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Organization:

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Comments: Permits

I am reluctantly supporting the new policy of reservations and fees for hiking at overused wilderness trailheads.

I am a lifetime resident of Oregon and outdoor enthusiast. Hiking, backpacking, exploring - you name it - have been precious experiences for as long as I can remember. The thought of having to take a number and pay a fee to commune with nature is, at its best, a violation of the very privilege of taking a walk in the woods.

Still, I am crestfallen to take that walk and a) be unable to find a parking place closer than 1/4 mile down the highway, b) find myself on the trail with innumerable people, often in large groups and not always behaving well, c) constant encounters with dogs, d) being witness to too much disrespect of our precious forests. Are we preserving the Wildernesses or beating them down?

I prefer the solitude of the Wilderness even if I have to take a number. So this is my grimaced approval of the new system.

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