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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Central Cascades Wilderness Project

Rebecca Schreiber  
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November 19, 2019

Dear Willamette National Forest,

While I live hours away in Portland, I have had the privilege to spend a great deal of time the past few years recreating in the Central Cascades Wilderness Areas included in the proposed limited quota area for day and overnight users. I acknowledge that there are isolated spots in these Wilderness Areas that are being "loved to death" (e.g., South Sister climbing route, No Name Lake), but - speaking from my personal experience - the vast majority of the wilderness areas are not being overused or misused.

It seems that there is an opportunity to implement less restrictive management tools prior to implementing limited-entry. Examples include educational programs focused on leave no trace practices, better signage, revegetation and restoration projects to address areas of concern, and installation of toilet facilities and/or wag bag stations to address human waste issues. Managing and enforcing parking would also self-limit the number of people on trail systems.

If people do not get to experience the outdoors and wilderness, they will not advocate to protect it. I understand that interest in hiking, backpacking, and climbing have all increased dramatically with the rise of Instagram and that the population continues to grow in the areas surrounding the Central Cascades. Still, I believe that the proposal to implement limited-entry and permit fees is not the answer. People need to spend time outdoors in wild and beautiful places so that they value them and will work to protect them. Permits and fees might limit use and impact in the short-term, but it sure feels like a losing system in the long-term.

Thank you for your work in preserving and protecting these Wilderness areas, but I hope you might reconsider this proposal.

Sincerely,  
Rebecca Schreiber