



THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
GOVERNOR

May 31, 2006

The Honorable Greg Walden
United States House of Representatives
1210 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
United States House of Representatives
2446 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressmen Walden and Blumenauer:

I am pleased to write in support of your many efforts to come up with legislation to manage and preserve Mount Hood for generations to come. Oregon has been an active participant in the numerous public summits and stakeholder meetings that you convened during the past three years. I applaud your collaborative efforts to develop this legislation and H.R. 5025, the Mount Hood Stewardship Legacy Act, is a fine start.

The Mount Hood Stewardship Legacy Act sets the stage for Mount Hood's long-term needs, including urban population expansion and increasing recreational use that clearly takes into account the four million plus visitors on the mountain every year. It also addresses the imperative to protect water quality for Portland and other local communities, as well as the environment; restore and maintain a healthy forest; and preserve the treaty rights of Native Americans who have looked to the mountain for sustenance for generations.

I support your efforts to date, and urge you and your colleagues in the House of Representatives to pass your legislation out of committee and the full House. At the same time, I believe some additions to this legislation are warranted, such as increasing the wilderness acreage and including language that permits a special land exchange between the State of Oregon and the federal government.

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department would like to transfer ownership of certain lands in the Columbia River Gorge to the Forest Service in exchange for U.S. Forest Service land the State is currently leasing. These lands could be designated as additional wilderness under the

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Page Two

Act or could be added to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. The inclusion of this exchange in the "Land Conveyances" section of the Mount Hood Stewardship Legacy Act will assure that the very popular Detroit Lake State Park continues to provide recreational opportunities for the public and valuable economic benefits to the community of Detroit. The state lands acquired by the federal government would also be protected in their present condition for the use and enjoyment of the public.

Thank you for your efforts to create additional wilderness in Oregon. If I can be of assistance at any point in the process, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theodore R. Kulongoski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T'.

THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor

TRK:jh:jb