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Comments: The U.S. Forest Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have reached a good agreement for a federal purchase of about 80,000 acres of state-owned school trust lands and 3,200 acres of county tax-forfeited land inside the 1.1-million-acre Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) in the Superior National Forest in Minnesota.

This proposal will benefit the BWCAW, but some local state legislators are trying to torpedo the proposal.

I support the federal purchase of the 80,000 acres of state school trust lands inside the BWCAW, and the 3,200 acres of St. Louis County land included in the land purchase package.

A federal purchase will increase the efficiency of administering and protecting the BWCAW as a Wilderness, and prevent future state or county governments from developing these lands.

A federal purchase will provide far more income to Minnesota's Permanent School Fund than would a land exchange, according to analyses by the local Timberjay newspaper and others.

Unlike the assertions of the local legislators, a federal purchase is perfectly legal under the Weeks Act. Furthermore, Congress created the Land and Water Conservation Fund for just such purposes.