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Comments: Recreation Fees Comments

I am not against limiting access to wilderness areas. I am, however, against the fee structure that has been proposed.

* It should not cost \$20 per night (plus reservation fee) for a family of 4 to go backpacking. This is more expensive than staying in most National Forest campgrounds.

* The new fees will most affect those who can least afford it.

* If the impetus for the fees is truly based on damage to the environment, then there should be significant additional fees for pack animals. For example, a horse should cost at least twice as much as a human.

* In effect, imposing fees on the public for hiking and backpacking is shifting the burden of increasing firefighting costs from all citizens to relatively few. The Forest Service is spending more and more each year fighting fires while the budget for everything else has become an underfunded afterthought.

Mike Ahten