

Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs & Associates

Establish in 1932 for the Mutual Service and for the Promotion of the Proper Use, Enjoyment and Protection of America's Scenic Wilderness and Outdoor Recreation Resources

President's Message – July 2016

Greetings Everyone,

Members of FWOC continue to expend considerable time and energy in monitoring, evaluating, and responding to a great number of conservation and environmental concerns throughout the western states. At present there is so much proposed legislation that would compromise the Wilderness Act along with previous protected lands in all the western states and the entire country as a whole. One priority is joining with those working so diligently to gain protection for valued lands that have yet to be protected. FWOC members have been successful in influencing decisions that favor conservation and environmental legislation for over 84 years. It is our determination to continue that legacy left us by so many dedicated individuals.



Another priority concerns oil and coal trains traveling throughout the United States. The recent train derailment in Mosier, Oregon resulting in fires, pollution and evacuation of many from their homes is a reminder that the efforts to curtail such potentially dangerous oil trains must be continued. The Friends of the Columbia Gorge and the Sierra Club, Oregon Chapter have both been extremely effective getting people involved in efforts to protect Oregon and Washington from another potential accident. Government should no longer be in denial.

Privatization of public lands is another challenge affecting everyone. When land is removed from Federal jurisdiction, the protection afforded those lands will no longer exist. Among many leading the efforts to prevent such a travesty are the Great Old Broads for Wilderness. They helped organize rallies in support public lands in Washington, Oregon and Idaho in response to the occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Wilderness Watch has been active in discussions regarding grazing on public lands as well as defending wilderness areas from the growing efforts by mountain biker organizations to introduce legislation to allow such activity in Wilderness. Many of our member organizations are actively campaigning to protect public lands. You can learn more in our "Clubs in Action" section of Outdoors West which is available on our web site, www.federationofwesternoutdoorclubs.org

The National Parks and the US Forest Service are experiencing continued congressional reduction in their budgets; now less than 2% of the national budget. It is extremely difficult for both organizations to function as intended in maintaining facilities and lands. There are discussions currently under way to allow corporate sponsorship and advertising within the National Parks to supplement their inadequate budgets. Oh My!

I will remind you that FWOC resolutions, available on our web site, have been an effective addition to many campaigns. If you are writing letters about an issue, take a look to see if there is a resolution that might bolster your discussion. You might also consider submitting a resolution at this year's convention at Islandwood Educational Learning Center on Bainbridge Island, September 16th-18th, to help gain support for your efforts.

Sincerely,

George Milne

George T. Milne
President