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Organization:

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Comments: NO FEES YET...

With regard to the proposed implementation of a fee to access wilderness areas, it is clearly setting a precedent in federal land management policy. Charging fees in the past has always been associated with parking a vehicle outside the boundary of the wilderness area. You are now proposing to charge a fee for access within the wilderness area and using the funds to manage that area as a recreational opportunity at a rate of 21 cents per hour for each overnight visitor. All funds will dispersed with however the forest service sees fit in the management of the wilderness as a recreation site. I disagree with the allocation of any funds that are not clearly designated solely for the intended purpose for which I understand is to limit the human impact. The fee based management of wilderness as a recreational site is clearly in violation with Aldo Leopold's intent for wilderness as you propose to trammel these public lands as a funding source for further recreational developments (trail construction, campsite zones with designated sites, more signage, etc) Perhaps by limiting parking spaces and offering a more intended primitive experience would have greatly reduced the number of users. I believe the creation of wilderness was not for anthropocentric activity in the first place. Just as fire suppression policy has led to unintended consequences by forest management, so shall a for-use recreation fee policy will lead to the degradation of these special places as nothing more than public lands being prostituted for recreational development. Until at which time the forest service clearly states that by law all fees are to be for the designated purpose of limiting the number of people within the wilderness I cannot support the appropriation of any additional funds at this time. In addition, no individuals whose income is beneath the federal income poverty level should ever pay any fee associated with accessing public lands. The way we manage these rare and special places are reflection on us as a society and we need to carefully deliberate all possible options/proposals. We really need to get this right. Thank you for your time and consideration and I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

Limited access, but no fees at this time.

Best Regards,

Carl Blomquist

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