

Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness — School Trust Lands

BACKGROUND

Since the creation of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) in 1978 there has been and continues to be 93,000 acres of school trust lands land locked inside the BWCAW. For more than 30 years, because of restrictions on land in the wilderness area, this land does not generate any revenue.

The governor, legislators, land board members, trust administrators and all people involved in decisions about School Trust Lands and Permanent Funds are Trustees, who have a number of specific legal duties. The law is clear. The purpose is clear. A Trustee's paramount responsibility is to manage School Trust Lands and Permanent Funds to provide financial support for schools.

Under State Statute (127A.31) the goal of the trust fund is to secure a maximum long-term economic return from the school trust lands consistent with the responsibilities imposed by the trust relationship established in the Minnesota Constitution, with sound natural resource conservation and management principles.

Additional Laws:

- 2010 Legislative action
 - o Resolution No. 1
 - o Adopted the recommendation of the PSFAC to pursue the sale and exchange of the school trust lands inside the BWCAW with the USFS. The PSFAC recommended that this hybrid model consist of a one-third land exchange and two-thirds sale to the federal government.

- 2012 legislation
 - o School Trust Lands are to be managed as privately held trust lands for the benefit of public education
 - o 92.80, expedite land exchange
 - o 92.82, expedite land sale

One-Third Land Exchange

- August 2012
 - o DNR proposes land exchange to US Forest Service
 - o 30,000 acres of school trust lands lying within BWCAW
 - o 41,500+ acres identified outside of BWCAW boundary

- September 2014
 - o Superior National Forest receives approval to continue with one-third land exchange
 - o Approximately 2,500 acres removed from original federal candidate parcels
 - Removed lands adjacent to Grand Portage reservation boundary
 - Removed some riparian lands