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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Attn: Recreation Fees

I am writing in resistance to the new fees to use the trails of Mt. Jefferson, Mt Washington and Three Sister areas. We already have to pay State and/or Federal Fees to use "our" trails. Plus we pay for gas to get to trails (gas is taxed), we pay a plethora of taxes to State and Federal systems which should already be covering trails, parks, bathroom maintenance and renewals.

Our group is usually 6-10 older women. Yes, we use the toilets as well as the trails and park our cars. We do car pool and share the cost for gas. If 10 of us hike that is an added cost totaling \$40 for one hike. It is too much. We also don't leave waste of any sort and take out dropped paper, bottles and cans that we can manage.

I do not want our forests and wilderness areas to become too expensive for average people to use. Can we reduce the numbers trampling some popular areas by having limited permits as in the past, bikes use on odd days, or hikers and horses on even ones? Limited parking that is enforced with tickets issued to abusers. If it is full you go to another park for that day. Period.

It seems that no matter the choices there will have to be monitoring which I know costs money. Make sure the rich are putting in their fair share of taxes collected and demand that more money go for parks, trails and other recreation and wilderness and wildlife management. Then monitor that process. We would have more than enough money to care for trails, etc.

Meanwhile, how about a huge campaigner to educate all potential users about how to RESPECT the areas they are about to enter. The info is already there. It just needs to be in our faces in large print, short, clear messages at trail heads. And there must be consequences for leaving trash and human waste. I know it is almost impossible to catch people in the act. What about volunteers on trails? Rewards for taking trash out? Have clean up our trails days, like we do at Smith Rocks and the section of the Deschuttas that runs through Bend. People need to invest their time to feel more connected to an area. Then they will care more about our wonderful wilderness areas. How about some tricky slogan about not being just a user, but a giver.

Thank you. Jean Harkin