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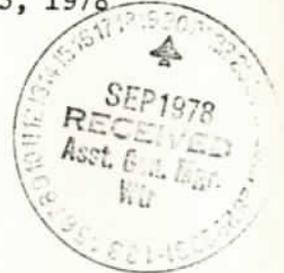
Public Land Management Alliance

P. O. Box 14565

Phoenix, AZ 85063

September 13, 1978

The Honorable Bruce Babbitt
Governor of Arizona
State Capitol
1700 W. Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007



Dear Governor Babbitt:

Many citizens of Arizona are very concerned about the recreational, environmental, economic and social costs of the U. S. Forest Service's inventory of 94 areas in Arizona for Wilderness potential. Nearly two million acres of National Forest in Arizona are now in limbo pending evaluation through the second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II) and their future is clouded in uncertainty.

We ask that you join the majority of Arizona citizens and varied interests represented by the Public Land Management Alliance (PLMA) in urging the Forest Service and Congress to quickly resolve the uncertainties over how these undeveloped National Forest lands are to be managed. We urge you to provide input to the Forest Service reflecting the sentiments of the majority of Arizona citizens that our state and the nation cannot afford to close their eyes to the resource needs of future generations by locking up vast tracts of land in Wilderness.

PLMA was formed this summer by recreational, wildlife, mining, energy, timber, grazing, water and agricultural interests united by the concern that too much land is being designated as Wilderness. RARE II was the immediate concern, and, as a clearinghouse for information on that issue, PLMA has helped stimulate and expand the awareness of its allied groups and their members. PLMA will continue involvement in the RARE process on through that issue's final resolution in Congress. We also will follow other issues affecting management of Arizona's public land, such as the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) fledgling Wilderness review.

PLMA endorses Gifford Pinchot's definition of conservation as "the wise use of the earth and it's resources," with emphasis placed on "wise use." We believe careful application of the wide range of management tools now available to land managers can provide the nation with increasing opportunities to improve land use and develop natural resources while protecting ecological balances. Although we may differ among ourselves as to priorities for final management objectives on any particular area, we are in agreement that multiple-use management for the long-term is preferable to short-sighted preservation.

PLMA supports the primary objective of RARE II as proposed by Dr. Rupert Cutler to end the uncertainty over what National Forest lands should be



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designated as Wilderness. That means no delay in the Forest Service submitting a RARE II recommendation to Congress at the beginning of 1979. It means areas found more suitable for development of other multiple-use benefits should be dropped from further Wilderness consideration so that management plans can go forward. It also means minimizing the amount of land designated for further study, as those areas would continue to be subjected to a review process that already has gone on far too long. It is time for decisions to be made, not postponed further. The last thing PLMA wants to see is RARE III.

The pendulum already has swung unreasonably far towards preservation at the expense of badly needed management and development. Right now the United States has more than 350 million acres of federal land involved in the Wilderness evaluation and designation process. There are 17 million acres already in existing Wilderness and another 150 million acres of Wilderness proposals now pending in Congress. In addition, the Forest Service has 62 million acres in RARE II, and the BLM has an estimated 120 million acres that are expected to qualify for Wilderness consideration in the agency's own RARE process. Moreover, this 350 million-acre total does not include 1,600 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers with their 1/4-mile roadless buffer zones on each side, nor the 34 million acres in National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges where preservation is the underlying philosophy and management is limited.

In Arizona, the amount of land in existing or potential Wilderness also is substantial. There are more than 2.5 million acres already designated as Wilderness or on the verge of such designation pending Congressional approval. In addition, there are the two million acres under review in RARE II, the BLM is inventorying its 12.6 million acres in Arizona for Wilderness potential, and there are more than 3 million acres in the state preserved as National Parks and Wildlife Refuges.

Arizona, as one of the fastest growing states in the Union, cannot afford to disregard the enormous costs of putting unreasonable amounts of land in limited-use Wilderness. Better management of our existing resources and improved realization of the state's vast untapped resource potential are essential to provide the water, raw materials, jobs, revenues, taxes and recreational opportunities needed for the accelerating influx of people. The designation of too much Wilderness in our state will have repercussions that will grow increasingly serious as time goes on. For example, the sighting of energy and industrial facilities required to accommodate growth could be seriously impaired by an expansion of the Arizona land area impacted by restrictive Class 1 air quality standards resulting from Wilderness additions. Another example would be the decrease in recreational opportunities. The placement of National Forest land with recreational potential into isolated Wilderness will do little to meet the state's increasing recreation needs while putting added stress on adjacent public land already suffering from inadequate improvements and overcrowding.

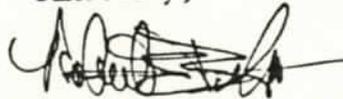
Rather than preservation, substantial investments in money and manpower combined with more responsive management policies are needed right away if Arizona and the United States are to have any hope of prudently planning for the needs of future generations. The RARE II process already

has postponed badly needed investments on millions of acres for nearly a decade. Wilderness would prevent them entirely.

To see so much land tied up in the Wilderness controversy is appalling. Wilderness is one of the most short-sighted and costly forms of land use. In Wilderness the threat of devastation by wildfire, insects and disease epidemics rapidly accelerates, wildlife and livestock forage is limited, access and development for increased recreational use is precluded, watershed values are reduced, and mineral deposits as well as new energy sources are isolated. Wilderness ignores the needs of the vast majority of federal land users as well as the general taxpaying public which owns the land and benefits from its resources, and it mortgages the needs of future generations to benefit a comparative few.

PLMA urges you to carefully consider how much more Wilderness Arizona and the nation truly require. Please keep in mind the rapidly increasing needs of the diverse publics represented by our alliance in any recommendation you provide on RARE II. Considering the significant increase in benefits provided through multiple-use management and the vast amount of land, locally and nationwide, already in existing or proposed Wilderness, the only sensible course is to give the designation of additional Wilderness a low priority.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Boley, Chairman
Public Land Management Alliance

Members of the Public Land Management Alliance

- Agri-Business Council of Arizona
- Arizona Association of Earth Science Clubs
- Arizona Cattle Growers Association
- Arizona Department of Mineral Resources
- Arizona Forest Products Industry
- Arizona Lumber and Builders Supply Association
- Arizona Mining Association
- Arizona State Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs
- Arizona State Chamber of Commerce
- Arizona Water Resources Committee
- Arizona Wildlife Federation
- Committee for the Protection of Multiple Use
- Home Builders Association of Central Arizona
- Phoenix Chamber of Commerce
- Rocky Mountain Federation of Minerological Societies
- United Four Wheel Drive Associations
- U. S. Ski Association - Rocky Mountain Division

- cc: Arizona U. S. Congressional Delegation
 Hon. Ed Sawyer, President of the Arizona Senate
 Hon. William L. Swink, Chairman, Arizona Senate Natural Resources Committee
 Hon. Frank Kelley, Speaker, Arizona House of Representatives
 Hon. Bill Lewis, Chairman, Arizona House Natural Resources and Energy Committee
 Robert S. Bergland, Secretary, U. S. Department of Agriculture
 Cecil D. Andrus, Secretary, U. S. Department of Interior