

All of Spider, Gravel, and Hog Islands, totaling 29 acres, are included in the proposed wilderness.

These three limestone islands, which total 29 acres and vary in elevation from 10 to 20 feet above lake level, have a thin covering of gravel and soil which supports grass, brush, and some trees. Geologically similar, they portray an ecological sequence from Gravel Island, which is devoid of tree growth, to Green Bay Island, which has the highest elevation and the greatest number of living trees.

Ground hemlock grows abundantly on Spider and Hog Islands, while it is now rare on the mainland because of heavy deer browsing pressure. A small area of willow brush is found on Gravel Island; Spider Island has remnants of white birch, white cedar, and white spruce. Red osier dogwood, elderberry, raspberry, and wild currant form dense brush cover on Spider and Hog Islands.

Their small size, remoteness, and landing difficulties have preserved these islands from development. These characteristics have made the islands attractive to gulls, herons, and waterfowl which have found them ideal havens for unmolested nesting and resting grounds. Herring gulls, ring-billed gulls, and waterfowl are the most common nesters, though great blue herons and black-crowned night herons also are successful island nesters.

In their present state, the islands provide ideal conditions for nesting birds, and no developments or management changes for the sake of the resource seem necessary. Public demands for development have been absent or negligible. We agree with the Bureau that public access must be prudently limited and restricted by it to late summer and early fall to avoid disturbance of nesting birds.

The Wisconsin Islands proposal is noncontroversial. Over 160 communications were received during the public hearing procedure, and all expressed support for the wilderness proposal. Little economic impact in the vicinity would result from the islands being added to the national wilderness preservation system. Protection of these islands and their wild values will be most strongly secured by designating them as wilderness areas under the Wilderness Act.

MOOSEHORN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

S. 3502 also would designate two wilderness areas within the Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge in Maine. Moosehorn is located in Washington County, the easternmost land in the continental United States. The wildlife refuge consists of three separate tracts: the Edmunds unit, the Birch Islands unit, and the Baring unit, totaling 22,565 acres. Wilderness potential is found in all three units, and portions of two—the Edmunds and Birch Islands units—are proposed for such designation at the present time.

The largest of the tracts is the Baring unit, which extends south from the Canadian border near Calais and comprises about 16,000 acres. The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife omitted to study or propose wilderness in this 16,000-acre portion of the refuge during the 1964-67 review period of the Wilderness Act. However, many citizens and groups appearing at the administrative public field hearing in Calais in 1967 pointed out that the wilderness system potential of the Baring unit should be given serious study. Important values