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Organization:

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Comments: To whom it may concern,

I have been living and working on the Gunflint Trail year round since 2006. In that time I have seen many changes to the wilderness I love. Some good and some bad.

My primary concern is maintaining the wilderness aesthetic of this pristine area. To me that means limiting users, keeping travel in the BWCA limited to paddle and foot power, and keeping the campsites clean. In the past few years I have noticed a large increase in the amount of trash to have to pack out when leaving the wilderness others leave behind.

As a former employee of a number of outfitters and lodges up here I can say with certainty that some resorts are much better at advising wilderness users of the essential leave no trace ethics than others. I feel that violation of these ethics should carry a much heavier consequence for the users themselves and for outfitters who repeatedly send out groups that violate these rules. It is no secret in our community who the repeat offenders are.

Beyond the cleanliness of the area I feel there should be ZERO motor permits for anyone who does not have special needs. To me this means absolutely no tows at all by anyone under any circumstances and that other motor permits should be restricted to groups who are able to show it is a necessity due to special needs. I feel that the wilderness should be accessible to everyone but also feel the lazy and entitled exploit these permits and trash the sites. Keeping them available to the elderly, groups with young children, and the disabled is imperative but removing the option for otherwise able bodied folks is ideal in my mind.

To me this area is special because of its relatively untouched nature and the more we as a society encroach on it the more of that character it loses. There really is no other place like the BWCA so keeping it as wild and untrodden is my primary concern.