

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Pass S. 22, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act!

February 9, 2009

Dear Colleague:

As members of the Oregon delegation who have worked tirelessly for the past six years on legislation to designate wilderness and enhance recreation in our state, we encourage you to support S. 22, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, which will soon come before the House for a vote.

This bill contains numerous widely supported and critically important public lands provisions, some of which have been awaiting Congressional action for years. The bill includes several pieces of public lands preservation legislation important to Oregonians.

The Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness Act, for example, reflects input from hundreds of constituents, numerous organization and agency representatives, local government and Tribal leaders, and Oregon's entire congressional delegation. It enjoys the support of local counties and Oregon's Governor, Ted Kulongoski. The bill protects almost 127,000 acres around Mount Hood with Wilderness protection and adds almost 80 miles on nine free-flowing stretches of rivers to the National Wild and Scenic River System. It also authorizes a number of high priority, locally supported land exchanges.

In developing this legislation, the Oregon delegation held numerous public forums, meetings with stakeholders, and even a bi-partisan hike around Mount Hood. The House of Representatives passed similar legislation in 2006, and Oregonians have been waiting for three years for the bill to pass the Senate.

Other important Oregon provisions include:

- The Cascade Siskiyou National Monument Voluntary and Equitable Grazing Conflict Resolution Act, which establishes a 23,000-acre wilderness area, to be known as the Soda Mountain Wilderness, in the Monument's southern backcountry;
- The Oregon Badlands Wilderness Act, which designates almost 30,000 acres of wilderness 15 miles east of Bend. The wilderness designation comes over two decades after the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recommended the area be preserved;
- The Spring Basin Wilderness Act, which designates approximately 8,600 acres of BLM land as the Spring Basin Wilderness, overlooking the John Day Wild and Scenic River. The area is important habitat for populations of Mule Deer, Rocky Mountain Elk and many bird species, and offers recreational opportunities for hikers, horseback riders, hunters, botanists and other outdoor enthusiasts;
- The Copper Salmon Wilderness Act, which designates 9.3 miles of rivers at the headwaters of the North Fork of the Elk River as Wild and Scenic and adds 13,700 acres of new wilderness adjacent to the existing Grassy Knob Wilderness. The Elk River is known as the most productive wild salmon and steelhead river of its size in the lower 48 states.

These Oregon provisions, as well as the rest of the omnibus legislation, reflect years of public input and refinement, and they enjoy broad support from diverse local constituencies. We urge you to not only support swift passage of S. 22, but to vote against any amendment or motion to recommit that would send this bill back to the Senate.

Sincerely,

/s/Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

/s/Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress

/s/Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress

/s/David Wu
Member of Congress