

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/11/2025 11:55:55 AM

First name: Jay

Last name: Brasher

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Please choose the "no action" alternative for Emerald Lake Shelter Reconstruction Project #66370

The Wilderness Act prohibits structures, with a very narrow exception for those that are the minimum necessary to preserve Wilderness. This hut not only detracts from the Wilderness, but also fails to meet this Wilderness Act requirement.

The "no action" alternative would honor the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness because alternatives that used traditional skills, like those used to build the structure, were rejected for consideration in the draft Environmental Assessment.

The natural deterioration of structures is part of Wilderness-it is evidence of untrammeled and 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. This hut is not listed on the national register of historic places, though it has been proposed for listing. Even if listed, it could be documented and allowed to fade into the Wilderness.

The Forest Service's first responsibility is to protect the wild character of the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness. The agency's own wilderness policy recognizes that a structure is 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 Forest Service must analyze and adopt an alternative that lets the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness be wild by allowing the metal remnants of the Quonset hut to fade with time or by using wilderness-compatible means to remove it. The remaining rock and cement could be safely dismantled and allowed to fade back into the Wilderness. The claim that it can't be dismantled (or even repaired) using traditional means is false, as the Forest Service built the hut without motorized equipment.

The EA does not detail how many helicopters flights are expected or the duration of the project. The EA only alleges without proof that use of pack animal stock is impractical and stock users (unidentified) said they wouldn't take their animals up there. The Forest Service has wilderness pack stock. There is no indication the agency asked its own people.

Again, please choose the "no action" alternative for Emerald Lake Shelter Reconstruction Project #66370.