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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Proposed Backpacking Fees

To Whom It May Concern,

I understand your department is considering drastically increasing overnight backpacking fees within the Three Sisters/Jefferson Wilderness. While it may seem a desirable choice considering the rise in popularity (and therefore resulting harm to the alpine ecosystem), I would urge you to refrain from increasing the rates simply because other wilderness areas charge in similar structure. As an avid hiker myself, I believe the beauty of Oregon lies in so much more than just the nature. Merely one example is held within the opportunity to experience it on such a vast scale without serious harm to wallets. I am a deep supporter of use fees as I wish them to maintain our availability of options, cleanliness, staff pay, and etc. However, by raising the rates as much as has been proposed, you'll be depriving many of the chance to experience our lovely state without a large financial hit. Escaping to nature should be refreshing and not cause duress. Higher fees will not serve to weed out those who are disrespectful of nature; yet, it will indeed deter those, like my family, who make trips based on affordability and an effervescent love of our beautiful surroundings. I believe we should do our best to encourage people to opt outdoors and experience our state, not make it a rich man's activity. A more minimal rise in rates would still accomplish select goals without enraging a vast community that thrives on the economical and ease of access to beloved trails. Born and raised in Oregon, I can honestly say there's no state like it. Let's keep it that way.

Best Regards,
Michelle Sullivan