



Resolution #10

Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs
Approved, September 10, 2006

EXPANDING PROTECTED AREAS IN UNDER-REPRESENTED ECOSYSTEMS

The National Parks and Monuments Committee of the Sierra Club recently examined a study of the 89 major terrestrial ecoregions in the United States and found that only 38 (40%) have units of the national parks system located within them which have sufficient size and cohesiveness to adequately represent the ecoregions. Although there are additional units of the national park system within the boundaries of some of these ecosystems, they are not of sufficient size to effectively protect a significant sample of the ecosystem where they are located. Consequently the committee has identified a problem that over time, with public support, can be corrected. The National Parks and Monuments Committee of the Sierra Club is trying to publicize the results of this "Gap Analysis" and gather support for a process to identify projects that can be implemented to fill these "gaps".

Three major recommendations have been made:

- that gaps in America's system of protected natural areas be filled such that all terrestrial and aquatic ecoregions within the United States are represented by a national park or equivalent preserve of adequate size to assure long-term preservation of all its natural resources;
- that, as necessary for each represented area and so as to be consistent with other federal laws such as the Wilderness Act, a restoration program be undertaken that creates conditions for re-establishment of natural processes throughout the area;
- that a research and education program be developed to promote the protection and restoration of all native species throughout the ecoregion for present and future generations.

The Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs supports the establishment of new units of the national park system and the enlargement of existing national parks or similar protected areas in all major ecological regions so that they are adequately protected and made available for research, education and enjoyment by all citizens of the United States.

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