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Organization:

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Comments: I greatly value our nation's designated Wilderness Areas and believe they are vital for preserving future biodiversity and intact ecological systems.

I support the federal purchase of the 80,000 acres of state school trust lands inside the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW), and the 3,200 acres of St. Louis County land included in the land purchase package.

My understanding is that a federal purchase will increase the efficiency of administering and protecting the BWCAW as a Wilderness. It would also prevent future state or county governments from developing these lands which would likely lead to compromising the ecological integrity of the Wilderness.

Federal purchase will also provide far more income to the Minnesota Permanent School Fund than would a land exchange, according to several analyses.

It is my understanding that a federal purchase is perfectly legal under the Weeks Act. Furthermore, Congress created the Land and Water Conservation Fund for just such purposes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.