

HOOD RIVER NEWS

Wyden announces forum on plan to expand wilderness

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U.S. Senator Ron Wyden will host public forums in Hood River and Portland to discuss his Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness proposal.

The Hood River forum will be April 17, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Hood River Inn (Best Western), Gorge Room, 1108 East Marina Way.

Wyden proposed last month to designate 160,000 acres of additional wilderness along the Lewis and Clark expedition's path in the Columbia River Gorge and in areas surrounding Mount Hood, as well as designating four river segments under the Wild and Scenic River System.

"Over the years, I have heard from many Oregonians about the need for greater protection and additional recreation in the Mount Hood area and in the Columbia Gorge," Wyden said. "These forums will allow people to make their voices heard at that point in time where they will have the greatest impact on the content of the legislation that Congress will soon consider."

The wilderness areas Wyden is proposing for protection include additions to the Mount Hood Wilderness, the Mark O. Hatfield Wilderness, the Badger Creek Wilderness and the Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness. The four river stretches proposed for addition to the National Wild and Scenic River System include portions of the East Fork Hood River, Middle Fork Hood River, Zigzag River and Eagle Creek.

At the forums, speakers will be asked to limit their remarks to two minutes and are encouraged to also bring a written copy to submit.

Comments will be taken in the order of registration. To pre-register, people should submit their name, which forum they will attend, and the name of the organization they represent (if applicable) by e-mail to: registration@wyden.senate.gov or by phone at 503-326-7541.

Additional details on Wyden's wilderness proposal are available at: wyden.senate.gov/mediaThe Portland forum will be Wednesday, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Portland State University's University Place, in the Columbia Falls Ballroom, 310 S.W. Lincoln St.