

I am not sponsored by a specific group, I represent a growing voice among other businessmen of the Northwest who share my conviction that there is too little wilderness for too many people within my State.

My conviction is substantiated by direct observation that wilderness, much of it de facto, is shrinking rapidly, while forecasted population of Oregon is destined to expand at a rate considerably in excess of the national average.

In contrast to the rapidly expanding horizons of research, in which my company takes part, wilderness remains historical evidence of the past and can never be expanded beyond the protection given to it by public authority.

I have intimate knowledge of the focal points for wilderness experience inside and outside the proposed Forest Service boundaries of the Mount Jefferson Wilderness. More than 20 years have elapsed since my first visits to Jefferson Park, Hunts Cove, above Pamela Lake, the lakes basin west of Three Fingered Jack, and Square and Long Lakes to the south.

I have seen camping sites on these small lakes, such as Santiam Lake, 4 miles within the wilderness boundary, reduced to dust bowls where grass once grew to the lakeshore, as short as 10 years ago.

Where one campsite existed 10 years ago, you can now count 10. The same applies to Hunts Cove, where one must travel more than 7 miles from the roadhead below Pamela Lake and climb several thousand feet in elevation.

To an even greater extent, the quality of Jefferson Park has been eroded, due to the extremely heavy visitor density to this alpine garden of exquisite beauty.

Until the Forest Service roaded the White Water Creek west of Jefferson, access to Jefferson Park was from Brietenbush Lake, over a 7,000-foot pass, a 7-mile hike. Now, from the White Water Creek roadhead, it is a short hike to the Sentinel Hill Ridge, and an easy 3-mile grade to Jefferson Park.

This new access permits greater pressure on the park, and promotes faster erosion of wilderness quality.

In the vicinity of this area, to the north, are Fire Camp Lakes. One lake lies within the proposed boundary, the other outside. Inclusion of both lakes would add to the wilderness experience and relieve pressure on Jefferson Park.

On the North Santiam River, the trail from Big Meadows follows a 6-mile easy grade to Duffy Lake. The proposed wilderness boundary bisects a stream junction containing a fine meadow, with lakes close by. The area is of high wilderness quality, and should be protected by extension of the boundary to Big Meadow road.

Square and Long Lakes, No. 15 on map B, was one of my first wilderness experiences in de facto wilderness. Although access is now by high clearance vehicles and four-wheel drives, this could be an area of quality wilderness experience for people who wish a short 1-mile hike to an area of solitude.

I now come to the major considerations in my testimony, which are as follows:

There are so few focal points within the Forest Service proposal; there are several on the outside.