

Wilderness Management Review Mount Jefferson Wilderness

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Report Title: Jack Lake Loop

Route: Where did you go? How many days were you camping?

Day hike from Jack Lake up to the east side of Three Fingered Jack and back around the loop to the parking lot at Jack Lake. When we left there were a dozen or more cars in the lot. When we came back cars were parked far down the road.

Summary: 250 word max

Nice wildflower walk hike when the last snows melt and a great fall hike as the first snows arrive. Great close-up view of the cliffs on the east side of Three Fingered Jack.

Wilderness or Wild River: Mount Jefferson Wilderness

Management Unit: Deschutes National Forest

Administrative Location: Bend, Oregon

Head of Administrative Unit: John Allen, Forest Supervisor

Trip Report: Grade the success of the management agency with an A to F letter grade. Comments must support letter grades in each category; skip any category on which you do not want to comment.

D Access; is resource damage occurring at campsites on trails or at trailheads.

Trail erosion is a serious problem on many sections of this loop. Years of limited maintenance have allowed erosion to create incised trails that have promoted users to develop alternate routes. This additional trampling of vegetation compounded with significant amounts of sediment entering nearby streams is creating significant damage to the resource.

C Management; regulations, permit systems, education, enforcement actions.

Entry signboards offer the visitor information on a variety of wilderness-friendly topics. However, there is no information encouraging campers to cleanup all campfire remains and teaching them that it is entirely possible to build a safe campfire without ringing it with a circle of rocks.

C Stewardship; are management actions in accord with wilderness values and best practices in wilderness management?

Management can and should make greater efforts to address trail erosion issues. Simple actions like annually cleaning sediment from waterbars and breaching trailside berms to allow water off the trail would make a significant difference.

The crew who recently removed blowdown from this trail did a nice job; cuts were made close to the trail and only a small section of log removed. This technique keeps users on the trail and prevents trampling and destruction of nearby vegetation.

D Wilderness; how well is management protecting the wilderness resource.

This area is a popular day-hike destination and is heavily used. Evidence of trash and litter is nearly nonexistent but firepits and rapidly evolving user trails impact the area. It may well be time for the agency to ban campfires in such a heavily visited area. To the extent the wilderness resource includes trails the management agency is doing a poor job of protecting the taxpayer's investment from rapid deterioration and nearby streams from sedimentation.

____ Fire Management, Wildlife Management, Other

Viewed five goats high on Jack's northeast ridge, just below one of the remaining snowfields