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Comments: Let me start with an excerpt from an study I found:

"It has been argued that wilderness is only wilderness if there is no human influence, but is that really possible? In designing an area as a human-defined "wilderness," we are inherently involved in the concept. Just as it would, and should, be impossible to remove spiders from wilderness, we cannot remove humans from wilderness. Humans evolved with and from the natural world, and by taking humans out of the concept of wilderness, we are taking humans out of their rightful place in evolution.

Humans evolved with the rest of the natural world, and it is a mistake to attempt to take humans completely out of nature, just as we have seen that taking nature completely out of humans has disastrous consequences. No one would argue that wilderness is "true" without the animals or plants in it, just as it becomes obvious that animals are not themselves if taken out of their natural environment (for example, zoos). Therefore, it is not "natural" to do the same for humans. It is ridiculous to discuss the concept of "wilderness" without including the human influence. It has been called anthropocentric to create wilderness simply for humans, but isn't taking humans out of evolution the highest form of anthropocentrism? So long as it is a human making the decision or having the discussion, it can always be considered anthropocentric."

I object to more designated Wilderness because you isolate the forest from a public majority who cannot hike or ride a horse. The Forest Service/Congress should not be so short sighted as to think that the elderly or handicap don't deserve, or have the right, to enjoy the mountains, streams, and lakes as much as the 30 somethings. The forest is there for the "public" to enjoy... and last time I checked, the definition of "public" did not include just "special interest, or the young..."

I don't see why we shouldn't have a "Blue Ridge Parkway" through our wilderness so that the "public" can enjoy it... instead of the unmaintained trails, closed campgrounds, abandoned roads or gates stop the "public" from enjoying what's rightfully ours. Stop isolating us from our lands!

Respectfully,

Don Slonski

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