



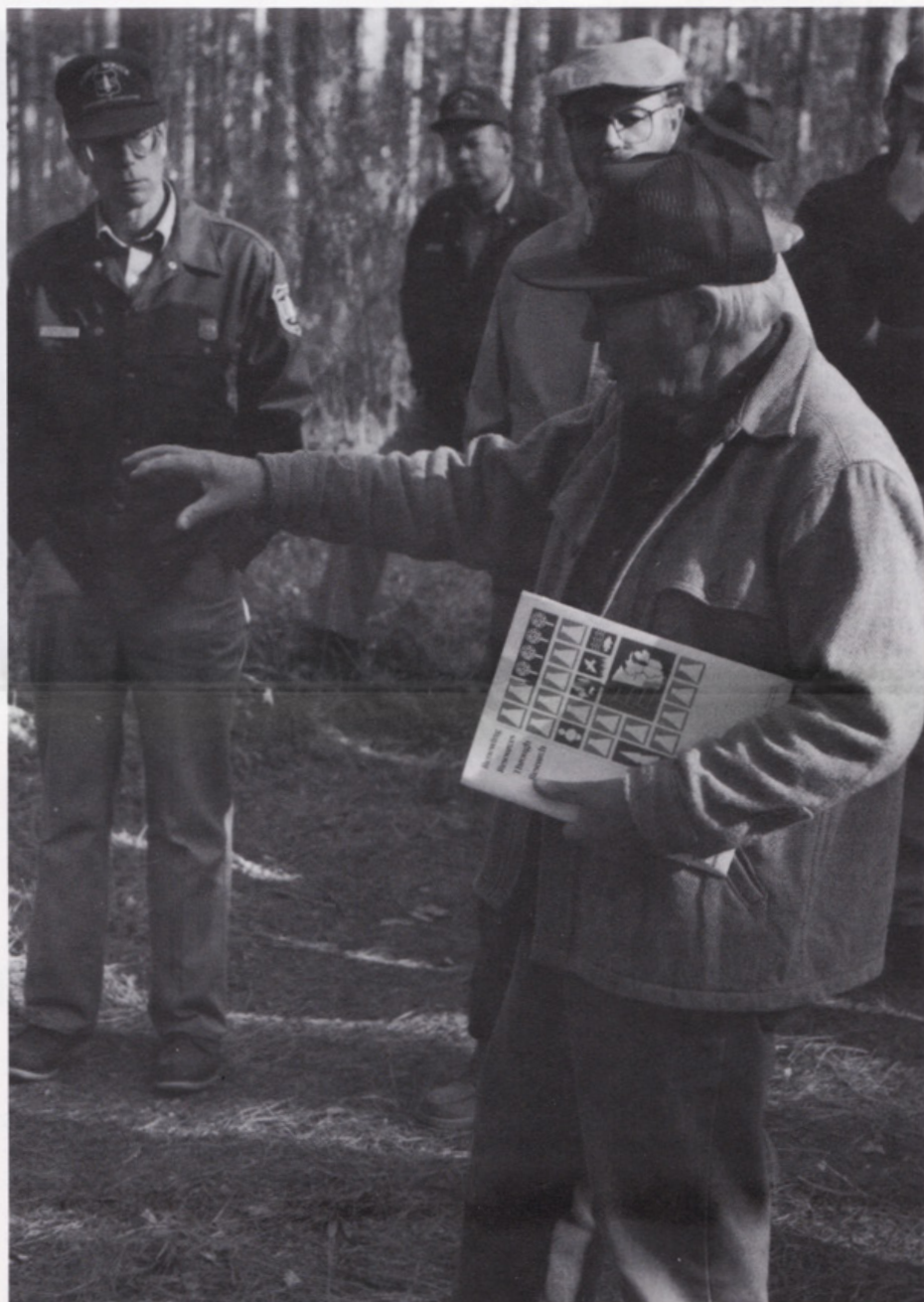
FROM THE QUETICO-SUPERIOR FOUNDATION • SUMMER 1993

A TESTIMONIAL TO BUD HEINSELMAN

Janet C. Green

In the passing of Dr. Miron L. Heinselman on February 28, 1993 at the age of 73, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and its friends lost a passionate advocate of wilderness, and science lost a pioneering voice of ecological wisdom about the Quetico-Superior country. Bud, as he was known to everyone, was a great teacher and he lectured students and congressmen alike on the ecological and spiritual values of wilderness. For people who were fortunate enough to work with him, either as scientific colleagues or environmental advocates, he also taught by the example of the way he lived his life. With his wife Fran, companion for over 50 years and field assistant as well, he showed how dedication to a single purpose, which was the understanding and protection of a one million acre forested and lakeland wilderness, can shine as an example to others of a beautiful and productive life. Make no mistake, the Boundary Waters that we know today would not be the same without their efforts.

Smitten with a love of the canoe country and its forests from a trip he took with his family as a boy in 1931, Bud went on to become a forest ecologist, receiving both his forestry and doctoral degrees from the University of Minnesota. His first research topic was peatlands, which culminated in the publication of a pioneering work in landscape ecology in *Ecological Monographs* in 1973: "Landscape Evolution, Peatland Types, and the Environment in the Lake Agassiz Peatlands Natural Area, Minnesota." His professional career was entirely



Continued on page 3

BUD HEINSELMAN, Continued

with the U.S. Forest Service as a researcher in their North Central Forest Experiment Station, first in Rhinelander, then Grand Rapids (MN) and finally in St. Paul. He took early retirement from the Forest Service in 1974, after finishing two other major projects. The first was the work for which he is best known, documenting the fire history of the BWCA, which was published in the *Journal of Quaternary Research* in 1973: "Fire in the Virgin Forests of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, Minnesota." He also completed and published a 1:500,000 scale map "The Original Vegetation of Minnesota" compiled from the U.S. General Land Office Survey Notes by F.J. Marschner in 1930.

Bud is best known by environmentalists for his leadership of the coalition called the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness that worked ceaselessly from 1975 to 1978 to pass the legislation that ended all logging, most threats of mining, and much motorized use in his beloved canoe country wilderness. Without Bud's persistence, knowledge and attention to detail the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Act, passed literally in the last hours of the 1978 congressional session, would not have taken the form of the increased protection that we now have. During that time, Fran and Bud lived in Washington for long periods, constantly watching and shaping that hotly-contested bill through every congressional step. The nation-wide grassroots movement that was necessary to pass the bill was also held together by Bud's leadership and his example of selfless dedication.

Looking back, those of us who worked with him on that legislation recognize that it was an exciting and formative time of our lives and wonder at Bud's ability to do it all—inspire us, convince the Congress and teach the public and scientists alike about the BWCA. His signature was his roll of maps, carried everywhere, and displayed at a moment's notice to impress upon a key player the importance of this special place in northern Minnesota. I well remember one episode in 1977 when I had been paired with him to lobby Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland (a former Minnesotan). In the elegant office suite of the Secretary out came the maps unrolled across an elaborate coffee-table, much to the amazement of



assembled staff and the Secretary alike. They learned more about the geography, history and ecology of the Boundary Waters, a place they hardly knew existed, in a few minutes of Bud's intense presentation than many other places they probably knew well. This sincere and comprehensive style of lobbying made an impression in Washington and we have the passage of Public Law 95-495 as a result.

Bud's defense of the wilderness started long before this mid 1970's period. It was the outgrowth of both his love of the canoe country and his ecological research which had traced the fire history of the BWCA, stand by stand, over an eight year period of rigorous field mapping. This research demonstrated that

natural fire was the molding force of both the pine and aspen-birch forests, and that over 500,000 acres of the BWCA was virgin wilderness. His key insights were much ahead of the forestry of his time. They are best expressed in a quote from the abstract of his seminal paper in *Quaternary Research*: "To understand the dynamics of fire-dependent ecosystems fire must be studied as an integral part of the system. The search for stable communities that might develop without fire is futile and avoids the real challenge of understanding nature on her own terms." Only now has this ecological understanding become widely accepted by management agencies and environmental organizations alike.

I first heard Bud lecture on this topic in

Duluth in the late 1960's and last heard him address a group of foresters and conservationists in this same fashion in the fall of 1992. Always, the depth of his knowledge and his ability to convey it to all kinds of audiences were impressive. Scientists and lay people alike always learned from him whenever he spoke. He must have given similar talks hundreds of times (at three meetings in Duluth in the spring of 1975 for one instance) and they gave a firm foundation to his wilderness message. No other wilderness advocate came displaying a twelve page, multi-authored, scientific and historical bibliography of the land in question.

That wilderness message was prominent as far back as the 1950's when Bud was active with the Grand Rapids chapter of the Izaak Walton League as they pushed for wilderness protection for the BWCA. This finally happened in 1964 with passage of the federal Wilderness Act, albeit with exemptions that permitted logging and motorboats in the BWCA that bedeviled management for the next 14 years. Bud's emphasis on the scientific importance of wilderness areas was an early forerunner to the arguments for preserving large natural areas to protect biodiversity and the natural processes of intact ecosystems that one hears today. To show how prescient Bud was, here is a quote from a talk he gave to the local chapter of the Society of American Foresters in 1964:

"But there is still another value in our wilderness areas, and this a 'practical' one. I refer to the scientific value of large scale natural communities. Much has already been written about this, and I will not belabor the point, except to remind you that we can hardly imagine the possible values that future generations of scientists may uncover in these 'islands of the natural world,' that hopefully we may save for their minds to ponder."

The Society of American Foresters passed nationally a policy statement in support of wilderness for "spiritual enjoyment, scientific study, and primitive recreation" finally in 1975.

The battle to preserve the wilderness qualities of the canoe country has been constant since the Superior National Forest was created administratively by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1909. Most of the emphasis has been, and remains, on recreation and spiritual renewal, but Bud widened the rationale with his stress on the ecological value of natural forests. Obviously, logging destroys that scientific baseline and the big fight over logging in the BWCA occurred in the early 1970's when the Minnesota Public Interest Research Group brought suit in federal court to stop timber sales in the wilderness. Bud's testimony as an expert witness in that case, and the resulting publicity, led first to an injunction by Judge Miles Lord and later to a public outcry that ultimately halted all logging before the 1978 Act was passed.

Wilderness advocates have been erroneously characterized as just interested in preserving static scenic backdrops for their outdoor recreational pursuits. Using "preservationist" in this fashion shows no understanding of the wilderness movement either philosophically or scientifically. Those of us who were tutored by Bud for the last thirty years clearly recognize the forces of natural change. He stated it best in his September 1977 testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on National Parks and Insular Affairs, Chairman Philip Burton presiding:

"The goal of wilderness preservation is not to literally 'save' individual trees, but rather to maintain and restore complete natural ecosystems—the dynamic mosaic of plant communities, wildlife

habitats, and animal populations of a natural region. In the BWCA, fire was the key environmental factor in the primeval ecosystems that maintained the diversity of vegetation and animal populations, regenerated old forests, recycled nutrients and accounted for the long-term stability of the system. Browse for moose and aspen and birch for beaver existed long before the loggers arrived. It was in the young post-fire forests that such species were most common . . . The BWCA is the last large and relatively complete northern conifer forest ecosystem in the eastern United States, and contains the last large remnants of Minnesota's original forests . . . This remarkable living laboratory has already become the focus of much research and education in forest and wildlife ecology, animal behavior, vegetation history, nutrient cycling, and aquatic ecosystems. Fortunately the BWCA is complemented on the Canadian side of our border by its sister areas, the Quetico Provincial Park of Ontario where logging is now prohibited. Together these areas match the size of Yellowstone National Park, and comprise one of the finest wilderness ecosystems on our continent."

In the continual guarding of the protection of that wilderness ecosystem we will all sorely miss Bud—for his friendship, his leadership and his encyclopedic knowledge of the Boundary Waters. Fortunately, his legacy will not be lost because his last years were spent completing a monumental manuscript, "The Boundary Waters Wilderness Ecosystem" that has just been collated and submitted to the University of Minnesota Press by his wife Fran. When it is finally published we can all deepen our understanding of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and our appreciation of Bud's life and work.

FOREST SERVICE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BWCA

Our Fall, 1992 issue of *Wilderness News* provided background and key issues involved in The U.S. Forest Service proposed new restrictions intended to protect the BWCA from overuse. The proposed plan sought to redistribute visitor groups during peak times from mid-July to mid-August and on holiday weekends. The final plan was released

with some fanfare August 19, 1993.

The Forest Service received more than 4,000 responses on the draft plan and officials said that comments helped the Forest Service better understand the issues and concerns of many people. Cathy McAllister, acting supervisor for the Superior National Forest said: "This new plan will provide visitors with the

opportunity to experience the BWCA, while protecting this precious resource for future generations."

After release of the plan the public will have 90 days to appeal the decision. Public involvement in planning the proposed changes began in November, 1990 when people were invited to attend open house meetings held in a number



of cities throughout Minnesota. The meetings focused on 15 issues which included party size, campsite and portage conditions, visitor use levels, reservation fees, winter use issues and outfitter guide operations.

Only one of the new changes will go into effect next year: a reduction to 280.5 in the maximum number of overnight camping groups allowed to enter the BWCA daily from May 1 to September 30.

This number is still above the current average use of 203 groups per day. The other restrictions will go into effect in 1995.

The plan calls for each group to number no more than nine people and each group cannot have more than three canoes or motorboats. Currently a group can have 10 people and there is no restriction on the number of watercraft.

Free entry permits will be required for all BWCA visitors throughout the year. At present permits are required only from May 1 thru September 30. The purpose of this change is to monitor winter use which has been growing rapidly in recent years.

The number of campsites available will remain at the current number,

approximately 2,000. The Forest Service will eventually phase out about 300 of the existing camp sites in areas damaged by heavy use. It will establish an equal number of new sites along the rivers and lakes in BWCA.

The new plan will also require a reduction in motor quotas. A limit will be imposed on the number of privately owned towboats which carry canoes across entry lakes. Sailboats and sailboards will be banned from the BWCA.

The new restrictions represent a considerable compromise from the proposed plan the Forest Service announced in November, 1992 which called for reducing the number of people in each visiting group to six. That proposal drew opposition from area outfitters, Scout and church groups.

Some northern Minnesota outfitters and resort owners were critical of the new restrictions. An appeal by critics to senior Forest Service officials is possible. The appeal could come from Conservationists with Common Sense, a group based in Ely. Environmentalists appeared relatively satisfied with the new restrictions.

Anticipating the proposed U.S. Forest Service changes, an editorial to the

Minneapolis Star Tribune in February said the following:

During the summer of 1991 I worked as a volunteer wilderness ranger in the Gunflint District of Superior National Forest. The early part of the summer was spent working on portage and campsite maintenance in the BWCA, but from mid-July through August we were kept busy largely with public contact because of the great number of visitors.

Nearly every day we would come across parties who had paddled for many hours and could not find an open campsite, parties illegally camped, and portages backlogged with 10-15 canoes waiting to land. These people had all come to the BWCA to enjoy the beautiful, serene wilderness, but overcrowding was preventing this and they were unhappy.

The Forest Service's proposed changes are designed not to limit access to an elite few but to spread the use of the BWCA more equitably through the open water season and to assure a positive wilderness experience to all who visit the area, particularly those who may not have time or energy to travel to the far interior of the BWCA.—Polly Ann Dubbel, Minneapolis

PROPOSED AND FINAL MANAGEMENT CHANGES FOR BWCA

U.S. Forest Services Proposed Management Plan Announced 11-17-92	Final Version of Plan Released by U.S. Forest Service 8-19-93
1. <i>Entry Point Quotas</i> Reduction in entry of overnight camping groups from 382 daily to 276 per day during summer season (current average use is 203 per day).	Reduction from 382 groups entering per day to 280.5 (about 27%).
2. <i>Party Size</i> The number of people in each group will be reduced from ten to six.	Reduction to nine people in each party with a new maximum limited of three watercraft per party.
3. <i>Motor Quotas</i> a) Reduction percentage approximately the same as for overnight quotas: overnight motors reduced from 2,561 per year to 1,976 per year and day use quotas reduced from 10,169 per year to 7,902 per year. Towboat use not part of the calculation. b) Towboat operators will be regulated by special use permit and limited to 29 total operators.	a) Final version the same as proposed. b) Towboat operators will require special use permits and will be capped at 1992 level.
4. <i>Number of Available Campsites</i> Reduced from approximately 2000 to under 1800 sites.	Will remain at approximately 2000
5. <i>Visitor Permits</i> Will be required year-round for all types of travel.	Final version same as proposal
6. <i>Entry Points</i> Water-access entry points will be reduced from 62 to 60.	Entry points will remain at 62
7. <i>Other Issues</i>	Sailboats will be prohibited. Canoe rests will be removed. 183 miles of hiking trails will be maintained. Dogs will be required to be under voice or leash control.

QUETICO PARK DECISION EXPECTED SOON

Recent issues of *Wilderness News* have described proposed Quetico Provincial Park changes in response to requests beginning in 1991 by the Lac La Croix Indian Band. The Lac La Croix First Nation published their recommendations in a paper titled "The Lac La Croix Story" which appeared in our Spring, 1992 issue. The proposal by the

Lac La Croix First Nation would open up a new series of lakes to motorboat use of up to 10 horsepower. On a rotating basis the Band would relinquish current motorized access to lakes in the northwestern corner of Quetico Park. The decision whether additional lakes in Quetico Park are open for motors and float planes will be critical to the wilderness preservation

of the park. The final decision may be rendered by mid-October, 1993. The decision will probably spell out improved employment opportunities for Lac La Croix First Nation members in the park and may set forth a compromise between the Band proposal and an effort to protect the wilderness preserve against motor intrusion.

SILENT SPRING

Our last issue of *Wilderness News* reported on the November ruling of the Federal Appeals Court requiring that three portages in the BWCA be closed to motorized vehicles. A panel of the Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that transport by non-motorized means called portage wheels is "feasible." Consequently continued use of motorized transportation across Prairie Portage, Four-Mile Portage and Trout Lake Portage was deemed to violate the intent of the BWCA Wilderness Act of 1978.

In late January, 1993 a Federal Appeals Court declined to reconsider its decision banning the use of trucks to haul watercraft across the three portages. An order was issued by the Appeals Court which denied a Forest Service request to reconsider the issue.

Under the court order, BWCA visitors will be required to carry their canoes across portages or use portage wheels, wheel-and-axle units which enable owners to push them across portages. The U.S. Forest Service advised in February that it would close the motorized portages and no longer fight the decision.

Brian O'Neill who argued the case

for conservation organizations said that he would seek a permanent ban so the issue will not resurface again if the administration changes. U.S. Representative Jim Oberstar said that the ruling will have a devastating effect on northeastern Minnesota's economy. He wanted the issue decided in the U.S. Supreme Court.

A motion for a stay on the decision to close portages was turned down in April by U.S. District Court Judge James Rosenbaum. Canoe outfitters began to make provisions to bring their guests across the three closed portages by non-motorized means. Some predicted that chaos would reign at Prairie Portage on the opener of fishing season.

Environmentalists believe that the closing of the truck portages will result in a reduction of motorboat use on lakes where the motors are still allowed. This issue is a point which angers long time motorboat users.

In June the U.S. Supreme Court declined to consider an appeal to re-open the three truck portages in the BWCA. An attorney representing northeastern Minnesota interests who helped prepare the appeal felt that the

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battle had been concluded with the U.S. Supreme Court decision.

The U.S. Forest Service had been in favor of keeping the portages open but they did not join Ely interest in the appeal to the Supreme Court. Groups joining Ely in its bid to re-open the truck portages were Conservationists with Common Sense, a private group located in Ely, and Wilderness Outfitters, which had operated trucks on the Four-Mile Portage. It appears for the moment the question of motorized portages has been laid to rest.

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