

Recreation Resource Advisory Committee

US Forest Service- Eastern Region

Fee Proposal

National Forest, State: Huron-Manistee National Forests, Michigan

Site Type: Campsites

FLREA Fee Type: Special Recreation Permit

Type of proposal: Fee Increase



Site Description: **Au Sable River Corridor designated Campsites**

A series of 102 individually designated single-family campsites are located on a 55-mile stretch of the AuSable River shoreline and bluffs within Alcona and Iosco Counties, Michigan. Camping is permitted only at designated campsites, and reservations and nightly camping fee payments are required prior to camping during the period May 15 through September 30. Camping is open at designated campsites outside of the reservation season on a first-come, first-served basis. Au Sable River Primitive Camping encompasses over 100 miles of shoreline, most of which is impounded by Consumers Energy dams. Excessive indiscriminate camping had resulted in sanitation problems, littering, shoreline erosion, vegetation damage, degradation of esthetics, and diminished user experiences. In order to preserve the natural and primitive character of the Au Sable River corridor, the Forest initiated a reservation and permit system in 1991, limiting camping to designated sites in the River corridor. The Forest's goal in maintaining a permit system is to eliminate further campsite expansion and user created sites, reduce the effects of overcrowding along the shorelines, give users the opportunity to camp in a primitive setting and assign responsibility by requiring a permit to camp. These areas have available a combination of ten amenities at boat ramps and camping sites of kiosk/exhibit/interpretive, trash cans, permanent toilet, reasonable security, fee collection, fire rings, tent sites, boating access, road access, and designated parking.

Proposed Action:

SITE	Current Fee	Proposed Fee	Amount Increase
Au Sable River Corridor designated Campsites	\$5.00	\$10.00	\$5.00

Date of Last Increase: 1991

Reason for Proposed Fee Increase: inflation, increased maintenance costs, increases use, improved facilities, and alignment with local market, (see summary).

If approved, the proposal will be implemented: January 1, 2009

Price Comparisons for Similar Facilities & Services:

- **Forest Service:**
- Hiawatha (MI) fees for camping range from \$12 to \$19 per night.
- Ottawa (MI) fees for camping range from \$10 to \$14 per night.
- Huron-Manistee (MI) Concession sites camping fees range from \$11 to \$16 per night.
- Wayne (OH) fees for camping range from \$10 to \$16 per night.
- Shawnee (IL) fees for camping range from \$5 to \$12 per night
- Chequamegon-Nicolet (WI) fees for camping range from \$10 to \$17 per night

Local Private and Public Providers:

2008 fee rates were reviewed for this comparison study:

- 82 privately owned recreation sites within 50 miles of National Forest System land in the lower peninsula of Michigan.
- 3 National Park Service recreation sites in Michigan
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources rates

The fees compared were for campsite fees with no hook-ups, no showers, no flush toilets, no pool, and no internet. Forest Service campsite fee allows two sleeping units, two vehicles, and eight people.

The comparison study results showed that an average campsite fee was \$23.00 and the median fee was \$21.00. The range was from \$15.00 to \$50.00 per night for camping fees. The Huron-Manistee proposes to charge \$10.00 per night per campsite permit.