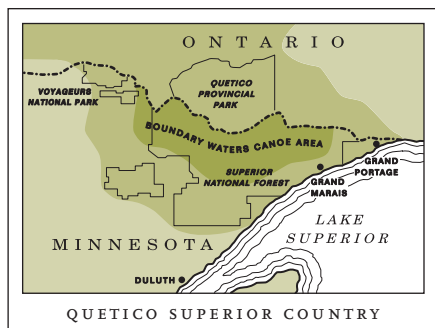


Wilderness News

FROM THE QUETICO SUPERIOR FOUNDATION SPRING 2009



The Quetico Superior Foundation, established in 1946, encourages and supports the protection of the ecological, cultural and historical resources of the Quetico Superior region.

The times I spent with my children in nature are among my most meaningful memories — and I hope theirs. We have such a brief opportunity to pass on to our children our love for this Earth, and to tell our stories. These are the moments when the world is made whole.

— Richard Louv

Wilderness News

Published by the Quetico Superior Foundation
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Project Venture students on a hike with Project Venture Coordinator Brian Ensign (back right) and YMCA Camp Widjiwagan instructors. Photo courtesy of Project Venture North.

Project Venture North Budding Program Reconnects Youth to Nature

By Alissa Johnson, Wilderness News Contributor

Ice fishing, snow shoeing, canoeing and camping – cornerstones of the northwoods experience, yes, but cornerstones of drug and alcohol prevention? Project Venture North, a replica of Project Venture in New Mexico, is betting yes, serving American Indian communities in the Quetico Superior region by connecting kids with nature. The hope? That in addition to developing a renewed commitment to the land, their culture and their community, the junior high participants will be more likely to stay in school and a lot less likely to use drugs and alcohol.

Once every month Project Venture North students visit YMCA Camp Widjiwagan outside of Ely, Minnesota for a weekend of outdoor play and experiential education. Depending on the season, they learn to canoe, cross-country ski and perhaps most importantly, to simply enjoy being outdoors. Even though the fifth, sixth and seventh graders all live in or around the Quetico Superior Region, in towns like Tower, Orr and Net Lake, the “outdoors” are not something they’ve spent much time appreciating. “They live in nature’s Disneyland and just don’t experience it.” Michelle Metzger is Indian Education Coordinator for St. Louis County Schools, and when her schedule allows, she likes to join the kids on their trips to Widjiwagan. She never tires of watching them learn to love the outdoors, transforming from skeptics suspicious of spending a

whole day outside to kids who don’t want to go back inside. She loves the way they learn leadership and coping skills that can be hard to teach in the classroom; it’s the type of transformation she hoped Project Venture would create when she first pitched the idea of the program a few years ago. Now in its second year, Michelle is not the only one noticing that the outdoors can have big impacts. After accompanying a group of students to Widjiwagan, a Net Lake basketball coach was astounded by the experience. According to Michelle, “he couldn’t believe how his relationship changed with his students. He saw them in a totally new light, rising to the challenge of being outdoors and becoming leaders.” It was, he told her, one of the most amazing experiences he has had with his students.

Using the outdoors as a setting to teach life skills and transform student-teacher relationships is at the heart of the Project Venture curriculum. By creating lasting change, Project Venture coordinator Brian Ensign hopes students will feel more connected to their school. It’s a critical goal in a school district where students like his – mostly American Indian but also other ethnic minorities and low-income students – have not met with as much success as non-Indian students. American Indian students in particular are more likely to disengage

continued on page 2

Voyageurs National Park Sees Future in Today's Youth

Voyageurs National Park Superintendent Mike Ward has some strong beliefs when it comes to the role the Park can play in education: "By being a part of a child's education we hope that they will grow up to be good stewards of land and water, and [become] a new generation of constituents that appreciate and find Voyageurs and other special places important."

When Ward first arrived at Voyageurs in August of last year, he was surprised to see that past relationships with local schools had been let go due to budget issues. As national parks across the nation face declines in attendance, Ward knows that one of the main challenges faced by Voyageurs is staying relevant to generations of kids that are increasingly disconnected from nature. He has made rebuilding relationships with local and regional schools a priority, and this fall Voyageurs will hire a winter seasonal position to lead those efforts.

The new staff member will present educational programs that have been specifically designed to build awareness of the Park, connect kids to the history of the region and help them understand the unique resource issues faced by both. In the long run and as budgets allow, Ward hopes to go one step further and bring students to the Park: "By being present in the classroom and turning the park into a classroom we are opening young minds to why Voyageurs is a National Park, why there are National Parks, and why they are important. There is also an underlying teachable moment regarding civics, stewardship, and thinking outside one's own generation."

It's a lesson Voyageurs National Park and Quetico Superior supporters understand well; for the future health of natural places, instilling it in the next generation may well be the most important challenge faced by wilderness lovers everywhere.



Project Venture North students learn to ski and paddle at YMCA Camp Widjiwagan near Ely, Minnesota. Photos courtesy of Project Venture North.



continued from page 1

from the school community and resort to drugs and alcohol. By giving the Project Venture students positive experiences, helping them express themselves, and facilitating stronger relationships with teachers and educators, Ensign hopes they will feel more comfortable, better understood, and as a result, stay in school and off drugs and alcohol.

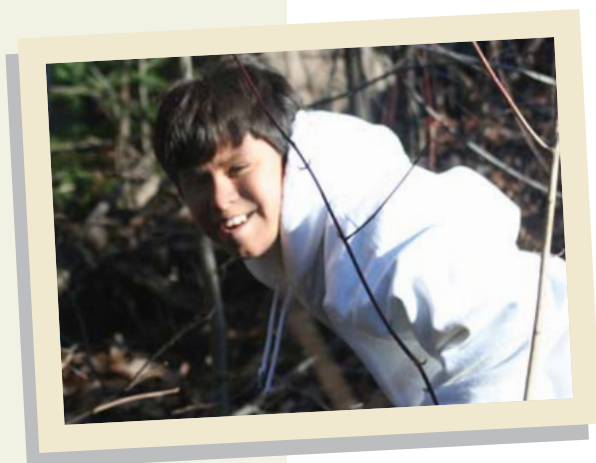
"The great thing about the program is that we do that without ever talking about drugs or alcohol." Instead, Ensign uses his unique role – part camp counselor, part teacher and part mentor – to provide positive experiences in four key areas: classroom teambuilding and writing activities; outdoor experiences like sledding, snowshoeing or geo-caching; adventure camps like Widjiwagan; and community and service learning projects. He also integrates American Indian practices and beliefs whenever possible, helping the students set out traditional offerings of tobacco at outdoor sites where meaningful experiences occur and inviting community elders to volunteer and speak to the students. It is not your traditional school curriculum, and that's the point. By giving kids confidence in their own abilities and the ability to communicate, the program gives them the tools to cope and succeed in life. And as the program has grown, Ensign has seen marked changes in student enthusiasm and excitement when he arrives for an hourly classroom session, an after school activity or a trip to Widjiwagan.

The latter has so far been the most transformative part of the program, and last summer, a small group of students were even able to take a canoe trip in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness through Widjiwagan. The partnership has been made possible by financial support from the camp, which recognized Project Venture North as a natural

fit for the camp's mission to work with diverse groups and reach out to Northern and Iron Range students. YMCA program director Karen Pick has observed that, "after working with the kids for the past year and a half, it is clear that the kids who have participated more than once have gained confidence in their skills and in themselves."

While it is still too early to tell if the program will have long-term impacts on drug and alcohol use, these observations have been echoed by Ensign and Metzger. They are hopeful that the visible changes in confidence and enthusiasm will translate to the same successes experienced by the original Project Venture in New Mexico. Developed by educator McClellan Hall to combat high drop out rates among Native American youth, Project Venture is the alcohol and substance abuse program of the National Indian Youth Leadership Project. It was specially designed to connect kids with native beliefs and a respect for mother earth, and twenty years of data and studies have shown that the approach works. In 2001, a study of "past 30-day" alcohol use showed that use declined among participants by 32%. A National Study of High Risk Youth found that "2 years after program enrollment, Project Venture participants had a 25% increase in past 30-day alcohol use, compared to a 64% increase seen in control group youth." The program is so successful that the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration has recognized Project Venture as a model program. And in addition to St. Louis County, it is being recreated throughout the United States and Canada.

In time, Ensign and Metzger may have the data to support their belief that Project Venture North will change kids' lives. It has been selected as one of six study sites to determine whether the replica programs are as successful as the original. For now, they will simply continue to develop the program. They hope that as the program becomes more integrated into the communities and more partners like Widjiwagan get involved, their ability to get kids outside, connect them to their culture and give them experiences in nature will only continue to grow.



Quetico Superior Foundation Launches Online News

In March of this year, the Quetico Superior Foundation launched an online sister publication to its quarterly newsletter, *Wilderness News*. The online news source will complement the printed version and increase the Foundation's ability to provide timely, ongoing news about the Quetico Superior region.

The Foundation has long recognized that an informed public is crucial for informed stewardship. In 1964 it launched the original *Wilderness News* to educate and inspire those who value the region's wilderness character. The newsletter has striven to bring its 17,000 readers the latest developments impacting the Quetico Superior Region's health and vitality, covering major news events like the Ham Lake Fire and highlighting less prominent regional developments like the White Pine Initiative that aims to reinvigorate the dwindling coniferous giant.

"Our ultimate goal with *Wilderness News* is to provide objective coverage of all the news," said Foundation president, Jim Wyman. "The Boundary Waters and Quetico region inspire passion in so many, and they care about the unique challenges these regions face. *Wilderness News* digs into all sides of an issue to give a balanced perspective, free from editorial bias. We don't want to tell readers what to think – we want them to be informed."

Wilderness News Online was founded on these same principles, as a way to cover relevant topics in a timelier manner. According to editor Tim Eaton, "We've been able to cover the impacts of significant events, like the 1999 BWCA blow-down and Ham Lake Fire, in depth – but only after the fact. With the online site, we could have covered it while it was happening, providing a reliable online source for all the latest developments."

The official launch in March 2009 marks the beginning of ongoing online coverage of the Quetico Superior Region. *Wilderness News Online* will compile existing news updates from outside sources and provide some of the original reporting readers have come to value from the printed version. Visit www.wildernessnews.org for a look at the latest updates and sign up for the RSS feed to receive the news as it is posted.

In conjunction with the launch of *Wilderness News Online*, new features have been added to the Quetico Superior Foundation web site, including an option to donate online. *Wilderness News* readers can show their support for Quetico Superior Foundation initiatives by donating online or through a voluntary paid subscription for the *Wilderness News* printed edition. Just visit www.queticosuperior.org to learn more.

What's Online:

- **Subscribe to *Wilderness News Online* and reduce paper waste and mailing costs**
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- **Read past articles and full issues of *Wilderness News* (in pdf format) anytime**
- **Explore the Events Calendar and find groups that are active in the Quetico Superior region**
- **Find the most complete list of regional links, from news sources to non-profit organizations, from park web sites to government offices**
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Get Involved: show your support for the Quetico Superior Foundation and its mission to protect the wilderness character of Minnesota's Border Lakes Canoe Country and the Quetico Superior Region.

We have recently implemented a new online donation service through PayPal. Supporting Quetico Superior Foundation initiatives is now convenient and safe, whether it's a \$15 donation to cover the printing and mailing costs of your *Wilderness News* subscription, or a generous gift to support the general funding of grants, initiatives and original reporting in *Wilderness News*. Your support will go a long way in continuing our mission. Once you've made your donation, you will receive a tax deductible receipt from the Quetico Superior Foundation.

We appreciate the support that *Wilderness News* readers show for the Quetico Superior Region and the QSF mission. **Thank you** to every subscriber for your ongoing commitment to helping us preserve the wilderness character of the Quetico Superior Region.

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FROM THE QUETICO SUPERIOR FOUNDATION

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Project Venture North

Thursday, April 9, 2009

Ice fishing, snow shoeing, canoeing and camping - cornerstones of the northwoods experience, yes, but cornerstones of drug and alcohol prevention? Project Venture North, a replica of Project Venture in New Mexico, is betting yes, serving American Indian communities in the Quetico Superior region by connecting kids with nature.

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Moose Population Steady in Voyageurs National Park

Wed, Apr 8, 2009

According to a Voyageurs National Park press release, a recent survey of the park's moose population revealed that it is holding steady. The aerial survey sited 45 moose - a pleasant surprise for park officials given the decline of other moose populations across northeastern Minnesota and southern Ontario.

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Critical Habitat of Canada Lynx Expanded in Minnesota

Tue, Apr 7, 2009

Critical habitat for the endangered Canada Lynx has been expanded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including parts of northern Minnesota.

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Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder

By Richard Louv

Published by Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill (2008, 390 pages, \$14.95 Softcover)

Reviewed by Alissa Johnson

Kids These Days.

Generations of adults who grew up traipsing through national parks and idolizing Smokey the Bear sometimes wonder about these kids called millennials, the ones who only know the world after the Internet. Plugged into iPods, laptops and cell phones, hanging out inside. Can't they just go out and play? At some point, every generation shakes its head at the kids who follow, but this reproach hits upon a vital concern explored in *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. Journalist Richard Louv delves into a startling observation: today's kids do not connect with the outdoors or nature because societal changes have taken away the opportunity to do so. National park and wilderness lovers take heed; the implications are significant for child development, but they are also crucial for the long-term protection of natural places.

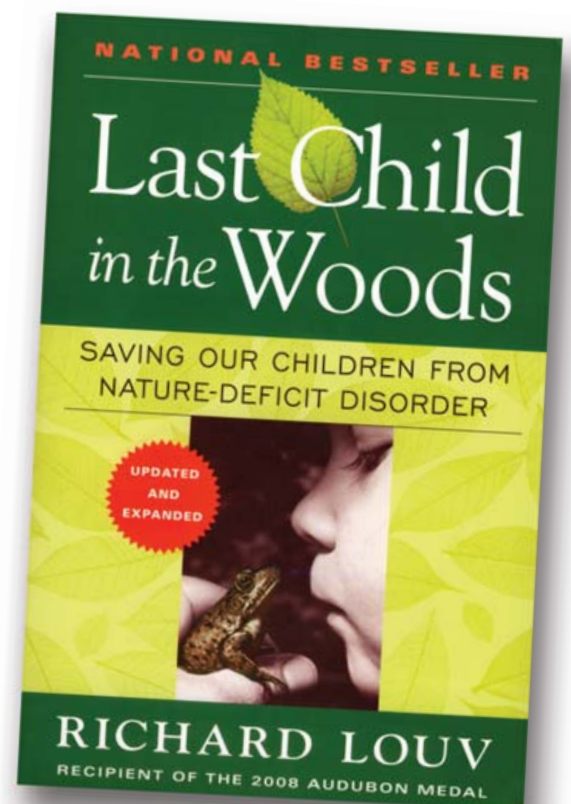
Having devoted his writing career to exploring nature and family, Louv weaves personal knowledge from hundreds of interviews and community conversations with an array of intriguing studies to demonstrate that kids are indeed spending less time in nature, whether close to home or traveling to places like national parks: increasingly structured schedules leave little time for unstructured outdoor play; fear of injury, abduction and wild animals motivates parents to keep kids at home; and urban developments often prevent kids from playing outdoors like the generations before them did. Louv holds up Scripps Ranch, a San Diego community, as only one example of a place where child-friendly neighborhoods have been replaced by concern over "illegal use" of open space; where kids were once welcome to build forts, run through the trees and fish in the local pond, these activities became prohibited by the neighborhood association. This loss of exposure to the outdoors has some far-reaching consequences.

Louv cites study after study to show that play in a natural environment stimulates creativity and changes the way kids see the world and each other. One study demonstrated that kids who play in natural spaces exhibit a greater sense of wonder. Another discovered that kids who play outside on manmade structures establish a social hierarchy based on physical dominance whereas

during play in natural settings, "Children used more fantasy play, and their social standing became based less on physical abilities and more on language skills, creativity and inventiveness. In other words, the more creative children emerged as leaders in natural play areas." A Denmark study compared children in a traditional kindergarten with children in an outdoor kindergarten program and found that "children in the nature kindergarten were found to be more alert, better at using their bodies, and significantly more likely to create their own games." Time in nature has even been suggested as an effective way to reduce the symptoms of ADHD, with studies indicating that nature has a calming influence and increases kids' abilities to concentrate. Getting overwhelmed? This is only the start in this information-packed book.

At break-neck pace, Louv calls attention to what he has coined "nature-deficit disorder." Not intended as a medical term, Louv wisely recognized that problems with names get more attention. Once defined, he runs from topic to topic, as if his sense of urgency is pushing him along to share every aspect of this theory: detailing evidence of nature deficit, outlining the importance of nature to an individual's and society's development, ascertaining why it is happening, extolling the virtues or reuniting children with nature, and most importantly, tackling how to bring about that reunion. It's at times a dizzying amount of information; though it clips along in a conversational and accessible tone, it's enough to leave a reader thinking, "Wait, I need to read that again." Do. Each chapter is jam-packed, and the consequences of nature deficit reach are not just important to parents and educators. Anyone who hopes to see a continued love of wild places and national parks has a stake in understanding this phenomenon; childhood experience in nature is a key ingredient in the development of environmental stewards.

According to Louv, this link was first discovered by Thomas Tanner in 1978, but a slew of studies have confirmed that nature experiences do more than grow environmentalists; they grow adults who care for and show concern for the environment at all. A 2006 Cornell study of urban adults found that experiencing "wild nature activities," like fishing or hiking, before the age of eleven was a key factor in how adults view the environment. If kids today aren't getting these moments in nature, a very real concern develops: who will be tomorrow's stewards of natural places? It's a crucial question; national parks across the nation are facing declining visitors, and Voyageurs National Park Superintendent Mike Ward readily acknowledges that one of the biggest challenges facing Minnesota's only national park is staying relevant. He draws connections between the decline of youth interest in the outdoors with the future health of the park itself, and the park is in the process of implementing a youth outreach program.



Luckily, Voyageurs National Park isn't alone in noticing the trend or working to change it. Since the original publication of *Last Child in the Woods* in 2003, a wealth of community and state-wide efforts have been undertaken to correct nature deficit. Over forty regional "leave no child inside" campaigns have started, and the state of Washington passed a Leave No Child Inside initiative, devoting \$1.5 million a year to connecting underserved kids with nature. And the book itself has been expanded to chronicle the growing movement as well as include a growing body of research that support the crucial role of nature. The 2008 version includes a field guide with a progress report, recommended reading for families and kids and specific actions we can all take to create change. It has become a hopeful final chapter that national park and nature lovers everywhere should read; the health of our children and nature depends upon it.



Author Richard Louv. Photo courtesy of Algonquin Books.

The Changing Nature of Wilderness Protection: Looking Forward

By Alissa Johnson, Wilderness News Contributor

In part I of *The Changing Nature of Wilderness Protection*, Wilderness News uncovered a transformation in the challenges facing the BWCAW. Where issues like motor use once topped the list, they are now giving way to increasingly complex challenges that defy man-made boundaries. Meeting these demands may mean letting go of the emotional divides of the past and looking forward as a community; in Part II, we explore the nature of today's conversations and what they mean for future community discourse.

Where a highly publicized conversation surrounding the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness once dominated the region, a shift has occurred in the thirty years since the passage of the BWCAW Act of 1978. The polarizing debate over the Act and its implementation has taken a less prominent role; in fact, when it comes to the Boundary Waters, no single issue seems to dominate the conversation. The BWCAW has become part of the backdrop against which Ely and local communities create a life. Emotions linger, but in a town that, in the words of nearly everyone, demands a hard-scrabble life motor use and other hot-button issues are not always the stuff of daily life. Wilderness and multiple-use groups once involved in the implementation of the Act are still keeping a watchful eye out for each other, but most people are simply living. **In the small reprieve this has afforded, a few things become clear: a gentle softening of hardened attitudes is detectable, and the inclusion of new voices into the discussion could open the door to a new way of meeting future challenges.** While lingering emotions still hinder the creation of a public conversation, the complexities of today's issues may demand that these seeds of change be allowed to grow.

A Subtle Shift in Mind Set

The tumultuous debate over the BWCAW has often led multiple-use and pro-wilderness interests to draw on oft-cited examples of negative behavior to paint each other in a dim light, the burning of Sigurd Olson in effigy chief among them. Though such accusations grew out of real action, their continual invoking has only reinforced unfortunate stereotypes of corrupt politicians and uneducated northerners. The resulting emotional rift cannot be underestimated. But where fevered legal battles once made it virtually impossible for either side to concede shared values, away from the bitter fight, individuals from both camps will quietly express a more open attitude.

"It is a good thing to have the BWCAW. I'm glad we have it. I just don't like the cheating way it was acquired." Such an admission from Dee Whitten was once unimaginable: "Ten years ago, I probably would have answered differently." As the former head of the multiple-use group Conservationists with Common Sense, she led the fight during the 1990s to keep truck portages open in the BWCAW. Their ultimate closure "just about tore my heart out," she admits. The emotion of the legal fight and the resulting loss left her so raw that she expressed great reluctance to even speak about the 30th anniversary of the 1978 Act. For Whitten and CWCS, efforts to close the truck portages felt like one more political ploy to take the region away from locals one piece at a time. Listening to her talk it was evident that recognizing the value of the BWCAW during the fight would have felt like yielding too much ground; the debate was so heated there was little room to acknowledge that both sides were acting out of passion for the region.

"We all love the Boundary Waters as much as anyone," said Nancy McReady, Ely resident and current head of CWCS. As she reminisced over a cup of coffee in local Ely haunt Vertin's, her eyes took on the same glow that alights canoeists' after a paddling trip. She fondly described the rejuvenating effect of family fishing trips on her husband, who worked long hours and spent much of the workweek away from home to make ends

meet. There is one marked difference between McReady and canoeists, of course: she and her family fish by motorboat. For McReady, suggestions that the BWCAW cannot be a true wilderness until every last motor is out sound like direct threats to her way of life—one that encompasses the beauty and peace of the BWCAW—and one more way to undermine the tentative peace that has been struck over use of the Wilderness.

Indeed, some wilderness supporters, including the Friends of the Boundary Waters, would like to see the 1978 Act strengthened, actively promoting a bigger, completely motor-free BWCAW. Concerned that the Wilderness represents one of the last vestiges of true nature in a unique region, they see no room for multiple use when the noise and pollution of motors and snowmobiles join potential mining, slant drilling and air born pollutants in threatening the health and vitality of its wilderness character. Kevin Prescholdt, author of *Troubled Waters: The Fight for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness*, believes that in light of such threats, the job of protecting the wilderness will never be done: "We can, over time, move toward a better protected wilderness, but even Sig [Olson] said the '78 Act didn't get the job done."

Yet in the three decades since the Act's passage, the desire for a long and bitter fight may be waning. For some, it may become possible to focus less on the shortcomings of the bill and more on its accomplishments. Becky Rom, an attorney involved with the Friends and daughter of the late Ely outfitter Bill Rom, believes that setting the controversy aside, the 1978 Act accomplished a lot: much of the argument prior to its passage was over vagueness, and the Act created a clear set of management rules. Acknowledging that no law is perfect – the give and take in the legal process rarely leaves any interest group completely happy – she suggests: "Given what we have for a legal framework, let's make it the best wilderness we can." She is also being realistic, based on the attitudes she sees among wilderness supporters and the leadership in Congress. "The appetite for the bitter fight is going down. People are mellowing out, at least in my generation. I'm optimistic we can start constructive talking over the next ten years."

The need for talking is clear, but cautious optimism is also tempered by hesitation. McReady acknowledged, "More talking would be good, but it's hard when there's so little trust." **The fear and mistrust have wider implications as well, implications that go beyond the ability of two adversarial groups to find healing. It also creates a general reluctance for the rest of the community – members who do not fall into such clearly defined groups – to join in the conversation.** Behind closed doors, individuals and families expressed frank observations and eloquent ideas about the interconnectedness of the Ely community and the Wilderness and summer tourism, but most spoke on the condition of anonymity. Given the region's tumultuous history, one cannot begrudge their hesitation to shake things up. Yet their words broaden the picture, illuminating the reality that we are all connected in one way or another, local resident and summer tourist alike.

Broadening Perspectives

To the average summer visitor, Ely is a gateway to the Boundary Waters. Though many stop in to say hello to their favorite outfitter, drop by for a piece of pie at the Chocolate Moose or stroll up Sheridan Street, few truly get to meet the community that calls Ely home. It is eclectic, made up of families with roots in the town's mining and timber history and newer families who have arrived over the last few decades. For some, living next to canoe country means the delight of paddling out the front door to take the kids on a canoe trip. For others, the establishment of the Wilderness meant the emotional removal of the family resort log by log or dismantling the family business – some rebuilt and continued to prosper, others did not.

continued on page 6

Wilderness News

Spring 2009

Project Venture North 1

Voyageurs National Park Sees
Future in Today's Youth 2

Quetico Superior Foundation
Launches Online News 3

Book Review:
Last Child in the Woods 4

The Changing Nature of
Wilderness Protection Part II 5

www.queticosuperior.org

continued from page 5

One thing most families agree on is the inherent challenge in making a living in Ely. Nearly every family interviewed for this story mentioned this reality. And looking at the town's history, it is easy to see why. The mining era came to a close as the Wilderness gained traction. The burgeoning resort industry, which thrived off of fly-in resorts and tourism, was curtailed, and the 1978 Act also impacted the timber harvesting industry. Though it included provisions for logging outside of the Wilderness, there is much disagreement over how well this was realized. In short, the town's ability to support itself was completely transformed by forces out of its control.

Eric Mayranen knows this story well, for he has lived it. He moved to Ely during the 1970s, called by the allure of a career as a bush pilot. When airplanes were banned in 1976, he turned to logging. When that was impacted by the 1978 Act, he found himself facing unemployment for nearly three years. Finding only seasonal employment, he was close to leaving Ely for work when he finally established a career in logging and now mining. His livelihood has routinely been impacted by changing laws as well as shifts in the public's emotional tide for or against these industries. His experience is familiar to many; a local development study even recognized changing rules as one of the barriers to establishing steady economic development in the area.

The health of the community is still impacted by the Wilderness and tourism, and it would be a mistake to think that canoeing tourism was a boon for everyone. Many do not see profits from the annual stream of tourists and instead find their lives impacted in more subtle and pervasive ways. Several families cited fears that rising land values price out local families and the small "mom and pop" resorts, prohibiting them from owning or keeping family land as taxes rise. Others still shared concerns that the community loses homestead taxes as land is instead bought up by out-of-towners because of property tax reform enacted by Governor Jesse Ventura. While more private cabins can improve local industries like lumber and development, less money in the tax base directly impacts things like the education budget. It is an inherently complex web of connections that ties the health of the local community to tourism and the Wilderness.

Some wilderness proponents question the determination of people like Mayranen to stay in Ely. Yet what unites him with other local families is a love for the land and a commitment to a vibrant local community. Traditional definitions of wilderness have not left room for this type of human presence, promoting the preservation of land for its intrinsic value and limiting human activity. But this notion that wilderness can exist separately from civilization may miss the point. Acknowledging the inherent ties between the BWCAW and the health of surrounding communities like Ely might even be a crucial component in finding solutions to today's challenges.

A New Level of Intricacy

Whether an individual is a member of CWCS or the Friends of the Boundary Waters, an Ely resident or a Minneapolis tourist, there are inescapable truths when it comes to the BWCAW. Visitors who drive to Ely to paddle the wilderness or buy a cabin at its edge impact the local economy for better and worse. When local communities welcome a potential mine because it will provide much needed jobs, they ask for something that will boost the economy but might impact the environment even with new safety regulations. This has always been true. But challenges faced today hold consequences for the Wilderness and the community on a level never before seen; if climate change and invasive species alter the composition of the forest as some predict, the feel of the BWCAW and the health of the timber industry will both be impacted. While it might not be possible to find widespread agreement on individual issues (mines, motor use, treatment of invasive species, the causes and impacts of climate change), there may be room for common ground in our ability to recognize the importance of a healthy forest.

The emotional history and deep seeded feelings cannot but be trivialized, but perhaps the time has come to embrace our commonly held values – namely, a love for the region – and start working toward the recognition that each individual has a unique wisdom afforded by their experience. Mayranen has elegant ideas about establishing healthy and sustainable logging in the communities surrounding the Wilderness. McReady and Prescholdt both express a reverence for the region's natural beauty that is echoed by many, even though their methods of enjoyment differ. Rom has knowledge of the legal framework. **Bringing the wilderness advocate, the policy maker, the life-long logger, the multiple-use proponent, the educators, and the wilderness outfitters to the table along with Wilderness managers would seem like a good way to ensure that all voices are heard and simultaneously address the intricacies of today's challenges. Perhaps it could even help create community healing.**

Why wait for the next big debate to create a platform for conversation? Let us set the stage for constructive conversation through the simple communication channels that already exist: public Forest Service meetings where management decisions and environmental impact statements are shared; supporting the efforts of the Heart of the Continent Partnership to reach across borders; or simply making an effort to understand the motivations and inspirations that drive someone to enjoy the wilderness in a way that might be different from our own. Let us set down our tired, worn out stereotypes and really get to know each other.