

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/26/2019 6:54:11 AM

First name: John

Last name: Hartman

Organization:

Title:

Comments: special recreation permit comment: Big problem for long-distance hiker without a PCT thru permit on the PCT for days/weeks before reaching the permit area

Hi FS,

Thank you for comment opportunity. I appreciate your work, openness to input; and the difficulty of accommodating conflicting needs and all users.

Here's what concerns me as long-distance section hiker without a PCT thru permit:

Cost - will be substantial, e.g. \$35 to \$70 to traverse the permit area. allowing for uncertainty about the time it will take, weather etc.

***Inflexibility and whole trip uncertainty is a worse problem - When I will be on the PCT for days/weeks before reaching the permit area, I won't know when I will reach the permit area. How can I plan or get a permit?

It seems such hikers must either:

1. Buy a permit for many extra days to cover uncertainty about the time he/she will be entering and leaving the 100 mile permit section
- or 2. Get off the trail when close to the permit area, find a computer, and try to buy a permit (adding extra days at the end for uncertainty about exit date), and get back to an entrance trailhead..

Then there will be risk of permit not being available for the entrance trailhead, forcing entrance to be delayed, rerouted, or aborted.

***Can there be a better approach for such trips?

E.g. :

Have permits with somewhat flexible entrance/(exit) dates.

And/or

Have an explicit policy about flexible enforcement when entrance (or exit) has to be early or late for good reasons.

The impact of either of these will miniscule compared to the impact of several thousand PCT hikers with thru permits who enter and exit at unregulated times.

I realize you addressed the different but related situation of section hikers starting their hikes at a permit area PCT trailhead and traveling within the permit area in the Decision Notice p. 13:

Many people commented about how section hikers/riders (those people who hike/ride longdistances on the PCT, but less than 500 miles) could be affected by this project. The draft DN had included the introduction of a special "skyline" permit (see EA p. 61). However, following additional discussions with PCTA, section hikers, and other

long-distance backpackers, we've decided that a simpler way of addressing their concerns is to allow overnight permit holders to travel by foot (human or stock) between the three wilderness areas with one permit, obtained under this system. Travel between wildernesses will be limited to PCT trailheads since that is the only trail that traverses all three wilderness areas (although the initial entry point identified on the permit may be any trailhead).

(For the reference "EA p. 61", I couldn't find anything in EA https://www.fs.usda.gov/nfs/11558/www/nepa/105465_FSPLT3_4290447.pdf , p.61, or anywhere else after searching "section hiker", "skyline", etc.)

Thank you for your consideration and good work!

Cheers,

John

John Hartman, Ph.D.
Software Understanding
541-505-9980
2042 Lincoln St Eugene OR 97405

jh@swunderstanding.com
<http://swunderstanding.com>