

Administration of Barack Obama, 2015

Remarks on Signing the Sawtooth National Recreation Area and Jerry Peak Wilderness Additions Act

August 7, 2015

Well, first of all, over the last 6 years, the American people have worked really hard to bounce back from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. We got jobs numbers today, showing that America had created another 210,000 new jobs. That makes 65 consecutive months of private sector job growth. This is the strongest 2-year run of private sector job growth that we've seen in the last 15 years. And it is a testament, I think, to the incredible ingenuity and resilience and hard work of the American people.

So even as we continue to focus on rebuilding our economy, providing more opportunity, one of the things that we've also been trying to focus on is leaving a legacy for the next generation in preserving this incredible beauty, the God-given blessings, that we've received, those of us who have lived here in the United States of America.

I think everybody here knows that one of the prettiest States that we have, with some of the greatest national treasures, is the great State of Idaho. I am very proud to be able to sign this piece of legislation, enacted by the House of Representatives, entitled the Sawtooth National Recreation Area and the Jerry Peak Wilderness Additions Act. And what this does is, it designates three additional wilderness designations in the great State of Idaho.

This is a remarkable area. It is used by fishermen, hunters, rafters, people taking hikes. It is not only beautiful, but it's also an important economic engine for the State, attracting tourism and creating jobs. And thanks to the work of a broad-based coalition of folks in Idaho, but spearheaded here in Congress by Congressman Mike Simpson—who was able to receive not a single "no" vote—[laughter]—which does not happen often in the House of Representatives—something that folks have been working on for quite some time is going to be reality.

And so we want to congratulate all of them. We want to urge the American people to visit these new, incredible wilderness areas and recognize that not only will this give opportunities to people in Idaho, but it's going to be there for future generations as well.

One last point I want to make: We want to be thinking during the course of this summer about the firefighters who are taking on some really tough fires all across the Western States. As I've noted before, we've seen a consistent escalation of the severity and the length of wildfire season. And a lot of that is attributable to the fact that climate change is going to be raising temperatures and creating less water, more vulnerability for a lot of forests out there.

One of the things we're trying to work on with Congress is making sure that we are able to properly fund firefighting efforts, but also that we're engaged in the kind of conservation planning to ensure that we're preventing fires from happening in the first place.

And so that's a project that, at least in the Western States, you get a lot of bipartisan support for. And hopefully, we'll be able to get that same kind of support here in Washington.

So, again, congratulations to all of you. Mike, congratulations for the great work you've done.

I will now sign this designation.

[*At this point, the President signed the bill.*]

I'm getting a lot of practice doing this, but I want even more. [*Laughter*] There you go. Good job.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. H.R. 1138, approved August 7, was assigned Public Law No. 114–46.

Categories: Bill Signings and Vetoes : Sawtooth National Recreation Area and Jerry Peak Wilderness Additions Act, signing remarks.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Simpson, Michael K.

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