Forest Service will still require day use pass

Deschutes National Forest officials will continue to require recreation day use passes in an effort to be consistent with other forests.

On Thursday, forest officials advised the public to delay purchasing the passes until a determination could be made in how the new Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act would be administered.

The forest and private vendors will continue to sell the passes during the transition period.

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, passed in December 2004, establishes new criteria to identify which recreation sites will require fees. The new legislation means some sites would be exempt from the program and no longer require a fee.

The act continues to reinvest fees back to the site of collection to enhance visitor services and reduce the backlog of maintenance needs for recreation facilities.

The Deschutes National Forest is preparing for implementation of the new legislation. It is unique in that it administers a national monument and officials need time to ensure the legislation is applied to it appropriately.

“We hope to make the transition as customer friendly as possible,” said Deschutes National Forest Supervisor Leslie Weldon. “We regret any inconvenience to forest visitors.”

The current program will be modified to meet the intent of the act. Those modifications will be publicized for Deschutes National Forest sites over the next 30 to 45 days.

Recreation passes can be purchased at all Deschutes National Forest offices and some Central Oregon retail outlets. Telephone the Deschutes National Forest headquarters at 541/383-5300 for additional information.

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