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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Recreational fees

Regarding the proposed fees for wilderness access. While I understand the importance of maintaining our public lands, it has become cumbersome to keep track of and plan for the numerous fees we must pay to simply be able to enjoy a hike through our beautiful state. I am an Oregon native who grew up spending countless days outdoors and my husband is a volunteer for search and rescue with Lane county, who also was raised by two trail guides in MN, you could say we are definitely serious outdoor enthusiasts. Considering this, even we find it difficult to navigate the numerous, outdated information outlets to determine how and when we must pay a fee when planning our trips, I can't imagine what your average visitor must feel like. I would think at a certain point, most people would give up trying to figure it out and will simply not pay, I know I've had that thought cross my mind a time or two. Ultimately, all these fees will only be paid by the few who frequently hike and understand the system, and those people are not the ones causing the problems you seek to fix.

Should you consider an additional fee system, I would greatly appreciate if you also consider overhauling the entire system and implementing a streamlined way to purchase permits. I really enjoy the ability to buy long term passes such as the northwest forest pass and our county pass. I would love an expansion/consolidation of that with a state wide option for all public lands in the state and perhaps additional "tags" for special areas such as the three sisters for certain dates, similar to how fishing licenses work. And you can also sell out of state or temporary ones as well. One place online and/or in outdoor stores. But I would happily pay a couple hundred dollars a year to be able to go wherever I want without worrying about which county I'm in or if it's a national forest or state park, etc.

I would also recommend not charging any fees for children, perhaps under 16. It is so important that children have the ability to enjoy and learn to respect the outdoors at a young age. They will likely be accompanied by a permit carrying adult who will (hopefully) monitor their behavior. It would be a shame if a family couldn't afford to explore their own public spaces.

Whatever fee you ultimately decide to charge, please consider using those fees to create an overall state-wide system that makes it very easy and streamlined. I believe you will find this to be ultimately profitable and cost effective.

Thank you,
Kayla Ackerman

Sent from my iPhone