

have them and wilderness too in the same area. We believe the value of the wilderness resources in the three proposals before you is greater than the possible benefits from other important resource use and activities which will be forgone.

Another consideration is the factor of need. Approximately 9 million acres or about 5 percent of all national forest lands are already in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Another 5½ million acres or about 3 percent of national forest lands are in primitive areas that are being studied for possible inclusion in the system. In addition there are a number of other areas with wilderness characteristics that we will also study. The Department of the Interior is also studying areas for possible inclusion in the Wilderness System. Taking all of this existing and potential wilderness into account, we strive to arrive at proposals which result in a reasonable balance between the need for wilderness and the need for nonwilderness recreation and other resource uses and activities.

Once the basic wilderness unit is selected the placement of boundaries becomes very important. Our 44 years of experience in the administration of wilderness has taught us that a properly placed boundary helps assure that the quality of the wilderness resource within the unit will remain high. National forest visitors appreciate having the boundaries on prominent topographic features which they can easily recognize. This prevents accidental disturbances of the wilderness atmosphere. We have also found boundaries are best placed on features such as ridges or rims which, in themselves, act to shield the wilderness resource inside from the effect of nonwilderness activities outside. These concepts have been followed to the extent possible in developing the three wilderness proposals before you.

THE PROPOSED MOUNT JEFFERSON WILDERNESS

The proposed Mount Jefferson Wilderness is part of the Willamette, Deschutes, and Mount Hood National Forests. It is located within the Cascade Range in part of Jefferson, Lynn, and Marion Counties in the State of Oregon. The area lies approximately 60 airline miles southeast of the city of Salem and extends along about 25 miles along the Cascades in a generally north-south direction. This proposed wilderness takes its name from its most prominent peak, 10,427-foot-high Mount Jefferson. Three Fingered Jack is another prominent volcanic peak in the south end of the area.

The proposed Mount Jefferson Wilderness will be an outstanding sample of Oregon's timber heritage. The area is 87 percent forested and about 70 percent of the forested area supports virgin timber of gold to excellent commercial quality.

The area proposed for wilderness has an estimated commercial timber volume of 1.35 billion board feet. However, most of this volume has never been included in the calculations of allowable harvest for the three national forests involved because it has been included in the Mount Jefferson Primitive Area since the early 1930's.

The proposal will have only a very minor effect on the timber available to support nearby dependent communities and industries. You will find more detailed information on timber and other resources and on our plans for administering the proposed wilderness in the report of Secretary Freeman.