

Omnibus Public Lands Bill to be signed into law by President Obama



Washington, DC – Today, the House of Representatives voted in favor of final passage of H.R. 146, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. This bill, which passed the Senate last week, contains numerous public lands provisions for Oregon. Included in the bill is the Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness Act introduced by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), which would protect almost 127,000 acres around Mount Hood and add almost 80 miles of nine free-flowing stretches of rivers to the National Wild and Scenic River System.

In 2003, Blumenauer convened the first of a series of Mt. Hood Summits. In 2006, he partnered with the Oregon House delegation members to pass the Mt. Hood Stewardship Legacy Act. Today's passage of this bill marks the first new major expansion of Oregon wilderness to pass through Congress in over 20 years.

Other Oregon wilderness areas included in the legislation are the 13,700 acre area known as Copper Salmon; 30,000 acres for Oregon's Badlands; 23,000 acres in Soda Mountain; and 8,600 acres at Spring Basin. Rep. Blumenauer's statement on today's passage is below:

"Today's passage marks the culmination of seven years of work that I've been involved with to preserve some of our nation's most treasured places, including those on Mt. Hood. It is a great day for the state of Oregon. Oregonians have been waiting a long time for the passage of new wilderness and I am overjoyed that today we will finally send this measure to the President's desk. Our state boasts some of the nations most beautiful natural wonders and Oregonians

should not have to wait another 20 years to protect its natural beauty and our children's environmental legacy."

The trail was long and the battle hard, but today, by working together across the aisle we have preserved an important piece of Oregon's natural history for generations to come. I am grateful to my colleagues in Oregon's congressional delegation and the hundreds of constituents, numerous organizations and agencies, local governments and Tribal leaders who have all worked tirelessly to pass these wilderness provisions. I look forward to celebrating with all Oregonians the signing into law of new Oregon wilderness by President Obama."

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