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Comments: I write as someone who values wilderness and has visited the Mount Timpanogos area to urge the Forest Service and to abandon the proposal to reconstruct the Emerald Lake cabin inside designated Wilderness.

Structures are not permitted under the Wilderness Act except in rare cases when a structure is the minimum required to protect wilderness qualities. This cabin does not meet that requirement. Furthermore, the proposed reconstruction would require the use of helicopters and other motorized equipment, also not allowed in Wilderness. In addition your draft EA fails to state such basic facts as how many helicopter trips would be needed.

Perhaps most important, your draft EA does not even offer or assess an alternative action that would involve letting the cabin deteriorate or require its removal in ways consistent with the Wilderness Act. This is a serious deficiency. In fact, I believe that any proposal that runs counter to provisions of the Wilderness Act should be given the full review of a thorough EIS.

Finally, I believe your claim that the cabin cannot be dismantled and removed with traditional means that do not violate the law is highly questionable, to say the least. My understanding is that the Forest Service built it without motorized tools to begin with. You do not present any hard evidence that the use of stock for removal is impractical.

I urge you to withdraw this draft EA and either begin a full EIS process that addresses the shortcomings of the EA or drop the project altogether. Wilderness deserves more respect than you have given it so far. And I know you can do better.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.