Wilderness Act Turns 45 With 4.5 million Acres Protected in WA

Local News

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SEATTLE, Wash. - Folks in Washington will have lots of places to hunt, fish and raft this Labor Day weekend, thanks to the Wilderness Act, which turns 45 years old today. The Act made it possible to protect more than 100 million acres nationwide, and more than four million acres of public land in Washington State.

Tom Uniak, Washington Wilderness Coalition conservation director, says there are plenty of undeveloped wilderness areas for hunters, fisherman, rafters and families to head to.
"The Wilderness Act has been very important to Washington State over the last 40 years. It directly lead to the protection of 31 different Wilderness Areas across the state, covering more than 4 million acres."

Ready access to unspoiled wild lands are one of the major reasons people are attracted to Washington State, he adds.

"Wilderness is very much where we hunt, fish, raft, kayak, backpack; it's a place we go for daytrips - and it's really critical to why people move here to live, to raise their families and to work."

A bill is pending that would give Washington State another slice of protected land by extending the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. The U.S. Senate passed a resolution commemorating today's anniversary of passage of the Wilderness Act. Nationwide, the act has protected more than 109 million acres in the last 45 years.