

## **Izaak Walton League - Minnesota Division**

Re: Minnesota School Trust Lands within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

***\* The Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America strongly supports cash compensation to the Permanent School Trust Fund for the full buy-out of all School Trust Lands within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.***

***\* The Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America, in the interest of finally and fully resolving a long-standing conflict, can reluctantly support a properly-vetted exchange of up to 1/3 of the School Trust Lands within the Wilderness for federal lands outside the Wilderness boundary, only so long as the remaining 2/3rds of the School Trust Lands within the Wilderness are purchased at the same time.***

***\* The Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America **OPPOSES** the current proposed land exchange of approximately 30,000 acres of Superior National Forest lands outside the Wilderness for multiple reasons:***

- 1) There is no proposal to buy out the remaining 2/3rds of the land, leaving the overall issue in contention.
- 2) The proposed land exchange will result in the removal of federal regulations which currently prohibit surface mining on (at least some of) the exchanged lands.
- 3) The proposed land exchange will result in intensified resource development aimed at maximizing revenue rather than at sustainable multiple resource management, such as recreation, habitat protection, and sustainable forestry as required by US Forest Service regulations.
- 4) Lands that are now public forest lands could be sold off by the School Trust administrator to private parties, potentially limiting public access and recreation.
- 5) The stated purpose of some proponents\* of the exchange are to "mine, log and lease the hell out of the lands" to be exchanged. This is inimical to the conservation ethics of the Izaak Walton League.

***\* State Representative David Dill (D-Crane Lake), speaking of the use of exchanged School Trust Lands before the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee in 2012.***