

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/30/2019 7:13:04 PM

First name: John

Last name: Bailey

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Central Cascades Wilderness Strategies 2017 #50578

Dear U.S. Forest Service:

I'm adamantly opposed to your proposal to charge people for simply taking a walk in the in the Mount Jefferson, Mount Washington and Three Sisters Wilderness areas in the Oregon Cascades.

Your proposed fee violates the intent and purpose of the Wilderness Act, including protecting Wildernesses from commercialization.

Wilderness areas belong to all of the American people. They are a birthright to people. Charging fees for access to PUBLIC resources is discriminatory against the non-wealthy.

All citizens across the nation already own the Wildernesses in the National Wilderness Preservation System. They have ALREADY PAID FOR THEM through ALREADY EXCESSIVE taxation. It is unjust and unconscionable to charge people to visit the Wilderness they already own. The proposed fees would be illegal under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act for excluding the public from accessing and enjoying their public lands.

The USFS is incorrectly, perhaps unlawfully, claiming authority for charging such fees under a clause in the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) that allows a fee for specialized recreation uses such as group activities, recreation events, and motorized recreational vehicles. Congress never meant the FLREA to apply to private individuals who are hiking, walking, horseback riding and camping in a completely undeveloped part of a national forest, and the act does not specify those activities.

I'm strongly opposed to the government charging people a fee simply to take a walk in the Wilderness.

I urge you to abandon your money-grabbing scheme for the Mount Jefferson, Mount Washington and Three Sisters Wilderness areas.

Thank you.