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News Release



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Date: May 7, 2020

Forests delay implementation of Central Cascades Wilderness limited entry system COVID-19 causes delays, implementation will begin May 2021

Springfield and Bend, Ore. – After much consideration, the Deschutes and Willamette National Forests will delay the implementation of the Central Cascades Wilderness limited entry permit system until May 2021.

“Given many logistical constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are delaying our implementation until next year,” said Deschutes National Forest Supervisor Holly Jewkes.

The Central Cascades Wildernesses limited entry system was set to begin on May 22, 2020 and would bring day-use limits to 19 out of 79 trails and overnight limits to all trails in the Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Washington and Three Sisters Wilderness.

“Our focus has been on responding to COVID-19, and preparations for the permit system were delayed,” said Willamette National Forest Supervisor Dave Warnack. “We felt there was too much uncertainty for the public on when we might open the reservation system. Therefore, we made this difficult decision.”

One aspect of the Central Cascades Wilderness Strategies decision, which will be implemented this year is the elevational campfire ban. The ban includes:

- All campfires are banned above 5,700’ elevation in Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Washington, and Three Sisters Wildernesses, as well as some areas lower than 5,700’
- All campfires are banned above 6,000’ elevation in Diamond Peak Wilderness.

Other than the elevational fire ban, the wilderness areas will be managed this year as they were previously. The Willamette National Forest will maintain the Pamela and Obsidian limited entry areas, and both forests will maintain the free self-issue permit systems for entering the wildernesses.

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