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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments of wilderness fees

Please use this permit system as an opportunity to educate wilderness users about the rules of the road, so to speak, when traipsing in the wilderness - develop education, and possibly enforcement rules, that would be employed when anyone applies for a permit on the application website, recreation.gov. This could be as simple as requiring applicants to watch a video about proper wilderness behavior to having applicants "sign" an agreement to abide by a set of clearly stated rules that would allow wilderness rangers to cite permit holders who were violating the terms of that agreement. Cited violators would be barred from obtaining additional permits until he/she completed an on-line proficiency test.

This could be coupled with a "Responsible Users" program that would allow individuals and groups to pre-qualify, not unlike what TSA does with commercial airline passengers, allowing them to avoid having to go through the steps described above each time they apply.

Additionally, the Forest Service should incorporate some sort of permit application privilege for volunteers. Perhaps accruing a certain number of volunteer hours would allow the individuals to receive one free wilderness permit or tap a set of volunteer-only permits for particularly popular trailheads.

I also believe that it is a mistake to exempt hunters from having to pay. If this exemption is allowed, I would urge all frequent wilderness users to obtain a \$33.50 Oregon hunting license instead of paying trailhead fees. For seniors, like myself, the license is only \$21.50. Just because a person has a hunting license should not exempt them from paying wilderness use fees.

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