

Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest

New Fee Proposal



February 2010



Recreation Niche

Mountains to See, Places to Be

Stretching from the inspiring heights of the Cascade Crest to the open lowlands of the Columbia River, the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest is defined by contrasts. Vast wild areas offer solitude, challenge and freedom while travel corridors offer easy access to avenues of adventure. Quality of life and connections to the land will continue to draw a growing and diverse population who call this amazing place their own.



Recreation Niche

Settings and Opportunities

Scenic Corridors
Front Country
Wilderness

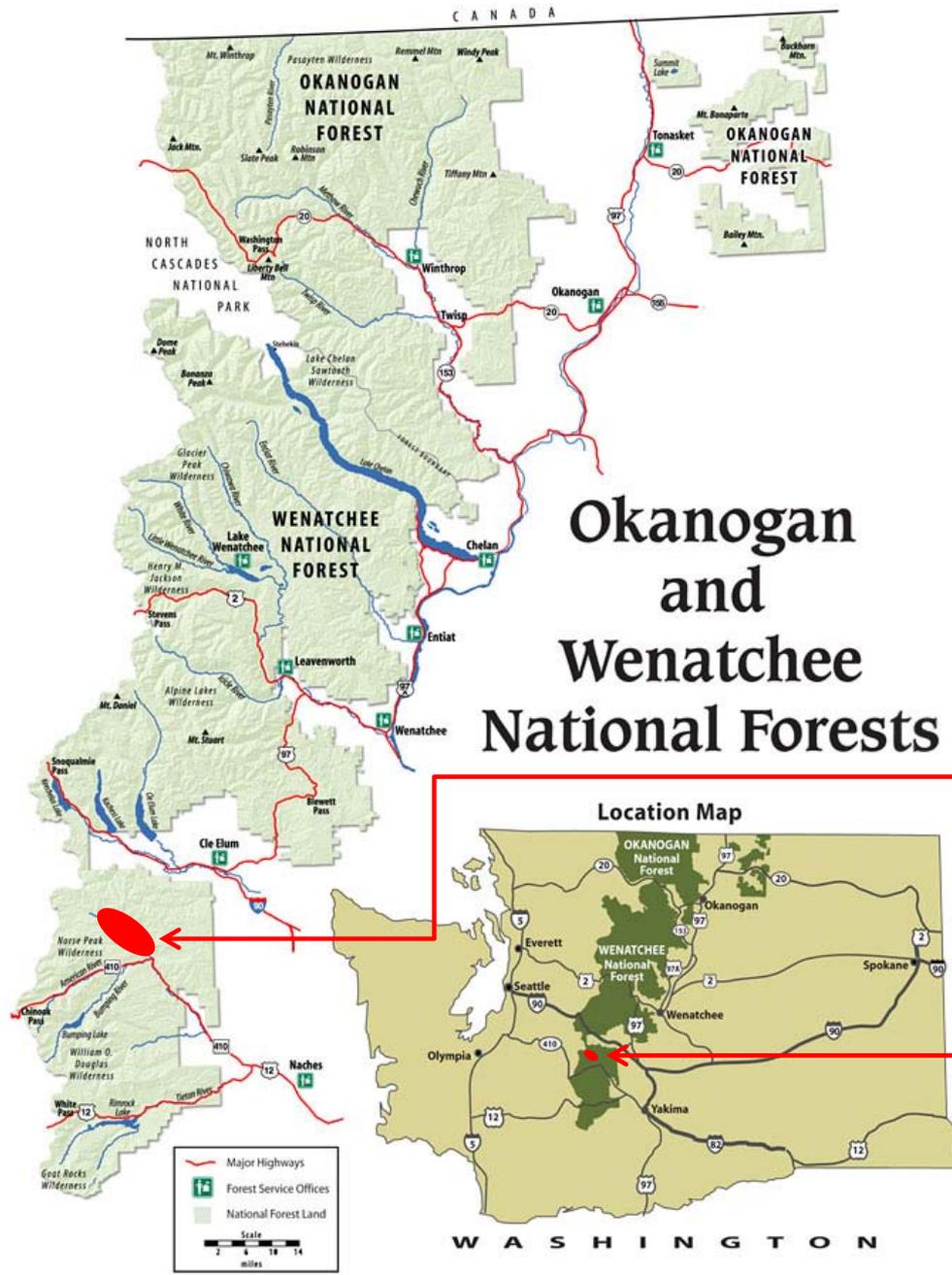


Family/Group Activities
Camping
Hiking & OHV Trails
Skiing & Snowmobiling



Location of New Fee Sites

Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests



Little Naches
Drainage



The Little Naches Drainage

Popular Destination for Visitors from Washington State and Beyond

Dry , Warm Weather and Outstanding Scenic Beauty

Concentrated Camping Opportunities

Extensive Motorized Trail System

Growing Use:

1988.....	107,944 visitors*
2005.....	122,360 visitors*
2015.....	130,000 estimated visitors*



*snow-free season only



The Little Naches Drainage

Variety of Camping Opportunities:

- 3 highly developed fee camping areas
- 4 moderately developed *free* camping areas
- 240+ undeveloped *free* dispersed camping areas



Heavy use from Memorial Day through hunt season. 3000+ campers in drainage on holiday weekends.

Most camps are located along streams or meadows.

Endangered fish populations, meadow habitat and archaeological sites are a few of the local resource concerns.

Watershed restoration funding was used in the late 1990s to address resource impacts at many popular camp sites in order to provide for continued public use while protecting local resources. Installations included traffic controls, road hardening, educational signing and concrete vault toilets.

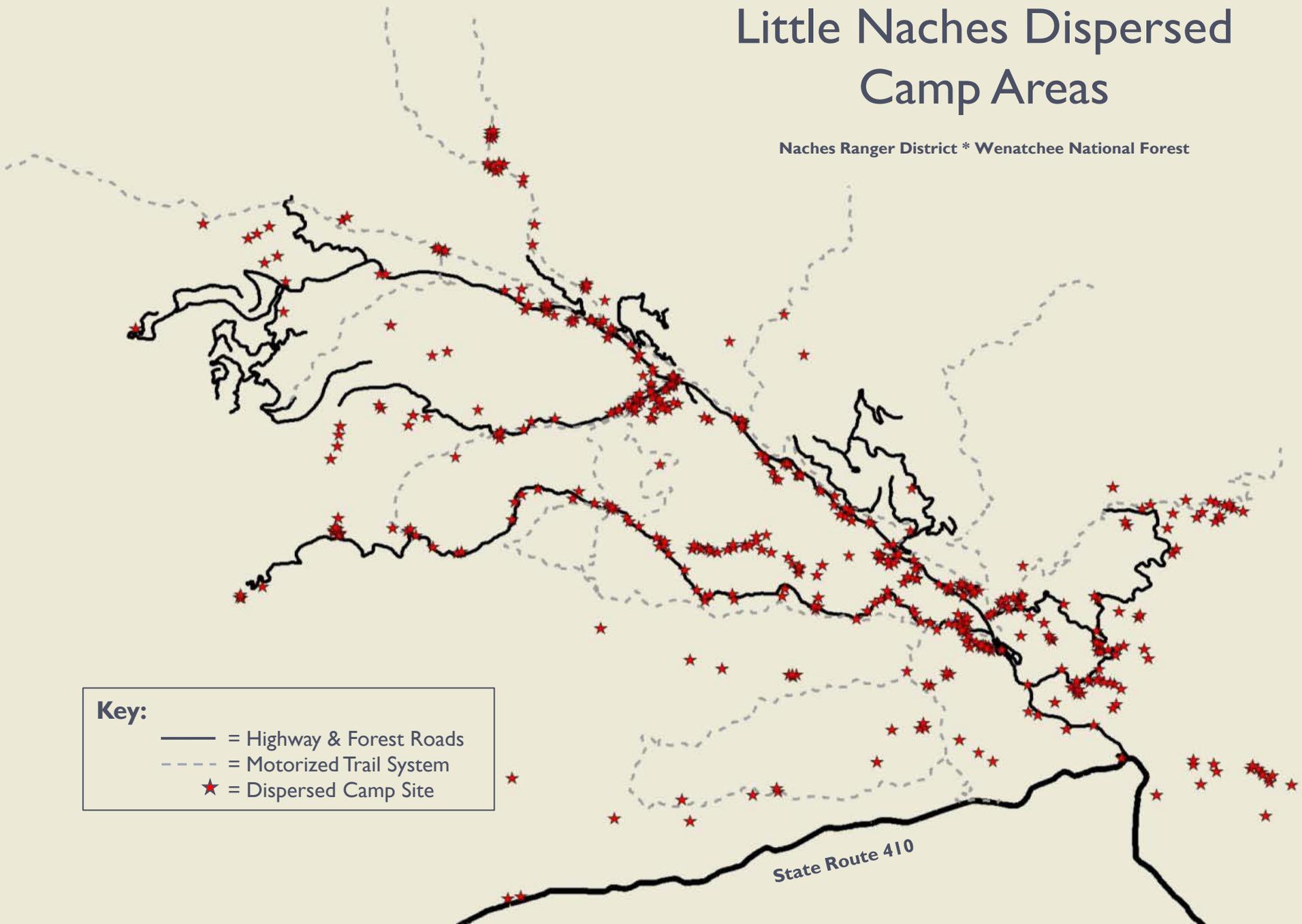


Little Naches Dispersed Camp Areas

Naches Ranger District * Wenatchee National Forest

Key:

- = Highway & Forest Roads
- - - = Motorized Trail System
- ★ = Dispersed Camp Site



State Route 410

Little Naches Developed Recreation Sites

Naches Ranger District * Wenatchee National Forest



Lost Meadow

Longmire Meadow

Crow Creek Campground

Long Meadow

Ponderosa Camp

Kaner Flat Campground & Group Reservation

Little Naches Campground

KEY:
◻ = Proposed Fee Area
◻ = Existing Fee Area

New Fee Proposals

Little Naches Drainage



Long Meadow
Longmire Meadow
Lost Meadow
Ponderosa Camp

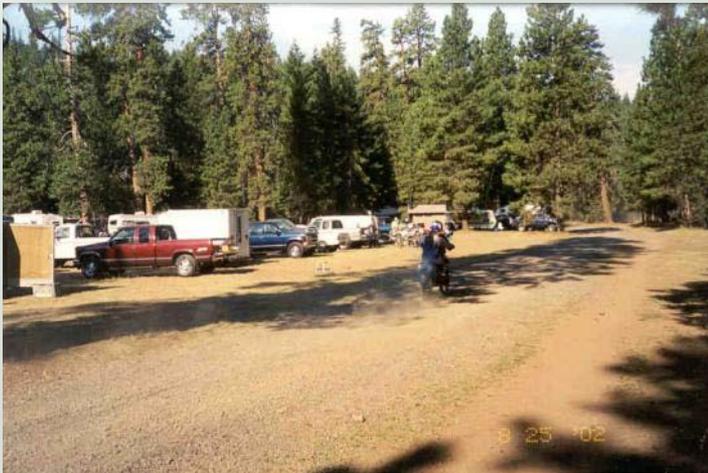
Proposed fee \$5.00 per vehicle per night*

*Applies to non-towed vehicles only.



Description

Long Meadow



- Popular Camping Area
- Ready Access to Motorized Trails
- Defined Learner Trails in Camp
- Concrete Vault Toilet
- Resource Protection Barriers
- Paved Road Access
- Bulletin Boards/Signs
- Primitive Rock Fire Rings
- No Water
- No Picnic Tables





Proposal

Long Meadow

Use Period: May to early November

Proposed Fee: \$5.00 per vehicle per night*

Expected Occupancy: 40%

Expected Demand: High

***Non-towed vehicles only. Fee site from about mid-May to early September only.
Free use before and after this period.**



Description

Longmire Meadow



- Popular Camping Area
- Ready Access to Motorized Trails
- Concrete Vault Toilet
- Resource Protection Barriers
- Paved Road Access
- Bulletin Boards/Signs
- Primitive Rock Fire Rings
- No Water
- No Picnic Tables



Proposal

Longmire Meadow

Use Period: May to early November

Proposed Fee: \$5.00 per vehicle per night*

Expected Occupancy: 40%

Expected Demand: Moderate

***Non-towed vehicles only. Fee site from about mid-May to early September only.
Free use before and after this period.**



Description

Lost Meadow



Heavy Use at Lost Meadow During a Poker Ride Event

- Popular Camping Area
- Ready Access to Motorized Trails
- Learner Trails in Camping Area
- Two Concrete Vault Toilets
- Resource Protection Barriers
- Paved Road Access
- Bulletin Boards/Signs
- Primitive Rock Fire Rings
- No Water
- No Picnic Tables



Proposal

Lost Meadow

Use Period: May to early November

Proposed Fee: \$5.00 per vehicle per night*

Expected Occupancy: 40%

Expected Demand: High

***Non-towed vehicles only. Fee site from about mid-May to early September only.
Free use before and after this period.**



Description

Ponderosa Camp



- Popular Camping Area
- Ready Access to Motorized Trails
- Learner Trails in Camping Area
- Concrete Vault Toilet
- Resource Protection Barriers
- Bulletin Boards/Signs
- Primitive Rock Fire Rings
- No Water
- No Picnic Tables



Proposal

Ponderosa Camp

Use Period: May to early November

Proposed Fee: \$5.00 per vehicle per night*

Expected Occupancy: 40%

Expected Demand: High

***Non-towed vehicles only. Fee site from about mid-May to early September only.
Free use before and after this period.**



Financial Information



	Annual O&M	Current Revenue	Predicted Revenue
Long Meadow	\$2500	\$0	\$3600
Longmire Meadow	\$2500	\$0	\$ 720
Lost Meadow	\$5000	\$0	\$3600
Ponderosa Camp	\$2500	\$0	\$1800
	<hr/> \$12,500	\$0	\$9720

The proposed new fees come close to closing the gap with current annual operation and maintenance costs.



Planned Accomplishments

Increased safety patrol and cleaning.

Provide garbage service.

Maintain/enhance resource protection installations.

Respond to visitors desires for improvement.



Reasons for Proposals

Improve services.

Maintain existing facilities.

Continued protection of sensitive resources.

Reduce litter.



Reasons for Proposals

Revenue collected above and beyond annual O&M needs at other fee sites in the drainage could help fund maintenance and upkeep of Long Meadow, Longmire Meadow, Lost Meadow and Ponderosa Camp as part of the “fee family”.

	2009 Revenue
Crow Creek	\$ 5,550
Kaner Flat Campground	\$ 22,400
Kaner Flat Group Site	\$ 5,200
	<hr/>
	\$ 33,150



Results of Not Implementing New Fees

Inconsistent Service: Fee sites will remain a higher priority for patrol, maintenance and cleaning. Facilities at the four sites will marginally meet safe and sanitary conditions during heaviest use periods.

Declining Resource Conditions: Installations designed to protect sensitive resources will suffer from a lack of maintenance. Degraded resource conditions could result in site closures.

Postponed Improvements: Litter issues will continue. Sanitation in camping areas will decline.



Public Participation



Environmental Assessment Process
Field Posting
Press Release (Newspaper & Radio)
Letters to Elected Officials
District Low-Watt Radio
Forest Web Page
Federal Register Notice Published



Field Posting Sign



Wenatchee National Forest PUBLIC NOTICE



Proposal to Change Fee Structure

Little Naches Drainage: Ponderosa Camp, Lost Meadow, Longmire Meadow and Long Meadow

Proposal: The Wenatchee National Forest is proposing to change the fee structure at select Little Naches drainage campgrounds in 2010. The proposed fee will change from the currently free-use status to a \$5.00 per vehicle for overnight use at Ponderosa Camp, Lost Meadow, Longmire Meadow and Long Meadow. Fees are assessed based on the level of amenities and services provided, cost of operation and maintenance, and market assessment. Fees help pay for part of the cost of operating and maintaining recreation sites. Recreation fees collected at these sites in excess of what is necessary to maintain the sites (e.g., compliance work, toilet cleaning, vault pumping and garbage removal) will be made available for maintenance of the motorized trail system in the drainage.

Overview: The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act permits charging a fee for use of recreation facilities such as campgrounds that have a certain level of amenities or services. In conjunction with a fee increase, additional amenities are proposed for the facilities and may include garbage service, picnic tables and fire rings.

Please send comments about establishing this fee site to:

Mail: Naches Ranger District
Attn: Jacqueline Beidl, Recreation Fee Program
10237 US Highway 12
Naches, Washington 98937

Email: jbeidl@fs.fed.us

For additional information, contact the Naches Ranger District at (509) 653-1432



Results



2003-2004

Environmental Assessment process indicates general support of fees provided revenue is used to maintain facilities and for increased law enforcement.

2009

15 letters, phone calls and emails

9 support fee

6 against fee

Two opposing individuals are hunters who use the sites for extended periods in late fall. They will not be affected (no fee after September).

Most people indicate they want sites to remain primitive (no picnic tables, etc).

People in support of fee want money used for toilet and/or trail maintenance. One suggests the Recreation Pass be accepted.



“...the user fee for the primitive camping areas is a good idea... especially if it helps keep the areas open... I don't see any need to put the monies towards picnic tables, and fire rings. I would rather see the money go towards trail improvement.”

Troy Thompson
Buckley, WA





“I would counter-propose that the Forest Service designate these four locations as Northwest Forest Trail Park Permit areas. Funds could go directly to maintaining the pit toilet, could contribute to trail maintenance as well, and a \$30 season pass would appeal to many Little Naches River area recreationists.”

John Bores





“Should not charge. This is just the beginning to charging more and turn them into expensive campgrounds so someone else gets the money.”

Bob Jump
Naches, WA

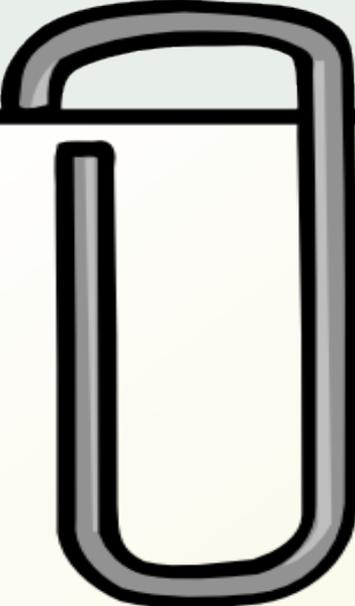




“Hello I am a user of the Naches drainage and would not have a problem paying to use the area. I am against any form of improvement such as fire rings benches trash service.”

Scott Surma

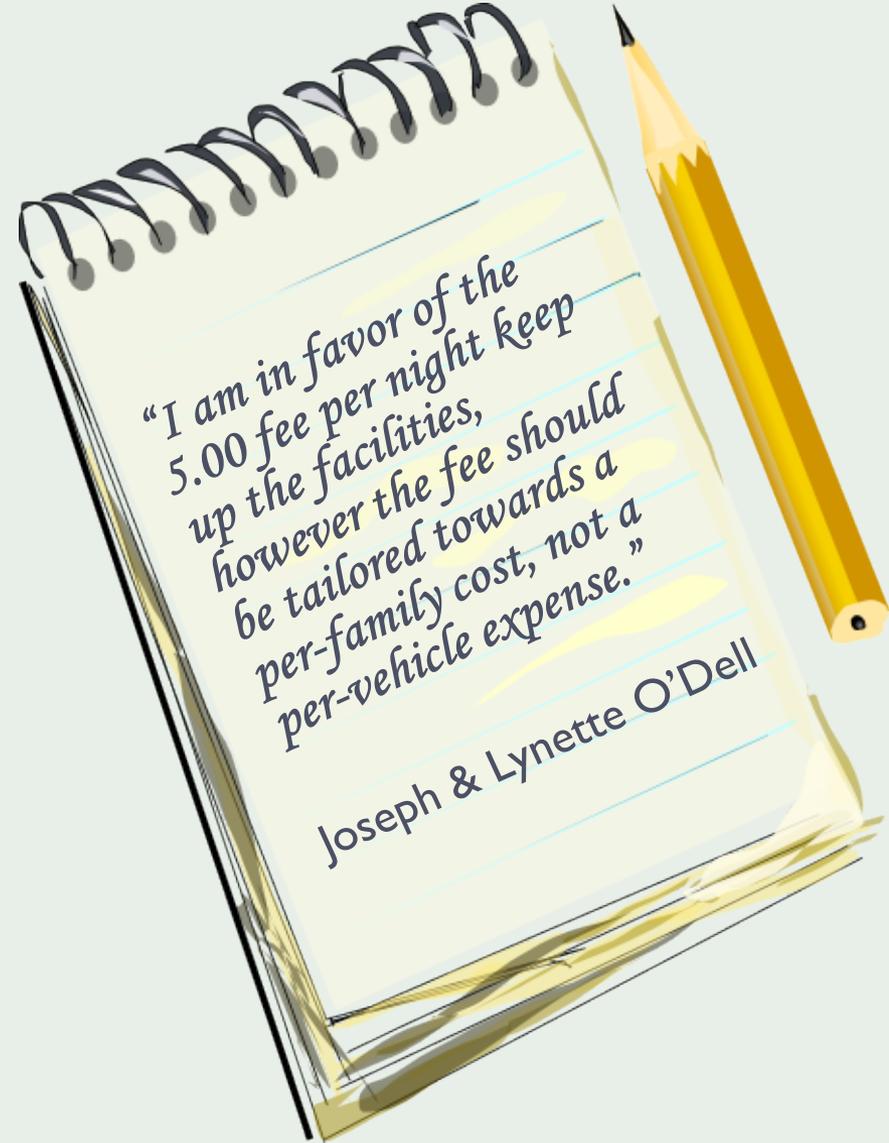




“I hope they do NOT charge the fee... I have already got tabs on my truck, trailer, bikes. I have also paid tax on the gas I use and on most everything else I have purchased to go camping. I kinda like the idea of free camping.”

DJ and Sara Cromwell





*"I am in favor of the
5.00 fee per night keep
up the facilities,
however the fee should
be tailored towards a
per-family cost, not a
per-vehicle expense."*

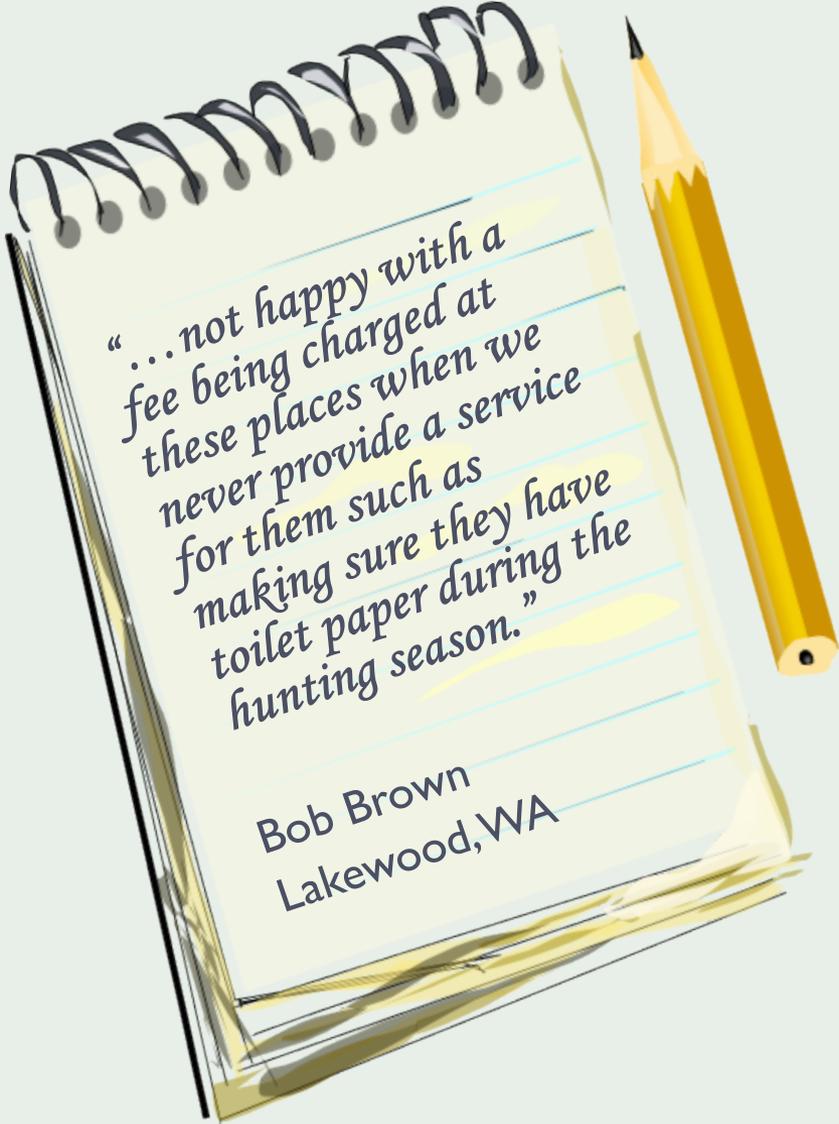
Joseph & Lynette O'Dell



“Please DO NOT create a user fee program at the Little Naches unless 100 percent of the funding goes to trail improvements/expansion.”

Tod Petersen
Stanwood, WA





"...not happy with a fee being charged at these places when we never provide a service for them such as making sure they have toilet paper during the hunting season."

Bob Brown
Lakewood, WA





“I support a \$5 fee in the Little Naches Drainage. Please put as much money to the trails as possible by providing the most maintenance free amenities.

I would support a large dumpster... Little dumpsters fill up fast.”

Barry Collins
Naches, WA



Questions?



Thank You!

