

U.S. Forest Service - News Release

Black Hills National Forest • Public Affairs Office • 1019 N. 5th Street
Custer, SD 57730 • Voice (605) 673-9216 • Web: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/blackhills/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Rick Hudson (605) 673-9239

Forest Seeks Public Comment on the Recreation Facilities Analysis and Announces Campground Upgrades

Custer, SD – Officials at the Black Hills National Forest have some ideas for how to manage some of the 110 developed recreation sites on the Forest.

Forest Supervisor Craig Bobzien announced the release of the proposed program of work (PPOW) for all 110 developed recreation sites found on the Forest and invited comments from the public. “We want to provide healthy, safe, and well-maintained recreation opportunities that are important to local communities and visitors to our area,” Bobzien said.

Through the RFA process, the overall goals of the Black Hills National Forest’s developed recreation program are to:

- Focus money and effort on the highest priority campgrounds, picnic sites, and other developed recreation facilities to meet changing public desires and demands.
- Maintain or enhance visitor satisfaction with the sites and services provided.
- Meet quality health and safety standards at developed recreation sites.
- Be financially sustainable.
- Be environmentally sound.
- Maintain community sustainability.

Many of the Forest’s recreation facilities were built 30-50 years ago and have reached the end of their useful life without significant deferred maintenance investment. Other facilities receive little or no use, and no longer serve the demand that existed in years past.

The proposed work includes accessibility upgrades, refurbishment of older popular sites, and some removal of some or all facilities at low use deteriorating isolated sites, especially those with health and safety deficiencies. Details on the proposed program of work can be found on the Forest’s website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/blackhills/projects/>.

The process is called “Recreation Facility Analysis (RFA).” Every national forest in the nation has completed or will complete this process by the end of 2008.

A public meeting for those who might wish more information or who wish to comment is planned for Tuesday May 13th at the Mystic Ranger district office on Hwy 16/385 in Rapid City from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Those who are unable to attend Tuesday's meeting and wish to comment can respond via email at r2_blackhills_webinfo@fs.fed.us with RFA in the subject line. Questions and comments can also be directed to Rick Hudson at 605.673.9239. Comments will be most useful if made on or before Monday, June 2, 2008.

Several high use developed recreation sites throughout the Forest are undergoing needed upgrades and enhancements this spring and summer.

Dutchman Campground near Deerfield Reservoir will be closed for the 2008 season as contractors complete work on a new water system, restrooms, and some of the campsites.

Accessibility work including a lakeside boardwalk, new picnic sites and restroom are in progress at Bismarck Lake and should be completed by the July 4th weekend. In addition, the parking lot at Horsethief Lake day use area is being reconstructed to improve accessibility & public safety, work should be completed before Memorial Day weekend. Both facilities are the result of partnerships and funding agreements with the South Dakota Department of Transportation and the Federal Highways Administration.

For more information see our website at www.fs.fed.us/r2/blackhills.