Friends' booth at events and register your support (see calendar on page 5).



Volunteers Needed Help Advance Wilderness Protection

Adopt-A-Wilderness

Volunteers are needed to maintain up-to-date information on the wilderness characteristics of 24 roadless areas within the Superior National Forest. These units were inventoried in 2001 and 2002 and were identified by the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness as suitable for wilderness protection. This opportunity involves hiking and/or canoeing in one or more of the areas near the Boundary Waters, taking photographs, and recording notes about the area's features. Training and materials are provided. To sign-up, contact Donna McNamara or Chris Hoff at (612) 332-9630.

Monitor Exotic Plant Species

Non-native plants are harming our northern forests. They can displace native plants, degrade wildlife habitat, increase soil erosion, and impact recreational activities. The Friends and the Forest Service will offer a July field training session at which volunteers will learn to identify invasive plant species and how to stop the spread of these invaders. No special plant knowledge is required - just a willingness to learn and a desire to help keep weeds out of the wilderness. For more information, contact Sarah Strommen at (612) 332-9630.

Monitor Water Quality

Since 1973, citizen volunteers have helped the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) monitor the quality of Minnesota's lakes. In 2004, the Friends will join this effort by inviting members and allies to collect water data as they paddle the lakes of the Boundary Waters. Volunteers lower a Secchi disk (an 8-inch disk attached to a calibrated rope) into the lake and record the depth at which the disk is no longer visible. Measuring water transparency is easy, and it provides useful information about a lake's water quality. To sign-up, contact Sarah Strommen at (612) 332-9630. ●

Trout Lake Portage Work Delayed Until 2005

Trout Lake portage, a mile-long motorized trail in the wilderness which connects to Lake Vermilion, is severely eroded but will not be restored until 2005 at the earliest, say Superior National Forest officials.

Despite the Friends' persistent efforts since 2001 to place the project on the Forest Service priority list, no funds were committed for the portage's restoration this year. While the plans are on hold for a third year, the Forest Service will continue with remedial restoration at the portage, including filling holes with dirt. The agency hopes to release a revised project plan by May 2004 and solicit public comments on the recommendation.

The Forest Service abandoned its original plans in 2001 because of staff and funding shortages. Earlier that year, Friends' staff visited the site and observed considerable erosion and rutting on the portage, where an ATV provides canoeists and motorboat owners the option to be transported between the lakes. The portage's poor condition led the Friends to support the Forest Service's remediation plan.

The Friends is committed to seeing this work completed and will continue pressuring the Forest Service to find necessary funding for 2005. ●

Correction

In the Winter 2004 issue, there was an article about large groups in the BWCAW which may have been misleading to readers.

The group size limit in the Boundary Waters is nine (9) people and four (4) watercraft. While groups larger than nine people may acquire more than one permit, they may not convene in the BWCAW. That means groups should not portage together, gunnel up on the water, or eat meals together. Remember: the fewer people congregating in the Boundary Waters, the lower the impact on the wilderness. ●

Writer Joins Friends' Board



Gus Axelson, a senior writer for Words At Work, a Minneapolis marketing communications firm, joined the Friends and Foundation Boards in January 2004.

In his job, Axelson prepares speeches, annual reports, brochures, websites, and opinion-editorial pieces. He is also a freelance writer, whose work has appeared in several publications, including *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, *Wisconsin Trails*, *Land and Water*, and the books *Voices for the Land* and *The Talking Stick*.

Axelson joined the Friends board because he wants to "put my marketing knowledge and writing skills to good use in giving back to the Boundary Waters." Already, he has been a tremendous asset, helping draft Friends' membership acquisition letters and advising on other print materials. He is also organizing a creative team to develop and promote the Friends' wilderness initiative, *Preserving the Canoe Country Heritage*, which seeks to permanently protect nearly 90,000 acres of unroaded areas near the BWCAW.

Gus serves on the Friends' Education and Policy committees and lists his favorite spot in the BWCAW as heading out of the Cross Bay River looking for moose. Axelson earned a B.S. in Journalism from the University of Illinois and lives in Minneapolis with his wife and son.

Calendar of Upcoming Events and Important Dates

APRIL:

- 12-15** Sigurd Olson Lecture Series - Pete Morton, a resource economist with The Wilderness Society, will discuss "Drilling in the Rocky Mountains: How Much and at What Cost?" See article on page 8.
- 23-25** Midwest Mountaineering Outdoor Expo - Visit the Friends' booth at this expo for outdoor enthusiasts. Expo features exhibits, lectures, and gear and equipment sales, including a speaker co-sponsored by the Friends, who will be there in honor of the Wilderness Act's 40th anniversary. Held at Midwest Mountaineering, 309 Cedar Ave. S., Minneapolis. To volunteer, call Sean Wherley at (612) 332-9630.
- 24** Sigurd Olson Anniversary Luncheon - Celebrate Sigurd Olson's birthday. Event held at Town and Country Club in St. Paul, sponsored by the Listening Point Foundation. Keynote address by Doug Scott of the Campaign for America's Wilderness. For more information, call Paul Monson of the Listening Point Foundation at (952) 929-5029.

APRIL 29-MAY 2; MAY 7-9

BWCAW Campsite Clearing - Participants will maintain trails and clean up campsites. Organized by Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness (NMW). To sign-up or get more information, contact Kris Wegerson or John Ipsen at (218) 724-5453.

APRIL 29-MAY 31

BWCAW Trail Clearing - The Minnesota Wilderness Trails Alliance seeks volunteers throughout May to clean-up and maintain 200 miles of trails in the Boundary Waters. Sign-up deadline is April 20. To learn more, visit www.kek.org/MWTA2004.html or call the Kekakabic Trail Club at (800) 818-4453.

MAY:

- 1-2** Living Green Expo - Volunteers needed to staff the Friends' booth at eco-friendly event held at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds in St. Paul. Contact Sean Wherley at (612) 332-9630 to volunteer. The event runs both days from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

JUNE:

- 12** Hike with Forest Ecologist Lee Frelich - Lee Frelich is an expert forest ecologist and Friends' board member who will lead a hike through an unroaded area near the BWCAW, explaining the flora and fauna. The site is one recommended for permanent protection by the Friends. For more information or to sign-up, contact Sarah Strommen at (612) 332-9630.

OCT:

- 7** Friends Annual Luncheon - 12 p.m. (noon) Milwaukee Depot, Minneapolis. Acclaimed author and environmental activist Terry Tempest Williams will be the keynote speaker during the Friends' Annual Luncheon. More details to appear in upcoming newsletters.

Conservation Groups Pursue Sensible OHV Legislation

The Friends and several other conservation groups are asking Minnesota state legislators this year to support sensible off-highway vehicle legislation that emphasizes land protection and responsible riding.

Conservationists are troubled by proposed legislation which threatens the protection of Minnesota's wetlands and forests and severely undermines the OHV bill signed into law last year by Gov. Tim Pawlenty. Conservationists argue that any new law must require OHV riders to stay on designated trails, exercise safe behavior, and abide by all laws.

Twelve Minnesota conservation and civic organizations are calling for a better approach to managing OHV use. These include the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, American Lands Alliance, Jack Pine Coalition, Sierra Club North Star Chapter, Audubon Minnesota, Izaak Walton League, Minnesota Lakes Association, League of Women Voters of Minnesota, Minnesota Conservation Federation, Fish & Wildlife Legislative Alliance, and Minnesotans for Responsible Recreation.

Conservationists point out that under one bill, sponsored by Rep. Tom Hackbarth (R-Cedar), ATVs and 4x4 trucks would be permitted in sensitive wetlands, and OHVs would be allowed off of designated trails in state forests. The proposed bill also would abolish a voluntary safety training program for riders and eliminate environmental guidelines used for creating OHV trails.

Meanwhile, conservationists are working with state legislators to offer OHV bills this session that build on the 2003 law to ensure protections for state lands and wetlands from OHV damage. The Friends is supporting bills that would extend the life of the damage restoration account beyond its 2005 expiration; ban OHV accessories like snorkels (which allow ATVs to operate entirely submerged in water) and oversized, extreme traction tires; increase funding for the number of conservation officers patrolling state lands; and place greater penalties on OHV riders who repeatedly or intentionally break the law.

Friends' members will likely receive action alerts related to OHVs in the next two months, and we urge you to contact your state legislators in response. ●

Foundation to Launch Youth Canoe Trips

Imagine you're a 17-year-old girl who has never been camping. Never paddled a canoe. Never carried an 80-pound pack on a portage in the wilderness.

Then imagine that a school counselor suggests you take a ten-day canoe trip in northern Minnesota with a group of kids you've never met. The counselor assures you that you will have a good time even though it may be rainy, hot, cold, buggy, and hard work.

Nineteen students jumped at such a chance in 2003 and this opportunity is again open to students in 2004. The Boundary Waters Wilderness Foundation and Wilderness Canoe Base will offer two, ten-day canoeing and camping trips in the BWCAW this year: July 6-15 and Aug. 11-20. Funding is provided by the Thomas Flint Boundary Waters Wilderness Fund, established in memory of Thomas Hunter Flint, an avid outdoorsman and canoeist who loved the BWCAW, and the Bob Johnson Boundary Waters Wilderness Fund, in memory of Bob Johnson who suffered a heart attack in the wilderness in 2000.

Last year, teenagers from various socio-economic and cultural backgrounds (including African-American, Hmong, Native American, Ethiopian, French Guinean, Hispanic, and Caucasian) experienced first-hand what so many of us already know: to live and travel in wilderness is an extraordinary gift. As one of the guides noted, "It was truly a wonderful experience to watch these kids interact and share their different cultures with one another."

The trips also provide a great opportunity for young people to get outside of their comfort zone, experience something new, realize that they are capable of doing more than they thought possible, and learn the importance of team work.

Youth ages 15-19 are eligible for the trips, and students of color are encouraged to apply. The trip costs \$400 but full and partial scholarships are available. Applications may be obtained by contacting Melissa Lindsay at (612) 332-9630, and must be received by May 1, 2004.

Luke Hammer, a camp guide from last year's trip, said that he enjoyed working with the students. "Each one of them learned how they could help make the workload easier for the team," he said. "They overcome fears and doubts about themselves and hopefully will carry those feats on into the 'real world' when they head home."

Hammer likes the impetus of the trips and welcomes the opportunity to help guide in the future. "I was lucky enough to be a part of their journey," he said, "and would do it again in a heartbeat." ●

Building Awareness of the Friends, BWCAW

As a member or ally of the Friends, you understand the importance of educating the public about the Boundary Waters and the threats posed to this national treasure. Now the Friends needs your help to reach a larger audience, including people who may want to learn more about the wilderness and our organization.

In December the Friends unveiled a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation designed to educate civic organizations, church groups, and business associations about the history of the Boundary Waters, its natural values, threats launched against it, and the role the Friends plays in protecting the area. In addition to educating the public about the wilderness, the presentation is geared toward increasing Friends' visibility and membership.

Friends' staff has already reached 360 people through such presentations to Twin Cities organizations, with several more appearances planned for the coming months. If you belong to a group that would like to have a knowledgeable Friends' staff member discuss the Boundary Waters with the aid of beautiful photography, please contact Sean Wherley at (612) 332-9630 or sean@friends-bwca.org. Or, if Friends' members would like to address their own organizations, arrangements can be made to deliver the presentation. ●

Speaker to Address Rocky Mountain Drilling

Drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge may be the subject of many headlines, but an equally sensitive area is being targeted for drilling: the Rocky Mountains.



Pete Morton, a resource economist with The Wilderness Society, will discuss the topic during three appearances in Minnesota, April 12-15. His appearance is part of the Sigurd Olson Lecture Series, sponsored by the Vermilion Community College Foundation and the Boundary Waters Wilderness Foundation.

Morton, who has testified before Congress several times regarding energy policy and drilling in the Rocky Mountains, will make the following appearances: April 12 at 4 p.m. at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities' St. Paul Campus, 335 Borlaug Hall; April 14 at 7 p.m. at Vermilion Community College's Fine Arts Theater in Ely, Minn.; and April 15 at 7 p.m. at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, Life Sciences Building, Room 185. For more information about these events, contact Melissa Lindsay at (612) 332-9630. ●

Yes! I want to join the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness and help protect and preserve the Boundary Waters and surrounding Quetico-Superior Ecosystem.

\$100 Patron \$75 Contributing \$50 Family \$30 Individual \$20 Student/Senior

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PLEASE DO NOT SHARE MY NAME WITH ANY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

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Boundary Waters Author Paul Gruchow Dies



Award-winning writer and essayist Paul Gruchow, who wrote *Boundary Waters: The Grace of the Wild*, died Feb. 22 in Duluth. He was 56.

In addition to his writing, Gruchow was an advocate of the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness. He was the keynote speaker at the Friends' annual meeting in 1988, 1993, and 1998, and spoke in 2001 at an environmental fair in Minneapolis sponsored by the Friends and several other conservation organizations.

Gruchow's *Boundary Waters: The Grace of the Wild*, published in 1997, is complemented by two other works, including *The Necessity of Empty Places* (St. Martin's Press, 1988), and *Grass Roots: The Universe of Home* (Milkweed, 1995), which won a Minnesota Book Award.

Gruchow, born and raised in Montevideo, Minn., attended the University of Minnesota, where he edited the campus newspaper. He served as an aide to U.S. Rep. Don Fraser (D-Minn.), in Washington, D.C., before returning to Minnesota to work at Minnesota Public Radio and the Worthington Daily Globe. He later taught creative writing at St. Olaf College in Northfield and Concordia College in Moorhead.

Gruchow is survived by his former wife, Nancy, a son and daughter, and two sisters.

"A Psalm of Praise: Wilderness Travel as an Artistic Act - Being on the move, seeing what you have never seen before, not knowing where you will rest your head when night falls, receiving what comes as it comes, expecting everything and nothing: this is the allure of the canoe country. Every stroke of the paddle or step along the trail with a canoe on your shoulders or a pack on your back literally enlarges your world."

-- Paul Gruchow, *Boundary Waters: The Grace of the Wild*

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