

Recreation Resource Advisory Committee

US Forest Service Eastern Region

Fee Proposal

National Forest, State: Hiawatha NF, Michigan

Site Type: Cabins

FLREA Fee Type: Expanded Amenity

Type of proposal: Fee Increase

Site Description: These two cabins are immensely popular, with the occupancy rate at Tom's Lake cabin reaching 96% between Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends in 2006. Occupancy at the McKeever cabin was 50% in the first 9 months of 2006. McKeever cabin sleeps 6 and Tom's Lake sleeps 8 people. Both cabins have vault toilets, water, firewood, and bunk beds with mattresses, Tom's Lake has a solar well. Both cabins are open year round. Cabins may be reserved through the National Recreation Reservation Service for an additional fee.



From left to right: McKeever Lake cabin, Tom's Lake cabin, Tom's Lake interior

Proposed Action: Raise the fee for two rustic log cabins (McKeever and Tom's Lake).

Current Fee: The current fee is \$35 per night.

Proposed Fee: The proposed fee is \$45.00 per night.

Amount Increase: \$10 per night

Date of Last Increase: 1999

Reason for Fee Change: Since fees were instituted in 1999, costs have increased to maintain the cabins. Lost of SCSEP. The fee increase will allow the Forest to continue to provide cabins to the public

If recommended, the fee increase will be used for: Snow plowing, firewood, water sampling and testing, vault pumping, maintenance of a new solar pressurized well, repairs (roof repairs and new windows), resource protection projects and salary for full-time staff and seasonal rangers who are responsible for patrolling and maintaining the cabins.

If recommended, the proposal will be implemented: October 1, 2007.

Price Comparisons for Similar Facilities & Services:

- **Forest Service:**
 - There are not many Forest Service cabins available in the Eastern Region for rent. The eight Lost Lake cabins on the Chequamegon-Nicolet NF in WI rent for \$40 during the week and \$45 on weekends.

- **Local Private and Public Providers:**
 - The State of Michigan offers State Park rustic cabins which are similar: cost is \$60 - \$80 per night, sleep 4-24 people and have hand pumps and vault toilets. Renters must provide their own bedding, cookware and tableware, lanterns and other camp supplies. The State also offers State Park Mini Cabins within modern state park campgrounds. These cabins sleep four and cost \$45 per night.
 - The Appalachian Mountain Club in Maine, offers the Moose Point cabin for \$110/night during the winter and \$90/night during the summer.
 - Private providers generally offer cabins for rent that are fully furnished and offer more amenities (bedding, cookware, cable TV, etc). The cost for these cabins ranges from \$75 to \$150 per night.

Public Participation

Method	Date(s)	Comments/Results
Posted notice at recreation site inviting comments on the proposal (2 months minimum during visitor season)	June 4, 2007 - to present	Summarized in "Other Methods" below
News release and/or notice in local papers inviting comments on the proposal (if news release is not printed, place a paid notice in the newspaper)	Paid notice in local newspaper July 14, 2007	Summarized in "Other Methods" below
Briefed local elected officials on the proposal. List names of officials.	Was not done	
Met with affected stakeholder groups to get input on the proposal	July 17, 2007	Summarized in "Other Methods" below
Posted Federal Register Notice..	Not a new fee	Not applicable
Posted proposal on Forest Website	July 17, 2007 - present	Summarized in "Other Methods" below
<p>Other methods: 330 letters were sent to all of those people who rented McKeever or Tom's Lake cabins over the past 3 years, asking them for their comments on the proposed fee increase.</p>	July 17, 2007	<p>Most of the responses were received as a result of the direct mailing. Of 43 comments received: 24 people (59%) supported the increase, 4 were opposed, 4 proposed a lower fee of \$40, and 11 were favorable if more cabins were built with the money, if fees don't continue to rise like the state of MI, or if improvements are made. Many gave positive feedback and enjoyed the cabins.</p>

Analysis: There is public support for the proposed fee. The proposed increased fee is in line with fees charged at other publicly managed facilities in the Great Lakes region.