

**A Call for the Protection of Missouri Wilderness
May, 2007**

Across Missouri's rich, forested landscape are a few remaining areas that can rightfully claim the title "wilderness." Most of these areas are within the 1.5 million acres of the Mark Twain National Forest, where only about 63,500 acres, or 4.3%, is currently protected as seven federally designated Wilderness Areas. Nearly all of the remainder of the Mark Twain remains open to intensive management including salvage and other commercial logging, road building, and lead mining. Yet hidden among the hollows and hills remain a few cherished, wild landscapes. These remaining places deserve enduring protection for their high quality wilderness character – a diminishing, endangered, and valuable resource in Missouri.

As such, the signatories to this statement request the following:

1. Immediate designation of the following five areas as Wilderness Areas under the Wilderness Act of 1964:

Big Spring (7,600 acres) in Carter County
North Fork (7,200 acres) in Ozark, Howell, and Douglas Counties
Spring Creek (6,400 acres) in Douglas and Howell Counties
Swan Creek (9,200 acres) in Christian County
Smith Creek (2,500 acres) in Callaway and Boone Counties

2. Immediate designation of the following two areas as Wilderness Study Areas, with the intent of full Wilderness designation pending reconciliation of boundary issues:

Lower Rock Creek (13,800 acres) in Madison and Iron Counties
Van East Mountain (2,500 acres) in Madison and Iron Counties

3. Immediate protection under the Wilderness Act for the 13 Wilderness Area additions (totaling 1,770 acres) adjacent to existing Wilderness and recommended for Wilderness Study by the Forest Service in the 2005 Forest Plan (FEIS 3-282)
4. Until such time as the above areas are protected under the Wilderness Act, the Forest Service and National Park Service shall manage such areas for their wilderness character, and consistent with Forest Plan Management Prescription 5.1.
5. The Forest Service and National Park Service shall recognize the ecological and public value of wilderness. All areas with significant wilderness qualities, including RARE II and other roadless areas, as well as potential Wilderness Area additions, shall be managed in a manner not detrimental to their wilderness character.