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Comments: Dear Forest Service Officials,

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the proposed project involving the use of motorized equipment and helicopter flights to address remnants of the Quonset hut in the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness. This proposal, as currently presented in the Environmental Assessment (EA), runs counter to both the spirit and the letter of the Wilderness Act and the Forest Service's own wilderness stewardship policies.

The Forest Service's foremost obligation is to protect the wild character of designated Wilderness areas. The agency's wilderness policy explicitly acknowledges that visitor use does not necessitate structures and that visitors should come prepared to accept "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 presence or absence of a structure such as the Quonset hut should not alter this foundational principle.

Instead of proposing an intrusive and mechanized operation, the Forest Service must analyze and adopt a more appropriate alternative: one that preserves the Wilderness character by allowing the remaining metal remnants to fade naturally over time, or by using wilderness-compatible, non-motorized means to remove them. The rock and cement foundation could also be safely dismantled and allowed to weather back into the landscape without compromising the area's natural values.

The EA fails to adequately justify the need for helicopters and motorized equipment. It provides no clear estimate of the number of flights, duration of the work, or actual evaluation of non-motorized alternatives. The claim that stock use is impractical lacks supporting evidence. It is particularly troubling that the Forest Service's own wilderness stock users do not appear to have been consulted, even though the agency has access to experienced personnel and stock animals capable of navigating rugged terrain.

Given the scale of the proposed intrusion-helicopter flights, jackhammers, cement mixers, and other motorized tools in a designated Wilderness area-an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is clearly warranted. The impacts of such a project are significant and far-reaching, and they demand the highest level of environmental scrutiny.

The Mount Timpanogos Wilderness deserves the strongest possible protections. I urge the Forest Service to withdraw this flawed proposal, conduct a full EIS, and develop an alternative that honors the Wilderness Act and the public's expectation that our remaining wild places remain truly wild.

Thank you for your attention and for your ongoing stewardship of our public lands.

Sincerely,

Bridget Pieroni