

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/18/2019 6:58:42 PM

First name: Pavel

Last name: Plekhanov

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Central Cascades Wilderness Project

Pavel Plekhanov

16913 NW Waterford Way

Portland, OR 97229

November 18, 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 new quota-based fee structure for limited-entry day-use permits and overnight users, would restrict climbing access and create more barriers for low-income communities. 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.

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. 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.

No recreational activity can be compared in its negative impact to logging, mining, power line routing, and other industrial uses. Before limiting recreational activity, steps need to be taken to limit or eliminate the industrial use of wilderness areas.

Hunting and fishing are the types of recreational activity that should be banned before any other recreational use limit is even considered. Hunters and fishermen kill and wound the wildlife, destroy natural habitats, and are generally and frequently observed to have no regard for the natural conservation. They do not attempt to limit their presence and impact to trails and other dedicated areas, but wander over large areas negligently destroying plants and habitats.

I understand that permitting is the best way for the Forest Service to prove its usefulness, create additional worker positions to be paid by taxpayer money, and generally to increase the management salary and ego-building enforcement authority. However, the Forest Service should not forget that its charter is to SERVE, not to restrict and ban the enjoyment of wilderness by recreational users. We, the people, do not appreciate the banning and enforcement that is being promoted by the Forest Service.

Sincerely,

Pavel Plekhanov