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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Public Comment on Special Recreation Permit Fee

Suggestions for implementation of limited access and fees to Deschutes Forest Service trails:

1. To most people, it is irksome to pay a fee every time we want to hike on public land. I think you could reduce the ill will by letting people set up accounts, and then charging the accounts. For example, a person could put \$50 into their account. Then, every time they want to hike on a restricted trail, the account could be charged. Psychologically, it wouldn't seem as bad. It is psychologically easier to pay once, rather than have to make a payment every time we want to go hiking.
2. A corollary to (1) (suggestion to use accounts rather than one-time payments) is to have a system of refunds if we don't want to go hiking. If I reserved a hike several months in advance, and then the weather turned bad-which it does-I wouldn't want to be compelled to go hiking no matter what. It would be nice if we could cancel our reservations and get our money back. If we had accounts, it would be straightforward to apply a credit to our accounts.
3. You should consider implementing the restrictions gradually. Instead of imposing limited access on so many trails in 2020, perhaps you could impose limited access on a smaller number of trails and evaluate how it is going.
4. Overall, I am quite negative about the new system. I realize that overuse of trails is a problem, but the reason I-and nearly everyone I know-enjoys living in central Oregon is because we like to go into the mountains. This will significantly change the quality of our life.
5. It is a fundamentally undemocratic proposal. There are a lot of people in this area with very little money. Are they no longer permitted to enjoy the beautiful areas of our national heritage?
6. Your quotas are quite Draconian. 12 people on the Todd Lake trail per day? That is a severe restriction, especially for such an accessible and scenic trail. Perhaps you could start with less severe quotas and see how it goes.

Thank you for your consideration.

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