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Comments: Wilderness Permit Fees

Greetings,

I am a retired National Park Service employee who spent my entire 32 yr. career working in federally designated wilderness in western national parks. The proposed permit regulations put too much emphasis on the high fees that will be charged hikers and backpackers. Enforcing the new regulations will be a daunting task. The NPS has had a permit system in place for many years and still struggles with resource degradation and overuse. This comes with funding, and a large staff of patrol rangers to try to enforce wilderness regulations. The USFS proposal is so broad that it will have little effect on wilderness conditions. Where will the funding initially come from to hire staff to enforce regulations? Are the wilderness patrol rangers going to be commissioned law enforcement officers? With all of the areas that will be subject to the new regulations the USFS may have bitten off more than it can handle. A scaled down version may be a better way to start off, with lower fees and an emphasis on education. Don't price the public out of wilderness or they will no longer be advocates for it. Thank you.

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