

Washington, D.C. – The U.S. House of Representatives today unanimously approved the Mount Hood Stewardship Legacy Act (H.R. 5025), introduced by Congressmen Greg Walden (R-Hood River) and Earl Blumenauer (D-Portland). The comprehensive legislation provides a long-term stewardship plan for one of Oregon’s most diverse and treasured icons and comes after several years of cooperative work between the pair including public summits, round table forums with stakeholders, in-depth meetings with scientists and a four-day, 41-mile backpack trek around Mt. Hood on the Timberline Trail.

“This is landmark legislation for the thousands of citizens who love, live, visit, and work on Mt. Hood,” said Blumenauer. “It protects remarkable places that Oregonians agree should be preserved as wilderness, and it provides a blueprint for managing future demands of recreation, transportation, land use, forest health, and Native American treaty rights. I want to thank my colleague, Congressman Walden, for joining me on what has been a remarkable odyssey over the last three years to reach this day. House passage today represents a significant milestone and I urge the Senate to take action quickly so this important legislation can become law before Labor Day.

“This is a significant development for Oregonians everywhere,” Walden said. “It’s remarkable to think that less than a year after Congressman Blumenauer and I hiked for four days and 41 miles around the base of Mt. Hood that this bill would resoundingly pass through committee and the House. This wasn’t an easy task. With 435 Representatives from all corners of our nation, many diverse opinions and backgrounds come into play. The fact that we achieved the unanimous support of our colleagues shows that the fruit of our labor is a perfect compromise. It’s a bill that has won wide support from stakeholders, local governments and the media. It’s time for Oregon’s senators, Senator Wyden and Senator Smith, to now step forward and shepherd this bill through the Senate and on to the President’s desk.”

The bill is the result of several years of public forums, negotiations and compromises between the congressmen and Mt. Hood stakeholders. It would add 77,216 acres of new wilderness and 25 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Mt. Hood National Forest, along with promoting long-term planning to meet future demands for recreational use, transportation and clean and abundant drinking water. It also encourages forest health and recognizes and respects the cultural traditions and historical rights of Native Americans.

The bill features Oregon House members Congressman Peter DeFazio and Congresswoman Darlene Hooley as co-sponsors, and has earned the support of scores of local governments,

## **Mt. Hood Stewardship Legacy Act Clears House**

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state and federal officials, stakeholders on the mountain and media.

The legislation now moves to the United States Senate for consideration.

Congressman Walden represents the 2nd District of Oregon and Congressman Blumenauer represents the 3rd District of Oregon; the two districts split Mt. Hood at its crest.