

Recreation RAC Meeting

March 13, 2008; 1:00 – 5:00

March 14, 2008; 8:00 – 11:30

La Quinta Inn, Castle Rock Conference Room, Moab, UT

RAC Attendees: Carl Albrecht, Dell LeFevre (Friday only), Paul Jacobs, Mike Jenkins, Lowell Braxton, Ray Bloxham, Ashley Korenblat, Riley Cutler, Jerry Spangler, Gordon Topham, Fee Busby (Friday only), Tom Clawson, Lynn Stevens (Friday only), Manuel Morgan (Thursday only). Drew Sitterud, not in attendance.

BLM Attendees: Glenn Carpenter (for State Director), Sherry Foot, Russ von Koch, Suzanne Garcia, Patrick Wilkinson (WO), Wayne Ludington, Brian Quigley

FS Attendees: Ann King, Liz Close, Charlie Rosier, Eileen Richmond, Tim Garcia, Dave Bell, John Lucas, Brian Murdock, Bill Broadbear

Public Attendee: Ber Knight, Red Rock 4-Wheelers

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Welcome and Introductions

Sherry Foot, RAC Coordinator

A motion was made by the RAC Chairperson, Gordon Topham, to vote/accept the fee proposals on Friday, due to lack of a quorum present in Category 3. Lynn Stevens did, via telephone, accept the motion to wait until Friday. (A quorum in Category 3 would be present).

Summary of Fee Proposals

Riley Cutler, RAC Member

Riley – committee of “one” as described in the RRAC charter. Business plans were collected and read, summary sent to RRAC. RRAC can ask questions of presenters.

Tim Garcia: RRACs were to be established as mandated by the Recreation Enhancement Act. RAC chose to take on the RRAC responsibilities.

FS presentation. Dixie was not asking for any fee proposal increases as this time—just the Ashley, Uinta, Wasatch-Cache, Manti-LaSal, Fishlake.

Tourism in Utah: (population increased 10% from 2000-2005; projection 10% by 2010 and 19% by 2020; 80% population lives adjacent to Fee Sites.

Operations: Dollars shrinking – costs increasing. Use covering all seasons (not just Memorial Day to Labor Day). Three types of fees--standard amenity fee (campground fee); expanded amenity fee (water, sewer pumping/disposal); special recreation permits (river permits, OHV permits, special trail systems).

Getting to know our areas: Requirements of the Recreation Fee Area—provides significant recreation opportunities, defined boundaries, substantial federal investment, and efficient fee collections. Fee proposals have gone through rigorous public involvement processes (newspaper, posting on-site notices, radio, fee station handouts, personal meetings with local/state officials, established stakeholder groups).

Visitation use – how is it calculated? Traffic counters, talking to people, surveys, visitor booth encounters, and additional sampling methods. There has been a history of over-estimating visitor use – FS is now using a more reliable method of calculating use.

Does Congress rely on fee program (budgeting process)? In our policy, the fee collections under the REA wouldn't offset appropriated \$\$ to the Rec programs.

Users want to be sure that fees are being used properly (visually seen). Fees also need to be used for other improvements (not seen visually). FS may want to provide info to public (i.e. handouts) to show what improvements, other than visual ones, are taking place. NPS does this.

Trail head fees – fee compliance--varies depends on method of collection (staffed facility, self-service fee tubes, people make contact with public and collect fees – if hang tags not showing in vehicle).

Fishlake Campgrounds

Dave Bell, FS

(Fee Proposals) Starting a proposal to start fees on the 4 campgrounds (Elkhorn Campground, Tasha Equestrian Campground, Rosebud ATV Campground, Lower Bowns Campground)

Handout of presentation (provided upon request)

Elkhorn – What is FS expecting from the locals (that fees will be placed)? When scoping was done – no responses were made. Want to put this on the reservation system.

Single family campsites, \$8.00; Extra vehicles \$4.00; Group site (existing fee) – 1-25 people, \$25; 26-50 people, \$35; 51-75 people, \$45

Tasha – no fee established at this time. Charge \$10 single site; Group site, \$25; Extra vehicles, \$5. Equestrian group offers to help clean.

Rosebud – Double family sites, \$20; extra vehicles, \$5
Fee station kiosk (no water at this site)

Lower Bowns - Single family campsite, \$8; Group site, 1-25 people, \$25; 26-50 people, \$35; extra vehicles, \$4 (no water at this site). Fee station kiosk.

With revenue generated, what will the FS do with these funds? Maintain to standards and/or maintenance.

All other FS campgrounds (with amenities) have fees charged—these are the last 4 sites for proposed fees.

Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (NRA), Ashley NF Eileen Richmond, FS
(Use Fee Increase)

Proposed Fees

\$5 – 1 day

\$15 – 7 days

\$35 – Season

NRAs – congressionally delegated (38 NRAs)

10-year pilot fee program testing – changes were made. Fees only charged in areas of high number of facilities that have improvements, services.

Charge fees on corridors at locations surrounding the access road from the highway or river access points.

What did the visitors say about the fee proposals? Utah generally supportive—WY generally not supportive.

Since 1997 the NRA has collected over \$2 million, averaging approx. \$200,000 per year.

FY 06 – Total Expenditures, \$118,102.89. Extra \$\$ are held for emergencies, monies can be carried over to next year.

Mirror Lake Corridor **Tim Garcia (for Larry Lucas), FS**
(Fee Increase)

Dedicated in the 1950s as a recreation corridor. Rec fee demonstration project started in 1997. Hwy 150 very scenic ride especially in the fall.

Proposed fees:

\$6 – 3 days

\$12 – 7 days

\$45 – season

(Fee passes interchangeable with American Fork Canyon)

Pass-throughs not charged.

Fees used to increase services, improve facilities, protecting streams and vegetation by actively manage dispersed recreation, and trail enhancement. Partners and volunteers are crucial in helping to leverage funds.

American Fork Canyon

John Logan, FS

(Fee Increase)

Fee program started in 1997. Started as partnership with Utah Co., DOT, Timpanogos, Wasatch Mtn. State Park

Proposed fees:

\$ 6 – 3 days

\$ 12 - 7 days

\$ 45 - season

(Fee passes interchangeable with Mirror Lake)

Pass-throughs not charged.

Fees used to bring on extra tour guides at Timpanogos Cave and for interpretive groups.

Equestrian parking lot was established.

Future activities: reconstruction of picnic areas, trailhead rehab projects, re-vegetate trails, install bulletin boards, updating trailhead kiosks and signage, trail enhancements and re-routes, and improve existing dispersed campsites.

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Manti-LaSal National Forest Campgrounds

Bill Broadbear/Brian Murdock, FS

(Fee Increase and New Fee Sites)

Handout provided (upon request)

Most camping is done in dispersed areas.

Proposed Fees:

Buckboard Campground - \$10 (fee increase from \$8)

Dalton Springs Campground - \$10 (fee increase from \$8)

Fish Creek CG & Trailhead - \$7 (new fee)

Forks of Huntington - \$10 (fee increase from \$8)

Gooseberry - \$10 (fee increase from \$6)

Gooseberry Reservoir - \$10 (fee increase from \$5)

Lake Canyon Recreation Area - \$5 (fee increase from \$3)

Lake Hill - \$10 (fee increase from \$8)

Little Rock - \$5 (fee increase from \$3)

Manti Community - \$10 (fee increase from \$8)

Mason Draw - \$5 (new fee)

Nizhoni - \$10 (fee increase from \$8)

Oowah Lake - \$5 (new fee)

South Hughes Group - \$60 (fee increase from \$50)

The Bridges - \$5 (fee increase from \$3)

The Bridges Group A - \$50 (fee increase from \$40)

The Bridges Group B - \$40 (fee increase from \$30)

The Chute Group - \$50 (fee increase from \$40)

Twin Reservoir - \$5 (new fee)
Indian Creek Guard Station - \$50 (new fee)
Seely Guard Station - \$30 (new fee)

Future projects: provide more on-site presence (volunteer subsistence), deferred maintenance needs. There is LE presence (agreements are made with local counties).
Should have more interpretation.

Horse campgrounds in the Manti-LaSal – No comments made to the FS regarding this. North zone has horse campgrounds – no corrals, just tie-ups.

Jerry Spangler moved that we approve the fees as presented. Recommended that the fees from the Guard stations go back to the on-going maintenance of the two Guard stations (historic preservation). Ashley seconded. Motion carried.

Cleveland Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry **Wayne Ludington, Price BLM**
(Fee Increase)

The Quarry is located about 45 minutes from Price. In 1964, the Quarry was designated as a National Natural Landmark (NNL). The site was renovated in August 2005 and reopened March 2008.

Fees collected in 1998 - \$2 adults, \$1 children; increased fees in 1999 - \$3 adults, \$2 children; current rates - \$3 adults, children under 16 and educational groups, free.

Average visitation in 2007, 6000 people

Proposed fees: \$5. Fees do not support the Quarry totally. They are used to hire summer positions (SCA students). Without the fee increase, there would be a cut-back in the season of use; slow development of interpretive materials; lessened visitor satisfaction; and, lower visitor numbers.

Efforts in getting the word out about the Quarry are being made by posting in the Dinosaur Diamond and the literature at the Visitors Center.

Is there camping at the facility? No camping is allowed.

Fee Busby made the motion to accept the proposed fees. Lynn seconded—motion carried.

Cedar Mesa/Kane Gulch **Brian Quigley, Monticello BLM**
(Fee Increase)

Permits are needed – only the canyons. The fees are used to run the permit system, visitor system and law enforcement. BLM records approx. 60,000 visitor days a year.

Current fees: Overnight permit fee - \$8
Off season - \$5
Day Hike - \$2 (no permit needed)
Week Hike - \$5
Seasonal day use - \$20

Proposing:
Day use - \$5 - \$10
Commercial overnight - \$10 - \$15
Week pass - \$10 - \$20
Season pass - \$30 - \$40

Expenditures in 2006 were \$191,000

Fee increases would help to maintain comparability with other offices, extend services at the Kane Gulch Visitors Centers, permit reservation system, facilities at some of the trail heads, operators at Kane Gulch Contact Station, resource monitoring, search and rescue and clean-up.

Lynn made the motion to approve the fee changes as follows – Riley seconded.

Day - \$5
Commercial overnight - \$10
Week pass - \$10
Season pass - \$30

An amended motion was made by Fee—Lynn seconded – as follows:

Day - \$5
Commercial overnight - \$15 (each trip)
Week pass - \$15
Season pass - \$30
Motion carried.

Fishlake Campgrounds: Fees approved with one exception. Recommendation that a flat fee of \$35 replace the sliding-scale fees. Motion was approved.

Flaming Gorge NRA/Ashley NF: Fee increases approved.

Mirror Lake/American Fork Canyon, Uinta Wasatch-Cache NF: Fee increases approved.

Public Comment Period **Gordon Topham, RAC Chairperson**

No public comments.

Schedule next meeting date, location, agenda topics **Gordon Topham**

Adjourn – 11:25 a.m.

Next meeting to be held in Salt Lake City, June 26-27. Agenda topics of concern: Insurance coverage (user purchased) – Ashley will look into this; Oil and gas updates (impacts to recreation and cultural resources); Factory Butte update; RMP updates; possible field trip – Gordon Topham and Glenn Carpenter will discuss this at a later date.

Approved: ____/s/ Gordon Topham_____
Gordon Topham, RAC Chairperson

Date: ____3/20/08____