

PURPOSE OF WILDERNESS

(First part of Wilderness Act quoted below, yellow highlights added for emphasis; for full Act see: <https://wilderness.net/learn-about-wilderness/key-laws/wilderness-act/default.php>)

THE WILDERNESS ACT Public Law 88-577 (16 U.S.C. 1131-1136)

88th Congress, Second Session
September 3, 1964
(As amended)

AN ACT

To establish a National Wilderness Preservation System for the permanent good of the whole people, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SHORT TITLE

SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as the "Wilderness Act".

WILDERNESS SYSTEM ESTABLISHED STATEMENT OF POLICY

SECTION 2. (a) In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness. **For this purpose** there is hereby established a National Wilderness Preservation System to be composed of federally owned areas designated by Congress as "wilderness areas", and these shall be administered **for the use and enjoyment** of the American people **in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment** as wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of their wilderness character, and for the gathering and dissemination of information regarding their use and enjoyment as wilderness; and no Federal lands shall be designated as "wilderness areas" except as provided for in this Act or by a subsequent Act.