

Wilderness Act

16 U.S.C. §§1131-1136

Congress declares it to be U.S. **policy** to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness. [16 U.S.C. §1131(a)]

Wilderness areas are to be administered so as to leave them **unimpaired for future use and enjoyment** as wilderness and for the gathering of information regarding their use as wilderness. [16 U.S.C. §1131(a)]

The statute establishes the **National Wilderness Preservation System**, the lands of which are to be designated by act of Congress. [16 U.S.C. §1131(a)]

A designated wilderness area shall continue to be **administered** by the agency that had jurisdiction immediately before its inclusion in the wilderness system, unless otherwise provided by act of Congress. [16 U.S.C. §1131(b)]

The statute directs the Secretary of Agriculture to review, **for possible inclusion in the wilderness system**, each area in the **national forests** classified on September 3, 1964, as primitive. [16 U.S.C. §1132(b)] The statute directs the Secretary of the Interior to review, for

possible inclusion in the wilderness system, every roadless area of 5,000 acres or more in the **national parks, monuments**, and other units of the national park system, and every such area of the **national wildlife refuges** and game ranges, under the Secretary's jurisdiction on September 3, 1964. [16 U.S.C. §1132(c)]

An agency with jurisdiction over a wilderness area shall administer the area so as to preserve its wilderness character. [16 U.S.C. §1133(b)]

Except as specifically provided and subject to existing rights, there shall be **no commercial enterprises** or permanent roads in wilderness areas. [16 U.S.C. §1133(c)]

The statute establishes the extent to which temporary roads, motorized vehicles, ongoing mineral surveys, water projects, and livestock grazing may be permitted. [16 U.S.C. §1133(c)-(d)]

In general, after December 31, 1983, national forest lands designated as wilderness areas are to be withdrawn from entry under **U.S. mining laws**. [16 U.S.C. §1133(d)(3)]