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Comments: 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. I have seen this happen a many times with inholdings with special designated areas. It is critical to gain ownership of these inholdings in order to protect the surrounding 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. The State is not likely to ever be able to develop the lands inside of the Boundary Waters. A sale at least gives them some value for these lands. They also gain appreciable tax and public value by having a fully functional Boundary Waters Canoe Area unencumbered by shoddy development or mistaken resource extraction.

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.