



Re: Wilderness Evaluation for the Inyo, Sequoia and Sierra National Forests

Hi Mr Dietl,

We oppose new Wilderness additions for several reasons:

We have had several rounds of Wilderness designations over the years, and the existing Wilderness is excessively sufficient for the goals that it was intended to fulfill.

The nature of the land being considered is not appropriate for Wilderness and does not meet Wilderness standards.

Most importantly, Wilderness is far too restrictive for recreation and public access. It does not allow for Mountain Biking and forces recreation into smaller and smaller areas. It is unjust that only a limited number of horsemen and hikers are allowed backcountry experiences, where mountain bikers were once able to ride.

As Mountain Biking grows, trails are being re-aligned, improved, and rebuilt to modern trail building standards. With Wilderness, the options are destroyed forever. Even when bike trails are "cherry-stemmed" in Wilderness, the old unsustainable trail alignments are cemented in place forever. There is no flexibility for intelligent planning into the future.

Even as a hiker and backpacker, additional Wilderness limits access to the original and more appropriate Wilderness lands. Because it is accessible only to the most fit hikers and horsemen, it consistently destroys trails due to lack of use.

The extensive existing Wilderness has severely limited access to high altitude terrain, and the new Wilderness additions seek to take away even more. There are very few options for mountain bikers to escape the summer heat and recreate in the mountains.

Locals use these lands extensively and depend economically on the recreation provided in multi-use land. In both the Sequoia National Forest and Inyo National Forests, mountain biking is a rapidly growing sport and a very important part of the economy. New recreation and trail options are needed, not less.

Wilderness has already destroyed too many recreational areas. One good example is Domelands in the Sequoia National Forest. It used to be a thriving rock climbing location, with a very high quality climbing guide book dedicated to it. Now, no one can access the climbing spots without a large multi-day hike. Few people climb or hike it now, and the trails are disappearing. The entire region is now relatively inaccessible.

The lands being evaluated can be protected without the archaic and outdated Wilderness designation. Please oppose any new Wilderness.

Sincerely,

Allison Diller on behalf of KRMB
Kern River Mountain Bike Association