Wilderness

The Forest Service is again proposing more wilderness zones within Baker County. They are doing this without having any study to show the need for more wilderness.

A great deal of newly proposed wilderness is overlayed on two Baker city watershed and private property including an existing mining claim dating back to the 1860’s. This newest attempt tries to take land away from the congressional mandate of multiple use for our forests here in Baker County. For the past 20 years, the citizens of our county have had to defend against the overreach of the Forest Service who has been bent on making our forests into wilderness.

We have repeatedly said “NO” every year and the Forest Service will not listen, and this year is even worse than ever before. There is “NO” need for more wilderness in Baker County and your Forest Service has no right to border private property which puts owners in danger. Wildfires may start on “so called wilderness” and the Forest Service will not fight the fires until they are out of control and then cross private lands. Bordering wilderness next to private property will encourage trespassing as people try to gain access. Who is going to pay for the damage done to the private property owner?

The Forest Service already blocks multiple use on 75% of our forest within Baker County including wilderness, roadless areas, Hell’s canyon recreation restrictions, wild and scenic rivers and set aside study areas.

I ask that you remove all additional proposed wilderness recommendations from your plan revision attempts. I would suggest that there be “NO” new proposed wilderness recommendations.

Bill Harvey