

Trail Advocates

of the Clackamas River Ranger District of the Mount Hood National Forest

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Wilderness Bill Passes

Topic: Wilderness Bill Passes

Author: Robert Koscik

Topic Started: 3/25/2009; 11:17:20 AM

Last Posted: 4/13/2009; 4:45:28 PM

Wilderness Bill Passes

Robert Koscik : 3/25/2009; 10:17:20 AM

Reads: 536, Responses: 23 ([view responses to this item](#))

March 25th, 2009

WILDERNESS BILL PASSES!

Ten years in the making, the historic "Wilderness Bill" now goes to President Obama's desk

After many years of work by conservationists around the state and the country, the Public Lands Omnibus Bill has passed!

This bill contains numerous public lands provisions for Oregon, including the Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness Act, which would protect almost 127,000 acres around Mount Hood and add almost 80 miles on nine free-flowing stretches of rivers to the National Wild and Scenic River System.



Fish Creek will receive Wild and Scenic River designation under the Wilderness Bill

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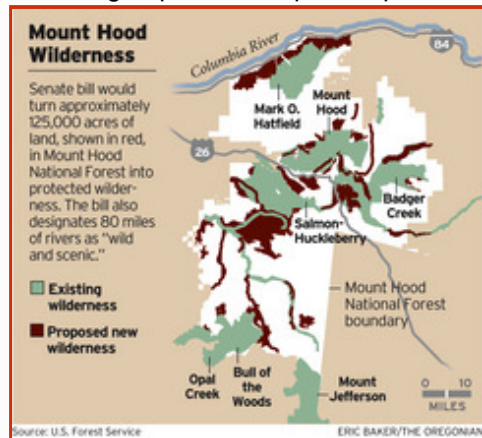
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Less than two weeks ago this bill was put before the House after passing through the Senate in January. It was presented as a non-amendment bill that required a two-thirds vote, in order to avoid allowing for an amendment that would allow guns in national parks. It did not pass and was sent back to the Senate, where it once again was returned to the House today. The bill passed 285 to 140. It will now go to President Obama's desk for signature.

Many thanks to the tireless efforts of our friends at Oregon Wild for continuing to push this important piece of legislation.



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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes

Donovan : 3/25/2009; 4:37:24 PM

Reads: 405, Responses: 22 ([view responses to this item](#))

I heard Blumenauer say today that this will bring a surge of tourists to [our District] and that will stimulate the economy.

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes

Pete Giordano : 3/25/2009; 5:15:56 PM

Reads: 406, Responses: 21 ([view responses to this item](#))

Ummm..."surge" huh? And Estacada was supposed to grow 100% in the last 20 years. Estacada is the same size and I won't hold my breath for a surge of tourists.

Got to love the politico speak.

pete

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes

Joe Keller : 3/25/2009; 8:46:26 PM

Reads: 396, Responses: 20 ([view responses to this item](#))

Typical for politicians. Try to do something good, and make things worse.

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes**Simon Harding** : 3/26/2009; 7:44:27 AMReads: 405, Responses: 19 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

I have written to Wyden a bunch of times asking where the effort for trail maintenance dollars (or a move to allow chainsaw use) is, pointing out situations like that in The Bull of the Woods and the CRT blowdown this year. No response yet. Not surprising. Now that the photo op is over, we won't see anything more done on this. And access is now going to be even worse. The CRT is a good example of this as it will now effectively become a stub trail - rather than a through hike from one car access to another. No access to any trail system. Just an in and out.

I read in the paper this morning that this will be good for the economy because of all the tourists who will now flock to the new or now larger wilderness areas. Seems to me that may not be true if they find they can not get into the wilderness safely because the trails are blocked. I'll be sure to look for the crowds this summer.

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Wilderness Bill Passes**[Edit this Page](#)**Rob Williams** : 3/27/2009; 6:57:18 AMReads: 398, Responses: 18 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

I wrote to him a while back, and he did respond and tell me there are provisions in the bill to allow mechanized stuff in on an exception basis-it specifically mentions fire fighting activities, but other uses are mentioned as well. It is up to the FS to create the necessary paperwork/justification to allow that use, but it seems like it isn't done very much, even though one of the stated uses of wilderness is for human "visits". If the trails are blocked and/or difficult to traverse, it makes it tough to get humans in to visit.

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes**Pete Giordano** : 3/27/2009; 12:26:13 PMReads: 396, Responses: 17 ([view responses to this item](#))

well that's at least a possibility. Although getting the FS to move on paperwork can be a herculean task.

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Wilderness Bill Passes****Donald Presley** : 3/28/2009; 11:35:17 PMReads: 389, Responses: 16 ([view responses to this item](#))

All that is left is for the ink to be put on the bill and let dry.

I am one who has been hiking in the wilds of this district, whether on trail or not for thirty years, and has only recently volunteered my services to the maintenance of our trails. The only reason I didn't hike on a trail for the most part was that I believed that one didn't exist in the area for it wasn't on the map. As I have learned in past year or so, there is alot of trails out there, just not enough people to take an interest in them to keep them alive. There are alot of older trails in our district that predate roads.

Some trails haven't seen any maintenance, for they figured the roads would be our access into the woods and alot of the trails wouldn't be needed. Or the road took the place of the trail, or the extraction of timber obliterated the trail partially or completely, and it was forgotten. But as we have seen as of late, even our roads are disapearing from the landscape. for they are no longer needed to access the timber that is no longer needed and they are being removed or closed to access.

If you have a trail or an area that you enjoy hiking in, now is the time to come forward and take an interest in it by helping keep it alive. A lot the trails we used to cut out with chainsaws, won't see the attention that is needed because a crosscut saw is only allowed in wilderness areas and there are not alot of people interested in cutting out trails with them.

There is no one paid in our disrict to do trail maintenance, so if you see someone doing the work out on a trail, it is out of passion, not the monetary gain the drives him or her to do the work.

Don

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes**Simon Harding** : 3/29/2009; 6:50:57 PMReads: 390, Responses: 15 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

Unnamed environmental groups would rather stand around and talk about how it is not their mission and whine about how the USFS and BLM need more money. Meanwhile, that log stays on the trail.

I've suggested rather directly that it would do a lot if they would put a page on their sites encouraging trail work with names and numbers for various federal government employees and others to contact regarding volunteering. No dice.

You know getting to the woods this Summer is going to be a real drag what with sitting in all that traffic and all those people drawn to the woods by the newly expanded and increasingly hard to access wilderness....

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Wilderness Bill Passes****Robert Koscik** : 3/30/2009; 5:57:27 AMReads: 390, Responses: 14 ([↩](#) view responses to this item)

You guys are cranky.

What is done is done and now we have to deal with the variables of this new reality. At least the woods and rivers aren't going any where, and that's why we're really all out there. No forests and mountain, no trails.

What happened to those 1914 trail building guys? They're just a part of history like the rocks and trees and old trails, and soon enough the rest of us. Let's hope our hard work and love of the land will leave a small legacy that some distant traveler may find a thrill and a bit of real excitement as our world get smaller and smaller, and wilderness vanishes one chunk at a time.

Some times all you can do is sit quietly with the enormity of it all...

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes**Donovan** : 3/30/2009; 5:18:03 PMReads: 390, Responses: 13 ([view responses to this item](#))

You'd be cranky too if some fools just increased your work load ten fold, took away things you had been building for years, etc.

Sitting quietly with the enormity of it all, is that the same as being quietly sat on by the enormity of it all?

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Wilderness Bill Passes****Robert Koscik** : 3/31/2009; 9:20:41 AMReads: 394, Responses: 1 ([view responses to this item](#))

It could be worse.

They could have sold the land to Longview Fiber.

Or ruined trails by thinning projects.

Or you could fall off a cliff tomorrow and that is that. No one gets out alive.

Wilderness is bad for trail maintenance, but what is it good for? Probably a lot of things. Probably a lot more than just trails.

In the end, this is supposed to be good fun hard volunteer work. Don't lose sight of that. Life wouldn't be life without epic lifechanging events every few minutes. Sometimes it's best to count one's blessings. Even without the trails, the Oregon Cascades are an incredible blessing and I for one consider myself very fortunate to have spent time within her green walls.

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes**Simon Harding** : 4/1/2009; 1:07:28 PMReads: 456, Responses: 0 ([view responses to this item](#))

Happiness is a warm chain saw!

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Wilderness Bill Passes****Karl Helser** : 4/10/2009; 6:51:45 AMReads: 371, Responses: 10 ([view responses to this item](#))

...sorry to hear brother, although I know lots of trails that could use some maintenance.

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Wilderness Bill Passes****Donovan** : 4/10/2009; 7:31:07 AMReads: 376, Responses: 9 ([view responses to this item](#))

That's OK because the environmental lobby is going to come to the rescue. Now that they are done litigating and hanging out with politicians, they will dedicate their funds to taking care of their vassal state wilderness areas.

Oregon Wild, BARK, Sierra Club, where are you? Lock it up and run? \$\$\$\$ It's time. We'll need about a hundred people for the Clackamas District. And don't forget they will need to be equipped and certified. May 1st. Better hurry.

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes**Simon Harding** : 4/11/2009; 9:12:52 AMReads: 358, Responses: 8 ([view responses to this item](#))

Ha ha damn funny! I was exchanging messages with a treehugger latte sipper type down in the Peoples Republik of Eugene and he said its better to lock it up and lose the access if that's what it takes. I told him it seemed to me that if folks cant go see and enjoy the wilderness then eventually the constituency that favors preservation rather than resource extraction will shrink. The same constituency that the tree hugger groups are supported by.

He was nonplussed. He might be right.

They don't care about trails. They drive their Subarus with mountain bike racks to where they want to go. I'd like to see trails like the Whitewater trail up to teh PCT and thence to Jeff Park made less accessible by closing the road from the Detroit highway to the trail head. Likewise roads out into the Wallowas that allow access to the Eagle Cap area. Closures like this would get the attention of the treehuggers. They will never happen though.

One would think that with the emphasis on road closures and wilderness designation groups like BARK and OW would AT LEAST visibly encourage members to help with trail work.

But their (nonsustainable) gore tex would get dirty if they did trail work. They depend on other folks to do the real work.

I have a lot of things I'd like to do this summer othere than busting my ass on trail. Maybe we all should lay off trail work for a summer or two and see what happens. It'd be interesting to hear about the complaints Jacquelyn would get.

I'd also like to see someone from BARK or OW (like Erik "photo op" Fernandez post on this site. He was in the paper a week or two ago standing ont eh trail at Roaring River. The trail we used to keep clear with chain saws.... And that will now go umaintained.

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes**Donovan** : 4/11/2009; 3:33:19 PMReads: 363, Responses: 7 ([view responses to this item](#))

Well it would save a lot of fuel and reduce the carbon footprint if we could bring the wilderness to Portland. The Hawthorne Wilderness, for instance. Closed to motorized devices. Peel the pavement, by hand, and plant native species. Is electricity allowed in a wilderness? Fuel oil is OK. It could be carried in.

Remember all that tread work on Dry Ridge we did? So Erik could stand there and savor his victory. It makes me sick.

As for the moratorium. Well, I haven't noticed that any of us trail workers have been back out to the east end of CRT since it got taken. I am willing to stay away from the recently lost trails. If we do crosscutting, we can do it in Bull of the Woods.

I haven't heard yet what the FS is doing to mitigate this trail disaster. Exemption talk is not realistic because loss of recreational access is not an emergency. That carrot was thrown our way by wilderness proponents but I doubt any Forest Supervisor so close to Portland would find it safe to authorize a chain saw exemption. An advantage of being close to Portland is that a larger number of people will be objecting to trail degradation.

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Wilderness Bill Passes****Simon Harding** : 4/11/2009; 6:44:42 PMReads: 352, Responses: 6 ([view responses to this item](#))

So let's make it a chainsaw summer(except for the Bull of the woods)!
Fawk the new wilderness trails, let the Barkers and OW folks maintain them.

I agree that if anyone at the USFS or BLM had the balls to grant a saw exemption they would get hassled by groovsters who want their wilderness experience un-marred by the evil roar of chain saws. Even if chain saws were only allowed for one day.... Think what we could have achieved on Whetstone last summer with chain saws....

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes

Pete Giordano : 4/12/2009; 6:52:37 AM

Reads: 360, Responses: 5 ([view responses to this item](#))

I don't know, Andrei Rykoff is a pretty practical guy for a District Ranger. He is very approachable and might see the "win-win" of a chainsaw exemption agreement of some kind. I don't know about the rest of the FS paperwork but still....

pete

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes

Simon Harding : 4/12/2009; 7:13:50 AM

Reads: 362, Responses: 4 ([view responses to this item](#))

Maybe we should contact him. I am not real excited about busting my ass all day with a crosscut to clear a mile or two of trail when a stroke or two of a pen could make us get it done far more efficiently.

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes

Robert Koscik : 4/12/2009; 7:32:25 AM

Reads: 369, Responses: 3 ([view responses to this item](#))

I agree. It's time to reinvestigate this with someone in the F.S. with clout. No point in pre-defeat.

I'm a backdoor trail maintainer, so the F.S. barely knows I exist. But the rest of you must have some connections. Personally I'm not a huge fan of chainsaws but I realize how important they are to keeping these jungle routes clear. I'll leave the noisy stuff up to the machine heads!

A weekend a year for each trail? Surely that would make a huge impact, and would maintain the wilderness values (which ARE important...we don't need a whole world of human modified reality).

What does Jacquelyn say about all this? She must be aware of the impact upon the F.S. and the small ragtag shifty eyed bunch of volunteers...

A side note: many trails are in danger of being lost due to brush encroachment. I'd say that's the #2 problem for trails in the district after down trees. Tread deterioration is a close #3. If you enjoy hiking trails in the Clackamas District, consider cutting brush on your favorite trail for at least a day this summer. It may be the only work the trail receives in a season. The trails need you!

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes[Edit this Page](#)**Rob Williams** : 4/12/2009; 8:00:02 AMReads: 360, Responses: 0 ([view responses to this item](#))

If there was a "weekend a year for each trail", that weekend would have to be publicized somehow, so that people would know (before they set out) that if they go to this trail this weekend, they will hear chainsaws. I like the idea, though, and seems a good compromise. Even a "weekend every other year for each trail" would be much better than what we have now.....

Brush encroachment isn't only a problem on trails, it is also increasingly becoming a problem on the roads leading to some of the trails. Usually alder or birch saplings that get bent over in the winter with the snow start squeezing out the roads. I've pruned back quite a few of them.

I agree with the brushing of the trails, too. I almost always spend some time while hiking cutting back brush. There is always more I could do, but I usually hit the worst areas. I still need to go buy those small loppers at HD so I can cut larger brush, though.

[Discuss this message.](#)**Re: Wilderness Bill Passes****Pete Giordano** : 4/12/2009; 9:54:42 AMReads: 373, Responses: 1 ([view responses to this item](#))

I've got a little bit of a connection with Andrei and Glenda Woodcock through rafting. I'll try and write them an email tomorrow to bring up the subject. Maybe get some gears turning or at least see what the possibilities might be. They don't know me from trails so if some of the more regular trail guys think it's better to go through them and their connections I'll defer.


pete

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Re: Wilderness Bill Passes**Donovan** : 4/13/2009; 3:45:28 PMReads: 371, Responses: 0 ([view responses to this item](#))

Go for it. The more voices the better.

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