

TEACHING/RESEARCH/SERVICE  
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Moscow, Idaho 83844-1131

December 1, 1993

Fred Dauber  
Krassel Ranger District  
P.O. Box 1026  
McCall, ID 83638

Dear Fred:

Jeff Yeo passed your letter on to me and I am responding out of the university's concern for wilderness stewardship and our relationship with the Forest Service. We understand your view of the Taylor Ranch Field Station signs along the Big Creek trail. The signs were placed in response to several incidents where university property and research opportunities were jeopardized by persons not recognizing they were no longer on national forest land.

For the past two years there was a sign only above the gate accessing the bridge across Big Creek. We had hoped that would be sufficient. We thought that the obvious presence of our meteorological station and gate in the lower pasture, and gate at the west end of the field station on the Big Creek trail, would be sufficient evidence to wilderness users that they had entered university property and thus would show the proper respect. Unfortunately, each year wilderness users camp, picket and graze horses, pitch tents, cut firewood and build fire rings on the field station, and in the process, damage long-term permanent research sites and research opportunities. Last year one party camped in the lower meadow and refused to leave even when Jeff explained the situation and asked them to leave. Thus, our current judgement is that the signs where located are necessary; we will reconsider the issue of whether they are the minimum size that would suffice.

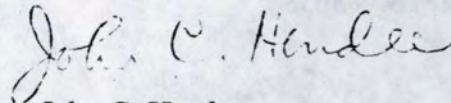
We are committed to serving the greater good of all wilderness and especially the FC-RNRW. Next summer I will leave the dean's position to become full-time director of the university-wide Wilderness Research Center (WRC). One of the first things I want to accomplish is preparation of a new strategic plan for the WRC and its Taylor Ranch Field Station. A policy level advisory committee of university leaders will be fully involved in the plan's preparation, and we also want to review all aspects of the new plan with appropriate Forest Service officials.

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Fred, we have the opportunity to make tremendous contributions to wilderness through the UI Wilderness Research Center and Taylor Ranch Field Station, but only by working in close partnership with the Forest Service. I'm excited about the opportunity to devote all my energy toward that goal as full-time director of the Wilderness Research Center. I look forward to working closely with you and to what the UI and Forest Service can achieve together.

Sincerely,



John C. Hendee  
Dean

JCH/vd

c: Jeff Yeo, Research Scientist/Manager, Taylor Ranch Field Station