



Forest
Service

Rogue River-Siskiyou
National Forest

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File Code: 2300
Route To:

Date: October 6, 2008

Subject: Pacific Northwest Recreation Resource Advisory Committee 2009 Recreation Fee Proposal Submittals

To: Regional Forester

In response to the reply due for the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest's recommendations on fee proposals, I am submitting for consideration new fees at day use areas within the Illinois River Scenic Corridor on the Wild Rivers Ranger District, following the guidelines of the Federal Recreation Enhancement Act. I am recommending changes in the following recreation site category - day use areas for Diver's Hole, River Bench, Six Mile and Store Gulch.

The Forest utilized a variety of public outreach methods which included: press releases, editorial board meetings with local newspapers, seven public meetings, posting at Ranger District Offices, Federal Register notice of intent, posting at recreation sites, answering numerous phone calls and emails from the public on the fee change.

Generally, there was overall understanding and support for the need to implement new fees for these day use areas, especially when the visitors will see a higher level of Forest Service presence, operation and maintenance at these day use sites.

If you have questions regarding the fee proposal submissions, please contact John Borton, Forest Recreation Program Manager at 541-618-2076.

/s/ Cassius M. Cash (for)
SCOTT D. CONROY
Forest Supervisor

cc: Jocelyn Biro
Tim Chesley
John T Borton



Executive Summary for the Pacific Northwest Recreation Resource Advisory Committee

Sites:	Illinois River Scenic Area – Diver’s Hole, River Bench, Six Mile, and Store Gulch Day Use Areas
Site Type:	Expanded Amenity
Proposed Action:	New Fees
Recommended Fees:	Day Use Area Site Fee: begin charging \$5.00 per vehicle per day

Site Description - The Illinois River Scenic Area is a highly used area within the nationally designated Illinois Wild and Scenic River corridor located on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Wild Rivers Ranger District. The area is about 15 miles south of Grants Pass and within a 1 to 2 hour drives from the Rogue River Valley and Medford-Metropolitan area. The approximate 2,970 acre area is nestled in an old growth forest setting. The area has four campgrounds, five picnic areas, two scenic overlooks and interpretive sites, one historic site, five trailheads, four developed parking areas with swimming and rafting opportunities, and one private commercial lodge. The area is the gateway to the east side of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness and the Wild Section of the Illinois W&S River. The unique mix of recreation opportunities is significant to southern Oregon. Visits to the scenic area exceed 180,000 people per season.

Fee Assessment - Recent capital investments of 1.2 million dollars in road and parking improvements, new picnic tables, shelters, trails, and campgrounds have been built to help serve the public, improve visitor safety and prevent resource damage. Day use fees have never been charged. Subsequently, fees are needed to provide law enforcement presence, operation and maintenance. The recommended fees are based on 1) a Market Value analysis, 2) the Regional Campground Pricing rating, and 3) the Recreation Facility Analysis process. Fee collection will be efficiently accomplished with self-service pay stations and compliance checks. The fees charged will cover most of the cost of annual operation and maintenance. If fees are not charged, the recent capital improvements and recreation sites will be operated and maintained below actual cost. This will increase deferred maintenance over time in the area.

Public Involvement - Public involvement regarding increasing fees has been conducted over the last two years and included: on-site postings in the campground and day use areas, notices at the Wild Rivers Ranger District Office, on the Rogue River-Siskiyou NF Website, two public meetings, two press releases, and a television interview. Several letters of support were received along with an editorial in the local newspaper expressing support for the proposal. The notice of the proposal was published in the Federal Register on January 22, 2008. To date, no letters opposed to the proposed fees have been received.