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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments on proposed fee system

To whom it may concern

I am a native Oregonian and an avid hiker. I have hiked and explored many of the trails in both the Willamette and Deschutes National Forests. It is something I enjoy doing with my family and I love being able to share these wild areas with friends who are seeing these areas of wilderness for the first time.

I also am familiar with various permitting systems used for backcountry access. I have purchased permits here in Oregon in both the Obsidian and Pamela lake limited entry areas, as well as multiple national parks and the Inyo National forest in California. I should also mention that none of those areas required a fee for any day hike, except the ones in Oregon.

I understand the need for limited permit backcountry camping, especially at the high use/alpine areas that are obviously overused. Limited entry day hiking, however, is a tough pill to swallow, and should be limited to only the most overused and sensitive areas, such as Green Lakes, Obsidian, and Pamela. 19 trailheads that require a limited entry permit is far too many to start with. A slow implementation with evaluation of effects and future needs should be the mindset. Adding a fee to the day use permit is even more burdensome on people and families that would like to enjoy a day hike in the wilderness.

The fee schedule that is currently proposed is outrageous, even by national park standards. For overnight permits, a per person, per night fee is far too great of a cost to add on to an already expensive outing. For 4 people on a week-long trip, the \$146 cost of permit looks a lot more like budget balancing than protection of natural resources. Look around at other national forests and national parks. A flat fee per trip, or per person, regardless of number of nights is the standard. My permit for 6 people, 4 nights in Grand Teton National park cost a flat fee of \$45. My permit for Inyo National forest for 6 people, 5 nights was \$36. It would have been \$150 under Oregon's proposed fee plan! Why do we have to try and re-invent the wheel when there are systems in place that are working fine, while not putting a huge burden on the people enjoying our wildernesses? If Oregon's goal is to keep people and families out of the wilderness, there is no better way to do it than implementing a complicated and expensive permitting system.

Thank you for your time and consideration into this matter.

Jeremy Salvage
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