



Gulf Islands Wilderness

Horn Island. Gulf Islands Wilderness

Wilderness is an indispensable part of the American story. Native Americans depended on the bounty of wilderness for survival while western explorers were inspired by its untamed beauty. But after just 200 years, the essential wildness of America virtually disappeared. As Americans realized that the long-term health and welfare of their nation was at risk, a vision for conservation emerged.

➤ **What is wilderness?**

Wilderness is self-willed nature where one can retreat from civilization, reconnect with the Earth, and find healing, meaning and significance. Wilderness retains its primeval character without man-made improvements and modern inventions, where man himself is a visitor.

➤ **Are all wild lands wilderness?**

No. Wilderness areas are federal lands designated by Congress to be part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. This designation provides the highest level of permanent protection to "...secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness."

➤ **What makes Gulf Islands Wilderness special?**

Horn and Petit Bois Islands of Gulf Islands National Seashore are largely undeveloped, wild coastal landscapes where modern human impacts are very subtle. In 1978, Horn and Petit Bois Islands off the coast of Mississippi were designated as Gulf Islands Wilderness, as a place of solitude, self-reliance and refuge from modern-day civilization. They are part of our wilderness legacy.

Forever wild!



“The idea of wilderness needs no defense. It only needs more defenders.” – Edward Abbey



Petit Bois Island. Gulf Islands Wilderness

Over 109 million acres have been included in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). Within the NWPS, the National Park Service protects over 40 million acres of designated wilderness across the country. Wilderness is a rare and special place. For more information, visit www.wilderness.net

Be a defender of Wilderness!

Gulf Islands National Seashore is proud to have two wilderness islands, Horn and Petit Bois. Many visitors welcome wilderness, not only for self-reliant, challenging recreational experiences, but as a haven, a refuge from our fast-paced, developed society – a place to reconnect with oneself and with nature. Gulf Islands Wilderness is a place to not look at nature but to look from nature.

Help preserve Gulf Islands Wilderness by preparing for your trip ahead of time. There are no facilities on these wilderness barrier islands. It is important to familiarize yourself with the plants and wildlife, changing weather patterns, and lay of the land before your trip. This is your wilderness. Practice wilderness ethics and Leave No Trace:



- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel & camp on durable surfaces
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find as you found it
- Minimize campfire impacts
- Be considerate of other visitors
- Respect wildlife