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Comments: FEEs for Use of Wilderness In Oregon

After considerable contemplation I have decided to voice my opposition to this proposal by the Forest Service to collect fees for entry into specific Wilderness units in Oregon.

I have a variety of objections -- but briefly:

1. The idea of a sole mechanism of obtaining a permit (requiring going "on-line"), and payment to obtain a permit going to a private sector contractor, is really repugnant.

2. The daily proposed fee amount seems to have NO supporting justification? -- it just sounds good??? Has a need for "X" to support Wilderness programs been previously identified and documented in the regular request and appropriation process? ... such that some rationale / justification for the fee actually exists?

3. The weakness in showing how the fee will advance / support and is needed for management, just seems glaring ... and I am in no mood to "trust" the Forest Service. The agency's lack of credibility has been too well established ... particularly with regards to Wilderness mgmt.

4. I worry that there is no "guarantee" that fee revenue won't simply be a "stand-in" for shifting appropriated monies to other areas / programs ... like to foster / support more of the horrible waste we see in the fire suppression programs! Can the FS assure the public that the fee revenue will supplement and enhance Wilderness and not just be a cover for reducing appropriated resources dedicated to Wilderness protection?

5. I really object to the structure that allows hunters to bypass the fee program! This is totally unacceptable ... as is the failure to address stock use and related impacts in any meaningful manner.

6. I really think the entire process employed throughout has been horrid!!! --- separating the decision process for instituting fees ... from the process to actually set the fee amount and leaving so ill-defined how the collected fees will be spent and how that will improve / support Wilderness protection, is illogical and ill-conceived. This should have been a unified and transparent process from the start. So disjointed and so shadowed! Hardly reassuring!

7. Finally - I will question the legal basis for instituting and levying fees on users to National Forest System Wilderness I think interpreting existing legislation to support this type of user fee is questionable.