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Wilderness Area Discussion

What is a Wilderness Area?

Wilderness Areas are pristine regions of public lands shaped by natural forces, that are non-motorized, and where people are only visitors. Wilderness Areas are our last vestiges of intact historical landscapes that preserve biological capital. Ultimately, they offer us a window into the past to appreciate and reflect on our national heritage.

Where did Wilderness Areas come from?

The Wilderness Act of 1964, passed by Congress, directs the United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to enforce non-motorized use on our public lands as Wilderness Areas.

What is the Eagle Cap?

The Eagle Cap Wilderness Area is one of the earliest primitive areas recognized by the USFS to be included in the original National Wilderness Preservation System. The Eagle Cap Wilderness Area includes 360,000 acres of pristine backcountry skier habitat.

How do outfitters fit into Wilderness Areas?

USFS Special Use Permits authorize outfitters to operate camps providing skiers access to the Eagle Cap Wilderness Area. Associated outfitter trip costs include USFS user fees to support Wilderness Area management. The Outfitter/USFS relationship ensures the general skiing public's continued access to the remote Eagle Cap Wilderness Area.

Who Cares?

Without Wilderness Areas, backcountry skiers are subjugated to motorized multiple-use on the National Forest. Wilderness Area management has become an effective policy to safeguard the opportunity for a primordial backcountry ski experience on public lands.