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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Central Cascades Wilderness Project

BARRY STUART KELLER

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Portland, OR 97219

November 20, 2019

Dear Willamette National Forest,

I am an original member of the 20 year old Mt. Hood Wilderness Stewards. Our group's mission is hiking trails, "Preserving, Protecting & Protecting Wilderness For Unrestricted Access By Public Education of Leave No Trace."

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 will have an 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, will create EVEN MORE barriers for low-income communities than already exist. The Forest Service, BY IT'S OWN POLICIES, should implement other, less restrictive management tools. 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.

IF WILDERNESS IS NOT ACCESSIBLE, IT IS NOT UNDERSTOOD; IF IT IS NOT UNDERSTOOD, IT IS NOT VALUED; IF IT IS NOT VALUED, IT IS NOT LOVED; IF IT IS NOT LOVED, IT IS NOT PROTECTED; AND IF IT IS NOT PROTECTED, IT IS LOST, F O R E V E R.

Sincerely,

BARRY STUART KELLER, Mt. Hood Wilderness Stewards