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First name: Joan

Last name: Siegwald

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to ask the Forest Service to adopt an alternative that lets the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness be wild by either allowing the metal remnants of the Emerald Lake shelter Quonset hut to disintegrate with time or using wilderness-compatible means like non-motorized/non-mechanized tools to remove it.

The Forest Service's first responsibility is to protect the wild character of the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness, not to protect structures such as the Quonset hut which are not necessary to preserve Wilderness. The Forest Service's own wilderness policy recognizes that structures are not needed for visitor use, stating that visitors must be prepared on their own to face "inherent risks of adverse weather conditions, isolation, physical hazards, and lack of rapid communications, and that search and rescue may not be as rapid as expected in an urban setting."

The Mount Timpanogos metal Quonset hut with a cemented rock retaining wall was finished in 1960 before the Mount Timpanogos Scenic Area was established in 1961 and before the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness was designated in 1984. Once this designation occurred, the Forest Service became responsible for ensuring that the area remain wild and primarily shaped by nature.

The natural deterioration of structures is part of Wilderness and is evidence of timeless natural processes reclaiming the Wilderness from temporary human occupation. Structures should be removed if that can be done in a manner consistent with wilderness principles and if the impact from removing the structure is less than the impact from leaving the structure. The Forest Service's proposal to use helicopters and build a new improved structure is antithetical to Wilderness. It perverts the Wilderness Act to declare that such a structure is part of the wilderness character of the area when the Act clearly precludes structures.

The Forest Service must adopt an alternative that lets the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness be wild by either allowing the metal remnants of the Quonset hut to disintegrate with time or using wilderness-compatible means like non-motorized/non-mechanized tools to remove it.