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Comments: We are very interested in this review and outcome regarding the BWCAW. It is the place that we most value. We appreciate the Forest Service's ongoing reassessment of the issues and the opportunity for the public to participate. My comments (trying to be fairly succinct):

Motors- the high volume of motorized traffic (esp the tows) is the most detrimental aspect of the experience. They create unwanted noise, wakes (see Moose Lake, which felt like a freeway last Summer, Basswood also) and the tow passengers are shunted to the front of the line for the limited campsites- because they can afford it and are unwilling to earn their access to the interior. I think the remote places, ie on the border, should be earned not purchased. Folks with disabilities need to be accommodated somehow but I doubt that most of the motor traffic is used to help this group. BWCA needs to move away from being the venue for a myriad of business ventures and move more toward the value of the place and the experience.

Permits- I have mixed feelings. the Wilderness aspect is critical to the experience, but there is no experience if you can't go there. We need people to go there to keep the public invested in it. Despite press reports highlighting abuses, most visitors are highly respectful of the place and others that they encounter. A BWCA trip already takes far in advance planning and frankly some dumb luck in getting the desired permit. As it is already very hard to obtain permits. After already enacting a permit reduction recently, I'd focus on getting the motors out, rather than paddlers.

The motors are far more detrimental.

I'm also concerned about the availability for non-guided trips. The outfitters can put their staff on task on permit day #1 to scoop up many permits to accommodate their guiding schedule. Trying to find a specific date probably doesn't matter so much to them, as they just need to have a client that hires them for the dates that they have permits and equipment available to outfit and/or staff to guide. They can get their permits on day#1 without much planning. The rest of us are trying to take specific dates off from work to go on a BW trip and it can be very hard to get the permit to match those dates and esp the location one hopes to visit- nearly impossible if you don't get your permit very shortly after permits are made available. I think that despite the guide/ outfitters complaints, they hold too many cards and it is the rest of us that could use better access to permits (ie not their).

South Farm Lake- Is a limited motor BWCA exception that is not working at all. It has been my Dad's (veteran, 89yo) favorite place to go for some nearby fishing and quiet. It is a dead-end lake, accessed from Farm Lake (fully motorized, where we have a cabin). The permitting process is nearly impossible, esp if one works for a living. One has to somehow be available on the announced permit open date and then work like heck to land a permit(s). The permits for this lake are always completely gone (entire summer) within <30 min of the website opening. The permits are marginally useful (just one day in the course of 1 week and you are required to go to the permit pickup site to obtain that actual permit). If something goes wrong after you pick up the permit and you can't go, you are out of luck. I obtained my first motor permit ever for the recent '24 fishing opener (with hope of taking my Dad there for the first time in 6+ years- because we haven't been able to get permits) and with the help of sheer luck in getting a gap in my work schedule allowing me to go on the permit website, our permit was wasted when a complication arose (with my 89 year old father) for our designated day. We could be gone the next day, or the next,... Yet, in spite of our frustration, whenever I am on South Farm Lake or mtn biking past the narrows, usually there are 1-3 motorboats on the lake fishing. That can't be if there is a permit for one motorboat on one day per week. If I ask them, some have no idea and some don't care if there is a permitting process. I don't know if the area resorts get most of the permits, but if that is happening, it needs to be curtailed. I think this type of lake needs a review. It either needs to be possible to get permits and not have to plan a morning of fishing 5-9 months in advance, then get very lucky and have a break from work in order to even obtain a permit

and then be able to actually use the permit date you obtained so far in advance. And the public needs to know that a permit is required. If this system exist, there needs to be more permits. Since motorboats only go there to fish, the disturbance from them is actually fairly minimal (mostly they are parked other than entry and departure) and the number of motor permits could be as much as one/day all Summer, even 2 on Fri-Sun. The boats also are not in the lake all day, most likely just a few hours in a day. As it is, the system for lakes such as this is a (unintentional I'm sure) complete charade- Can't get a permit if you play by the rules or you just go there regardless and ignore (or not know about) the rules. If a more accommodating system for above can't be instituted, motorized permits for a lake like this should just go away- which I'd also be fine with, though I suspect most others would not accept it.

Thanks for reviewing my comments.