

The National Wildlife Federation, Mr. Chairman, still is in the process of developing criteria whereby some of these alternatives, and others, can be judged. We expect to complete this work at our national convention in March. We then will have a yardstick to use in measuring some of the areas of controversy.

Therefore, we will not have recommendations on all of the various proposals under consideration today, hoping to supplement this statement with added information at a later time.

Now, we should like to outline a few brief recommendations. At the outset, we should say that we believe all of the three areas under consideration today merit addition to the wilderness system. Therefore, as we see it, the questions are not so much on "if," but of "how much" and "where."

First, we wholeheartedly endorse S. 2531, establishing the San Gabriel area. As best we can determine, this proposal is virtually without opposition, and everyone is in accord with the Forest Service recommendation. This would be to enlarge the present Devil Canyon-Bear Canyon Primitive Area in the Angeles National Forest of California, to contain 33,647 acres.

Located so near the Metropolitan Los Angeles area, this wilderness can serve an exceptionally useful function. It offers a wide variety of plants and wildlife to appreciate and enjoy in a highly scenic, mountainous area. We hope the Congress can act speedily upon this proposal.

Second, we support the Forest Service's proposal for the Mount Jefferson Wilderness Area, as outlined in S. 2751, with one recommendation for change. We compliment the Forest Service for deciding to add areas 12 and 13—417 acres and 595 acres respectively—to the original proposal of 95,450 acres. In summary, the Forest Service recommends that 14,701 contiguous acres be added to the 81,761 acres presently included in the Mount Jefferson Primitive Area. It is our suggestion that the 1,596-acre Marion Lake Scenic Area also be included. This is a fine lake in a beautiful setting. While the lake has a fairly heavy usage by boaters, our people in Oregon concur with Forest Service plans to phase out the use of motors, and to close the trail to motorized vehicles. This 2½-mile trail is easy to negotiate, and vehicles are unnecessary.

At this time, we neither recommend nor oppose the proposals that area 3 also be added to the Mount Jefferson Wilderness Area. Spectacular mountains in the Cascade Range, coupled with beautiful sub-alpine meadows, handsome stands of trees, glistening snowfields, lakes, and wildlife, make this one of the most attractive wilderness areas in the Pacific Northwest, and we also urge its early approval.

Third, we recommend establishment of the Washakie Wilderness Area in Wyoming, combining parts of the Stratified Primitive Area with the existing South Absaroka Wilderness Area. It is our understanding that there is general agreement between the Forest Service and groups in Wyoming on the merit of several additions and deletions to the existing proposal, and we shall limit our comments to some of the points in controversy. Our field representative, Mr. H. R. Morgan, has been able to view portions of the Stratified Primitive Area and the regions near it, and we are making two principal recommendations at this time:

based upon field studies of the areas as they are proposed for wilderness designation by the agency plus first-hand investigation of any contiguous lands which qualify for wilderness protection under the criteria of the Wilderness Act.

We appreciate this opportunity to present testimony today on three outstanding wilderness proposals prepared by the Forest Service—proposals for the San Gabriel Wilderness in California, the Washakie Wilderness in Wyoming, and the Mount Jefferson Wilderness in Oregon.

SAN GABRIEL WILDERNESS AREA

The Wilderness Society urges favorable action without amendment on S. 2531, the measure to designate the San Gabriel Wilderness in California as a unit of the national wilderness preservation system.

We are pleased to be able to support without qualification the Forest Service's strong proposal, which encompasses all of the Devil Canyon-Bear Canyon Primitive Area, plus substantial acreage within Bobcat Canyon and another small drainage on the southwest.

The proposed San Gabriel Wilderness, part of the Angeles National Forest, is located in the San Gabriel mountain range in eastern Los Angeles County. Only 35 miles northeast of the city of Los Angeles, the area may be reached by means of secondary roads from U.S. Highway 66.

Elevations within the proposed wilderness range from 2,150 feet along the west fork of the San Gabriel River to 8,000 feet on Waterman Mountain. Rugged and relatively undisturbed, its rough terrain and heavy brush cover tend to limit most horse or foot travel to trails. It is apt to continue to offer its visitors the experience of solitude, even though it lies within 50 miles of approximately 6 million people.