

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/20/2019 9:14:52 PM

First name: Kelsey

Last name: Shaw

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Central Cascades Wilderness Project

Kelsey Shaw

1408 SE 22nd Ave

Portland, OR 97214

November 20, 2019

Dear Willamette National Forest,

Recreation within Deschutes and Willamette National Forests' Wilderness areas has a positive impact on local Oregon communities. Many citizens choose to reside in places like Bend for the accompanying quality of life and the health benefits of outdoor recreation, including climbing, hiking, backcountry skiing, trail running, and other human-powered Wilderness-based activities. Burdensome and limited-entry permit systems could have an unintended economic impact on rural communities, local businesses, and the greater Oregon tourism economy. The Forest Service should implement other, less restrictive management tools prior to implementing limited-entry day-use permits. Examples include educational programs focused on leave no trace practices, administrative signage, revegetation and restoration projects to address areas of concern, and installation of toilet facilities and/or wag bag stations to address human waste issues.

For those of us living in Portland, the Deschutes and Willamette National Forests' Wilderness areas provide respite and recovery from the burdens of the city. These areas are bountiful in the health benefits they provide, both mental and physical. As someone who suffers from anxiety, the trails and other recreation opportunities are crucial to my self-care practices. If a complicated and time-sensitive permit process is instituted, me and others who suffer from similar mental health issues will be overwhelmed by the prospect of even planning an adventure, let alone going on one. Please take these thoughts into consideration when planning this new system.

A portion of permits should be held for walk-up, first come first serve availability to allow climbers to attempt summits during good weather windows, which decreases potential weather-related accidents and the chances of getting lost, both of which result in increased search and rescue missions within Wilderness areas. Additionally, the Forest Service should consider an annual pass or volunteer pass to remove undue limitations and financial burden for individuals who frequent the permitted areas and support stewardship.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Shaw