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May 27, 1994

Mr. Jon Roush, President  
The Wilderness Society  
900 17th N.W.  
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Jon:

I certainly enjoyed the meeting with you, Jeff Olson, and Mark Shaffer Wednesday, May 25. I was especially pleased at your positive response to our plans for expanding efforts in the University of Idaho Wilderness Research Center (WRC) on (1) wilderness monitoring and (2) the use of wilderness for personal growth. I'm enclosing a summary paper on the use of wilderness for personal growth and another paper describing our Wilderness Discovery program feasibility study last summer at the Curlew Job Corps Centers on the Colville National Forest. These papers, plus the enclosed brochure and monograph on the Taylor Ranch Wilderness Field Station should give you a feel for our capability and commitment to these two topics. We have strong support for the WRC by UI president, Dr. Elisabeth Zinser, and I am eager to leave the deanship after nine years to become full-time WRC director, July 1.

The issue we discussed at our meeting, the need to refine existing methods and develop new and better approaches to assessing wilderness values and analyzing potential allocations, is important nationwide and worldwide, but especially critical in Idaho. As you know, we have been unable to resolve our roadless area debate in Idaho. As federal agencies move into a new generation of planning, they have only the same old methods and approaches with which to assess the values of wilderness designation compared to other alternatives. Even wilderness management suffers from lack of methods and approaches for assessing efficiency—a classic case being the debate over what kind of administrative structure to use in managing Idaho's Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. I believe that scholarship and education could improve this situation and I am delighted at your interest. We want to develop a project, in partnership with the Wilderness Society and other stake holders to:

- Articulate the most current methods, approaches, and knowledge about wilderness values assessment (perhaps this could be done through a series of distinguished lectures by the most noted experts);
- compile and refine those methods and develop new ones;
- apply the methods in case study examples, through the efforts of a qualified principal investigator (maybe a 3-5 year task but with some intermediate outputs); and
- develop a handbook of wilderness values assessment and analysis procedures.

Mr. Jon Roush  
May 27, 1994  
Page 2

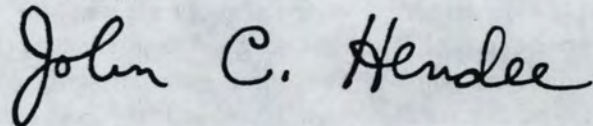
As the new and refined knowledge on wilderness assessment is developed it should be made available in publication, video, and short courses for agency policy makers, managers, congressional staff, and the public. University curricula should reflect the new approaches for use by the next generation of resource analysts and users. Publications, video, and computer software could be packaged to make the information available to instructors in universities nationwide, and eventually in the national, televideo course on wilderness allocation, use and management that is part of my vision for the WRC. I believe that all of the above provide opportunity for the WRC to work collaboratively with the Wilderness Society.

I look forward to additional discussions with you, Jeff, and Mark about the need for new and better wilderness assessment technology and strategies to implement the above described project. Jeff and I have been discussing the topic during our time together on the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Environmental Issues in the Pacific Northwest. Based on the interest you expressed, I'd like to work with Jeff (a first rate economist on a short proposal for such a project).

Jon, I'm looking forward to our next meeting. I hope you find your schedule clear to join President Zinser and me, along with WILD Foundation president, Vance Martin, and their board chair, Bob Baron, at Taylor Ranch, August 26-28. If you are available, I will be glad to help make arrangements.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



John C. Hendee  
Dean

JCH/nm

letters/vp/sj/tr

Enclosures

- c: Elisabeth A. Zinser, President, University of Idaho  
Jeff Olson, Director, Bolle Center for Forest Ecosystem Management  
Mark Shaffer, Vice President, Research Planning and Economics, w/enclosures  
Vance Martin, President, The WILD Foundation  
Bob Baron, Chair, The WILD Foundation
- bc: John Hunt  
Jeff Yeo  
Randy Pitstick