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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments on the Special Recreation Permit Fee

Good morning.

I am a member and volunteer climb leader of the Obsidians, a Eugene-based outdoor club. I find the proposed fee amounts to be acceptable, but I am requesting that last-minute refunds be possible.

The Obsidians schedule each season's climbs by April year and climbs are listed on the club's web site months in advance. For each of these climbs, we may restrict participation to maybe 6 or 8 people, but will not know how many people will actually sign up until a week or two before the date of the climb.

Under the proposed system, for each climb in one of the three wilderness areas, we will need to apply and pay for permits months in advance, not knowing if we'll be stuck with a handful of permits because only one or two people signed up for the climb.

Another concern that can affect our use of permits is the weather. It can be extremely dangerous to attempt climbs during inclement weather. Thunderstorms are probably the worst example. We postpone or cancel about 1/4 to 1/3 of our climbs each summer due to weather conditions. When this occurs, we try to reschedule the climb for the next day or next weekend, however, that option does not seem possible under the proposed permit system. (I had previously asked that the proposed permit system allow climbing permits to be valid over a multi-day period so that a climb can be postponed for up to a week to keep climbers off a mountain during dangerous weather.)

For these reasons, I request that the Forest Service allow refunds to be made within 48 hours of the date of a permit if the permits cannot be used.

Thank you.

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