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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Rec Fee Comments

Good Evening,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the fee structure as part of the Central Cascade Wilderness Strategies Project. As a Bend resident who moved here primarily for the wilderness recreation opportunities, I am concerned about how my family and so many others who enjoy these scenic areas will be impacted by the coming changes.

While attending a recent open house in Bend regarding permitting structure, I was particularly struck by the number of questions for which Forest Service staff did not have a ready answer, or even recommendations, based on permitting structures implemented in other wilderness areas in or outside of Oregon. I feel that the current outline is incomplete without broadly researched recommendations in response to the following questions that I and others posed at the meeting:

- \* What percentage of permits will be available in advance as compared to day-before or day-of?
- \* How far in advance of actual dates will online portals open for reservations?
- \* How will cancellations be handled so that others can take advantage of openings in overnight or day hikes in these areas?
- \* Will there be any kind of fee cap on overall costs for groups or individuals camping overnight for several nights in a row?

I believe that thoroughly researched recommendations to these and other important logistical questions need to be provided in advance to allow for additional public input and feedback, as opposed to what I am concerned will be a rocky and ineffective launch of the permitting structure on the current timeline.

In addition, I am very concerned about what options have been explored for folks who don't have access to the funds for these increased fees, to say nothing of the need to have access to the internet, a credit card, and/or a printer for purchasing and showing proof of a permit. At the Bend open house, a library pass was the only method of providing a permit pass that I heard mentioned. I would like to see recommendations for how to provide these passes at Forest Service locations, mobile-friendly, or other creative solutions based on what other wilderness areas have established as best practices.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide input and I look forward to staying up-to-date on the coming changes.

Sincerely,

Lauren Wood