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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Willamette National Forest Rec Fee comment

Willamette National Forest,

11/15/19

The proposed fee plan should be PHASED IN with ONLY requiring a permit with a fee. This would allow day use to be accurately tracked and monitored. It would allow extra funds for enforcement and education of existing day use rules.

NO QUOTAS should be introduced at this time. A permit system with quotas effectively SEVERELY LIMITS ACCESS way beyond the official daily quota.

Here are the problems I have experienced with the current permit/quota systems:

1. People make reservations and do not show up.
2. With day use hike permits, very often there will be a "group size" on a permit much larger than the actual number of hikers. People reserve a large group size either (a) hoping others will join (b) group members cancel (b) by accident when making the reservation.
3. There is no system in place to monitor groups at entry points and "subtract" hikers from a permit and allow others to enter.
4. With a quota system it is very likely all days for the entire summer will be reserved within the first few days of reservations opening. This is definitely true of weekend days.

From my experience it is literally impossible to cancel or edit a reservation once it is made. There are also no fines or very minimal fines for not canceling or editing a reservation. We have all experienced staying at a campground where the most desirable spots are reserved and nobody shows up for the entire length of the reservation.

There is no substantial fine for reserving more hiking spots than actually used. In reality the low cost of the permit is part of the problem. If the per person cost was higher people would think twice about reserving extra spaces.

There is nothing to stop local hiking groups from having their members effectively reserve all of the available spots. This will not leave room for spontaneous trips.

It would be a shame if a local resident had family visiting over a weekend and amazing local hikes were not accessible. Epic local hikes are one of the features that makes this area great. Even having last minute quotas is not acceptable in this area.

Thank you for considering the opinion of myself and other local hikers.

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