McClure sees delay in wilderness ruling

Sunday Nov 23, 1981

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Any decision on designating wilderness areas likely will not be possible before the next session of Congress in 1982, U.S. Sen. James A. McClure, R-Idaho, told The Post-Register in a telephone interview from Washington.

McClure, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, said it will be necessary to sound the sentiment of wilderness areas in Oregon, Washington, California and most other western states to determine what will be an acceptable compromise.

"We have not been able to put together a package and have not been able to get all the western senators and congressmen to work on this," said McClure.

McClure noted Congress has been primarily concerned in the current session in working on President Reagan's budget and other economic measures which have top priority over other measures.

"You must remember," he said, "that some areas in the U.S. Forest Service also have been designated for further study which complicates the situation."

He noted final decisions must be made on what land is to be retained for wilderness and multiple use, pointing out there are 3 million acres alone in Idaho involved in this controvery.

Only New Mexico and Colorado have fairly well decided on their wilderness package, he said.

Involved in such controveries are the RARE II Review Act of 1981 which has the primary purposes of ratifying and endorsing the long and difficult RARE II process, and to release statutorily those national forest system lands not included in wilderness designation, with a specified period of time, for multiple use management.

In other matters, McClure said:

- He favored AWACS sale because it will have a tendency to move towards a broader agreement in the Camp David accord to include the West Bank and Golan Heights and the Palestinian homeland questions.
- Legislation is moving in the House on radioactive waste disposal to concentrate on a permanent geographic storage side and provide for federal consultation with affected states.
- He favors funding the B1 planes and MX Missile Defense system but to update their capabilities.
- He sees no trouble in confirmation of Hal Ryan, Weiser attorney, as U.S. district judge for Idaho.