

these herds to and from vital winter feeding areas such as the East Fork Elk Winter Pasture. They also stress the scenic beauty of the area. They express concern that timber harvesting in these areas would destroy valuable elk habitat, and that public travel which would occur on access roads would disrupt elk migration.

Area J contains about 13,575 acres of commercial quality timber with an estimated volume of over 100 million board feet. About 30 million board feet of this timber is operable under present market conditions and logging methods.

The presence of commercial timber in this area is not the reason we did not include area J in our proposal. The area we have proposed for wilderness contains a much greater commercial timber volume.

One of our principal reasons for not including area J is that nearly all of the mature lodgepole pine stands throughout the drainages of both East DuNoir and West DuNoir Creeks were logged over in the period between 1920 and 1926.

These operations involved the cutting of most of the trees which were of a size that could be hewn into railroad ties. Some of that early logging also took place within the spruce fir type. Sled and wagon roads were cut through the timber for access. Most of these roads are still plainly evident, although many are no longer passable because of fallen timber. However, a number of miles of these roads are regularly used with four-wheel-drive vehicles by hunters, fishermen, and other recreationists. Other evidence of timber harvesting is still plainly noticeable because of the stumps, campsites and skidways.

In view of this evidence of human activity, these areas, even though very scenic, do not qualify for wilderness under the criteria of subsection 2(c) of the Wilderness Act.

This subsection defines "wilderness" in part, as an area "retaining its primeval character and influence * * * with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable."

The past logging and jeep roads in area J have left substantially noticeable imprints of man's work. Area J no longer retains its primeval character and influence.

The inclusion of area J in the proposed wilderness would lower the quality of the wilderness system. It would have the effect of lowering the quality level to which the act directs us to manage all wilderness in the system.

In addition to the question of suitability of these areas, we considered other public values, particularly future recreation needs. Most of area J offers outstanding back country recreation opportunities. In addition, the recent National Forest Recreation Survey identified five development sites within area J as being necessary to meet public needs for auto access type family recreation. Opportunities for recreation use on adjacent national forest land will become increasingly important to protect the park values in nearby Yellowstone and Teton National Parks from being lost due to overcrowding.

After adoption of our Washakie Wilderness proposal, nearly 53 percent of the Shoshone National Forest will be managed for wilderness. Most of the remaining 47 percent, including the DuNoir Basins, should remain available for general recreation and other resource uses.