

Fall 2001

CWCS

Conservationists With Common Sense

Preserving public access to and multiple-use of public lands and waters

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**Why CWCS continues to fight: “(We will) embark on a 10 year campaign to get every single motor out of the Boundary Waters” – Brian O’Neill, quoted in May 20, 1998 Mpls. Star Tribune**

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Chain of Lakes Position – Since the interpretation and implementation of the 1978 BWCA Wilderness Act, the U. S. Forest Service managed each Chain of Lakes as one lake – Moose Lake Chain, Farm Lake Chain and Seagull River Chain. The number of permits for the general public for each of the Chain of Lakes has been satisfactory, in addition to the exempt permits for the affected property owners.

The lawsuit brought by the Friends of the Boundary Waters and other environmental groups re-interpreted the long-standing interpretation and management of the Chain of Lakes. There is now a shortage of permits. The property owners usage of the Chain of Lakes was never figured into the annual average usage for the years 1976, 1977 and 1978, as stated in the 1978 BWCA Wilderness Act.

Conservationists with Common Sense feels the number of permits in Alternatives #2 and #3 is low in comparison to the number of exempt property owners at the passage of the 1978 BWCA Wilderness Law. At that time, there was no record of motorboat usage for the lakes beyond the first lake of the chain. Thus, no permit quotas were set for the Chain of Lakes, although the number of permits for the general public on the three Chain of Lakes had worked for twenty years.

Conservationists with Common Sense believes Alternative #3 best addresses the needs for permits for the previously exempted property owners for the years 1978 through 1998.

Alternative #3 attempts to address the needs of the property owners, resorts, and outfitters without increasing the number of permits to the general public. This alternative puts to rest the argument that there will be more motors in the Boundary Waters.

CWCS realizes that Alternative #3 may be more difficult to administrate, but it is fair and just, and is in line with the original intent of the 1978 BWCA Wilderness Act.

Snowmobiles to return to bays of VNP – In 1992, the National Park Service closed eleven bays of the lakes in Voyageurs National Park to snowmobiling. This was at the urging of several environmental groups, including the Friends of the Boundary Waters. They claimed that snowmobiles *might* be detrimental to wolves. No proof, just speculation.

Minnesota’s only national park has been considered ‘The Undiscovered Yellowstone’ by snowmobilers. What it lacks in mountains, it more than makes up in the miles and miles of lakes, with the United States to the south and Canada to the north.

Snowmobilers had argued that the eleven bays were the most scenic and desirable places to ride in the park, along the Minnesota-Ontario border. The bays are on Rainy, Kabetogama, Namakan and Sand Point lakes. Also, the ban seemed to impact the locals the most. The closures prevented them from the fishing areas they had frequented for generations.

The Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association sued the U.S. Interior Department and other agencies in 1994, arguing that biological data didn't support the ban. A federal appeals court later ruled that the park had the authority to close those portions of the park to protect the gray wolf population.

In 1998, researchers began looking at wolf demography, pack numbers and territories and tried to assess the influence of humans on wolf movements and behavior. The study found that wolves in Voyageurs had higher stress levels than those in the remote Isle Royale National Park in Lake Superior. But Voyageurs biologist Jim Schaberl said that didn't necessarily indicate that human activity caused the stress.

Voyageur National Park Superintendent, Barb West said the evidence doesn't warrant further closures. "We used the best available information in 1992 and now the best available in 2001 to guide our decisions," she said.

Kawishiwi has a new District Ranger – The Kawishiwi District of the Superior National Forest has a new ranger. Mark VanEvery fills the vacancy left by Bruce Slover.

Changing of Forest Rangers is nothing new to the Superior National Forest, or to any other national forest. Every few years there is a change of forest managers, which leads to the frustration of local timber industry and recreational interests.

Currently, CWCS is waiting on the Forest Service to render its decision on the Chain of Lakes permit quota situation. We're looking at a possible third year of inadequate permits for the resorts, outfitters and property owners on the Moose Lake Chain, South Farm Chain and Saganaga Chain.

Will the change in district rangers for the Kawishiwi District be another delay of any action to rectify the permit shortage problem?

Sierra Club Open House – This summer, the North Star Chapter of the Sierra Club hosted an open house at the International Wolf Center in Ely. Other open houses were also held in Grand Marais, Finland, Virginia, Duluth, and Roseville. The purpose of the open houses was to educate landowners in the Superior National Forest about the forest plan proposed in northern Minnesota and how to influence forest decision-makers.

The Sierra Club invitation to the open houses was sent to 5-6000 lakeshore property owners in the Superior National Forest. The mailing list was obtained from county tax records. A couple of quotes from the invitation stated: "Your lake's watershed, the trails you hike, or the view from your cabin could become a clear-cut." And: "the Sierra Club has proposed a new vision for our forests that is being studied by the Forest Service."

The Sierra Club supports Alternative D, which establishes new wildlife corridors and wilderness reserves, including a buffer around the Boundary Waters. It restores our forests back to their natural state, emphasizes outdoor recreational opportunities. Alternative D also brings a gradual end to commercial logging on our national forests by providing transition funding and job re-training.

Although Joe Hesla, Sierra Club's Minnesota Conservation Organizer said that the Sierra Club does not support a no-cut policy for our National Forests, his literature and handouts were saying the opposite. Sierra Club stickers stated 'commercial logging', but the bumper stickers stated "Stop Logging our National Forests".

Ely area logger, Warren Johnson, attended the open house in Ely. In a discussion on various forest management plans and ecosystems, Johnson said, "As loggers, we are not looking two years down the road. We are looking at 50 years, 100 years."

Hesla was informed (by CWCS board member Nancy McReady) if he wanted to check out several different forest management plans and ecosystems in a short distance, ride the Taconite Snowmobile Trail in the winter. This trail runs through an uncut area, a select harvest, a clear-cut, a red pine plantation, a burn area, and the 1999 blowdown area. A person can see all this on the Taconite Trail between Bearhead State Park and Cook.

Sierra Club Sues to stop Timber Sales – The Sierra Club filed a suit in federal court Dec. 5th to block the sale of aspen in six national forests around the Great Lakes. They are calling for a stop of all aspen sales in the Superior and Chippewa forests in Minnesota, Chequamegon-Nicolet forests in Wisconsin, the Huron-Manistee, Hiawatha and Ottawa forests in Michigan.

Wayne Brandt, executive vice president of the Minnesota Timber Producers Association said of the action, "The Sierra Club is dead set on eliminating all timber harvests on public lands, the amount of aspen sales in the National Forests has been going down not up!"

Stopping terrorists at home – In the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist strikes, maybe now our country will be less tolerable of terrorist acts committed by Americans, against Americans, all in the name of wilderness.

Environmental radicals have systematically been terrorizing us for years. Eco-terrorists burned down a Vail, Colorado ski resort resulting in well over 10 million dollars in damage.

ALF (Animal Liberation Front) and ELF (Earth Liberation Front) have been implicated numerous times in Eco-terror attacks. Some of their targets have been McDonalds, meat packing companies, feed mills, universities, research facilities, logging and resort operations. They are so brash as to claim responsibility for these attacks through their spokesman.

The greatest threat to northern Minnesota is fire. Over 500 million acres of trees were blown down in the Boundary Waters and now lie drying. The Forest Service's unwillingness to use common sense, and salvage the timber, is mismanagement at its worst. The Forest Service refused to utilize their authority as stated in 1964 Wilderness Act – "such measures may be taken as may be necessary in the control of fire, insects, and diseases..."

Many experts say catastrophic fire is inevitable. Lightning could trigger the worst fire that civilized North America has ever seen. Hopefully fire will not be at the hand of eco-terrorists, pushing their extreme agenda, to do whatever it takes to get mankind out of our forests.

The Nature Conservancy Acquires 7,500 Acres in NE MN – Another 7,500 acres of land have been added to the land holdings of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in northeastern Minnesota. The area acquired surrounds the headwaters of the St. Louis River system, in what is more commonly known and referred to as the Seven Beavers area. The area has a large amount of public land but this acquisition makes The Nature Conservancy the largest non-public title-holder. This action will also add another 80 acres to TNC-held forest near Finland, MN.

CWCS's concerns lie with yet another loss of privately held land and with The Nature Conservancy's intentions with the land. CWCS's position is that the lands remain multiple-use and open for access. Preliminary reports states that TNC wants to work with Govt. bodies on land use designations. However, if past actions reflect the future, we're likely to lose more access. The Nature Conservancy has already identified many rare and exotic species in the area.

Forestry chief blasts Clinton acts – President Bush's top forestry official recently declared he would quit in protest if the Bush administration handled environmental policies the way the Clinton administration enacted its roadless policy.

"I will never advise the president of the United States to announce the outcome of a rulemaking, and if he does that he will have a resignation on his desk," said Mark Rey, undersecretary for natural resources and environment at the Department of Agriculture.

Rey, a former senate staffer, was labeled by some of Bush's critics as a controversial environmental appointee. Environmentalists lashed out at his nomination as a sign of the cozy relationship between Bush and industry. Still, he was confirmed easily in the Senate.

Rey now oversees the U.S. Forest Service, which under the Clinton administration drafted the roadless policy. Finalized in President Clinton's last days in office, the policy banned logging, mining, oil and gas development and severely limits motorized recreation on one-third of the nation's forest- lands, including 4 million acres in Colorado. Critics of the policy say Clinton rammed the policy through the rulemaking process to build an environmental legacy and cater to environmental groups.

Many critics complain that the comment process has been as controversial as the plan itself. A federal judge in Idaho called the process deeply flawed, saying there was strong evidence that the end result was predetermined. He later blocked the policy from going into effect. That ruling is now before the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

CWCS attended the Forest Service Hearings in Duluth and Minneapolis MN. The Forest Service used an audience control tactic that prevented individuals from voicing their own opinions. Everyone was separated into groups. Each group had to come up with collective opinions, which were later relayed through a chosen interpreter to the main body in attendance. Individual opinions and thoughts were not allowed. Many other CWCS members have stated their experiences with Forest Service Hearings in their area were very similar.

Clearly this policy was forced upon us and was predetermined. We now have some hope with the New Forest Chief, Mark Rey and the Federal Judge in Idaho. It seems evident that the tactics used by the past administration later became the legal basis for the Federal Judge's ruling against the roadless plan.

12th Annual CWCS Fundraiser/Picnic – CWCS held its 12th Annual Fundraiser/Picnic on Saturday, August 18th. About 100 people came to the picnic and enjoyed a fish fry sponsored by Fortune Bay.

This year CWCS did not mail out our boat, motor & trailer raffle tickets, instead we had a separate "Early Bird" drawing for new and renewal memberships and dues returned by August 1, 2001. Along with this change and "Early Bird" drawing, CWCS also increased our dues to \$15, as our costs have gone up over the years - printing, mailing, transportation, etc.

This year CWCS board members decided to change how the traditional boat/motor/trailer raffle was implemented. We decided not to mail out raffle tickets to CWCS members for logistic reasons. We limited the number of tickets to be sold to 2500 at \$ 5.00 per ticket. Another difference this year - the motor for the boat was a 25 hp 4-stroke Yamaha.

Changing the format has created some hurdles, which we had to address, and will need to re-think for the 2002 raffle. The outcome of CWCS's 12th annual raffle was a success. The total sales of the boat raffle were \$ 7,285.00 with 1,457 tickets sold.

Thank you to all the members who donated their time selling boat raffle tickets and promoting CWCS's mission. Thanks also to all the participating businesses for their support, sales of boat raffle tickets for the fundraiser and for their generous prize donations.

In looking forward to 2002, we would like the opportunity to be able to sell more raffle tickets. We can do this by exhibiting the boat/motor/trailer to be raffled at various festivals and fairs during the summer. Several other organizations sell raffle tickets this way. We would need some volunteers among our supports to help out with this endeavor. If anyone is at all interested in volunteering their time, please contact CWCS.

By changing the format for the raffle, we realize that not all members receive raffle tickets to sell. If you would like to sell tickets, or buy tickets, contact any board member and tickets will be sent to you. Please keep in mind that all raffle tickets sent out need to be accounted for before the drawing. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions for the 2002 raffle, please contact a board member or email us at [info@ cwcs.org](mailto:info@cwcs.org)

Membership Drawing Winners:

- 1st prize Robert Schultz, Gaylord, MN - Handheld GPS Unit
- 2nd prize Bruce Kainz, Ely, MN - Fish Locator
- 3rd prize Gary Aubol, Virginia, MN - Trout Lake Portage Print

Boat Raffle Winners:

- 1st prize - Yamaha 16' Boat, Yamaha 4-Stroke Motor & Trailer - Henry Held, Ely
- 2nd prize - Two-nights at Sandemar/Burntside Lake - Dan Ritter, Chisholm
- 3rd prize - MinnKota Trolling Motor - Terry Kerntz, Ely

Bagley ATVers Contact CWCS – Conservationists with Common Sense was recently contacted by concerned ATV users in the Bagley, Minnesota area. That area’s ATV club is trying to build an ATV trail, keeping riders in a designated area.

Minnesotans for Responsible Recreation (MRR) doesn’t think a designated trail for ATVs is responsible recreation and they are opposing any such trail development. Would MRR rather that the ATVs ride all over? MRR says they are for responsible recreation, but what they really are for is non-motorized responsible recreation.

CWCS thinks the Bagley ATV club is acting very responsibly. We’ll keep you informed as we learn more on the situation.

IRBA Update – The effort to maintain our traditional visitor rights at Isle Royale National Park is a difficult and uphill struggle. Our fundraising is off to a good start. Thanks to all of you who continue to support the IRBA’s efforts to protect the traditional right to visit and enjoy our National Parks.

Focus is now being put on the evidence regarding Congressional Intent that clearly supports IRBA’s Appeal. Much of this is material the NPS initially tried to withhold as “Privileged”.

This evidence clearly demonstrates that Congress, and the NPS at the time, intended to preserve facilities, including docks that the NPS now plans to remove. The evidence also shows that the NPS clearly understood and agreed with that Congressional Intent.

In addition to our legal efforts, our attorney has suggested we renew an effort seeking the support of our US Congressional representatives, Senators and members of the House of Representatives. This is now on our agenda.

IRBA appreciates any and all support. They may be contacted at:

IRBA
P.O. Box 97
Houghton, MI 49931

New Isle Royale Chief – In October, the National Park Service named Phyllis Green as head of Isle Royale National Park. A Houghton, Michigan native Green will assume the job on December 2. Green was chosen for her leadership, natural resource and wilderness management skills, and her ability to build partnerships and work with complex controversial issues.

Isle Royale has been a point of controversy in the battle of motorized vs. non-motorized recreation. Lake Superior boaters say they are constantly facing increasing regulations, including no-wake and quiet areas, and loss of popular docking spots.

Preservationists eye the Apostle Islands for Wilderness – The National Park Service (NSP) is evaluating the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore for possible inclusion in the National

Wilderness Preservation System. Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness has joined Wisconsin preservation groups in support of this area as a candidate for Wilderness designation.

Public input is needed to direct the NPS's decision. So far, the majority of comments they have received are opposed to wilderness designation. Those opposed feel it will restrict the development of motorized access to the islands.

Interesting, is the fact that those in favor of wilderness protection status for the park either don't exist, or are not commenting.

The deadline for comments is January 15, 2002.

Please write to voice your comments, ideas and concerns.

Mail to:

**Superintendent, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
Route 1 Box 4
Bayfield, WI 54814**

New Website – A new website, Green-Watch.Com was recently launched by the Capital Research Center. It is a free online interactive database and information clearinghouse monitoring the leadership, activities and funding of over 500 non-profit environmental groups.

Idaho Congressman C. L. Otter says Green-Watch.Com will provide elected officials and the general public with valuable information regarding where these extreme preservation groups get their money, how they use it and when and where national environmental policy is being determined. "It is a sad state of affairs for the nation's taxpayers that only 12 cents out of every dollar the Environmental Protection Agency spends to improve our environment actually goes toward clean-up. The rest goes to answer charges brought in court by extreme groups with often phony cases, only meant to delay clean-up efforts," said Otter.

What can we do? – Contact your senators and representatives, TODAY. DO NOT let extreme preservation groups dictate public policy!

Send letters to:

**c/o Representative _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515**

**c/o Senator _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510**

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Trout Lake Portage Update – The LaCroix District of the National Forest Service is currently reviewing a proposed maintenance plan for the Trout Lake portage. CWCS President, Guy Holmes, met with portage operator Jim Zak, LaCroix District Ranger Connie Chaney and other officials of the Forest Service for an inspection of the portage access to Trout Lake.

The new plan calls for the elimination of the turn-around loops on both sides of the portage. This raises safety concerns for users and operators. The turn-around loop on Trout side offers a certain degree of safety and protection. The turns are also much easier to negotiate.

The Forest Service intends to cut the angle of the slope, reducing some of the danger. This may be difficult to do, as the underlying ground is made up of rock. Further assessment showed that if the cantered slope were re-established to slant to the outer side, erosion could be better controlled.

CWCS feels the erosion problem on the Vermilion side could be alleviated with concrete slab at the landing, much like many of the other DNR waterway landings in the state. We are also concerned that trying to re-establish the shoreline on the Vermilion side might not allow adequate turning radius for larger boats.

CWCS's primary concerns are for the safety of users and operators. The current operator on Trout Lake Portage uses ATVs for transporting boats, but that does not mean that he or some other operator would choose ATVs in the future.

CWCS opposes any plan that removes the loops. It would be virtually impossible for trucks to operate on Trout Lake Portage without the turn-around loops. We were assured that the re-worked plan would maintain the loops, improve safety, and better control erosion. CWCS will follow developments and report progress.

Tough balancing act – The Bush Administration is striving for a bit of common sense with the help of Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth.

Bosworth wants to eliminate the confusion in the layers of regulations governing close to 200 million acres of federal and grasslands. He wants to make policies clear and regulations easier to understand. Bosworth calls what we have now “analysis paralysis” – subject to endless planning and evaluating, but little action. Pleasing environmental groups and the timber industry will prove to be a tough balancing act.

Up for review by Bosworth and the Bush Administration are three major policies: The roadless rule, imposed on 58 million acres of forest lands by the Clinton Administration; a transportation

policy outlining the management of forest roads; and regulations that guide local officials in writing 10 to 15 year forest management plans.

Many of these policies were pushed through during the final days of Clinton's presidency. Environmental groups will contend that environmental protections are being rolled back. In reality, the Bush Administration will give such important policies the respect and time deserved in their decision-making.

False findings on lynx – Interior Secretary Gale Norton has called for an investigation of federal biologists who planted lynx fur in two national forests as part of a study. Members of Congress claim that the biologists were trying to rig a study to keep people off federal lands.

U.S. Reps. Scott McInnis, R-Colo., and Jim Hansen, R-Utah, plan oversight hearings before the House's Forests and Forest Health Subcommittee early next year.

The Forest Service has said that three Forest Service employees, two U.S. Fish and Wildlife employees and two Washington state wildlife officials were involved in submitting "unauthorized samples" from captive lynx as part of a survey of Canadian lynx. Other officials may be implicated.

The four-year survey is intended to track where lynx live and how many there are in the United States. The results would be used to determine how best to protect the tufted-eared cat, which has been deemed threatened in 16 states. In places where lynx are found, restrictions could be placed on logging and winter motorized recreation.

In an April 2001 article in Outdoor magazine, Michael Milstein of The Oregonian reported that genetic tests of hair collected from scented scratching posts in Oregon national forests in 1999 show that it came from bobcats, coyotes or other common wildlife, not lynx as originally reported.

The Forest Service had hired John Weaver, an independent biologist of the Wildlife Conservation Society to survey the Oregon Cascades for lynx. The 1994 Northwest Forest Plan provided the lynx protection.

Weaver told the Forest Service in 1999 that hair he collected from several sites in Washington and Oregon, including the Willamette, Deschutes and Mount Hood national forests, was from lynx. Almost 40 conservation groups used the findings to call for a halt to more than 50 federal timber sales in "known or suspected" lynx habitat.

The Forest Service didn't honor the request, but its biologists reported the findings publicly. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also cited the unpublished report of lynx in the Mount Hood, Willamette and Deschutes national forests when listing the cat as a threatened species last year.

The Forest Service did not receive a final written report on Weaver's findings. Weaver did not make available his data and results, but agreed to send the hair samples to a laboratory in Canada to verify his results. "When they ran the hair, in no instance did they get lynx. They were all bobcat, coyote or something else," said Elaine Rybak, a U. S. Forest Service biologist.

The only known populations of lynx in the Northwest live in the Okanogan National Forest of northern Washington. Later surveys by other biologists using hair collection techniques similar to Weaver's have turned up no other proof of lynx populations in the region.

The Forest Service notified national forests in Oregon and Washington that the lynx evidence Weaver reported in 1999 is now considered "unverified."

Conservationists with Common Sense wonders how many times similar surveys have been conducted, providing doctored results. Local preservation groups have expressed the possible presences of lynx in Minnesota's National Forests.

CWCS supports the use of common sense, the best available scientific data, objective analysis, and broad public input on the part of government agencies and elected officials when making and implementing land management and environmental policies. This is the greatest difference between CWCS and the so-called environmental groups. How quickly the 40 'conservation' groups jumped to use this false information to further their zero-cut agenda! Further updates will be posted on the CWCS website, www.cwcs.org