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Comments: Trail Fees and horses

Hi

I am sharing my concern over trail fees applying to horse users. While I am not totally against a small trail fee, my expectations for a payback of user fees for horses will be increased.

The way a horse person has to plan the ride begins at least a day before, as opposed to a hiker who may decide within 20 mins to go for a hike. A horse person needs to rise earlier and feed stock extra early so the horses will be ready to load, say by 9 am. This means feeding by 7 or 7:30 am. Once we are loaded, we conceivably will need to stop by a permitting venue. That includes navigation of small parking lots, around cars who have no conscious thought of the space needed for a 5 horse trailer. Then driving an hour to the trailhead (thinking Soda Creek, Green Lake) only to find multiple cars parked in the trailer only spaces. By now it's probably 11 am and we have nowhere to go. Cars are lined down the sides of the hwy and obviously not a place for trailers to unload and tie up. When riding with friends, we have a caravan of 2/3 trailers and nowhere to go and barely a place to stop together so we can talk about a change of plans.

So, for the fee, I am expecting increased patrolling of trailer only spots, patrolling of cars parked too closely to back of trailer doors (at least 8 ft) so horses can be reloaded, and fines for those illogically parked cars -to pay for the increased patrolling.

This scenario is not imagined, it has happened to me on more than one occasion. Even if permits are available on-line the prior day, it doesn't guarantee a parking spot for trailers. Not policing the existing parking lots makes it hard for a trailer to get in and around only to find no available spots to park among a million cars parked illogically. Perhaps if you make MORE horse trailer parking, the over-use by hikers may automatically diminish while horse use increases- thereby adding more nutrients and moisture to the trails!

Thank you

Paula Buchanan

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