

RESOLUTION TO OPPOSE CRATER LAKE WILDERNESS DESIGNATION

WHEREAS OREGON WILD IS PETITIONING SENATOR WYDEN TO INTRODUCE A BILL TO CREATE A 500,000 ACRE WILDERNESS AREA ENCOMPASSING CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK AND SURROUNDING FOREST SERVICE LANDS IN THE UMPQUA AND ROGUE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST;

WHEREAS MUCH OF THE FOREST WITHIN THE PROPOSED AREA IS CATEGORIZED AS HIGH RISK FOR CATASTROPHIC FIRE;

WHEREAS MUCH OF THE AREA IS A HIGH USE RECREATIONAL AREA CENTERED AROUND DIAMOND LAKE AND CRATER LAKE FOR SUMMER AND WINTER ACTIVITIES, ALMOST ALL CENTERED AROUND MOTORIZED USES;

WHEREAS MUCH OF THE SURROUNDING FOREST SERVICE LAND IS ROADED AND PROVIDES RECREATIONAL AND HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZENS WHO MAY BE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED;

WHEREAS THE UMPQUA NATIONAL FOREST HAS IDENTIFIED 50,000 ACRES OF DEAD AND DYING LODGEPOLE PINE IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS PROPOSED WILDERNESS AREA AND HAS ONLY BEEN SUCCESSFUL AT TREATING LESS THAN 20 % OF THAT AREA BECAUSE OF LEGAL CHALLENGES BY THE SAME ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS WHO ARE PROPOSING THIS DESIGNATION;

WHEREAS BOTH THE UMPQUA AND ROGUE-SISKIYOU NATIONAL FORESTS HAVE RECENTLY DEVELOPED RESTORATIVE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROJECTS WITHIN MUCH OF THE PROPOSED WILDERNESS AREAS THAT WOULD BE OTHERWISE PROHIBITED UNDER THE WILDERNESS DESIGNATION;

WHEREAS THE CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK HAS A LET BURN POLICY AND THIS SUMMER A LIGHTNING STRIKE IGINITED A CATASTROPHIC FIRE THAT BURNED 20,000 ACRES IN THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE PARK, MOST OF IT DURING AN UNCONTROLLED RUN IN MID-AUGUST;

WHEREAS USFS CAMPGROUNDS WERE CLOSED FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND OWNERS OF SUMMER CABINS ALONG DIAMOND LAKE WERE UNDER AN EVACUATION WATCH FOR SEVERAL DAYS AND WOULD HAVE BEEN FORCED TO LEAVE WITH VERY SHORT NOTICE IF THE FIRE WOULD HAVE CROSSED THE MEDFORD/CRATER LAKE HIGHWAY;

WHEREAS THE FOREST SERVICE WOULD NOT HAVE ATTEMPTED TO STOP THE FIRE ON THE GROUND IF IT CROSSED HIGHWAY 230 BECAUSE THERE WERE NO SAFE EVACUATION ROUTES FOR FIRE FIGHTERS OR PUBLIC AS THE FIRE APPROACHED THE DIAMOND LAKE RECREATION AREA;

WHEREAS NO FIRE PROTECTION EXISTS FOR STRUCTURE FIRES IN THE AREA AND ALL OF THE RECREATIONAL STRUCTURES INCLUDING CAMPGROUND FACILITIES, CABINS AND LODGES WOULD BE AT RISK OF DESTRUCTION BY FIRE;

WHEREAS THE MEDFORD/GRANTS PASS AIR SHED WHICH HAS BEEN IMPACTED BY SMOKE FROM RECENT WILDFIRES AND THE SMOKE FROM A WILDFIRE IN THE DIAMOND LAKE BASIN WILL FLOW INTO THE MEDFORD/GRANTS PASS AIR SHED; NOW, THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED BY:

THAT WE THE _____,
SUPPORT AND CONTINUE TO ENJOY CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK BUT STRONGLY OPPOSE OREGON WILD'S PROPOSAL TO DESIGNATE A 500,000 ACRE CRATER LAKE WILDERNESS AREA ENCOMPASSING CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK AND SURROUNDING FOREST SERVICE LANDS IN THE UMPQUA AND ROGUE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, THAT A COPY OF THIS RESOLUTION BE PRESENTED TO THE OREGON CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION.