

THE BWCA WILDERNESS KIT

Lesson Plan
and Materials



UNIT ONE



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

OVERVIEW

GRADES: 5-8

AGES: 11-14

TIME: 50 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Vote With Your Feet items and images
2. Instructor Reference Sheet: Vote With Your Feet Object, Image and Sound Identification Sheet
3. Tape/CD player and Vote With Your Feet Sounds tape/CD
4. Belongs in Wilderness, Does Not Belong in Wilderness signs
5. National Wilderness Preservation System Map
6. Instructor Reference Sheet: Wilderness Act Primer Cards
7. Wilderness Act Primer Cards (9)
8. Map of BWCAW
9. Instructor Reference Sheet: Wilderness Act of 1964 Excerpts
10. Instructor Reference Sheet: What is the BWCAW?
11. Unit One Wilderness Passport (master in manual or on CD, make copies as needed)
12. Unit One Wilderness Passport stamp and ink pad

CONCEPTS AND KEY IDEAS:

1. The idea of wilderness varies from individual to individual, across cultures, and over time, and may incorporate physical, spiritual, recreational, and economic elements.
2. The Wilderness Act, which established the National Wilderness Preservation System, provides a common definition of wilderness that serves to protect and to conserve wilderness areas and their scientific, watershed, life support systems, historic and cultural, spiritual, aesthetic, recreation, refuge, and educational values.

GOALS:

1. Participants will be able to give a personal definition of wilderness and understand that the idea of wilderness varies from individual to individual.
2. Participants will be able to describe in their own words the purpose and main components of the Wilderness Act of 1964.
3. Participants will be able to identify the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System and describe some of its unique characteristics.

SKILLS:

1. Brainstorming in a large group
2. Identifying pictures, objects and sounds
3. Decision-making
4. Defending an opinion
5. Reading and listening comprehension
6. Drawing conclusions
7. Communicating

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?



BACKGROUND (1 OF 4)

Cultures and groups of people understand wilderness in different ways. Some cultures, which live in proximity to or in balance with wilderness, have no word for “wilderness” in their vocabulary. The Puritans in early America viewed wilderness as an evil place to be conquered and tamed. In our society today, the word “wilderness” evokes different images in each person’s mind. So what exactly is wilderness?

In order to answer this question it is important to remember that wilderness is a concept created by cultures which did not live in balance with, or were at odds with, wilderness. Five hundred years ago, before European settlement, the North American continent was a vast **tract** of wild, undeveloped land and water occupied only by **Native Americans**. European settlers, however, significantly changed wild lands. The “New World” of North America became divided between the “wild” and that which was “tamed” or part of civilization. As the European settlers moved across the continent, more and more land was “tamed” for agriculture, livestock, and homes.

Today, the balance has shifted dramatically. A continent that was once completely wild land is now almost entirely developed and controlled by people. As less and less wild land remained people began to value it more. The remaining wild lands or “wilderness” areas were no longer seen as an evil to be fought and conquered, but rather as a valued resource to **preserve** for future generations. Americans realized that most of the land in this country had been developed through agriculture, homes, forestry, mining, grazing and other activities. In order to protect and preserve these remaining wilderness areas, there needed to be a generally accepted definition of wilderness and a mechanism for protecting them.

On September 3, 1964, the **Wilderness Act** was signed into law. The Wilderness Act provided a legal definition of wilderness, created the **National Wilderness Preservation System**, established a process to be used for designating wilderness areas, and set provisions for the use of

THE WILDERNESS ACT

The Wilderness Act was enacted in 1964 to protect some of the remaining areas in the U.S. that had not been restructured or changed dramatically by humans. The Act established a common definition of “wilderness,” enabling managing agencies such as the Forest Service, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management to base management practices on recognized criteria. For the complete text of the act, see the appendix.



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

BACKGROUND (2 OF 4)



FUN FACTS:

THE LANGUAGE OF WILDERNESS

Looking at the root of the word wilderness, it is easy to see how different cultures perceive wilderness. "Wilderness" is based in the Germanic/Norse languages and comes from the root "will" and "wild" meaning self-willed, uncontrollable, disordered, and confused.

In Old Swedish "wild" means "boiling water." The Old English definition of "wildeor" is a place of wild beasts. Wilderness in Spanish is "falta da cultura," literally "lack of civilization," and in Italian, wilderness is "scene di disordine o confusione," fairly self-explanatory.



wilderness areas. The intent of the Wilderness Act was to establish wilderness areas "for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness..." Legal wilderness, "in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape," is "recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are **untrammled** by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

In order to comprehend the concept of wilderness, it is important to understand the many values of wilderness. While most people are familiar with the common recreational values of wilderness there are also other non-recreational values of wilderness.

One value of wilderness is the life support value of wilderness. Wilderness protects watersheds and plays an important role in oxygen production, carbon dioxide absorption, soil building, biomass decomposition, insect regulation, and pollution scrubbing. Wilderness can be used as a benchmark to show what an ecosystem undisturbed by humans looks like. This will help us learn to better intertwine ourselves within the biological systems in which we exist. These areas can also serve as gene banks and a place for natural evolutionary processes to continue.

Related to this life support value is the scientific value held in wilderness. Wilderness is a natural lab in which we can study natural processes. Society can benefit from this scientific research as it enlarges our understanding of the world and our roles in it. If we were to destroy all wilderness it would be like burning an unread book. Research may lead to yet undiscovered knowledge and uses of resources found in wilderness.

Wilderness also holds educational value and training value for schools and universities. It is an important classroom for learning outdoor skills such as orienteering, survival, mountaineering and stock packing. It can be used by outdoor education programs to teach about natural processes. It is also the source of material for many magazine articles and television

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?



BACKGROUND (3 OF 4)

shows about plants and animals. Many people enjoy wilderness vicariously through these kinds of media.

For many, wilderness is much more than just a place to soak in the scenery. Its aesthetic value is appreciated through intimate contact with the environment and can be sublime, awesome and majestic. It is a place where people can experience sights, sounds and feelings they are unable to experience in other less natural settings. People, some of whom may never actually visit a wilderness area, also enjoy the aesthetic value of wilderness vicariously through items such as posters, calendars, and books.

For some, wilderness also holds philosophical and religious value and is a sacred place. To them wilderness is a place with natural cathedrals where people can celebrate the creative forces behind life. It is a place where we can better understand unity and continuity. Wilderness is spiritually sustaining and has spiritual cleansing powers for some.

A value of wilderness that is more difficult to understand is its intrinsic value. This value hypothesizes that non-human organisms have a place on earth and that even inanimate objects have the right to exist. This value confers that all value does not originate with humans and that plants, animals, inanimate objects and the ecosystems that they inhabit, have rights of their own whether or not humans assign that value.

The National Wilderness Preservation System continues to grow every year from the original 9.1 million acres established by the 1964 Wilderness Act. Since 1964, Congress has passed scores of laws adding hundreds of areas and over 100 million acres to the National Wilderness Preservation System. In 2002, there were 644 individual wilderness areas totaling 105,778,352 acres. Alaska contains 58,182,216 acres, which is about 56 percent of all wilderness in the United States. About 4.4 percent of the continental United States is protected as federal Wilderness. Four federal agencies manage designated Wilderness in the United States: the National Park Service, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land

FUN FACTS:

- U.S. Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota and nine other Senators introduced the first wilderness bill in 1956.
- The Wilderness Act was signed on September 3, 1964 by President Lyndon Johnson.
- It took 8 years, 18 hearings and 66 versions of the wilderness bill before Congress passed the final version.





UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

BACKGROUND (4 OF 4)

Management and the Fish and Wildlife Service. Wilderness is one layer of protection placed on top of the original federal land designation.

So, while people have an individual perception and understanding of wilderness, the Wilderness Act provided a legal definition for federally-designated wilderness. Other non-federal lands, such as those owned by states or land trust organizations, may also be called wilderness but may not have the same features, criteria, and resource values as used in defining federal wilderness areas. When discussing wilderness it is important to differentiate how it is defined by individuals, non-federal land managers, and federal legislation.

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?



PREPARATION & INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION: (4 minutes)

1. Ask the following questions to assess the participants' knowledge and get them ready to learn.
 - Have you ever been in a wilderness area before? If so describe what made it a wilderness.
 - Have you heard of, or been to, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness?
2. Explain that the unit will explore the idea of wilderness and wilderness areas around the country (including one in our “backyard”) and why wilderness areas exist.

PREPARING FOR UNIT ONE:

1. Read through the unit and familiarize yourself with all of the materials before starting the activities.
2. Make sure you have a chalkboard or large piece of paper to create the What is Wild? list.
3. Set up the room so participants have an area to move around during Vote With Your Feet. You will need approximately 15-20 square feet of empty space depending on the number of participants.
4. Take the materials out of the BWCA Wilderness Kit marked “Unit One: What is Wilderness?”
5. Plug in the tape cassette/CD player, insert the Vote With Your Feet Sounds tape/CD and have the bag of Vote With Your Feet objects and images ready.



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

ACTIVITY ONE: WHAT IS WILD?

TIME: 3 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Chalkboard and chalk
OR large sheets of paper
and markers to create the
What is Wild? list.

OBJECTIVE:

1. Participants will classify those objects, images, and sounds that represent wilderness.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use a chalkboard or large sheet of paper that all participants can see.

1. Brainstorm with participants a list of words that describe wilderness.
2. Make another list of things that should be in wilderness.

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE:

Expect that participants' ideas and opinions will differ. There is not necessarily a right or wrong answer in this activity. Encourage discussion. The point of the activity is to demonstrate that not everyone agrees on what should be in the wilderness.

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?



ACTIVITY TWO: VOTE WITH YOUR FEET

OBJECTIVES:

1. Participants will classify those objects, images, and sounds that represent wilderness.
2. Participants will observe how the word “wilderness” evokes different meanings.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Ask all of the participants to stand up.
2. Establish two ends of a continuum in the room about 15 feet apart (depending on size of room, and size of group). Label one end of the room, Belongs in Wilderness and the other Does Not Belong in Wilderness with the signs provided.
3. Get the bag of Vote With Your Feet items.
4. Ask 5-7 volunteers to pull out Vote With Your Feet objects one at a time. When the group sees the object, each individual must choose where to stand along the continuum depending upon what he or she thinks. A participant is allowed to stand anywhere, including the middle or either end.
5. Discuss some of the participants’ “votes;” allow time for some group discussion. Get participants to elaborate on their points and encourage others to respond.
 - Why did they choose that vote?
 - Who disagrees/agrees and why?
 - What would they change about that item to ensure that it does or does not belong?

TIME: 15 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Belongs in Wilderness and Does Not Belong in Wilderness signs
2. Vote With Your Feet items and images
3. Tape/CD Player
4. Vote With Your Feet Sounds tape/CD
5. Instructor Reference Sheet: Vote with Your Feet Object, Image and Sound Identification Sheet



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

ACTIVITY TWO: VOTE WITH YOUR FEET



FUN FACTS:

1. Total wilderness areas in U.S. = 644
2. Largest wilderness area in U.S. =
Alaska's Wrangell-St. Elias -
9,676,994 acres
3. Smallest wilderness area in U.S. =
Florida's Pelican Island
- 5 acres



6. Next, hold up some of the Vote With Your Feet Images and/or play some of the Vote With Your Feet Sounds from the tape/CD and repeat voting.

7. Conclude the activity by asking participants:

- What patterns did they notice as they were voting?
- What would they add to, or subtract from, their initial words from the What is Wild? list made earlier?
- If they had to decide what areas to designate as wilderness, how would they choose these areas? What factors would affect their decision?

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?



INSTRUCTOR REFERENCE SHEET (1 OF 2)

VOTE WITH YOUR FEET OBJECT, IMAGE AND SOUND IDENTIFICATION SHEET

Objects

(Some of the objects are replicas of the real thing; unless labeled, all other objects are real. The scat has been varnished and is safe to touch; it is not a health hazard.)

1. Beaver Tail (replica)
2. American Toad (replica)
3. White Tailed Deer Antler
4. Moose Scat
5. Morel Mushroom (replica)
6. Bracket Fungus
7. Jack Pine Cone
8. Wolf Track (casting)
9. Black Bear Track (casting)
10. White Tailed Deer Fur
11. Black Bear Fur
12. Bug Spray Bottle
13. Glass Bottle
14. Fishing Line
15. Aluminum Foil Ball
16. Transistor Radio
17. Bottle Caps
18. Plastic Bag

Images

1. Moose and Calf
2. Scenic View of Lake
3. Eagle
4. Loon
5. Bear
6. Wolf
7. Deer
8. Owl
9. Wildflower (Iris)
10. People in Canoe
11. Fire Hydrant
12. Fast Food
13. Mailbox
14. Machinery
15. Lock and Key
16. Snowmobile
17. Flower Garden
18. Trash Can
19. Boom Box
20. Mountain Bike



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

INSTRUCTOR REFERENCE SHEET (2 OF 2)

VOTE WITH YOUR FEET OBJECT, IMAGE AND SOUND IDENTIFICATION SHEET

Sounds

Push PAUSE on the tape/CD player after each sound to allow the group time to identify it.

1. Water Lapping at Shore
2. Woodpecker
3. Loon Call
4. Cow
5. Chain Saw
6. Mosquito
7. Telephone
8. Traffic
9. Grouse Drumming
10. Alarm Clock
11. People at a Party
12. Wind in the Trees
13. Lawnmower
14. Tent Zipper "Zipping"
15. Toilet Flushing
16. Beaver Slapping Water with Tail
17. Airplane
18. Cat
19. Wolf Howl

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?



ACTIVITY THREE: WILDERNESS ACT PRIMER

OBJECTIVE:

1. Participants will examine key components of the Wilderness Act.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pull out the National Wilderness Preservation System Map. Explain that after many years of debate about what should be in the wilderness, the Wilderness Act of 1964 was created to provide a national, legal definition of wilderness.
2. Briefly describe the purpose of the Wilderness Act.
3. Hand out one Wilderness Act Primer card to each of nine participants. Each card contains a key passage from the 1964 legislation.
4. Instruct the participant holding “Card 1” to read aloud his or her section from the Wilderness Act. After reading the section, have the participant ask the group to describe what it means. Then have the participant read aloud the slogan, appearing in CAPITAL letters, and have the group repeat the slogan. Continue these steps with each of the next eight primer cards. Finish by having the participants read aloud their sections consecutively, without the slogans.

TIME: 15 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. National Wilderness Preservation System Map
2. Wilderness Act Primer Cards
3. Instructor Reference Sheet: Wilderness Act of 1964 Excerpts
4. Instructor Reference Sheet: Wilderness Act Primer Cards



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

INSTRUCTOR REFERENCE SHEET

WILDERNESS ACT OF 1964 EXCERPTS

**The Wilderness Act
(16 U.S.C. 1131-1136)
Sept. 3, 1964**

Sec. 2.(a)

In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness. For this purpose there is hereby established a National Wilderness Preservation System to be composed of federally owned areas designated by Congress as "wilderness areas," and these shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such a manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of their wilderness character, and for the gathering and dissemination of information regarding their use and enjoyment as wilderness; and no Federal lands shall be designated as "wilderness areas" except as provided for in this Act or by a subsequent Act.

Sec. 2.(c) DEFINITION OF WILDERNESS

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

INSTRUCTOR REFERENCE SHEET

WILDERNESS ACT PRIMER CARDS

CARD 1:

“It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness.”

SAVE SOME FOR US...SAVE SOME FOR US!!

CARD 2:

“A wilderness is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled...”

PLANTS AND ANIMALS COME AND GO
AND GROW AS THEY PLEASE.

CARD 3:

“...where humans are visitors and do not remain...”

THANKS FOR VISITING. DON'T STAY
TOO LONG!

CARD 4:

“...an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence...”

IT LOOKS LIKE NO HUMAN HAS BEEN
HERE FOR YEARS!

CARD 5:

“...without permanent improvements or human habitation...”

NO CONSTRUCTION, NO DESTRUCTION

CARD 6:

“...which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition which generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature...”

WHAT CHANGES THIS PLACE? WIND,
WATER, FIRE AND TIME!

CARD 7:

“...has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation...”

WE COULD WALK OR PADDLE FOR DAYS
AND NOT SEE A SOUL.

CARD 8:

“...has at least 5,000 acres of land or is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition...”

5,000 ACRES MAKES A WILDERNESS TAKER.

CARD 9:

“...may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value...”

HISTORY, GEOLOGY, AND ECOLOGY OH MY!

(taken from the Wilderness Act, 1964 P16 U.S.C.
1131-1136, Sept. 3, 1964)



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

ACTIVITY FOUR: WILDERNESS IN OUR BACKYARD

TIME: 8 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Map of BWCAW
2. Instructor Reference Sheet:
Wilderness Act
of 1964 Excerpts
3. Instructor Reference Sheet:
What is the Boundary
Waters Canoe Area
Wilderness?
4. Wilderness Act
Primer Cards (9)

OBJECTIVES:

1. Participants will locate the BWCAW on a map.
2. Participants will understand the unique characteristics of the BWCAW.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Explain to participants that Minnesota is fortunate to have a wilderness area right in “our backyard.”
2. Spread out the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness map.
3. Have participants gather around the map or hang it on a wall.
4. Take time for stories of those who have traveled to certain lakes or rivers.
5. Share information from the What is the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness? sheet.
6. Ask participants to compare the list of BWCAW characteristics with their original What is Wild? list and the principles from the Wilderness Act. Review the Wilderness Act Primer cards, or spread them out so all the participants can gather around if needed.

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?



INSTRUCTOR REFERENCE SHEET (1 OF 4)

WHAT IS THE BOUNDARY WATERS CANOE AREA WILDERNESS?

Great glaciers carved the physical features of what is today known as the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) by scraping and gouging rock. The glaciers left behind rugged cliffs and crags, canyons, gentle hills, towering rock formations, rocky shores, sandy beaches and several thousand lakes and streams, interspersed with islands and surrounded by forest.

The BWCAW is a unique natural area located in the northern third of the Superior National Forest in northeastern Minnesota. Approximately 1.3 million acres in size, the BWCAW extends nearly 150 miles along the International Boundary adjacent to Canada's Quetico Provincial Park and is bordered on the west by Voyageurs National Park. The BWCAW contains over 1,200 miles of canoe routes, 16 hiking trails and approximately 2,000 designated campsites and offers freedom to those who wish to experience solitude, challenge and personal integration with nature. Because this area was set aside in 1926 to preserve its primitive character and made a part of the National Wilderness Preservation System in 1964, the BWCAW allows visitors to canoe, portage and camp in the spirit of the French Voyageurs of 200 years ago.

Due to concerns about increased development that could have changed the natural character of the area that is now the BWCAW, early conservationists, both within and outside of the government, responded with efforts to protect the region. Their efforts led to the withdrawal by the General Land Office of 500,000 acres from potential settlement. In 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt used these early land withdrawals to create Superior National Forest. Layers of additional protections for the Superior National Forest and the BWCAW have been added ever since, including the first administrative wilderness designation in 1926; inclusion of the BWCAW as an original wilderness under the 1964 Wilderness Act; and further protection of the region with the 1978 Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Act. The purpose of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-495) was to protect, enhance, and preserve the natural values of the lakes, waterways, and associated forests of the area. The act also intended to create orderly public use of the wilderness while protecting the area's aesthetic, cultural, scientific, recreational, and educational values to the nation. The act was debated in Congress for three years. The Congressional deadlock was finally broken when a representative for northeastern Minnesota residents and a representative from environmental groups met in a marathon negotiating session and reached a compromise agreement. The implementation of the BWCA Wilderness Act has resolved some of the issues concerning the management of the BWCAW. The act changed the BWCAW from an area of timber products and multiple forms of recreation to an area producing primarily a wilderness experience. It enhanced the recreational opportunities for those activities most supportive of the wilderness experience. The BWCAW is visited by more than 200,000 people annually, making it the most



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

INSTRUCTOR REFERENCE SHEET (2 OF 4)

heavily used wilderness area in the country and complicating the Forest Service's job of balancing recreational use and wilderness values. The BWCAW is and has been popular throughout time because of its unique characteristics:

- One of the most unique features of the BWCAW is the great abundance and arrangement of lakes and streams. Approximately 1,175 lakes varying in size from 10 acres to 10,000 acres and several hundred miles of streams comprise about 190,000 acres (20 percent) of the BWCAW surface area. The opportunity for long-distance travel by watercraft through a series of interconnecting lakes, waterways, and **portages** in a scenic forest environment was a primary force behind wilderness designation. This type of experience is rare within the continental United States. The BWCAW is the only large lake land wilderness in the **National Wilderness Preservation System**. Canoeists can explore over 1,200 miles of routes, including some that trace those used by **Native Americans** and fur trading **Voyageurs**.
- The BWCAW is the largest and only federal wilderness of substantial size east of the Rocky Mountains and north of the Everglades.
- The BWCAW is one of four key protected areas in the international Quetico-Superior Ecosystem that includes Voyageurs National Park, Ontario's Quetico Provincial Park, and Ontario's LaVerendrye Provincial Park. This ecosystem stretches over 2,500,000 acres, creating an international wilderness of immense biological, recreational, and intrinsic value to both the United States and Canada. The combined protected area of the BWCAW, Voyageurs and Quetico is 3,859 square miles – an area larger than Yellowstone National Park.
- Geologically, the BWCAW occupies the lower portion of the Canadian Shield. It is located on the remains of the ancient Laurentian Mountains, some of the oldest rock in North America. The Laurentian Divide separates two major drainage basins in the BWCAW: the Hudson Bay and the Great Lakes. About 90 percent of the BWCAW lies within the Hudson Bay basin and the remaining 10 percent flows into the Great Lakes. The BWCAW contains the highest point in Minnesota: Eagle Mountain (2,301 feet).
- The BWCAW is characterized as unique, **pristine**, endangered, rugged, primitive, beautiful, and fragile. It is a place to explore, reflect, challenge oneself, and refresh the human spirit. Visitor studies indicate that the top six motives for visiting the BWCAW include nature appreciation, personal development, escape/solitude, companionship, adventure, and fishing. Canoeing, hiking, skiing, dogsledding, fishing, hunting and camping throughout the seasons are a few of the recreational activities the wilderness supports. This land has inspired countless artists, photographers, poets, and writers.

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?



INSTRUCTOR REFERENCE SHEET (3 OF 4)

- The BWCAW is the most heavily used wilderness in the country with approximately 200,000 annual visitors staying for 1.5 million “recreation visitor days.” The BWCAW represents less than one percent of the acreage of the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS), but receives 10 percent of the use in the entire NWPS. Approximately 65 percent of BWCAW visitors live in Minnesota.
- The BWCAW has a rich human history beginning with sites from the Paleo-Indian culture of 10,000-12,000 years ago. There are numerous cultural resource sites in the BWCAW resulting from the Woodland period (500 B.C. – 1650 A.D.) and historic Native American settlements and activities. These include camping sites, villages, wild ricing sites, burial mounds, pictographs, and sites of spiritual and traditional importance. The BWCAW also contains evidence of a number of historic European and early American activities ranging from the fur trade up to and including early logging and settlement of the area.
- The BWCAW is a Class I air quality area, as defined by the federal Clean Air Act. It is the only wilderness in the country that has an airspace reservation, which requires airplanes and helicopters to fly at a minimum of 4,000 feet above the area. The airspace reservation was created by an Executive Order in 1949 by President Harry Truman. The White House is the only other airspace reservation in the country.
- The BWCAW provides a unique place for types of research and education that cannot be accomplished in more developed places. The types of research include plant and animal ecology, animal behavior, paleoecology, geology, fire history, and limnology. The BWCAW is also an important place of education for students learning natural history, science, and primitive skills.
- The BWCAW contains the largest contiguous area of virgin forest remaining in the eastern United States. The BWCAW lies at the transition between the southern most edge of the boreal forest and the Great Lakes Forest, providing aspen, birch, spruce, fir and pine forest habitat. In these woodlands, humans and wildlife enjoy a variety of woodland wildflowers and berries, including the Showy Lady Slipper, blueberries, raspberries, and wild cherries.
- Superior National Forest, including the BWCAW, was named by the American Bird Conservancy in 2001 as one of 100 Globally Important Bird Areas. The BWCAW provides critical habitat to many species of neo-tropical migrating birds – birds which breed in North America and migrate to Central and South America in the winter. The year-round resident bird population includes raven, pileated woodpecker, gray jay, chickadee, ruffed and spruce grouse, and the great horned owl. Summer residents include several species of warblers, white-throated sparrow, red-eyed vireo, cedar waxwing, bald eagle, common loon, merganser, black duck, northern goshawk, broad-winged hawk, osprey and peregrine falcons, an endangered species.



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

INSTRUCTOR REFERENCE SHEET (4 OF 4)

- The BWCAW provides important **habitat** to many wildlife species at all levels of the food chain including gray wolf, red fox, lynx, fisher, pine martin, mink, otter, weasel, black bear, moose, beaver, red-backed salamander, southern bog lemming, northern leopard frogs, bats, white tailed deer, black bear, beaver, porcupine, snowshoe hare, red squirrel, and chipmunk. The fish population includes lake trout, walleye, northern pike, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, perch, crappie, whitefish, sucker, sturgeon, burbot, and many species of minnows. As any summer visitor will tell you, the BWCAW is also home to an abundant array of insects.
- Because of its unique characteristics the BWCAW was included in a list of the 50 greatest places to visit in a lifetime, as compiled by the National Geographic Society (NGS) in 1999. The NGS identified destinations that “no curious traveler should miss” and the BWCAW was included alongside places such as Antarctica, the Amazon, the Grand Canyon, the Giza pyramids, the Great Wall of China and the Taj Mahal.

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?



UNIT CLOSING

1. Briefly review the words on the What is Wild? list and ask participants to think about how they would define wilderness.
2. Briefly review what happened during the Vote With Your Feet activity and ask participants to think about how other individuals may define wilderness differently than they do.
3. Briefly review the Wilderness Act Primer Cards and remind participants that the Wilderness Act of 1964 created a legal definition of wilderness.
4. Review with participants a few of the unique characteristics of the BWCAW.
5. Ask participants questions such as the following:
 - Is it good to have wilderness areas? Defend your answer.
 - Do you think it is good to have an Act that defines, designates and protects wilderness? Why?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of setting aside wilderness areas?

TIME: 9 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. What is Wild? list developed in Activity One
2. Wilderness Act Primer Cards
3. Instructor Reference Sheet: What is the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness?



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

WILDERNESS PASSPORT

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Unit One Wilderness Passport Activity Sheet (master in manual or on CD; make copies as needed.)
2. Unit One Wilderness Passport stamp and ink pad
3. National Wilderness Preservation System Map

OBJECTIVES:

1. Participants will write their own definition of wilderness.
2. Participants will list three principles or features of a wilderness area.
3. Participants will list three unique characteristics of the BWCAW as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each participant a copy of the Unit One Wilderness Passport (master in manual or on CD).
2. Ask participants to complete Unit One Wilderness Passport.
3. Stamp each participant's passport when the section is complete.



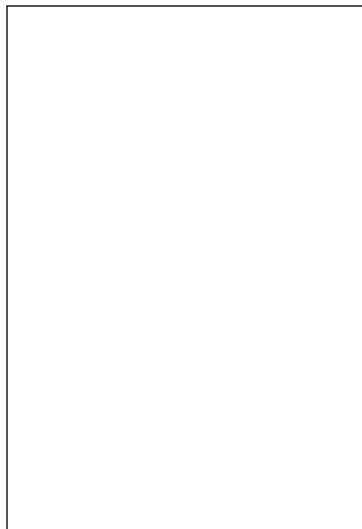
WILDERNESS PASSPORT

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

NAME _____

1. Write your own definition of wilderness.

2. List three principles or features of a wilderness area.



UNIT ONE STAMP HERE



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

EXTENSIONS



FUN FACTS:

1. Alaska contains 56 percent of all federally-designated wilderness areas in the United States.
2. The BWCAW is the most heavily used wilderness in the National Wilderness Preservation System.



1. Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center's "Wilderness and Land Ethic Curriculum." Additional information may be found at www.wilderness.net/carhart/.
2. Spend more time discussing each of the objects, images, and sounds and whether they represent wilderness. For related information, see appendix.
3. Have participants create their own images or collage of wilderness.
4. Engage in a discussion of other places as wilderness (city park, ocean, outer space). Emphasize the distinction between legally-designated wilderness and the idea of wilderness. Refer to the principles of the Wilderness Act.
5. Analyze the National Wilderness Preservation System map. What patterns do participants notice? How does the map relate to westward expansion and settlement? What agencies manage wilderness? (Possible project to coordinate with history lessons.)

UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?



MINNESOTA GRADUATION STANDARDS

MIDDLE:

Read, Listen and View (Learning Area 1)

NON-FICTION:

1. Comprehend, interpret, and evaluate information from a variety of non-fiction formats in reading, listening, and viewing.
 - 1a. Identify main ideas and supporting details.
 - 1b. Interpret presentations of data in connection with other information in the text.

MIDDLE:

Write and Speak (Learning Area 2)

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION:

1. Communicate effectively in a small group by giving a demonstration or presenting new information in a small group.

MIDDLE:

Social Studies (Learning Area 7)

CURRENT ISSUE ANALYSIS:

Defend a position concerning a current event or issue by demonstrating understanding of the history, facts, controversy, values, beliefs, and emotions surrounding the issue.



UNIT ONE: WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

The BWCA Wilderness Kit was jointly produced by the Boundary Waters Wilderness Foundation and the United States Forest Service-Superior National Forest. Both are available to answer questions regarding content, instruction, and materials of the kit.

Boundary Waters Wilderness Foundation

401 North Third Street
Suite 290
Minneapolis, MN 55401
(612) 332-9630
Fax: (612) 332-9624
E-mail:
info@friends-bwca.org
www.friends-bwca.org

Superior National Forest

8901 Grand Avenue Place
Duluth, MN 55808-1102
(218) 626-4300
Fax: (218) 626-4354
E-mail:
r9_superior_NF@fs.fed.us
www.fs.fed.us/r9/superior

- **www.wilderness.net:** a wilderness information network. Includes current issues, news and information on the Wilderness Act.
- **www.wilderness.org:** website of The Wilderness Society. Includes information on wilderness, history, and wilderness legislation, and links to related sites.
- **www.ericse.org/elessons.html:** ERIC Clearinghouse for Science. Includes a range of other environmental education lessons and links to other sites.
- **www.wilderness.net/carhart/:** Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center. Provides information on training and wilderness curriculum.
- **www.bwca.org:** the National Recreation Reservation Service website describes rules, regulations, planning and preparation information for the BWCAW.
- **www.superionationalforest.org:** Superior National Forest website complete with history and current information on the BWCAW.