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Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment during the Forest Plan amendment scoping period. As the Forest begins this process, I encourage the Forest to consider doing the following:

Intentionally engage with the outfitter and guide community regarding perceived problems and opportunities, and specifically information related to the actual experiences of broad groups of users. Use this information to temper anecdotal BWCAW complaints.

Consider potential new restricted permits (similar to the Mudro Lake Restricted #22 entry permit), that provide better disbursement of BWCAW travelers. Specifically, consider such a permit for the Lake One region.

Conduct a scientific survey of BWCAW permit holders to obtain input and actual experiences regarding travel patterns and perceived problems and opportunities in the Wilderness.

Consider establishing more campsites (eg, Sunday Bay of Crooked Lake) and more portages (eg, northern portage route between Lake One and Lake Two, and reestablish portage between Clearwater Lake and Lake Two, and between Crooked Lake and Jackfish Lake, and in the Stewart and Sterling Lake areas) to address concerns regarding campsite availability, potential campsite overuse, and Wilderness solitude, as well as concerns regarding seeing other groups on portages.

Use computer modeling technology to better understand travel patterns in the Wilderness.

Consider opening pristine and primitive management areas to greater recreational use with established campsites and portage trails to address issues related to campsite availability, potential campsite overuse, and Wilderness solitude.

Consider the value of towboats in dispersing Boundary Waters travelers and allowing access for those with more limited mobility.

Consider the value of commercial outfitters and guides in preserving and protecting the Wilderness through education, modeling leave no trace ethics, and providing guidance to groups and individuals who prefer guided opportunities. Create a plan that supports and encourages guided experiences in the BWCAW and recognizes the benefits of these professionals as well as the historical significance of these people.

Consider a variety of quota permitting systems to evaluate their benefits and limitations, and seek extensive feedback on a variety of permitting system options, especially from the Cooperating businesses who issue the majority of permits.

Consider continued reinforcement and enhancement of portage trails with stonework.

Reassess the Forest's newly expressed interpretation that dogs must always be on a 6' or shorter leash in the BWCAW.

Consider options for addressing bear issues in the Wilderness beyond the newly enacted order requiring expensive certified containers or hanging of packs from trees. Options might include the installation of food hanging poles or bear-proof bins at campsites in certain high use areas.