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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Central Cascades Wilderness Project

Dolores Niebergall

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November 19, 2019

Dear Willamette National Forest,

I am writing out of deep concern that the Forest Service is both over reacting and over treating the problem of crowding on popular trails. I am writing to encourage you to seriously consider less punitive options. The current plan is punitive to those with low income, including students who will be stewards of this land in the future and to those who climb. Here are a few suggestions.

1. The Forest Service should partner with County and State officials to address parking issues at trailheads.

Managing and enforcing parking would self-limit the number of people on trail systems. Dog Mountain in Washington is a good example.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. A business impact study for Bend and its environs needs to be performed and the results made public.

Please slow down the process and take a few steps back. The problem which needs a small tool or tools to improve it is being dealt with by use of a large bulldozer. This is public land and public opinion is critical. It seems this decision has already been made, without public opinion. Is this democracy?

I beg you to seriously reconsider. Thank you. I sincerely thank you for reconsidering this decision.

Sincerely,

Dolores Niebergall