

Research Center of UI Deep in Primitive Area

BIG CREEK, Idaho (AP) — Deep in the most remote part of central Idaho the University of Idaho has a research center practically untouched by man.

State officials visited it last week and agreed that potential of the Wilderness Research Center has barely been scratched.

The center is in a primitive area of the Payette National Forest. It can be reached only by horseback or airplane. A short airstrip has been carved out of a hayfield for small aircraft.

The 65-acre tract was bought for \$100,000 in 1969. It lies along Big Creek, a major tributary of the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

Officials see the area's remoteness as its biggest asset.

"It's a vast controlled window on ecology," said University of Idaho President Dr. Ernest Hartung. He said there's no other place in the United States with such a large and continuous block of land relatively untouched by man.

"These wilderness lands provide a set of standards against which resource scientists can measure success or failure of man in the manipulation of his environment," he said.

Janet Hay of Nampa, a member of the State Board of Education, agreed. She visited the center recently.

"It's a beautiful outdoor laboratory, an ideal headquarters for all kinds of study

and research of wilderness ecosystems," she said. But more money is needed if it is to reach its potential.

Hartung said researchers can study wildlife, plants and a waterway undisturbed by man. Another major area of research is the impact of humans.

A university wilderness researcher, Kenneth Sowles, says, "We have no choice but to learn how to protect and preserve our precious wilderness areas for future generations."

One study already done in the area was by Dr. Maurice Hornocker on mountain lions. Another 15 students are researching in the area.

Mrs. Hay said the center is the only one of its kind operated by a university. She said it offers something "Only Idaho can contribute to the total outdoor educational picture."

She said she plans to urge other members of the board to seek funds to develop the center. It doesn't cost much to operate because it is so remote, she said.

"We really should have a little more in the way of equipment and facilities if we are to take advantage of the unique opportunities the center has to offer," she said.

The center has sleeping facilities for seven persons but no electricity or running water.

Political Action Is a Goal

Head

Andrus Preparing for 'Tough Fight' With Congress Over Wilderness

BOISE, Idaho (AP)—Idaho Gov. Cecil D. Andrus has been busy since October gathering resources to combat a federal proposal on Idaho wilderness areas.

The governor's staff said Tuesday the governor expects a tough fight in Congress over a proposal that only 1.1 million acres of central Idaho be set aside for a wilderness area.

Andrus has urged keeping 1.8 million acres free from commercial development. The U.S. Forest Service recommended preserving 1.5 million acres.

"The tragedy of President Ford's proposal is that it doesn't reflect the public attitude or factual information," said John Hough, special assistant to the governor.

Seattle More Expensive Than Spokane

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — It's a lot cheaper to live in Spokane than Seattle, a study says.

But while the cost of living in the state's largest city is nearly 8 per cent higher than the second largest city, Spokaneites pay more for certain items, the Gonzaga University School of Business Administration study showed.

Seattle residents pay much more for housing, health services, fuel oil and recreation, the study said. Spokane residents pay more for food, clothing and upkeep.

If you're renting, it costs 17 per cent more in Seattle, the study said.

Study director R. Lee Norton said some factors may have produced unfair figures, including the over-all impact of the Expo '74 world's fair in Spokane.

Some prices, including motel rooms and meals, rose during the six-month fair which ended last month.

"This is our most powerful point. We have to demonstrate to the people that the decision that's going to be made will be based on public attitude," he said.

The governor's proposal is aimed mainly at protecting Salmon River watersheds and the middle fork of the Salmon River.

The wilderness area he advocates takes in both the existing Idaho and Salmon River Breaks primitive areas plus about 350,000 acres of adjacent wild country.

President Ford's proposal, issued last week and immediately attacked by Andrus, calls for preserving 300,000 acres less than the existing primitive area.

Hough said the President's recommendation was expected in September. When it didn't come, the governor's office "began suspecting trouble," Hough said, and groundwork was laid in October for the expected congressional hearings.

To prepare for the hearings, the governor's office is preparing to confirm and update testimony Andrus gave at Forest Service hearings 13 months ago.

The public hearings were held by the forest service to determine public attitudes toward the two primitive areas.

Based on those hearings, Regional Forester Vern Hamre of Ogden, Utah, submitted the forest service's proposal of 1.5 million acres of wilderness. Hamre's recommendation was supported by John McGuire, Washington, D.C., Chief of the Forest Service.

The President trimmed 400,000 acres from the forest service recommendation.

The proposal will be drafted in the form of a bill and assigned Senate and House interior committees, Hough said. The committees will pass the bill to subcommittees which probably will hold hearings in Idaho.

The wilderness Research Center at the University of Idaho is expected to provide support for Andrus' 1.8 million-acre position at the hearings.

"We're attempting to utilize a first-class state resource, the research center, to make our point," Hough said.

He said data from the Idaho Fish and Game Department and the division of tourism and industrial development will be used. The departments conducted an economic study of wilderness versus development.

"We're asking them to reassess the

study, to update it," Hough said.

Other state agencies also will be used to compile testimony, Hough indicated.

Both Idaho senators, Democrat Frank Church and Republican James A. McClure, are on the interior committee, but neither has come out in support of the Andrus wilderness proposal. Church has said he will fight against carving up the existing primitive area.

Hough said the governor will attempt to get Church and McClure to put his proposal in bill form so the interior committee will have more than one proposal to consider.