2020 IMPACT REPORT

SPORTSMEN FOR THE BOUNDARY WATERS

sportsmenbwca.org
CONTENTS

• 1 - A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
• 2 - OUR MISSION
• 3 - 2020 ACHIEVEMENTS
• 4 - 2021 GOALS
• 5 - ADVOCACY
• 6 - ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS
• 7 - FINANCES
• 8 - GET INVOLVED
• 9 - MEET THE TEAM
I think it goes without saying that 2020 has been quite the year. A global pandemic will do that. COVID has left no person or business unaffected in its wake. From businesses closing, to job loss, to a family tragedy, we've all had to endure in some shape or form. But I see a silver lining, and that is time with family and the great outdoors.

Sportsmen for the Boundary Waters, and nearly all of our partners, have been working from home since March and I'm starting to go a little crazy, but the immense blessing of being able to spend so much time with my family has been absolutely amazing. It's time with my two little girls that I'll never have again. It's time that I've been able to use to introduce them to nature early and often; cold, clean water, a first fish, a warm fire with smoke in their eyes, a lookout hike. That's what's important.

Scores of folks both novice and expert have flooded to our favorite outdoor haunts. Awakening some to the glory of our precious wild places like the Boundary Waters, but also creating the need to educate folks about proper stewardship of the land and its resources. In a way, that is exactly what we are doing to protect the Boundary Waters from the current proposed copper-nickel mine by Twin Metals, and future companies hungry to exploit a one-of-a-kind backcountry fishing and hunting mecca for immediate gain versus maintaining an outdoor economy juggernaut that will provide for Northeastern Minnesota far longer into the future than any mine could.

I've spent countless nights staring at the stars or lightning from the impending storms in the BWCA, waiting for the first light of dawn so I can get a line in the water as early as possible and watch the world wake. One of my greatest pleasures is inhaling that deep crisp, cold air that only those who have ventured deep into the wilderness know.

As I look to the future I think of my little girls and the future generations that depend on us to defend places like the BWCA so that they can experience them in the same, magical way that we have, and so that they can find peace in the wind and a nap under the red pines too. 2021, here we come.

For the woods, Lukas Leaf, executive director
OUR MISSION

To protect the integrity of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and its watersheds for huntable and fishable populations of fish and wildlife, now and forever through advocacy and education.

The Boundary Waters is a special place, filled with the wonders of the Northwoods and an awe-inspiring landscape shaped by glacial movements millennia ago. At nearly 1.1 million acres, the Boundary Waters spreads across the Northeastern tip of Minnesota. It is a vast boreal forest consisting of interconnected lakes, streams, wetlands, and aquifers that provide some of the best fishing and hunting the world has to offer.

Hunters and anglers travel to the Boundary Waters for the one-of-a-kind chance to pursue lake trout, walleye, smallmouth bass, northern pike, whitetail deer, ruffed grouse, and black bear in a true backcountry wilderness landscape. Our future generations depend on us to protect our wild places. The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness is no exception.

Our mission is directed at the entire outdoor recreation community, and more specifically at hunters and anglers. 140,000 jobs in Minnesota are outdoor industry jobs, of which 40,000+ are related to hunting and fishing. The Boundary Waters is the most visited Wilderness in America, and thousands of those visitors fish and hunt on their trips each year. Lodges, outfitters, guide services, and locals all benefit from the clean water in the BWCA and overwhelmingly advocate for their protection at events we organize, facilitate, or partner on.
2020 ACHIEVEMENTS

From leading the efforts in the conservation community on federal legislative advocacy to headlining a feature film by Patagonia, Sportsmen for the Boundary Waters has worked hard to make a difference in 2020, and we are riding the momentum into 2021.

SFBW worked to bolster bipartisan support for BWCA protection directly in Congress, at federal agencies, and amongst sportsmen and sportswomen nationwide. From Backcountry Hunters & Anglers to the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, we have created a powerful coalition that heading into 2021 has made the Boundary Waters a priority issue.

In January 2020, Representative Betty McCollum introduced bipartisan legislation, H.R. 5598, or the Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act in the United States House of Representatives to permanently protect the Boundary Waters watershed from proposed copper-nickel mining in its watershed.

This year, Sportsmen BWCA has shown support for H.R. 5598 with over 10,000 messages to Congress from across the country, plus thousands more from our conservation group partners. This is a great step forward for BWCA protection, but the work is just getting started, and with your help and that of our partners, we will continue the path forward to passing this legislation.

SFBW led the campaign within the hunt/fish community to encourage sportsmen and sportswomen to Vote The Boundary Waters. Through paid ads in local newspapers and a strong effort through digital platforms, this campaign was able to reach over 300,000 people over the course of six weeks.

Sportsmen for the Boundary Waters was featured in Patagonia led film, Public Trust along with Bears Ears and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, effectively solidifying the Boundary Waters as a national issue and increasing the exposure of our issue exponentially. On YouTube alone, the film has nearly 2.5 million views. SFBW held two private screenings of the film and led multiple online roundtable discussions with conservation leaders focusing on the Boundary Waters and the film.

We are excited to build off of these achievements and to see what we can accomplish in the coming year.
**GOALS FOR 2021**

Future work to ensure permanent protection of the Boundary Waters is underway and SFBW is leading the conservation effort.

What Comes Next

- Pursue re-introduction and testimony on behalf of H.R. 5598, ultimately achieving passage through Congress.

- Work closely with government agencies, key decision-makers, and national NGO partners to reinstate a federal mineral withdrawal within the Superior National Forest.

- Increase our membership, advocacy, and online actions taken by supporters to protect BWCA by 50%.

- Further develop working relationships with state & national NGO partners within the hunting, fishing, and conservation community to increase our chances of permanent protection for the Boundary Waters through both state and federal strategies.

- Develop our fundraising program by introducing and implementing a corporate partnership program and seeking more diverse resources for organizational funding.

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2021 WILL PRESENT REAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOUNDARY WATERS CONSERVATION
SFBW has worked hard to adapt to a new environment – the rallies, in-person events and sports shows where we spread the word about the need to protect the BWCA were put on hold in 2020. In their place, SFBW has stepped up to connect virtually with more people than ever.

Despite the challenges of staying distant, the Boundary Waters has an incredible ability to bring people together. Our work to permanently protect the watershed of this special landscape by uniting a broad coalition of hunters and anglers is picking up pace faster than ever.

Investing in the future of the Boundary Waters is more important now than ever. Conservation and stewardship of land and water isn’t a thing of the past – it needs to be lived and acted on for future generations of hunters and anglers.

Thank you again for your ongoing support. Without you, Sportsmen for the Boundary Waters could not have connected thousands of hunters and anglers from across the country to the decision makers who can make permanent protection for the BWCA a reality.
Engagement

133% increase in donors and donations made contributing to permanent protection of the BWCA

75% increase in direct action taken

Advocacy Increase
2019: 6,049 messages sent
2020: 10,621 messages sent

Fundraising Increase
2019: 351 donors made 441 contributions
2020: 789 donors made 1028 contributions
2020 FINANCIALS

Your support makes a difference.

*Financials reflect numbers through 11/30/20

REVENUE
$271,816.53

- Grants & Affiliates: 73.5%
- Individual Donors: 17.6%
- Fundraising Events: 7.8%
- Other Income: 1%

EXPENSES
$210,165.73

- Direct Program: 92%
- Management: 6%
- Fundraising: 2%

Know that .92 cents of every single dollar we received went directly to our work to protect the Boundary Waters.
GET INVOLVED

01 CONTACT CONGRESS
Send a message directly to your decision-makers at the State Capitol or in D.C. Whether it's an online message or a phone call, your voice matters now more than ever.

02 VOLUNTEER
Sign up at sportsmenbwca.org to volunteer at events, help organize direct engagement, and to stay updated on everything BWCA.

03 SPREAD THE WORD
Digital platforms are the best tool for you to reach others and get them involved. Share a petition, post on social media, and join other great conservation organizations working to protect our wild places.

04 INVEST IN THE FUTURE
Know that every dollar goes towards our efforts to permanently protect the Boundary Waters.
MEET THE TEAM

SFBW’s strength is in our partnerships across the country

THE SFBW TEAM

- Lukas Leaf, executive director
- Spencer Shaver, conservation director
- Jake Dahlke - digital content associate

BOARD OR DIRECTORS

- Bob St. Pierre, chair
- Ashley Peters, vice-chair
- Rob Drieslein, treasurer
- Heather Meier, secretary
- Doug Scott
- Dave Seaton

NATIONAL PARTNERS

- Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
- Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
- National Wildlife Federation
- American Sportfishing Association
- Trout Unlimited
- Izaak Walton League of America
- Ruffed Grouse Society
- Fly Fishers International
- American Fly Fishing Trade Association
- National Deer Association

STATE PARTNERS

- MN Chapter, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
- Minnesota Outdoor Heritage Alliance
- Minnesota Conservation Federation
- MN Chapter, Trout Unlimited
- MN Divison, Izaak Walton League

BUSINESS PARTNERS

- First Lite
- Patagonia
- Filson
- Camp Chef
- Outdoor News
- Omnia Fishing
- Piragis Northwoods
- Ely Outfitting Co
- Hungry Jack Outfitters
“ETHICAL AND MORAL QUESTIONS AND HOW WE ANSWER THEM MAY DETERMINE WHETHER PRIMAL SCENES WILL CONTINUE TO BE A SOURCE OF JOY AND COMFORT TO FUTURE GENERATIONS. THE DECISIONS ARE OURS AND WE HAVE TO SEARCH OUR MINDS AND SOULS FOR THE RIGHT ANSWERS... WE MUST BE ETERNALLY VIGILANT, EMBRACE THE BROAD CONCEPT OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL ETHIC TO SURVIVE.”

SIGURD F. OLSON