

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/23/2019 7:56:47 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Central Cascades Wilderness Project

Christopher Rall

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November 23, 2019

Dear Willamette National Forest,

I want to express concern and opposition to applying quotas for day access to to the 3-Sisters wilderness area. Day access is generally low-impact. It's important to be able to be flexible to catch good weather conditions. Compelling people to climb on a specific day for a permit they were forced to reserve ahead of time could result in incentivizing climbers to take more risks on poor weather days. My wife had that experience on Mt St. Helens, where her group climbed in very cold wet weather where a mishap could have been disastrous.

While I personally don't mind paying user-fees if it's clear they are used to pay for better management of trails, trailheads, visitor education, etc., the Forest Service needs to make a plan to ensure those fees do not unduly impact lower income visitors. A cumbersome process of applying for a waiver is not going to cut it. You could make the fee optional and publish info on how you use the fees. If you can't figure out a way to avoid impacting low-income visitors, you should not implement the fee.

Finally, I've climbed South Sister twice in the summer months and once in early spring, and I didn't find the hike particularly crowded. This suggests to me that there is not much need for fees or permit restrictions, especially on weekdays.

Sincerely,

Christopher Rall