



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Moose Creek
Ranger District

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Reply To: 5300

Date: May 10, 1993

Subject: Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Special Order

To: Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Users

A new special order dealing with livestock containment practices in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness will soon be signed by the Regional Forester. The order is designed to provide field managers with a tool to reduce resource damage resulting from tying stock to trees. A copy of the order is attached.

In summary, the following acts will be prohibited in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness:

- Hitching or tethering any pack or saddle stock without using highlines, portable electric fence corrals, or other non-damaging methods; except to adjust packs and saddles or when first arriving in camp.
- Hitching or tethering any pack or saddle stock so as to cause injury to any live tree or long term damage to vegetation.

Improper containment of livestock in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness has caused unnecessary, long lasting impacts to soil and plants. Examples of this damage are the barren shores of many high alpine lakes, and the trenches that exist around the base of trees in popular campsites.

Any time livestock are contained in one location there will be some impact. By using high lines or electric fences, stock can be tied away from tree bases and sensitive lake shores in places where the impact will have a chance to recover by the following season.

Considerable progress has been made in the last decade to educate wilderness users in low-impact camping and travel techniques. However, our education efforts aimed at reducing stock damage from improper containment techniques have had limited success. Under current regulations, a violation notice can only be written **after** damage to trees has occurred. This special order will provide field managers with an additional tool to prevent damage by ensuring that stock users tie their animals utilizing low-impact techniques.

If you have questions about the special order, or how it will be enforced in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, please contact me at the Moose Creek Ranger District office or Bob Oset at the West Fork Ranger District. His phone number is (406) 821-3269.

DAN RITTER
Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Coordinator

enclosure

