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INTRODUCTION OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK MOUNT HOOD **WILDERNESS** ACT OF 2008

June 18, 2008

**REFERENCE:** Vol. 154, No. 101

**SECTION:** Extension of Remarks

**SPEAKER:** Mr. BLUMENAUER

**TEXT:** [\*1267]

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HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

of oregon

in the house of representatives

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join my Oregon colleagues in introducing the "Lewis and Clark Mount Hood **Wilderness** Act of 2008."

In 2003, we held the first Mt. Hood Summit at Timberline Lodge, inviting local stakeholders to share their vision for the challenges and opportunities facing the Mt. Hood National Forest. Over the past five years a committed group of citizens, organizations, Native Americans, local, state and federal jurisdictions, and private interests have spent countless hours negotiating a long term stewardship and protection plan for Mt. Hood's forests and rivers. [\*1268]

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Today, this legislation designates over 132,000 acres of **Wilderness**, almost 80 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers, and 34,000 acres of National Recreation Areas in the Mt. Hood National Forest. It would create a long term transportation plan to address the challenges of getting to and from the mountain, establish a special watershed protection area for the Crystal Springs Watershed, focus on a forest-wide vegetation management strategy which includes biomass utilization, establish a working group to advise the Forest Service on recreation enhancements, respect Native Americans' treaty reserved gathering rights and honor the United States' cultural foods obligations to those Tribes. Lastly, the bill directs the Forest Service to participate in three land conveyances. These exchanges will provide additional protection for the North side of Mt. Hood, the Pacific Crest Trail, and a parcel of land that is critical to the community in Clackamas County.

In keeping with the spirit of our well-established and participatory process, I look forward to

working with our stakeholders as the legislative process moves forward. I hope that this bill is not the last word when it comes to protecting Oregon's most beautiful, scenic and at-risk places. I hope that the Natural Resources Committee will quickly schedule a hearing on it so that we can pass and implement it and begin working towards protection for other "Oregon Treasures" in the years to come.