

Changes to Wilderness Bill Include White Mountain Acreage

Written by Tom Woods

Sierra Wave Radio (<http://www.ksrw.sierrawave.net/site/content/view/1143/48/>)

Tuesday, 29 July 2008

The Boxer-McKeon Wilderness Bill is slowly changing as it is ground through the gears of Washington DC.

The bill had proposed 430,000 acres of new designated wilderness in the Eastern Sierra. That number is now up to 438,000.

As proposed wilderness areas near Mammoth were subtracted from the list, new wilderness areas are now proposed to be added.



According to Congressman Buck McKeon's staff, the proposed McGee Mountain Wilderness near Crowley Lake has been removed from the bill. The Laurel Lakes addition, near Mammoth is no longer on the list either.

Bob Huaeter with McKeon's office has explained that Senator Barbara Boxer's office won't budge on the total acreage of Wilderness in this bill, so other areas are slated to be added as parts are cut out.

4000 acres on Table Mountain, between Aspendell and South Lake is now proposed Wilderness. Other new additions include close to 4000 acres on Mt. Conness near Tioga Pass and 500 acres near Tioga Lake.

The White Mountains, where much of the controversy in this bill lies, will receive an additional 6000 acres on top of the 223,000 acres already in the bill. McKeon's staff reports that the recently added 6000 acres are in Mono County and include an already protected area of Bristlecone Pine Forest.

Other changes to the bill remain as previously reported. 22 miles of Cottonwood Creek in the Whites are slated for Wild and Scenic River designation and Wilderness boundary will fall 75 feet from the center line of roads cherry stemmed into the Wilderness. Every currently legal road will stay legal, staff reports.

Maps of the recent changes to the Wilderness Bill are now available on [Congressman McKeon's website](#).