



FROM THE QUETICO-SUPERIOR FOUNDATION • WINTER 1970

MINING

The St. Clair Affair

The anxiously awaited legal attempt to bar a man from drilling for minerals within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area fizzled out in Duluth's federal district court on the cold, gray morning of Jan. 14. Apparently nobody could find the star of the show, George W. St. Clair.

A drilling contractor of Jackson Heights, N.Y. (Queens) and Mexico City, St. Clair had informed the U. S. Forest Service that early this winter he intended to install rigs on part of the 30,000 acres in the BWCA to which he had inherited underground mineral rights from his grandfather, George A. St. Clair, oldtime Mesabi pioneer. For justification he points to his Cook County deeds which provide "the right to enter, mine and remove subsurface minerals in the customary manner."

Some say St. Clair controls or "represents" mineral rights to 150,000 BWCA acres, all sitting atop the Gabbro Contact, a formation reputed to contain deposits of scarce nickel and copper. His immediate target, however, is a parcel of some 5,000 acres that lies a dozen roadless miles SW of the Gunflint Trail's end around a cluster of lakes named Cabimichigami, Howard, Peter, Gillis and Jerry (see map). It is about 50 miles from the exploratory shaft sunk near Ely in 1966 by International Nickel Co. (Like most of the big mining companies, INCO is bending over backwards to stay away from the BWCA.)

Nickel on the Rocks. Last summer geologists hired by St. Clair reported finding 1 percent nickel in surface rocks. Now, dreaming of profits up to \$350 million, St. Clair wants to drill several 600-ft. holes to see what treasures may lurk below. Because the Wilderness Act of 1964 presumably puts the BWCA out of bounds to miners except in case of national emergency, the Forest Service responded to his plan in no uncertain terms: "We will be there physically to stop him." It has since impounded geology equipment illegally stored within the BWCA.

Alternate solution might be for the United States of America to buy out

George W. St. Clair. But the tab comes high. For some reasons — mostly money — the government has never acquired the mineral rights to 300,000 of the BWCA's million acres. To do so now, one official estimated, might cost as much as \$100 million — a figure, retorts St. Clair, that "isn't even close."

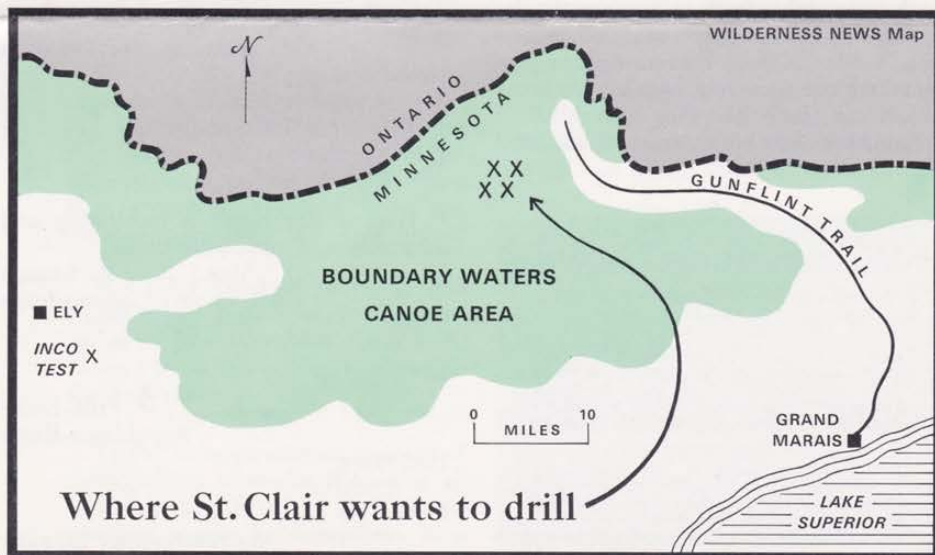
Enter Izaak. At this point the Izaak Walton League, militant champion of conservation, stepped in. Declaring, "We are on our way to the U. S. Supreme Court if necessary," its president, Raymond Haik, Minneapolis lawyer and member of the 1964 Selke committee, asked federal judge Philip Neville to restrain St. Clair from hauling his heavy equipment across the frozen lakes of the BWCA and despoiling the scenery. Named with him in the suit was an "associate," Thomas A. Yawkey of New York. He too is descended from an old Minnesota mining family, but is better known as the owner of the Boston Red Sox. (St. Clair's attorney stated flatly that Yawkey has "no interest whatsoever" in the BWCA.) For good measure Haik also included as defendants Craig Rupp, Superior National Forest supervisor, his bosses, agriculture secretary Clifford Hardin and forest chief Edward Cliff and two

state commissioners, Jarle Leirfallom, conservation, and Rufus T. Logan, taxation.

Not a one of these distinguished defendants showed up at the Duluth trial, but a bevy of barristers from Washington, New York and St. Paul was on hand to confront Haik.

Game Called. When it developed that U. S. marshals had been unable to put the finger on St. Clair, Judge Neville observed, "It is not in accordance with our American system of justice to pass judgment on a man until he has been duly notified of the charges against him." This pronouncement appeared to forestall further legal action — at least for the time being. Thus, after two hours and 20 minutes of rather aimless skirmishing the ball game was called off.

Still to be probed by a court of law is the heart of the matter: Can old mineral rights which later become part of a restricted area such as the BWCA be legally exercised despite subsequent regulations? For some non-judicial opinions see round-up inside. And for a report of another mining threat from an unexpected quarter, turn to back page. In the meantime WILDERNESS NEWS will try to keep readers informed.



HE HOPES TO DISCOVER VALUABLE DEPOSITS OF COPPER-NICKEL DEEP IN THE BWCA

1970 Prediction

One thing about this year we can be sure of: before it is over we will have to make at least a thousand corrections in the WILDERNESS NEWS mailing list. For it is an inexorable fact of life that people simply will not stop dying, retiring, moving and otherwise obscuring their whereabouts.

Our mailing company tells us that if you start out on January 1st with a perfect list of 1,000 names and addresses, by the following New Year's Eve 200 of them will be wrong. Just within the Minneapolis metropolitan area in 1969 an average of 772 families and firms changed their addresses every single day.

We try to keep track of our elusive readers in two ways — both expensive and laborious. We ask the post office to send back to us with corrections every copy they cannot deliver. This information ("Return Requested") costs us 10¢ apiece. From time to time we also ask our readers to send back to us a business reply card indicating any address alterations. This information costs us 7¢ for each card returned.

As a result of these maneuvers, since last August we have made well over 500 changes in our mailing list of some 5,000 names. And now we are starting all over again. Our dream: never to mail a copy of WILDERNESS NEWS that is undeliverable — or unwanted.

That will be the day.

Each in His Own Way

In announcing his decision not to run for reelection to the state senate, Henry McKnight, director and past president of the Quetico-Superior Foundation, said:

"The time has come for all of us, each in his own way, to concentrate on improving the quality of our environment. There is now ample legislation on the books, both state and federal, to get on with the task. What is lacking is a sense of dedication, a sense of deep commitment to protect and enhance our natural resources before our planet becomes unlivable."

Sen. McKnight has represented the 33rd district since 1963.

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CUTTINGS

Of the 1200 readers who responded to the recent WILDERNESS NEWS postcard survey, 89 percent want to remain on the mailing list. Excerpts from comments:

The Park

► It seems a little contradictory to devote years keeping this area virgin, and then in the same breath advocate a vast portion of it to national park use. I cannot imagine Sig Olson approving.

K. KAMMANN

Mound

Sig Olson replies: "The Q-S area I have spent my life defending is about 10 million acres. Practically all of the international boundary except the last 50-60 miles has some protection. It is this section of no more than 220,000 acres that would be given the status of a national park. Without such protection its shorelines would soon be cluttered with the keep-off signs of private ownership."

► The Richfield City Council has voted unanimously to support the Voyageurs National Park.

STAN OLSON
Mayor

Richfield

► I worked to get the BWCA established while in the Minnesota Legislature, but I am opposed to a national park.

HARRY BOSFORD

Wolf Lake

Nomobiles?

► Keep the BWCA free from all mechanized forms of recreation.

MICHAEL A. BOSANKO

Minneapolis

► Why build bridges and cut trails for snowmobiles as MOBS are? It's just extra litter from humans, more wilderness invaded and wildlife scared.

RICHARD TRITTAUGH

New Germany

The News

► WILDERNESS NEWS is interesting and informative, if somewhat biased.

(MRS.) JEAN B. RAIKEN
Cook County Commissioner

Tofte

► I value it!

PHIL DUFF
Republican Eagle

Red Wing

► We are happy to have it.

WEYERHAEUSER LIBRARY
Macalester College

St. Paul

► I make the News available to my geography classes.

BERT RUDE

Madison

► Gives a better picture of the BWCA than the newspapers.

HENRY M. WHITEMAN

Fairmont

► Like a breath of fresh air.

(MRS.) CHARLES F. BLAEKER

Arlington Heights, Ill.

► Interesting in all of its articles.

ELMER L. ANDERSEN
Former Minnesota Governor

St. Paul

► Enjoy WILDERNESS NEWS almost as much as taking a trip in the BWCA — but not quite.

TONY ANDERSON

St. Paul

► I thoroughly enjoy and learn a great deal from WILDERNESS NEWS. We in the southern part of the state do not know as much as we should concerning your problems.

(REP.) HELEN McMILLAN

Austin

► We feel in the interest of your economy and our lack of commitment in this area that we should relinquish our spot on your mailing list.

(MR. & MRS.) LORING M. STAPLES, JR.
Wayzata

Stories Wanted

► Be sure to publish results of wolf study.

JOE HEMMELGARN

Perham

► Some articles should deal with lake and stream pollution.

R. K. BERGESON

Minnetonka

► Put more emphasis on littering.

(MRS.) CARL STEINWALL

St. Paul

► All friends of the BWCA should be informed about potential mining problem.

HAROLD L. DOLAN

Minneapolis

See front page. — Ed.

Preservation

► We have led groups in the BWCA for 13 years. Preservation of the area is a tough job.

(THE REV.) FREDERIC J. KRUEGER

Willmar

► I do not agree with preservationists.

GENE D. PETERSON

Silver Bay

OPINION

Pay and Preserve

The St. Clair affair (front page) blew up a flurry of editorials and statements many of which seem to say that the government shouldn't let George do it, but ought to buy him out.

Duluth News-Tribune: "There's little doubt that if the government wants to preserve the BWCA it must pay a price to St. Clair and others having mineral rights in the area. The problem is to determine what is a fair price."

Red Wing Republican Eagle: "The prospect of an open pit mine in the middle of the BWCA comes near to the verge of lunacy."

Minneapolis Tribune: "Exploitation can only be stopped, apparently, if the federal government buys — through negotiation or condemnation — these mineral rights. We believe this should be done."

Swift County Monitor: "There is only one solution and that is for the government to buy all the mineral rights."

Minneapolis Star: "The owners of mineral rights should not be deprived of their rights without compensation, and ultimately it will be up to Congress to authorize the purchase and provide the money. In the meantime, the surface of this beautiful country should not be sacrificed for what lies underneath."

Eugene P. Pfeider, U of M professor of mineral engineering: "Basic decisions are needed to determine the rights of holders of severed mineral interests in Minnesota; to provide the mechanism of establishing an equitable solution for all parties without prejudicing the wilderness aspects of the BWCA; to ascertain, to some degree, the hidden potential of minerals in northern Minnesota as advocated by Dr. Sims [see below], and to permit responsible groups of the mining industry to continue to develop mineral areas outside the BWCA."

Kannabec County Times: "The mineral rights owner has the perfectly legal right of developing same, and we wish him luck."

Paul K. Sims, director, Minn. Geological Survey: "We have an obligation to future generations to determine the mineral resources of all areas. How else can we know if valuable minerals that could be used in a national emergency do, in fact, occur in such areas as the BWCA?"

William H. Magie, Friends of the Wilderness: "Obviously, revision of the mining laws, federal and state, is badly needed now."

Jim Klobuchar, columnist: "Mr. St. Clair has all the appearances of a poker player dabbling with the pot to see how large the payoff can be coaxed. It could well be that the government will have to make some out-of-court settlement."

Arthur W. Greeley, associate chief, U. S. Forest Service: "This is a first-class mess."



A VIEW OF THE BWCA

BY CRAIG RUPP

Supervisor, Superior National Forest

THERE are supposed to be times when administrators, faced with great responsibilities, are lonely.

I seriously doubt if any supervisor of Superior National Forest is ever lonely. The great responsibilities are there. Some seem almost awesome. But there are also those who would share those responsibilities, and no one carries the burden alone.

It was just last December 17 that it would have been easy to feel all alone. That was the date the U. S. Forest Service was informed of the intentions of George W. St. Clair to use mechanical means to explore for minerals at specific points in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. But we were not alone.

From all over the country the messages came in, and with them promises of support. Being new to the Superior, as well as to this part of the country, most of the messages were from strangers. Yet they were not complete strangers. We were united by a cause.

We have learned fast — as did those other supervisors who preceded us, John Wernham, Larry Neff, Galen Pike — that you're not alone on the Superior.

To the smog-enveloped resident of metropolitan areas the BWCA is an island of clean water and sweet-smelling woods he remembers as a

youngster. A visit there of a week or two is just what he needs to charge his batteries.

But there is a limit to what the BWCA can take if it is to retain that which makes it unique.

Campsites on thin soils continue to deteriorate — especially along main travel routes. Excessive soil compaction and damage to trees and other vegetation is found on too many campsites, necessitating the closing and resting of some of them for rehabilitation.

Sanitation, too, is coming under close scrutiny. There definitely is a need for improvement at many sites. Failure to improve sanitation will inevitably lead to the enrichment of area waters and contribute to algal pollution.

Soil surveys and water quality studies now well under way will go far toward answering the question, What can we do about it?

One of the answers to increased use is dispersal of visitors both inside and outside the BWCA. New and improved roads to various points in the forest will help this dispersal and make high quality areas more easily accessible to visitors.

In view of the expected population increase, we must be ever alert to anticipate the public's needs of the '70s while planning for yet unborn generations.

SUPERIOR FOREST

Nature Nuggets

A nature column shimmering with surprising bits of local lore emanates each week from U. S. Forest Service headquarters in Duluth. It is spawned by Raymond E. Naddy, artist, photographer and



ARTIST-COLUMNIST NADDY
Surprising bits of local lore.

one-time newspaper reporter, now billed as information specialist for Superior National Forest. Some nuggets:

A mocking bird was heard to sing in Duluth last November.

The fisher, a brown-furred weasel which was nearly trapped to extinction, is making a strong comeback. He never fishes.

When leaf buds of the swamp alder get as big as a mouse's ear, the walleyes will spawn.

Clark's nutcracker, a big black and gray bird that acts like a crow and rarely strays from its mountain habitat, recently made bird-watching history by appearing on the Gunflint Trail. It first made history by being discovered by the Clark of Lewis & Clark.

Most popular of all Christmas trees in Minnesota was for many years the balsam. Undisputed leader today is Scotch pine.

First Arctic loon ever reported in the state was spotted last year near Knife River by a Duluth doctor.

Oldest tree in Minnesota must be a white cedar growing on the southern shore of Basswood Lake. According to annual rings its birthday occurred in 1313.

Last official dog team of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police munched out of Old Crow Settlement in the Yukon on March 10, 1969. In Minnesota you can still see signs of the old dog trail near Hovland where Jim Bear Grease used to haul the mail along the North Shore.

A moose shot and abandoned near Two Harbors in 1968 had an antler spread of 60.5 inches, a near record.

Orange hawkweed (which New Englanders call devil's paintbrush) was nonexistent in northern Minnesota 25 years ago. Now these pretty little wildflowers are as common in these parts as buttercups.

Surveyor Albert Armstrong reported from the Isabella district on July 1, 1907: "Standing knee deep in snow I have been stung by mosquitoes."

NATIONAL PARK

No Score

In the second half of 1969 Minnesota tried valiantly to put the Voyageurs National Park on Kabetogama Peninsula. There was much scrambling, but little forward progress.

● At a public hearing in International Falls Aug. 22 Rep. Roy A. Taylor (N. Carolina) hurled this bomb: "I can assure you if Congress thinks this park will cost \$70 million, then there won't be any park. And if it's going to be a park you give up hunting."

● The Secretary of the Interior himself came up in September to do some open

FROM WATER TO WHISKEY

National recreation areas were authorized seven years ago. Now about a dozen span the U.S. — from the Delaware Water Gap to a locale in northern California known as Whiskeytown. As might be expected, their primary purpose is to provide outdoor recreation, but they are usually smaller and "of lesser significance" than national parks.

field running at the site, made this headline: HICKEL SUGGESTS RECREATION AREA FOR VOYAGEURS. He explained that unlike a park a national recreation area (see box) would allow hunting.

● In Washington Rep. Wayne Aspinall (Colorado), park committee chairman, called time out on Voyageurs hearings when the budget director told him there would be no money for such a project, even if approved.

● The Minnesota Poll revealed in October that 71 percent of the people in Minnesota are cheering for the park.

● Charles Lindbergh called the proposal a "unique opportunity" for the state to score points.

● Chippewa Indians announced they would try to block the park's advance unless they were compensated for lost yardage.

● State Sen. A. O. Sundet complained that the legislature was not getting the signals on park strategy.

● Former Governor Elmer L. Andersen, quarterback for the Voyageurs association denied that anybody wants to keep anybody in the dark about the park.

● In November Gov. LeVander ran a slow-motion replay of the season's action: "The process of establishing the Voyageurs National Park is proving to be a long one with many obstacles."

MINING (Cont'd)

Advice and Dissent

While a lawyer for Minnesota's conservation department was solemnly assuring a judge in Duluth (see front page) that the state would never, never touch any of its 100,000 acres of mineral rights in the BWCA, back at the capitol the senate's public domain committee was toying with the idea of doing just the opposite.

Earlier Sen. Raymond Higgins, a committee member, said that Minnesota should determine by drilling the value of these holdings: "They could be worth millions of dollars to the state." At a packed hearing on Jan. 26 the committee was bombarded by facts & fancies about mineral rights, laws and potentials from half a dozen witnesses, but two U of M geologists held the stage for much of the 2½-hour session. Paul Sims (geological survey) and George Wheaton (ore estimates) vehemently advocated immediate exploration, if not actual mining, in the sacrosanct wilderness preserve.

SEN. HIGGINS: Do you agree with the statement that it is ridiculous to expect to find quantities of valuable minerals in the BWCA?

DR. SIMS: In my opinion it is ridiculous to make such a statement.

On the other side of the fence another member, Sen. Rudolph Perpich, has suggested that the state trade its mineral rights outside the BWCA for those held inside by individuals such as George St. Clair. He asked for a special session of the legislature to block the treasure hunt, and invited consumer guardian Ralph Nader to get into the act.

PS — It was later reported that Higgins himself holds inherited mineral rights to 117 acres in the BWCA.

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE CAPITOL . . .



MINNEAPOLIS STAR