

Excerpted from:

Deschutes National Forest DRAFT Wilderness Ranger Training Materials, March 2011

What is Wilderness??

-- Wilderness is a special place, established by Congress through its 1964 Wilderness Act. By law, it is meant to be different than public lands outside wilderness.

“An area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”

-- Humans are asked to tread lightly and leave no sign of their passing.

-- Wilderness is managed specifically to protect the full range of wilderness resources: balancing “primitive” recreation with the needs of wildlife, clean water and other ecological, geological, archeological, and scenic resources.

-- Wilderness is managed to protect and preserve its natural conditions and minimize the impacts of humans in every way practical. Thus all visitors must practice Leave No Trace skills.

-- For those who choose to recreate there, wilderness is meant to provide challenge, risk, solitude, and discovery. Thus, we are expected to come prepared, knowing how to use a map and compass (or GPS). Trails are both signed and maintained less than those outside wilderness.

-- Wilderness is for our enjoyment, but must not be degraded, so that it is pristine for future generations.

Wilderness: Help Keep it Wild !

Quotes to share & inspire:

“It is impossible to overestimate the value of wild mountains and mountain temples as places for people to grow in, re-creation grounds for soul and body.” -- John Muir

“Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed.” -- Wallace Stegner

“A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.” -- Aldo Leopold

“The stark truth is, if we want wild animals, we have to make sacrifices.” -- Colin Tudge

“The bad news for our fragile wildland ecosystems is that the human population has grown so dangerously large that the old-time habits of frontiersmen cannot be tolerated. The good news is that wilderness users of this generation have demonstrated a readiness to be educated about right and wrong and have shown a willingness -- nay, an eagerness -- to be good citizens of the wilderness.” -- Ira Spring & Harvey Manning

“When I climbed Mount Adams I think I found the answer to the question of why men stake everything to reach these peaks, yet obtain no visible reward for their exhaustion. It came to me when I almost failed on the last steep pitch of Adams... Man’s greatest experience -- the one that brings supreme exultation -- is spiritual, not physical... The same experience comes in a host of other discoveries along the mountain trail...”

-- William O. Douglas

“In wilderness lies the hope of the world... Let children walk with nature, let them see the beautiful blending and communions of death and life...as taught in woods and meadows, plains, and mountains and streams.” -- John Muir

“From the forest and wilderness come the tonics and barks which brace mankind... in Wildness is the preservation of the world.” -- Henry David Thoreau