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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Central Cascades Wilderness Project

Walter Keutel

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November 20, 2019

Dear Willamette National Forest,

I would like to express my concerns about the proposed fee structure. As a climb leader for the Mazamas who diligently follows the leave no trail principles and frequently leads climbs in these areas I fear that the new system will severely limit the options to climb in these precious areas. The new quota-based fee structure for limited-entry day-use permits and overnight users, would restrict climbing access and also 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 also consider an annual pass or volunteer pass to remove undue limitations and financial burden for individuals who frequent the permitted areas and actively support stewardship.

Sincerely,

Walter Keutel