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First name: Justin

Last name: Saydell

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Willamette National Forest: Recreation Fees Comment

Hello,

I am writing in support of the suggested fees and quota system for the Central Cascades Wilderness areas. I have hiked with friends and family in all five wilderness areas over the last 20 years and have personally seen the crowds, garbage, and ecosystem degradation as a result of increased use. As a result, I have found it increasingly difficult to enjoy these areas. While I am sensitive to affordable access to public lands, I believe the proposed special limited-use entry system is reasonably affordable for both day-use and overnight-use and is an adequate framework for continuing to provide a wilderness quality experience for hikers and backpackers as well as to protect the ecosystems in each of these areas.

The fact is, these beautiful places need to be protected from over use, and where appropriate, restored. Revenue generated from the special use fees should be used to protect and restore wilderness quality lands, provide increased permit enforcement during peak season, and provide revenue for maintaining trails and trail infrastructure (including restrooms, signage, etc.). The system should be periodically evaluated for effectiveness and adjusted based on a data feed-back loop.

Lastly, the fee/quota system should incorporate a limited number of special use permits for "day-of" registration (i.e. at ranger stations), as online systems can make it difficult for folks to find dates that work for them as they sometimes get booked quickly and months in advance.

Again, I support the Forest Service's limited use system for the Central Cascades Wilderness areas. Please feel free to email me should you have a question or need any clarification regarding my comment.

Kind regards,

Justin Saydell

Astoria, OR