

Saturday, July 02, 2005

Why should wilderness users pay for developed campsites?

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Provo Daily Herald

Editor's note: The Daily Herald recently asked readers if the entrance fee to American Fork Canyon and the Alpine Loop should be abolished. Here are the comments we received:

Why should wilderness users pay for developed campsites?

I am one of those that are opposed, in principle, to the fundamentally flawed "User Fee" program. I use remote camp sites and hike wilderness areas. If people want to camp in a park-like environment, they can pay for that. Why does the Forest Service chooses to spend millions of its limited funds placing fences and barricades to keep us out of the forest, then charge us to get in because they don't have money to maintain it? Something is wrong here.

Don Capps,

Orem

'High-use area' open to wide interpretation, gross abuse

Having had to pay a fee just to park in order to climb Mount Timpanogos this past year, I think I have cause to give my two cents on this problem. Fee demonstration saw no problem with charging me to park on my own lands. Do not think the new version will be fairer. Any high-use area or any area with "improvements," even a portable toilet, will allow a fee to be charged. What's next? Paying for a nice view at viewpoints? How about charging at the door for attending your church?

Kevin Kingma,

El Cerrito, Calif.

Don't charge public fees just to drive through canyon

I highly resent paying fees to drive through American Fork Canyon. Were I to camp, that's another matter. If I need to stop and use the restroom, so what? They are public restrooms and the Forest Service is paid by our taxes to keep the canyon maintained. A drive-through fee is absolutely ridiculous.

Holly J. Perry,

Eagle Mountain

Fees only 'benefit' recreation industry, not public land users

The Forest Service falsely claims the public supports the Recreation Access Tax that was developed by the profiteering recreation industry. To document this, the agency has sought, or rather sold, public opinion at Forest Service visitor centers. In Oregon, people first had to pay the entrance fee that was required at the survey site. Only those willing to pay were

allowed to comment. Free speech, like public land access, is no longer free. It is time to kill the RAT, and toss its stinking corpse in the pit toilet.

Dale Neubauer,

Bend, Ore.

Apply foreign aid money to U.S. parks and forest lands

I think that the fees should be abolished. I think the American people should not have to pay for everything when we send billions of dollars overseas.

Myrna Lee Tew,

Mapleton