

# SNF Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Collaborative Update-20231115\_160102-Meeting Recording

November 15, 2023, 10:01PM

58m 37s

**Catton, Susan - FS, MN** 0:03

Also, if you could please add your name.

**Kolinski, Christine - FS, MN** started transcription

**Hoffman, Heather - FS, MN** joined the meeting

**Catton, Susan - FS, MN** 0:07

Affiliation and email into the teams chat.

Just so we know who's here, that would be super.

Umm.

So for those that are familiar, familiar with the teams platform, we do have that chat function.

**Felicia Hokenstad (BRTA)** joined the meeting

**Catton, Susan - FS, MN** 0:21

So you're welcome to start putting questions in the chat.

We just asked that you not use the chat for a lot of sidebar.

It can get kind of distracting and like I said, we will have some Q&A time at the end of the webinar.

**George Nickas (Wilderness Watch) (Guest)** joined the meeting

**Catton, Susan - FS, MN** 0:39

Umm, wanted to let you all know that the webinar will be recorded and we will post it and have it available for you all and others that were not able to attend to view at a later date. So just wanted you to be aware of that and then we do have information on how you can sign up for BWC.

AW updates and there will be several opportunities where you will see the link to the website will also drop it in the chat as we're going through this webinar.

So again, welcome everyone and I will start by introducing Tom Hall or Superior National Forest for supervisor and he will kick off the umm conversation.

**Alan Brew** joined the meeting

**Leigh Stepan** joined the meeting

**Catton, Susan - FS, MN** 1:26

So thanks.

**Bogardus-Szymaniak, Ellen - FS, MN** joined the meeting

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 1:29

Great.

Thank you so much, Susan.

So welcome and thank you all for your interest.

So the objective of today's webinar is to share information regarding the creation of a boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness collaborative over the last year we've been working with the URL Foundations National Center for Environmental conflict resolution to assess the superior National Forest effectiveness around communication and engagement related to management of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

The assessment included discussions with 100 individuals from 66 distinct partners and stakeholder groups.

One of the findings from the assessment was a broad interest among partners and stakeholders to have a focused collaborative space to increase understanding and explore possibilities to engage with management of the boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

**cbadb469-9943-4154-928f-3d2ada4513e4** joined the meeting

**Betsy** joined the meeting

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 2:24

And for me, this is an exciting opportunity that aligns with my desire to increase transparency and engagement, not in the work that we do here on the superior National Forest in order to move in this direction, we have asked that the Udall Foundations National Center help us to design and facilitate a collaborative around management of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

**Betsy** 2:31

Exist.

Exodus, yeah.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 2:48

We feel that the National Center is the appropriate entity to help us with this because they are an independent, really neutral third party that has expertise with collaboration in complex and controversial landscapes similar to the boundary waters.

The Forest Service understands that the boundary waters is rich with cultural, legislative, legal, political and personal histories.

Umm.

And the four services mandate through law regulation and policy to manage the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness is complex.

To do the unique nature of their motorized use that has allowed the high level of use and interest and the requirement to manage for wilderness qualities and character.

**Josh Dix** joined the meeting

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 3:35

Because of these complexities, uh, we are one of the few national forests to have a dedicated program manager for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness that helps us understand the laws and policies that guide our actions and decisions for the boundary waters.

**Matthew Davis, NCTA (Guest)** joined the meeting

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 3:50

We also know that there are many diverse perspectives and viewpoints on management of the boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

**Mindy (Guest)** joined the meeting

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 3:57

As we move forward, I want to engage with all of these diverse perspectives, not only for more transparency with our decisions, but also for shared learning and understanding and ultimately sound stewardship of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

**9d8e7aaa-d269-416b-bf8c-52dff557a6e2** joined the meeting

**Willy Vosburgh** joined the meeting

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 4:13

So I want to take this time to introduce Seth Cohen with the Udall Foundations National Center to help us all understand how they are thinking of framing this collaborative engagement and how interested stakeholders or parties can express interest.

**Seth Cohen** 4:35

Hello everyone.

Can you hear me?

Just give me a thumbs up or something if you have sound. OK, good.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 4:41

We got you.

**Seth Cohen** 4:43

Good. Thanks.

I just put a note in the chat to just remember you feel free to.

It's helpful if you can toggle up to the top and mute your mic unless you're wanting to speak or when you're speaking, you can unmute and videos optional.

Obviously there's a camera button there too that you can turn on and off, but thanks for Tom.

Really appreciate that. Umm.

I've had a chance to talk and meet with some of you in the past during our assessment that we did, which I'll go into shortly, but it's a good opportunity to be back here and connecting with some of you and to meet some of you for the first time to talk about this collaborative effort that we've been working on with superior National Forest for about the past year.

**Jim** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 5:35

And before we kind of really get started, I just want to briefly introduce myself and my colleague and Co facilitator, Lauren.

And then we'll give a little overview of what the National Center for Environmental Conflict resolution is and our kind of umbrella organization, the Udall Foundation.

For those of you who may not know much about it or have heard of it, and then we'll talk a little bit about how we got to this point today.

**DeJoannis, Alexa** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 6:01

The assessment that we did last year with many of you, the drafting of a collaborative purpose and also what the collaborative will look like in the next steps right now and then hopefully that will generate some interest from all of you and people that you're connected with.

So with that, let me just pull up the slide here.

OK.

Just I'm still seeing the PowerPoint now.

OK, great.

Thanks.

So uh, Lauren, would you please?

Well, let me just, I'm sorry I didn't finish introducing myself.

There's people still jumping into the webinar that we're admitting.

**Ann McNally** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 6:55

Umm.

But again, Seth Cohen, I'm a senior program manager at the National Center for Environmental Conflict resolution.

**Kevin Proescholdt** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 7:03

I physically live in Colorado and am from New Mexico and have been working on a variety of natural resource, land and water management, collaborative challenges and issues for the

past 20 years, a facilitator and mediator by training and work a lot with public local governments.

**Joe Friedrichs** joined the meeting

**Joe Friedrichs** 7:23

A lot.

**Seth Cohen** 7:25

Umm, Native American tribes?

**Amy Freeman** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 7:27

I'll just remind people that mute themselves cause we're getting a a little echo feedback.

**Joe Friedrichs** 7:29

People just.

**cbadb469-9943-4154-928f-3d2ada4513e4** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 7:34

Umm, I think one or two people may have joined twice by accident and that does create some feedback.

So just check and see if you're in the meeting twice.

Umm, so uh, there's always a technical challenge.

And as we as we know and that will be one of the issues I'm sure we talk about is we think about how to do hybrid meetings in the in this day and age.

So yeah, so like I say, I sit in that part of the country, but our organization is largely based out of Tucson.

**Thibodeaux, Jaime (DNR)** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 8:04

And also we have a Washington DC office, but a lot of US work remotely in different states because we work on natural resource challenges around the country.

And I'm I've been working with the Forest Service and the Superior National Forest for the past year on building up to this point today.

So nice to meet many of you and hope to talk with you further.

And I'll turn it over to Warren.

**Hagan, Cynthia M** joined the meeting

**Lauren Nutter** 8:27

Hi everyone.

My name is Lauren Nutter.

I am a project manager here at the National Center St to meet you all virtually I've been based here at the National Center and doing this type of work for little over 11 years now

and similar to Seth, I have experiences with this litigator and mediator on collaborative efforts around water resources and working with native nations.

**Ann McNally** left the meeting

**Lauren Nutter** 8:49

I'm based out on the East Coast, a little bit outside the Boston area and I'm just excited to work with everyone on this project, so it's great to meet you all and let me also.

Reintroduce you or introduce you if you haven't gotten to know a little bit about the Udall Foundation and the National Center for Environmental Conflict resolution here.

So the URL Foundation is an independent executive branch agency.

So we are a federal agency, we were set up by Congress in 1992 in memory of Morris.

King Udall was a senator from Arizona, and later they also added his brother, Stuart Lu Bar, which is you can see both of them the photo there and really it's a legacy in mission around strengthening work with federal agencies that native nations around travel issues around environmental issues.

And there's a number of different programs.

This is just a brief overview.

There's a number of educational programs, including a scholarship and Native American congressional internship program, and a few others.

And then there's our program.

That's up and I work for the National Center for Environmental conflict resolution to the mission of the National Center is focused specifically around and you can go to the next slide stuff.

Working with federal agencies and other affected parties around environmental disputes or conflicts, challenges and so this is exactly the type of work that has brought us into working with you all in boundary waters and working with us in relation to our mission.

**fbdb37d0-3339-4476-a50e-330685503b60** joined the meeting

**Lauren Nutter** 10:13

So that's a little bit of context around us and then I'll pass it back to set to give some context from the assessment work we've been doing with you all.

**Ann McNally** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 10:23

Thank you, Lauren.

And I do wanna note that we we are interested in questions that come up for you during this presentation with regard to the to the content and the forming of the collaborative.

So if you think of something and you wanna try to get to it at the at the end, we'll have a little time for Q&A after our presentation for where you can ask questions to either us or to Tom Hall about at the at the Forest Service.

And we'll also have those questions of that way we can follow up and get back to you if there's something that we can't answer today.

But as as I was mentioning on this particular project we started, we were approached by superior National Forest leadership.

Umm.

A little over a year and a half ago about the idea of putting together a collaborative group of of a smaller kind of body of diverse representative representative interest.

Who could you know?

Discuss and share and create a shared environment for learning and not only between those groups, but with the Forest Service around particular challenges and issues that specific to management and stewardship and communication of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

And so we worked with them and decided that the 1st place to start would be with what we often do, which is kind of a stakeholder assessment or a situational assessment to reach out to as many people that might be interested in talking to us to find out what are the critical issues and concerns that people have right now, I'm about communication and management challenges and also what is their willingness to or interest in the potential for a collaborative body of this sort.

**Melissa Garza** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 12:08

So that was the focus and you know what?

We walked away with was learning a lot about the kind of diverse perspectives on on those topics of of how the Forest Service was working around or with particular challenges like permitting, visitor use, impacts, campsite and trail maintenance, motorized and non motorized use issues, you know, current and future, social and environmental impacts to the boundary waters and also access and availability of opportunities to experience the boundary waters.

So those are some of the interest if you will, that we know kind of transcend some of the categories of people that are out there that use the the wilderness.

You know, they might come from different backgrounds or represent different groups, but they shared some of these interests.

And so as we think about a collaborative group, we wanna make sure that these types of diverse interests are represented.

So the what many of of the people on that participated in the assessment said as they shared ideas for what a collaborative could focus on, which we certainly reflected on and we we worked with the steering steering team from the Superior National Forest to kind of review and look at that.

And one of the main things that they requested was that they want the four service to come forward with their vision of what they see in collaborative to be about so that that that people like yourselves have something to kind of, you know, think about chew on see this makes sense as a, as a group, as a, as a focus for a group of people to to work on.

**Christine Rettler (she/her)** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 13:50

So this is a draft purpose that came out of that assessment and worked with the steering committee.

It's to create a form that brings together a wide variety of interest groups to exchange ideas and diverse perspectives, and to foster shared learning and discussion with the Forest Service

on the stewardship of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

In the context of wilderness laws, regulations, policy and guidance, so there's a lot in there. It's, but it's meant to be brought enough to encompass those kind of discussions and also to put some parameters around what what can be discussed, because that was another thing we heard from people like yourselves that participate in the assessment is that there's gonna need to be kind of bounced to the conversations and certainly Tom Hall mentioned some of those in his introductions of of the types of things that might be a focus of discussions.

**Quinn, Cathleen - FS, MN** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 14:47

So as we move forward in the next few months and we'll we'll share that timeline with you at the end of this webinar, we are we would like to hear from people that are interested in maybe being considered as a member of the collaborative collaboratives are typically not that large.

You know that because they have to be a manageable sides for discussion.

So that means finding people that have the time commitment that are really dedicated to, like wanting to work and discuss and maybe problem solve through some issues and we'll we'll lay that out in a minute.

But if you're interested or you know somebody who you think might be really good for being a member of the collaborative, and that might represent your interest as well, we would encourage you to just have them send us an email or interest.

And that's my email and Lauren's email right there.

As he as a point of contact.

And then we'll work through the winter to kind of go through that selection process of reaching out, having some conversations with folks and circling back with people that expressed interest to see if we can get to a actual initial collaborative groups to start off in, in the spring.

So Lauren, go ahead.

**Lauren Nutter** 16:01

Yeah, I'll jump in here with just starting to Orient does a little bit on kind of what we're visioning for a membership selection process.

So First off, to talk a little bit about our rules here.

So the National Center, given our role as independent party, will leave the selection process and our job is to work to ensure that the diversity of interests are represented in the collaborative.

And so we'll be selecting members based upon final selection criteria that stuffs gonna talk about the draft version of that in a moment here.

And then, of course, the period to force the convening the collaborative, so we're working with them and a steering committee of folks from Superior National Forest for input on the selection criteria, process and timeline.

And I think you can go next slide down South.

And so we'll be working with superior National Forest and independent neutral and looking to find a balance form or participants can both speak and be heard in our initial expectations for folks who are joining.

Is that it would be for a term of probably two to three years to ensure sustainability and

prevent full turnover of the collaborative membership and then upon selection into the collaborative, we'll send out a letter and work to schedule an initial kickoff meeting for the collaborative.

And I'll let Zach share a little bit more about the draft membership criteria and qualifications that we're thinking about for this process.

**Seth Cohen** 17:25

Thanks, Lauren.

Yeah.

And I just want to reemphasize that point, you know that we are well we're we're working with the steering committee that I mentioned from the Superior National Forest to think through these this criteria, but then our role Lauren and its role as this as an independent neutral that doesn't have a particular interest in a particular part of any of the issues that might be discussed is to really think critically through you know how to how to choose and help choose people.

Hopefully we get a lot of interest, but if you know there is a a huge amount of interest to work through with all of those people that are interested and try to get to a a representative number, that both is a good for a manageable size for discussion and dialogue, but also represents the wide variety of interests that care about the the resource, the boundary waters, Wilderness Canoe area.

So umm with that wait, this is our draft criteria and this is based off of our experience working with a lot of different types of collaborative bodies and collaborative groups that would be similar to this that meets from time to time.

**DeJoannis, Alexa** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 18:33

And if you if you haven't read the assessment report that some of you participated in, generally what we heard from people is that it would be hard to convene a collaborative body like this more than you know.

**DeJoannis, Alexa** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 18:47

Quarterly, generally and there might be some hybrid or virtual meetings that would happen outside of that, but because of people's busy lives and and and you know, especially during the the summer season and maybe being away during the winter, that's at least for the people that live live locally and regionally.

No, it'll be we'll have to kind of time a collaborative meetings around that.

So that's that's a little bit of just about the thinking about what it might mean to be committed representative or member of such a such a body.

But what we're looking for is that people that can commit to the time and resources you know necessary to participate fully in the collaborative, very importantly in a discussion like this, where you're gonna have divergent positions and divergent issues, which is of course welcome, do you know, definitely don't expect people to view things the same way, but there needs to be a commitment to, you know, to dialogue and respectful behavior with others.

And you know, to being able to work through and challenges where you know you might be sitting at a table with someone who has a very different perspective on on management or communication or other aspects of what might be discussed in that forum.

Umm, I've definitely a curiosity for learning shared learning with other members and with the Forest Service hearing those different perspectives and being open to kind of looking at issues that can address multiple ideas and multiple concerns.

Is, umm on that note?

I know I don't know if it was mentioned earlier, it was discussed a lot during the assessment.

The the expectation is that this collaborative would would not be a decision making body.

It would be an opportunity to discuss and share particular issues and challenges that superior national forces working on and whatever kind of problem solving and discussions happened in the collaborative, could help inform the superior National Forest so they can make better informed decisions.

But the group itself, wouldn't it be expected to reach consensus?

Because that was one thing that people brought up.

Is that is that that would be really challenging to reach consensus with a group like this that has potentially really different issues on and different interest.

So the other couple of their bullets demonstrated in established communication network with others within an area of interest or is committed to communicating about the collaborative and work of the Superior National Forest to a broader audience, including seeking input from others outside of the collaborative when needed.

So what we're talking about here is this is, you know, not a hard requirement, but it'd be great if people that wanna be a part of this have their own networks, through their groups or communities, that would also care and be interested in in learning and providing information back to the collaborative about some of the topics that would be discussed.

So that creates a little bit more of a because the collaborative group is smaller, it reaches a wider, broader, broader group that way and there would probably occasionally be some kind of like the collaborative reporting out to larger groups or to through a webinar.

And of course there's the website which will we'll mention again later.

We're information could be posted that comes out of those collaborative discussions.

I'm lastly demonstrate knowledge of experience in or expertise within a distinct interest area related to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, and I'll show those categories that we're working with as draft right now that what is what I mean when I say like a particular area or experience with or expertise in and these largely come out of, you know, types, ways that the four services already been engaging groups through its large database of of interested parties and and key stakeholders and partners.

So.

That we have a, you know, roughly about 14 I I haven't counted lately kind of areas of interest, if you will, that are pretty broad but.

What we would like to do is find a a couple seats for each of these areas of interest to fit to see the collaborative with and that we.

So when I say see what I mean like Members who would sit at the table.

So to speak, hypothetically, and that would be either in person or hybrid or or virtually when when the collaborative is able to meet.

So first one you know and we we put some kind of draft descriptions here, environmental or wilderness conservation, preservation, advocacy for the wilderness.

So there's obviously some distinct and unique groups within that.

So we would expect some diversity within each of these categories.

Same with outfitting, guiding or eager to tourism to different types of commercial commercial interest.

Some of you are involved in that might in that and there's a variety, obviously of types of commercial commercial use and commercial interest both in the Eastern and western parts of the boundary waters where we would like to find a few representatives to serve on the collaborative and same with with academia, research or historical.

We realize there's some people that are academics that have a lot of expertise and experience and knowledge of the boundary waters, as well as some historians who might not consider them an academic first.

But they have extensive historical knowledge and experience with the boundary waters.

And then recreational list is quite broad.

You know, that would really.

A.

Describe any kind of visitor.

Repeat visitor to the boundary waters, who may come to visit the boundary waters in different ways.

Either is an overnight canoeist or is a day use motor or whatever it might be, so we'll have to look at the the types of interests that express interest within that that category and hopefully find a couple seats that can represent diverse viewpoints.

Next slide is this wouldn't all fit on one page, so we have it over 3 pages right now.

Umm, we intend to invite representatives of the native nations or tribal nations.

The three bands in the area that have ancestral and and present day connections and interest in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness will be given an opportunity to to participate.

They, whether they choose to or choose to only participate outside of the boundary waters we and we want to make sure that a seat for them historically underserved or underrepresented populations where some of the folks that we spoke to during the assessment phase and this might include, you know, women groups, youth groups, the Umm, black, indigenous people of color who come to visit the boundary waters but have less access or resources to to to visit the the area and then education and interpretation, youth and adult might include something like youth camps and other forms of education that we spoke to her have.

**Lyman Welch** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 26:13

We've been put in touch with by the Superior National Forest and then lastly, there's a number of seats that would be at least available to different representatives of local, county, state and federal government who are more intimately involved in the wilderness area.

So county government or county level interest, you know that's geographically relevant or close to the boundary waters and maybe has some kind of role Community level interest could could specifically describe within the gateway communities.

So that might include interest around Chamber of Commerce or tourism, but we wanted to keep it a little bit more flexible than that because we don't know exactly who's gonna be available or interested to represent those particular communities.

My state government or statewide interest seat for you know, most likely are relevant state

agency that's involved with the boundary waters.

And then, of course, the convening force, the convening seat of the Forest Service, Superior National Forest.

That is gonna be ultimate responsible to, you know, think about and learn from what comes out of the collaborative and try to implement what is feasible in terms of ideas and and create creative kind of thoughts that come out of some of those discussions.

And then lastly, we don't know again whether they will choose to participate, but most likely there would be a relevant participation at at some level of engagement from neighboring federal or international uh agencies that interact with the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

**John F** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 28:00

And these are all groups that we spoke to during the assessment phase.

But of course, we didn't speak to all of you or speak to everybody, because not everybody was able to participate in that.

Initial assessment, or they they chose not to, but they that doesn't mean that they you or they will not be interested in this next step of of a collaborative group.

So with that, I'll just turn it over back to Lauren for a minute to just talk about the timeline and then we'll come back to some time for questions.

**Lauren Nutter** 28:31

Great.

So yeah, we can't where we are now.

I'm in November beginning to share this draft information with you all in this webinar.

Really kind of kicks off that process, so sharing what's gonna be draft information on the boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness collaborative process.

So as we've mentioned this webinar and the recording of it, the information from it will be eventually available and shared with folks and resource for you to look back on and going forward from there, you know we are inviting and encouraging any thoughts or questions or input at this stage.

So there will be a stage of updating the information available on the collaborative process. Finalizing the selection criteria and the membership category so that information will be available on the collaborative website, which we'll put in the chat again here and then sent out via the security National Force Outreach list, which you can sign up for through that website as well.

So we'll add that into a chat again as encouragement here as we kind of wrap up.

And then in December as well, encouraging expressions of interest for membership.

So again, as kind of selection criteria and the categories are available and finalized, there will be notification out to everyone who's interested.

We more information on that and then we'll be moving forward with the selection process.

So just an encouragement of at this stage we're still taking questions and kind of refining things, but then we will also notify as that gets finalized and move into the selection process.

So as you can see here, the selection process then is kind of over that winter sometime between January and March or they actually working through the selection process which is set that I have mentioned will be led by the National Center and the two of us.

**Leigh Stepan** left the meeting

**Lauren Nutter** 30:11

And then we're hoping for a collaborative startup in spring of 2024 and actually having a first collaborative meeting together like we in person slash hybrid and that would kind of be the next steps in timeline from there.

So step up half it back to him.

**Seth Cohen** 30:33

Great.

Thanks Lauren.

So this last slide UM, it should say contact us or it just think of it as that if you want to reach out after the webinar or you know someone you think might be appropriate and you know to express interest in potentially being considered for you know as a representative interest for the collaborative, we would appreciate it.

You know, some of you that one thought that occurred to me.

If you're part of a group already and you know that there's probably lots of you that would maybe be interested in the collaborative it, it would only help us if you talk amongst yourselves first and think about like you know, would one of us want to maybe put our name forward or, you know, think about who in your particular organization or group, if there's several of you might be interested in in being a part of this effort for consideration because as you saw, we can only have so many available seats for this.

But that doesn't mean you can't be engaged if you're not part of the collaborative.

Certainly we we kind of envision it to be like a tears of engagement, said the collaborative would meet and then share that information via websites.

Maybe some level kind of tier level 2 engagement where maybe there's a broader workshop from time to time where others could attend and kind of learn about what the collaborative is doing or webinar put on like this something to that effect so that people can be have a way to engage outside of that smaller group that might have to dedicate more of their own personal time and resources to to such an effort.

So I didn't see any questions in the chat.

If you do, you have a question either for the Forest Service team, you know, led by Tom or for Lauren and I about this process and where it is right now.

Feel free to raise your hand with the little hand raised feature if you toggle your mouse set to the top of your screen.

Umm you can do that.

You can raise your hand like that and then take it down.

You can also type a chat into the to the chat window and I see that Christine put a link to the the new, the new collaborative.

**DeJoannis, Alexa** 32:49

Well.

**Seth Cohen** 32:52

Getting a little background noise, but umm, let me let me see who's got their hand up.

**DeJoannis, Alexa** 32:53

Well.

**Seth Cohen** 32:57

Or maybe someone can help me identify cause I don't see all the screens right now and so the first hand was uh Lyman and then Jeremiah after that.

But what I was gonna say is, yeah, put that in the chat and then I was gonna say the the link to the new collaborative website that some of you may or may not have seen as in the chat window now and that will definitely be a place where information from this webinar and future information is posted and where you can sign up there for more news or information from the Forest Service team in terms of next steps.

Lyman, go ahead.

And yourself and jump right in for either Tom or Lauren and I.

**Lyman Welch** 33:42

Alright.

Yeah.

Thanks.

Sorry I I having trouble with the chat so I couldn't type into that, but I I was I guess I've continued on the boundary waters when I was much younger with the Boy Scouts and really appreciate the boundary waters and I'm wondering how can we best protect the boundary waters from mining.

It's it's an important wilderness area.

**Hatcher, Orry - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Lyman Welch** 34:06

And how can we umm limit the number of commercial tow boats that are motorized that are going through the wilderness areas so that we protect the wilderness character of the boundary waters?

Are you collecting comments from the general public at some point or exploring either of those two issues in what the collaborative is doing?

That's my question. Thanks.

**Seth Cohen** 34:33

Yeah.

I think I'll turn that over to to to Tom, that those particular topics right now are outside of the the bounds of the collaborative focus, but it's inevitable that there will be conversations on those types of things that it at the appropriate times probably.

But umm, and that's kind of a separate process that I can let the poor service speak to you.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 34:55

You know, I think at some level the collaborative is going to be an opportunity for us to discuss, you know, some of the things, make sure that everybody understands what those law regulation and policies, what that existing management looks like.

You know, there's definitely controversial things that exist, whether that's mining or motorized use, and people have different opinions of what that is.

And we really follow law regulation and policy and then those next steps really come down to if there's changes that are proposed, if there's, you know, need for action, those go through an epub process.

Right.

And so the collaborative is really meant to engage on what are the topics of the day related to anything that may touch management of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. At this point, there's no proposal that is on the board that we're looking for comments back right now, right?

If you're interested, there's always an opportunity for you to engage with the superior National Forest.

But you know, there's lots of things in the news related to some mining, you know, there's there's prohibitions within the boundary waters related to mining.

There's a buffer around the boundary waters related to mining, and so those things that are specific to the wilderness right now, there's nothing on the table that we're talking about, right.

But the general concept of management are things that this collaborative we want to engage with people on in order to understand is there a need for change?

Are there approaches that we should take as we are proposing?

Actions.

Uh, that we have that broad range of stakeholders input to understand.

Are we missing something?

Are we thinking of those things?

Are we engaging and communicating in an effective way?

**Lyman Welch** 36:46

Thanks.

Well, I appreciate that and I encourage the collaborative to consider those two issues that I mentioned, the mining in the Boundary Waters area and the limitation on motorized use and the boundary areas in the wilderness to protect the wilderness area as as two issues for the collaborative to engage on and discuss further.

**fbdb37d0-3339-4476-a50e-330685503b60** left the meeting

**c854c2de-77c3-47a4-b1d6-7b45d2cf5b9d** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 37:09

Being sliman.

Umm yeah, definitely noted and I appreciate the the comment, feedback and so I'll go to Jeremiah next and then I do see a couple of chats questions that we can try to address as well.

**Jeremiah** 37:25

Uh, yes, thank you for taking my comments here.

I didn't really hear what you were all about.

What is your goal?

Bony waters always been threatened.

So are you able to exhibit any power or you're trying to stop something?

It just seems it for me when I heard it just seems so vague and I don't know what your goal and your how you know you've succeeded.  
What you're doing based on what I've heard.  
So if you would tell me your purpose and your goals.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 37:59

So Seth, yeah, maybe maybe I'll take that and then we can go to that purpose slide, right.

**Seth Cohen** 37:59

Do you want to give a brief cap recap of that?

**Jeremiah** 38:00

In what?

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 38:05

And so in the beginning, the intent of this is to increase transparency and engagement around management of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Right.

For those broad range of perspectives and stakeholders, I think that's something that we've recognized as an agency and that we've heard through the situational assessment that the Utah Foundation helped us with is there are opportunities for us to increase our transparency, our engagement, have clear communication and this is definitely one of those methods that we are pushing forward, right.

And again, there's no specific action that we are asking the collaborative to take on.

This is a forum to have the right conversations at the right time to make sure that you know, as we do have proposals, there is engagement and there's that transparency and how we're approaching something and communicating around that.

And if there's, if the if there's consensus.

**Jeremiah** 39:05

Again, that seems I when I'm flying pretty.

And I was involved in Line 3.

There's a real a real a real intimate threat, umm.

And I don't seem like an I just doesn't have any purpose.

I don't quite get it.

Who's what are you worried about?

What?

You know, you gotta be worried knowing the boundary waters, but I don't know what your goal is.

You do?

Are you to stop mining or you to stop deforestation?

It looks like it just, I mean I'm being facetious here.

**Seth Cohen** 39:40

So.

**Jeremiah** 39:40

I know you're not that.

Just think a nice group to talk about things, but I don't know what power you're gonna have but influence since.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 39:46

So ultimately, ultimately, the decision making authority will still rest with the Forest Service, right?

Not most of that will sit with me specifically, right?

As the forest supervisor and so the collaborative is not going to be a decision making body, but it is a collaborative effort in order to have broad range of stakeholders and discussions to help inform at some level my perspective of for how we approach issues as they arise and to make sure that I'm considering all of those aspects when we do make decisions right now they're there was an invitation that we put out related to tobo management.

We are currently under litigation related to Tobo management in the wilderness and so we have recognized especially with this pre scoping invitation, what are the issues, what are the engagement that needs to occur and potentially what are the proposals that are needed to react to the issues that have arisen related to Tobo management, right?

That is probably one example I can think of many more related to the management of the wilderness, right?

What are the impacts that may exist related to wilderness character and are there changes that may be needed to manage for wilderness character?

What are the uh allowed motorized uses within the the wilderness and how do we manage those Tobo use being one of those right?

And how does that fit within the spectrum on authorized under the 1978 Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Act, right?

Those are all things that are very controversial, right that we want to have meaningful dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders through a collaborative effort to make sure that we are not doing this in a silo, which I think you know historically may have seen that way. We're trying to be more and more transparent and more engaged in a proactive way, not in a reactive way.

Right, let's have the right discussions early and not when it's in litigation not to prevent any of you from litigating.

That is a right that anyone has.

**Seth Cohen** 42:06

Thanks, Tom.

**Jeremiah** 42:07

Are you gonna?

**Seth Cohen** 42:07

Appreciate that.

And Jeremiah thanks.

I need to we need to get to a few other questions.

**Jeremiah** 42:10

I want more.

Right now, you're gonna stop nickel mining, and you're gonna stop nickel mining.

**Seth Cohen** 42:13

Pardon me.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 42:18

So I I have not authorized anything related to that, right.

**Seth Cohen** 42:18

So.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 42:22

There's obviously a withdrawal that was put in place related to mining within the Rainy River watershed.

**Jeremiah** 42:23

OK.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 42:29

All of this comes down to law, regulation and policy, and so those things that don't occur on National Forest system lands, we're not going to be able to speak to.

That's not going to be the forum here or in the collaborative.

**Seth Cohen** 42:43

Then it's Jeremiah.

And thanks, Tom.

And if you, you can certainly follow up with you more to Jeremiah to help clarify like more about the purpose and focus of such a collaborative body.

And hopefully that was helpful.

And I'm Tom.

Thanks for providing some specific examples of of topics that might be addressed in the collaborative around you know, challenges and and issues that are out there that are have particular things going on with regard to management and forced plan.

Umm so I I'm not seeing other hands but I do wanna make sure I at least try to get to the a few other comments in the chat and then if anybody else wants to jump in with a quick question or leave this with anything, please please raise your hand and you can also lower your hand if you want.

**Martinez, Juan - FS, MN** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 43:34

If you don't have another question, Jeremiah.

Thanks.

Umm, so it says.

Umm, you mentioned initial, George said.

You mentioned initial terms would be two to three years.

How long do you plan on this discussion running?

I'll let again, I can let Tom chime in on that.

If you if you wants to, but I I would say from a standpoint of what we've done with in terms of planning and thinking through this with the steering committee is that we have some

funding for the initial two years.

But the hope is that the collaborative will continue potentially indefinitely, because it'll be a form for discussion and and of a of communication and management issues over time.

The the Members may, you know, like we've mentioned, modify the purpose and objectives over time so that it can be kind of a living, a living document, a Living Group and so that all you know, obviously we don't know how it's going to fare in these initial years.

We hope it's successful and we thought, you know, for sustainability purposes it would be great to have a commitment again knowing that's maybe only three or four real collaborative meetings a year for people to commit to two to three years and it and with the reason we say two and three or three years is because if we have some people that commit to three years that way not everybody kind of drops off in two years and we're kind of starting from scratch with with finding new people that wanna be involved.

Umm hope that answers your question, George.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 45:06

Yeah, just to reiterate, you know, the hope is that this can be a sustained effort over time, right, that this is meaningful both from a management perspective and from a stakeholder perspective that this is a forum that has legs and is meaningful for long term engagement.

**Seth Cohen** 45:27

Great.

Thanks Umm and leave before I get to you.

I just wanted to get to Christine's comment.

Can you share again how many available seats are on the collaborative we, you know, that's not completely determined yet because we're trying to, you know, value the interest but based on those categories that I showed you, you know the different types of of interest you know whether it be the environmental, commercial, state, tribal, local government recreationist that those there's there's a I think 12 different groups right now that would essentially equal two seats per group, 24 seats in the collaborative.

That's a draft estimate because that's about a a really you get much bigger than that.

It's really hard to to get people around and have A and have collaborative discussions again.

That doesn't mean they can't report back or with with other people that from their groups that are interested in care about the collaborative.

But that's kind of a a more manageable size and a way to do it in a representative way that's also balanced so that no one, no one group has more seats than the other, so to speak.

Hope that answered your question.

And of course, as this becomes more of a finalized version, we will be sharing that out again, supposedly with those who are interested. Umm.

And then there was a quick question about media not listed on the possible possible membership.

Umm yeah.

I don't know if anybody else from the superior team wants to speak to that, but it it kinda doesn't.

The media didn't quite neatly fit with some of the other interest groups that some a media would be engaged, you know, and some of that reporting out in Tier 2 engagement from the collaborative, but it creates a somewhat of a different dynamic in terms of the, the dialogue and and the problem solving.

**Leigh Stepan** joined the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 47:26

If media is at the table, so that's just part from our experiences.  
How that has generally worked best, but happy to follow up more with Joe.  
Ohh, you know either us or the superior team about that.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 47:41

So it I think that has been part of our discussion of you know there there is obviously interest from the media related to how we engage with the collaborative as it moves forward and the management around the boundary waters.

**Seth Cohen** 47:41

I don't have anybody.

**Jeremiah** left the meeting

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 47:55

Canoe Area wilderness, right?

And my commitment to the media is that we're gonna continue that engagement that we have begun under my tenure, right, that we want to have the right conversations at the right time and that commitment to maybe directly after a collaborative meeting that that we have an interview that we have an opportunity to engage, that there's notes that are available, that are distributed to the public, that there's some level of engagement.  
But really trying to represent those interests, those interest groups, and having those seats at the table.

And so media sort of having that reporting role and taking a seat, maybe not having that same perspective like Seth was talking about.

And so again, happy to sort of talk about what that perspective may be and how we can accommodate those things as we move forward.

None of this is written in stone.

We're really eliciting interest and engagement and so if you have ideas of what that looks like or what you would like that to look like, happy to continue to engage on that.

**Seth Cohen** 49:04

Thanks, Tom.

And yeah, thanks, Joe.

I appreciate the the question.

Leaf, let me go to you.

We have a little bit of time left, so if you want to unmute and jump in.

**Martinez, Juan - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 49:22

I think your live.

**Leif DeVaney** 49:23

You can you hear me alright?

Yeah.

I just wanted to say thanks for the opportunity for, you know, potentially joining this collaborative.

This sounds like a really good opportunity to talk about some umm, controversial issues that are very important to Minnesota.

But also to ohm the Canadian side as well.

And I guess one of the things I was wondering is if any efforts have been made at this point to engage with people on the Canadians or and entities on the Canadian side or if this has been mostly between ohm, you know the United States and tribal entities within the United States.

Umm, so I'm a citizen of the may T Nation of Canada who just sort of a quasi governmental quasi tribal.

Umm agents organization and I.

I mean, there's a there's a huge history of matique culture in the boundary Waters area.

And I I think it would be good to have input from both sides of the fence or you know the boy or whatever so to speak.

**Seth Cohen** 50:47

Sounds good.

Leave umm, I appreciate that input and I know we did try to engage some of the umm, indigenous groups in Canada during the assessment, chose not to participate but but there's still that willingness to consider different input and perspectives and so we can certainly talk about that with the steering committee and somebody could follow back up with you.

**Leif DeVaney** 51:00

It's.

**Seth Cohen** 51:11

Anybody else wanna?

**Leif DeVaney** 51:11

So they they may decline to participate.

Is that correct?

**Seth Cohen** 51:15

Well, we didn't reach everybody from.

We reached out to a number of groups from and tribal interest and in the assessment, and some folks you know, prefer to communicate directly with the Forest Service and not through an assessment process.

So that's all that's part of it.

Without going into the details, it's not for lack of interest, always that people choose not to participate in an assessment.

**Leif DeVaney** 51:38  
Right.

**Seth Cohen** 51:41  
UM.

Tom or anybody else, was there anything there that you needed?  
I don't know if if there was a a particular question there leave that we missed, but I think you just you know you if you're interested in reach out to Lauren and I is you know for follow up.

**Leif DeVaney** 52:00  
I was probably a little vague, but I was just you.  
You answered my question so.

**Seth Cohen** 52:07  
Thanks.  
Umm.

**Leigh Stepan** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 52:17  
All right.  
Any other questions?  
Hands I don't see any other hands or just kind of clarifying questions about the collaborative process that Lauren and I can answer.  
And if you're not wanting to?  
I asked those in front of uh, it's great number, it looks like we have about 505355 people on the call.  
If you don't wanna do that here like I mentioned, a drop us an email with any questions about the process or and if it's more specific to Forest Service issues or things outside of the collaborative.  
Of course, you you may contact them directly or will or will connect you with the right people on the steering team.  
There's some specific questions about budget and the chat.  
I don't know for service wants to take those or you know follow up with the specifics to those individuals.

**Felicia Hokenstad (BRTA)** left the meeting

**BC** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 53:25  
But yeah, from our standpoint, there's just funding for us to convene the collaborative and put to put together the collaborative effort that's part of this interagency agreement.  
And you know to be able to enough for the meetings to convene and and to kind of do all the planning and sustain like a body like this, you know, and all the work that goes into it for two years, I know some people during the assessment had asked questions about like, would

there be funding for people to, you know, citizens to participate and unfortunately, you know, the the federal government cannot fund individuals to attend or participate in a collaborative.

**Dave Hunsche** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 54:05

So that is it is something that we recognize as a big ask, you know that people are giving of their time and resources to, you know, spend 1/2 a day or a couple hours, whatever the group ends up determining is most effective to attend and be a part of these meetings. But that's that's why we have that in the criterias that you know those those things will require more effort for some especially those who can't write it off as part of their job necessarily.

So I just want to acknowledge that you know, so I don't know with that, I don't know if anybody else wants to to jump in or speak with the last few minutes that we have.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 54:45

Yeah.

So George, I'm asking my team of how much has gone into that agreement and really, you know, I think the cost is higher because we're designing, setting up, putting time and effort into and and what that cost will be long term for facilitation really is a conversation that I think we will hope to continue to have, whether that's the National Center or if there are others.

Umm so the thought of \$200,000 comes to mind related to the amount, but I think it might be a little bit less than that.

And so that that's what it has taken for the agreement that we have with the National Center right now.

**Seth Cohen** 55:40

Yes, over a two year period that we have, umm a longer agreement though in case you know the collaborative there's there's various ways this could play out right.

The the collaborative could take off and do great and not maybe wanna sustain itself for more than a couple years and maybe the National Center would stay involved is in a facilitation role or maybe the collaborative would choose to go a different direction, that those are all kinds of things that can happen in terms of like facilitation and dynamics of a collaborative group like this.

But it it's just takes a bit of work upfront to really pull something like this together and and get it off the ground.

So appreciate all your time today and and dedicating an hour to just kind of learn about it. Listen and and and here are some of the the next steps and hope that we will hear from some of you now that you can digest a little bit more of what it means to to be in this in this effort and what the purpose is.

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 56:43

Yeah.

Thank you so much, Seth and Lauren for helping us to design this for framing up what this looks like.

**Matthew Davis, NCTA (Guest)** left the meeting

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 56:51

And as they said, the website that was put in the chat, that's where more information including this recording will be housed into the future where people can sign up for their interest, different levels of interest as you want to engage.

**Meghan Cosgrove** left the meeting

**Lyman Welch** left the meeting

**Hall, Thomas - FS, MN** 57:07

So I hope everybody has a great evening.

**Thibodeaux, Jaime (DNR)** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 57:13

Yeah.

Thanks.

I appreciate everybody and uh, we'll sign off now unless anyone else has anything and we'll stay on till exactly 5:00 o'clock.

**Alan Brew** left the meeting

**Eva - Ely Chamber of Commerce** left the meeting

**Barb Soderberg** left the meeting

**Bjorn Anderson- Camp Vermilion** left the meeting

**Leif DeVaney** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 57:22

But thank you again.

**Lucas, Sunny - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Hoffman, Heather - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Melissa Garza** left the meeting

**Mindy (Guest)** left the meeting

**Petrack, Nicholas - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Ann McNally** left the meeting

**Ozzie Reif** left the meeting

**John F** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 57:32

If he didn't enter your name in the chat and you're still in, we'd appreciate it.

**Taylor, Peter - FS, MN** left the meeting

**North, Eric - FS, WI** left the meeting

**Munter, Emily - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Hahn, Erica - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Quinn, Cathleen - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 57:36

Just so we can see who is here. Thanks.

**e769732e-253a-419a-9ee2-464f4f01c4c6** left the meeting

**Christine Rettler (she/her)** left the meeting

**Wickman, Trent - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Kevin Proescholdt** left the meeting

**Hagan, Cynthia M** left the meeting

**Rose, Charles L** left the meeting

**Kania, Aaron - FS, MN** left the meeting

**9d8e7aaa-d269-416b-bf8c-52dff557a6e2** left the meeting

**Bogardus-Szymaniak, Ellen - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Joe Friedrichs** left the meeting

**Josh Dix** left the meeting

**c854c2de-77c3-47a4-b1d6-7b45d2cf5b9d** left the meeting

**Jason** left the meeting

**Carson LaRocque** left the meeting

**Amy Freeman** left the meeting

**Seth Cohen** 58:15

And Lauren, our team, maybe we could uh, reconvene in the other space just after this for a minute if we want to just touch base on a couple things, that'd be great.

**Jim** left the meeting

**Schwaller, Ann - FS, MN** left the meeting

**Kolinski, Christine - FS, MN** stopped transcription