

Resolution #14
Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs

OPPOSE HELICOPTER TOUR FLIGHTS OVER CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK

Submitted by: Friends of Discovery Park, Seattle WA

Background: Leading Edge Aviation, Inc. Bend, Oregon, has applied for permission to fly tour operations over Crater Lake National Park, Oregon with at least 300 flights per year. They are requesting an interim permit be issued prior to development of an Air Tour Management Plan, now required by federal law enacted in 2000. This law calls for the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Park Service (NPS) to cooperate in developing an air tour management plan for all national parks. No new tours have been authorized since this 2000 law.

Leading Edge Aviation, Inc. now wants to fly tour helicopters from an airport outside the park and loop over the lake at a height of approximately 1,000 feet. They propose doing 30-minute tours and longer tours of up to 50 minutes. The primary flight season will be summer but flights will continue into the winter months

This company is poised to unleash a huge marketing campaign spreading brochures and information nationally and locally in motels, visitor's information centers, airports and on highway billboards. They plan to "emphasize the quietness" of their helicopters with noise levels "similar to that of a normal conversation and slightly quieter than TV audio or a vacuum cleaner".

Crater Lake, located at the crest of the Cascade Range in Southern Oregon, was formed after the Mount Mazama volcano erupted more than 7,000 years ago. The park brings millions of visitors from all over the world and is noted for its unique natural beauty and animal life, including northern spotted owls and peregrine falcons nesting near the edge of the lake. Most of all, Crater Lake is a unique national treasure in offering its rarest of gifts: quiet serenity.

Resolution: The Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs strongly opposes helicopter tour flights over Crater Lake and urges the National Park Service to deny an interim permit to Leading Edge Aviation, Inc to operate such tours. The FWOC further urges the NPS and the Federal Aviation Administration to strictly adhere to the 2000 law regulating helicopter tours over national parks.

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