

Federal Lands Recreation Fee Program

Appropriations Language

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) was passed on December 8, 2004, as part of the Omnibus Appropriations bill for 2005. Approximately 200 Fish and Wildlife Service sites collect entrance fees and other receipts. All receipts are deposited into a recreation fee account of which at least 80 percent is returned to the collecting site.

The Federal Lands Recreation Fee program demonstrates the feasibility of user generated cost recovery for the operation and maintenance of recreation areas, visitor services improvements, and habitat enhancement projects on federal lands. Fees are used primarily at the site to improve visitor access, enhance public safety and security, address backlogged maintenance needs, enhance resource protection, and cover the costs of collection. FLREA authorizes this program through 2014.

Authorizing Statutes

Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801-6814). The FLREA provides the authority to establish, modify, charge and collect recreation fees at federal recreation land and waters over 10 years. The Act seeks to improve recreational facilities and visitor opportunities on Federal recreational lands by reinvesting receipts from fair and consistent recreational fees and pass sales, and for other purposes.

		2007 Actual	2008 Estimate	2009			Change From 2008 (+/-)
				Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Recreation Fee Enhancement (\$000)		4,410	4,500		-	4,500	-
	FTE	26	26		-	26	-
Estimated User-Pay Cost Share (\$000)		[389]	[400]		-	[400]	-
Total, Recreation Fee Program (\$000)		4,410	4,500		-	4,500	-
	FTE	26	26			26	-

Program Overview

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act authorized the Federal Lands Recreation Fee program that allows the collection of entrance and expanded amenity fees. FLREA authorized the program for 10 years through FY 2014. At least 80 percent of the collections return to the specific site of collection to offset program costs and enhance visitor facilities and programs. The Service has over 150 refuges enrolled in the program with an additional 50 hatchery, ecological services or other refuge sites selling passes only and expects to collect approximately \$4.5 million in 2008.

FLREA did not change the Federal Duck Stamp program, which will continue to provide current stamp holders with free entry to Service entrance fee sites.

The Service is one of five agencies, including the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Bureau of Reclamation, participating in the federal Lands Recreation Fee program. The Service continues to cooperate with these agencies to update and reissue program implementation guidance to ensure compatibility and consistency across the program.

Some FY 2007 note-worthy accomplishments using recreation fees include the following:

Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR (CO) puts its fee dollars back into its public fishing program. Some of the projects include stocking lakes with Bluegills to provide prey for Largemouth Bass and Northern Pike; buying fishing poles and other equipment for school groups and other users; and replacing floating buoys in No Fishing areas.

Chincoteague NWR (VA) is adjacent to Assateague National Seashore which is run by the National Park Service. The two bureaus set up an intragovernmental agreement for fee collection services and visitor services to the refuge. Through this agreement, a National Park Service employee provided fee collection and visitor services support on an intermittent basis as GS-4 Visitor Use Assistant from April 2007 through March 2008. In addition, the refuge spent its fee money on graphic panels for a Welcome Center kiosk; a 911 Callbox for Swans Cove Bike/Hike Trail for visitor safety; various types of brochures and signage; vegetation control for improving wildlife viewing opportunities; bike racks for Swans Cove Trail; and sandstone and stone dust for bike trail maintenance.

The Federal Lands Recreation Fee program directly supports the DOI Recreation Goal to provide for a quality recreation experience, including access, and enjoyment of natural and cultural resources. Each agency also has a goal concerning costs associated with fee collections. The Service's goal is to limit collection costs to less than 20 percent of total collections.

Use of Cost and Performance Information

The Service monitors the Recreation Fee Program's costs of collection to ensure they remain below 20% of total fees collected.

2009 Program Performance

In FY 2009, the agencies will continue working to increase obligations and thereby reduce annual carryover. Although the collections are "no-year" monies, it is important to put this money to work on the ground, improving visitor services and maintaining buildings, roads, trails, and other facilities and places that visitors use. Some sites with lower annual collections will continue to save these funds over several years in order to accomplish a bigger project, but the overall trend will be to put more money to work each year.

2008 Program Performance

The agencies will also work to increase internet and third-party sales of the America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass (aka the Interagency Annual Pass). These sales provide the revenues that cover pass production costs each year.

Each year, the image on the Interagency Annual and Volunteer Passes will change. Judges select the winning image from entries to an annual photo contest. Last year, those entries were less than half of what we expected. The agencies will cooperatively work with each other and with their sites to encourage better participation in the annual photo contest.

We are working to move pass distribution capability to the field level. The Fish and Wildlife Service is inviting all interested sites to sign up for accounts and passwords with U. S. Geological Survey that will allow each site to order its passes and pass materials. The only costs to the sites will be shipping costs. Earlier, pass distribution was handled at Service Headquarters and was later moved to each Regional Office.

Interim guidance was put in place in September 2006. A final policy for the Federal Lands Recreation Fee program is now in the internal review phase and will be published in the **Federal Register** for public review and comment.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (\$000)	2007 Actual	2008 Estimate	2009 Estimate
Recreation Fee Revenues America the Beautiful pass	4,410 [235]	4,500 [235]	4,500 [235]
Unobligated Balance Brought Forward & Recoveries	4,318	4,790	4,407
Total Funds Available	8,728	9,290	8,907
Obligations by Type of Project			
Facilities Routine/Annual Maintenance	387	500	600
Facilities Capital Improvements	156	300	300
Facilities Deferred Maintenance	520	550	600
Subtotal, asset repairs and maintenance	1,063	1,350	1,500
Visitor Services	1,632	2,150	2,400
Habitat Restoration (directly related to wildlife dependent recreation)	91	200	300
Direct Operation Costs	595	625	650
Law Enforcement (for public use and recreation)	260	250	300
Fee Management Agreement and Reservation Services	8	8	10
Administration, Overhead and Indirect Costs	389	400	400
Total Obligations	4,038	4,983	5,560

Program Performance Summary

The Federal Lands Recreation Fee program is not associated with one particular goal; however, revenues collected through the program are used for visitor services and maintenance needs, including resource protection, and costs of collection to participating refuges. Therefore, the Federal Lands Recreation Fee program directly supports the DOI Recreation Goal to provide for a quality recreation experience, including access, and enjoyment of natural and cultural resources on DOI-managed and partnered lands and waters.

Performance Goal / Measure	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Plan	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 President's Budget	Change from 2008 Plan to 2009	Long-term 2012 Target
Recreation								
15.2.22 % of recreation fee program receipts spent on fee collection (GPRA)	0%	0%	14% (14 of 100)	14% (14 of 100)	14% (14 of 100)	14% (14 of 100)	0.0%	

Standard Form 300			
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RECREATION FEE PROGRAM			
Program and Financing (in millions of dollars)	2007 Actual	2008 Estimate	2009 Estimate
Identification code 14-5252-0-2-303			
<u>Receipts:</u>			
02.20 Recreation Fee Program	4	5	5
<u>Appropriations:</u>			
05.00 Recreation Fee Program	-4	-5	-5
07.99 Balance, end of year	0	0	0
<u>Obligations by program activity:</u>			
00.01 Direct Program Activity	4	5	6
10.00 Total obligations	4	5	6
<u>Budgetary resources available for obligation:</u>			
21.40 Unobligated balance carried forward, start of year	4	4	4
22.00 New budget authority (gross)	4	5	5
22.10 Resources available from recoveries of prior year obligations	0	0	0
23.90 Total budgetary resources available for obligation	8	9	9
23.95 Total new obligations (-)	-4	-5	-6
24.40 Unobligated balance carried forward, end of year	4	4	3
<u>New budget authority (gross), detail:</u>			
Permanent:			
60.20 Appropriation (special fund)	4	5	5
70.00 Total new budget authority (gross)	4	5	5
<u>Change in obligated balances:</u>			
72.40 Obligated balance, start of year	1	1	1
73.10 Total new obligations	4	5	6
73.20 Total outlays, gross (-)	-4	-5	-6
73.45 Recoveries of prior year obligations (-)	0	0	0
74.40 Obligated balance, end of year	1	1	1
<u>Outlays, (gross) detail:</u>			
86.97 Outlays from new mandatory authority	3	4	4
86.98 Outlays from mandatory balances	1	1	2
87.00 Total outlays (gross)	4	5	6
<u>Net budget authority and outlays:</u>			
89.00 Budget authority	4	5	5
90.00 Outlays	4	5	6
<u>Direct obligations:</u>			
11.9 Total personnel compensation	1	1	1
25.2 Other services	3	3	4
99.5 Below reporting threshold	0	1	1
99.9 Total new obligations	4	5	6
<u>Personnel Summary</u>			
<u>Direct:</u>			
Total compensable workyears:			
1001 Full-time equivalent employment	26	26	26