

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/11/2024 8:30:34 PM

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Comments: I am asking the Forest Service to move ahead with the federal purchase of the school trust lands within the BWCAW, and to ignore the plea from the state legislators for a land exchange.

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.

Lastly, 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.

Thank you for your consideration.