

**Pacific Northwest  
Recreation Resources Advisory Committee  
Agenda for October 30, 2009  
Marriott Residence Inn – Lloyd Center - Portland, Oregon  
1710 NE Multnomah Street**

Time	Topics	Purpose	Presenter
8:30	<b>Welcome/Logistics/Introductions/Participation</b> and opening statements, opportunity for committee questions. Review Committee Purpose and Agenda	Housekeeping Background	Lenise Lago (FS, Deputy Regional Forester) Dennis Oliphant (Chair) Dan Harkenrider (FS, DFO)
9:00	<b>Historic Treasures – A Look at Forest Service Recreation Rentals</b>	Discussion	Gail Throop, Regional Historian
9:30	<b>Malheur National Forest</b>	Recommendation	Malheur National Forest
10:00	<b>Break</b>		
10:30	<b>Public Comment</b>	Required	
11:00	<b>Ochoco National Forest</b>	Recommendation	Ochoco National Forest
11:30	<b>Lunch</b>		
12:30	<b>Deschutes National Forest</b>	Recommendation	Deschutes National Forest
1:00	<b>BLM Salem District</b>	Recommendation	Salem District
2:00	<b>Break</b>		
2:30	<b>Mt. Hood National Forest</b>	Recommendation	Mt. Hood National Forest
3:00	<b>Final Discussion time – summarize recommendations</b>	Discussion/Wrap Up	Dennis Oliphant
3:30	<b>A Look At Area Fees</b>	Information	Julie Cox, National Recreation RAC Coordinator
4:00	<b>Members Terms</b>	Information	Dan Harkenrider
4:30	<b>Wrap Up – Critique Schedule Next Meeting – Early Feb 2010??</b>		Dennis Oliphant
5:00	<b>Adjourn</b>		

## Attendees:

R/RAC members present:	
Elizabeth Lunney	Category 1, Summer Non-Motorized Recreation
Gustav Bekker	Category 1, Winter Non-Motorized Recreation
Richard Fahey	Category 1, Hunting and Fishing
Robert Hamlyn	Category 2, Motorized, Outfitter/Guide
Dennis Oliphant	Category 2, Non-Motorized, Outfitter/Guide, Chairman
Kevin Gorman	Category 2, Local Environmental
Todd Davidson	Category 3, State Tourism
John Walker	Category 3, Tribal
Charles Hurliman	Category 3, Local Government
R/RAC members absent:	
John Vogel	Category 1, Winter Motorized Recreation
Carol Jensen	Category 1, Summer Motorized Recreation
Federal officials:	
Daniel Harkenrider	Designated Federal Official
Trish Wilson	Ex Officio BLM Representative
Federal staff:	
Jocelyn Biro	Recreation Fee Coordinator, Forest Service, R6
Julie Cox	National R/RAC Coordinator
Kathy Mitchell	PNW R/RAC Administrative Assistant, meeting coordinator
Justin Bauer	Note taker
Guests present:	
Marlene Orchard	Backcountry Horsemen of Oregon
Del Orchard	Backcountry Horsemen of Oregon
Becky Wolf	Backcountry Horsemen of Oregon, OET, Pacific Crest Trail Association
Wade Judy	Cascades Resource Area, Salem District, BLM
Cathy Bailey	Recreation and Wild and Scenic River Program Mgr, OR State Office, BLM
Traci Meredith	Salem District, BLM
Belle Smith	Salem District, BLM
Zach Jarrett	Salem District, BLM
Dave Ballenger	Salem District, BLM
Tambi Gustafson	Salem District, BLM
Lenise Lago	Deputy Regional Forester, Forest Service, R6
Al Matecko	Director, Public Affairs, Forest Service, R6
Gail Throop	Regional Historian, Forest Service, R6
Jeanette Hatcher	Recreation Fee Program Specialist, Forest Service, R6
Jeff Walker	Archeologist, Forest Service, R6
Kent Koeller	Ochoco National Forest, Forest Service, R6
Les Moscoso	Deschutes National Forest, Forest Service, R6
Kathleen Walker	Zigzag Ranger District, Forest Service, R6
Malcolm Hamilton	Mt. Hood National Forest, Forest Service, R6

Guests present via phone:	
Jennifer Harris	Malheur National Forest, Forest Service, R6

## Topic Summaries:

<b>Topic: Welcome/Logistics/Introductions/Participation/Opening Statements</b>	<b>8:40</b>
Presenters: Lenise Lago (FS), Dennis Oliphant (Chair), Dan Harkenrider (FS), Trish Wilson (BLM)	
<b>Summary of Presentation:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chairman Dennis Oliphant began by welcoming everyone and calling the meeting to order. He then asked the committee members to introduce themselves and state the constituent group they represent. Additionally, Dennis asked for the rest of the attendees to introduce themselves and state the organization or agency they were affiliated with.</li> <li>Following the introductions, Dan Harkenrider introduced and welcomed Lenise Lago, who is new in her position as the Deputy Regional Forester, Region 6. Her position includes oversight for the Region 6 Recreation, Lands, and Minerals programs.</li> <li>Lenise Lago followed by re-introducing herself and welcoming the group. She noted that she is new to the region and to the position as Deputy Regional Forester, having spent most of her career in the budget. She followed her introduction by saying that, in general, there is a lot of support for the recreation fee program from constituent groups, as long as they and the public can see that the funds are being well spent and well managed. Last year, 8 million dollars in recreation fees were collected in Region 6, with at least 7 million dollars being spent directly on recreation sites. Lenise finished by thanking Dan Harkenrider for his involvement as the Designated Federal Official, as well as the rest of the members for their contributions. She is excited about her job here in Region 6.</li> </ul>	
<b>Summary of Discussion:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dan Harkenrider began the discussion by informing the committee that Michael J. Haske (BLM) was not able to make it to the meeting because of travel issues. Additionally, Abbie Josie was unable to attend because of a snowstorm in Montana. Trish Wilson will represent the BLM in the capacity of Ex Officio.</li> <li>Dennis Oliphant followed by a brief discussion of the committee's ground rules. He mainly focused on the need to respect one another view points and the importance of maintaining efficiency, without losing comprehensiveness. Dennis reminded the committee of its purpose, in that it is an advisory committee, not a decision making one. Dennis finished by saying that he wants to stay on task, maintain efficiency, and keep the discussions on pertinent topics.</li> </ul>	
Jennifer Harris joined the meeting via speaker phone.	

<b>Topic: Historic Treasures – A Look at Forest Service Recreation Rentals</b>	<b>9:00</b>
Presenters: Gail Throop (FS)	
<b>Summary of Presentation:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gail Throop gave a comprehensive presentation on the history of Forest Service architecture and forest lodging. The first Forest Service residences were tents, followed by the earliest ranger stations, which began being built in the early 1900s. These early ranger stations were built out of</li> </ul>	

native materials, which were available on site. They were plain and simple, one or two room buildings, used for business and as residences for the Forest Rangers. Today, there averages about one 100 year old ranger station per forest.

- Later, ranger stations were built in strategic locations: near entrances to wildernesses and for fire fighting purposes. Many remain in place today. After the “big burn” in northern Idaho in 1910, fire lookouts began being constructed. The earliest fire lookouts were simply large trees, but these were quickly replaced by more permanent, constructed lookout sites. Around 500 lookouts remain throughout the region.
- When Franklin D. Roosevelt enacted the New Deal, funding became available for construction, and a distinctly Pacific Northwest building design began to appear. It is referred to as “Cascadian.” This style reflects the dominant environmental features within Region 6, namely big trees. Most of these structures were constructed in the time period from 1933-1942.
- With the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, federal agencies were required to consider the effects of proposed actions near these historic, though run down, “orphan” guard stations. It was recognized that these older structures offered a unique recreation experience, particularly because of their locations in idyllic wilderness settings.
- As these cabins, as they are now referred to as, became available to the public, pressure began to mount to make recreation cabins pay for themselves, through recreation fees. It is desired that the recreation fees collected by recreation cabins pay for the cabin’s annual maintenance, begin to pay for any deferred maintenance, and with some additional saved for the inevitable emergency repairs.
- Gail finished her presentation by remarking that, in her opinion, federal agencies and the government are becoming too business-like in their recreation planning. For instance, some are worried that if too many cabins become available for use it will “flood the market,” resulting in a situation where revenues are being lost. Instead, Gail says, the government should focus on the public interest and recognize that recreation lodgings provide a unique recreation opportunity, even if some may have to be subsidized.

#### **Summary of Discussion/Questions/Comments:**

- Dennis Oliphant began by asking about the “Cascadian” style and if the term is still used to describe the “big beam” architecture that is common in the region. Gail answered by saying it is, and is now found nationwide, though still much more common in the greater Pacific Northwest.
- Gustav (Gus) Bekker asked how the Forest Service determines which structures are kept and which ones are sold off. He stated that in Wenatchee (where he lives) he is noticing that the Forest Service is selling off the properties they are not using anymore. Gail answered by saying that it is a complicated question. The Forest Service recently received the authority to retain properties not needed for administrative purposes. Accordingly, the Forest Service catalogued all the properties that were no longer needed for administrative purposes, and, using this list, created another of the properties which were considered “historic.” The final decision hinges on a determination of which historic values to protect. Gail finished by noting that a lot of properties have been sold recently.
- Kevin Gorman asked how it is determined which recreation fees come from each recreation opportunity (i.e., cabin rentals verses campground fees), and how it is ensured that the appropriate monies are spent on the appropriate recreation category. Jocelyn Biro explained that the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) put all the recreation monies into one big bank, which makes it difficult to determine which monies came from which recreation category. Jocelyn

stated that though it is difficult to say which percentage of money came from each respective category, but it is possible to get an idea from the reservation lists from campgrounds, cabins, lookouts, etc. Kevin followed up by mentioning that most public heartburn comes from people paying at day use areas that were previously free, and it might be beneficial to do some sort of cost-benefit analysis to determine the efficiency of charging at certain day use areas. Jocelyn Biro answered that unfortunately all the categories get lumped together, so a cost-benefit analysis is difficult to tease out.

- Charles Hurliman asked about transient room taxes and whether the Forest Service pays them. Jocelyn Biro referred to it as the “bed tax,” and said that the federal government is exempt from these taxes, but Forest Service concessionaires pay them. Todd Davidson added that the federal government is exempt because it is illegal for states to tax the federal government, though the states can apply the tax to individual concessionaires.
- Elizabeth Lunney brought the discussion back to the issue of the Forest Service not being able to differentiate which recreation services provide which revenues. She asked, without this knowledge, how it is a forest is able to come up with appropriate budget plans. Jocelyn Biro answered by saying that a forest is able to look at the reservation records and get a general idea of which services are being used the most, and therefore determine the relative amounts of revenue. Jocelyn continued by saying that the overall financial system for the Forest Service has moved away from tracking at the campground level, but that the people in the field have a good idea of which campground brings in what money, and what the benefits that are verses the costs. Elizabeth replied that this system must make it difficult to show that the money from one area is going back to that area, and not getting spent somewhere else. Jocelyn finished by conceding that though that may be true, she is confident that individual forests use the system to responsibly manage the use of recreation fees.
- Jocelyn Biro asked if Gail had a particular example of a cabin done in the Cascadian style. Gail showed a picture of the Fry Meadow Guard Station, saying that the guard station is an example of a modest, two room cabin, done in the Region 6 rustic style. Gail highlighted the steep gabled roof with intersecting roof gables, the multiple wood textures, and the stone masonry chimney. Gail next offered the Cold Springs Guard Station in the Ochoco National Forest as another example.
- Dennis Oliphant thanked Gail for her presentation. Dennis wrapped up the discussion by reminding the group about how the committee’s by-laws dictate how a fee proposal gets the committee’s recommendation. A vote is cast following the discussion after a fee proposal presentation. In order to get a recommendation, the fee proposal must get a “yes” vote from a majority of members in each of the three categories. The recommendation is then sent on to the regional forester for final approval.
- Jocelyn Biro again thanked Gail, and introduced Jennifer Harris, who was to be involved in the following presentation and discussion over the phone.

Presenters: Jocelyn Biro (FS), Jennifer Harris (on phone)

**Fee Proposals:**

	Site Name	Location	Proposal
<b>Recreation Rental Fee Increases</b>			
1	Deer Creek Guard Station	Blue Mtn Ranger District	Fee increase from \$40 to \$60/night
2	Murderers Creek GS	Blue Mtn Ranger District	Fee increase from \$40 to \$50/night
<b>New Fee Sites</b>			
1	Sunshine Guard Station	Middle Fork John Day River Blue Mountain Ranger District	New fee: \$60/night
2	Short Creek Guard Station	Near No. Fork Malheur Wild and Scenic River and Strawberry Mtn Wilderness Prairie City Ranger District	New fee: \$60/night

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Jocelyn Biro began the presentation by reading the Malheur National Forest's recreation niche: "A Traditional Way of Life". Jocelyn next gave a description of the sites where fee changes were being proposed. All four of the sites are guard stations, two existing with proposed fee increases, and two new sites with new fee proposals. All of the guard stations are located around John Day, OR. The reasons for the proposed fee changes are to increase and/or improve services (especially accessibility) and to align fees with the local market.

**Key presentation points:**

- Public participation included:
  - Proposals posted at each site and on the forest website.
  - Press releases published in the local newspaper.
  - Federal legislators were notified and briefed.
- Results of public participation:
  - Two letters were received, one expressing general support, and the other providing a suggestion that the cabins should be put back into administrative use.
  - Two phone calls were received, both in support of the fee proposals.

**Summary of Discussion/Questions/Comments:**

- John Walker began the discussion by asking since the Murders Creek Guard Station has such low annual occupancy (around 30%), do the improvements act as a strategy for increasing occupancy, and is this considered when the forest is performing their analysis? Secondly, considering its low occupancy, is it cost effective to continue to operate this particular cabin? Jennifer Harris answered that they are aware that they are subsidizing this cabin, but the uniqueness of the Murders Creek Guard Station weighed heavy in their decision to keep this site. Although the cabin is in slight disrepair, the location is the draw, and it is hoped that the proposed fee increase will allow for improvements to the cabin. The forest is hoping that these improvements will lead to increased demand. Jennifer pointed out that they considered the low demand, and which is why

they are only proposing to increase the fee to \$50 dollars, instead of the \$60 dollars proposed for the other three sites.

- Charles Hurliman continued by asking how low would the annual occupancy rate have to be before the forest would consider dropping the cabin from their recreation program. Jennifer Harris answered by conceding that if the forest was operating on a business plan model, the cabin would certainly be dropped. But we (the federal government) have an obligation to provide unique recreation opportunities, and therefore it is legitimate to subsidize recreation sites such as Murderers Creek. She recognized that this is a personal value judgment, but one that she is confident and comfortable in making. Charles Hurliman continued by suggesting that a better use for this cabin might be to put it back into administrative use as a guard station. He noted that this still achieves the goal of preserving the cabin, and is a more efficient use of resources. Jennifer Harris answered by saying that the forest looked at that, and determined that there is no longer an administrative need for the facility at Murderers Creek. Fire crews do currently still use some guard stations, but in general the trend has been to consolidate crews and staff into centralized bunkhouses. Jennifer finished by noting that if this cabin was not used as a recreation rental, it would be torn down. Charles Hurliman asked if there are no plans to remove the cabin, does the forest still plan to subsidize this rental and are there any plans to ever remove this cabin. Jennifer answered that they plan to continue to subsidize this cabin through other rentals.
- Todd Davidson asked if “annual occupancy” refers to the seasons during which the cabin is open or to the calendar year. Jennifer Harris responded that it is based on when the cabin is open.
- Todd Davidson next asked how was that the 80% occupancy rate was arrived at for the new proposed fee sites, noting that that number seemed a little ambitious. Jennifer Harris answered that she made the estimate based on the locations of the sites: attractive locations with paved road access and electricity. The Deer Creek site has an 85% annual occupancy rate and is sited in a less desirable area than the proposed sites.
- Todd Davidson next asked if any of the new proposed recreation cabins are ready to rent out right now. Jennifer Harris answered that no, they are not ready for occupation. Todd Davidson followed by asking if the proposed fees will take care of the entire maintenance backlog, or whether stimulus will be used as well. Jennifer answered by saying that no stimulus money was used on the Deer Creek Guard Station. For the other sites it is hoped that most of the backlog maintenance will be taken care of using stimulus money but that other work on the buildings will be done using monies generated from recreation fees.
- Kevin Gorman commented that though the fee increases seemed modest but they are actually 50% of the current rates. He asked how long these current fees would be in place before another increase. Jennifer Harris answered that they would be in place for 4 to 5 years. Jocelyn Biro added that, compared to the rest of the market, increases recreation fees in the Forest Service have been modest. The Forest Service has chosen to stair-step prices up, instead of jumping up to the full market value. Input from the RRAC has been taken into consideration when determining which method of fee implementation to use for a particular site.
- Charles Hurliman commented that the bad economy is hitting everyone and every aspect of the government. He continued by saying that when the Forest Service was still extracting forest products, counties were getting some of the money to help with their road maintenance. Counties do not receive any money for road maintenance from recreation fee, but many of the recreation sites use county roads for access.
- Kevin Gorman remarked that if the RRAC is being used to determine whether or not a fee increase or proposal is justified it would be nice to know how long the increase is going to last before the

next one. This would be a factor that he would consider in deciding whether or not to support a fee increase. Dan Harkenrider responded to Kevin's comment by saying that this question has come up many times, and each forest's response is that the expectation is that each increase is intended to be for 3-5 years, and that it is not anticipated that there will be justification for fee increases on an annual basis. Dan continued by saying that a tremendous amount of work goes into fee increase proposals, and this limits the ability of forests to increase fees on an annual basis. Jocelyn Biro recommended that if forests are shooting for a higher fee in the future, it is beneficial to jump straight up to the fee, and hold at that level for longer, as opposed to small annual incremental increases. Jocelyn finished by saying that because of the current economic atmosphere many fees that were proposed and recommended from the previous meeting were not implemented. The regional forester is recommending that fees remain the same for now.

- Gus Bekker noted that the Sunshine Guard Station is slated to be open in winter, and asked why is this cabin is available year-round unlike the others. Jennifer Harris answered that it is because this particular cabin is accessed by a paved and plowed county road, while the other cabins are located in areas with less reliable access.
- Dennis Oliphant asked the committee if they wanted to vote on the proposed increases and the new fee sites separately, or lump them together as they have been proposed. John Walker asked if the committee had the discretion to do that. Julie Cox answered by saying yes the committee does have that discretion. The group decided to vote on the proposals as a whole package.

Charles Hurliman moved to recommend the fees as presented.

**Vote:** Unanimous approval (Category 1=3; Category 2=3; Category 3=3)

**Break**

**10:05**

**Topic: Public Comment Period**

**10:35**

Presenters: Marlene Orchard (Public Lands Chair Backcountry Horsemen)

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Marlene Orchard began her presentation by showing a poster that highlighted the potential incompatibility of mountain bikers and horses, and requested that the Forest Service put them in their recreation cabins. The poster showed a picture of a horse and a cyclist, and Marlene explained that for a horse a fast moving bike resembles a predator because of their high speed, especially when coming up from behind. She also provided the group with a letter that gave a more detailed explanation of the issues between mountain bikers and horses.
- Marlene next showed a newsletter that details the volunteer work the Backcountry Horseman group has performed. She also showed the new issue of Columbia Gorge magazine, which contained an article about mountain biking and horseback riding, and the conflicts that can arise between the two activities. The article showed that equines are a strong economic factor throughout the region, a sentiment that Marlene said she shared. On this note, Marlene asked that the Forest Service considered this when they are restoring guard stations, and requested that they consider restoring the corrals that are near many of the recreation cabins.
- Marlene continued by reading a letter she received from another equine user which expressed worries about different fee cycles, namely over which times of the year fees are required at certain areas. The letter explained that equine users work hard restoring and maintaining recreation areas and have to pay recreation fees during prime horse riding season. Meanwhile

other users, such as hunters, benefit from all the work the equine users put in, while not having to pay fees because hunting takes place during a no fee period. The letter suggested that forests take this aspect into consideration and take another look at their fee cycles. The letter also expressed worry about confusion of when and where fees are implemented.

- Marlene read a second letter from another equine user who was opposed any fee increases in campgrounds. The letter’s author believes that fee increases discourage use. The letter also stated that dispersed camping areas near designated fee campsites are being used heavily as a means to avoid fees This is resulting in natural resource damage. The letter asked that forests consider this aspect when considering fee increase. The letter finished with the sentiment that fee increases are occurring at sites where no improvements are being made, while volunteer groups still do work to maintain sites. The letter asked that the Forest Service remain aware of the work the volunteers are performing.
- Gus Bekker asked if there were any specifics on which areas the last letter was addressing. There were none.
- Dan Harkenrider took this time to share an email he had received from Dick and Linda Butler regarding fees. Additional emails related to fees, generally in opposition to, were passed around the group. A final email was presented that was sent to the RRAC from Kitty Benzar in opposition to fees. It included a newspaper article on an issue related to fees at sites in Methow Valley.
- Kevin Gorman stated that Kitty Benzar said in her email that the Forest Service is required to provide at least six out of the nine amenities listed in the Recreation Enhancement Act (REA), but in other RRAC meetings it has been stated that they only to meet five out of nine. Jocelyn Biro replied by explaining that different fee types have different requirements. Standard amenity fee sites need to have six amenities and expanded amenity fee sites need to have a majority of nine.
- Charles Hurliman mentioned that Jocelyn Biro did not mention safety as one of the 9 amenities when she was listing them off. Jocelyn thanked Charles for pointing that out.

Marlene ended the discussion by thanking all for their attention and time.

**Topic: Ochoco National Forest** **11:00**

Presenters: Kent Koeller (FS)

**Fee proposals:**

QTY	Site Name	Location	Proposal
<b>Recreation Rental Fee Increases</b>			
1	Cold Springs Cabin	Road 30-100 Lookout Mountain Ranger District	Fee increase: from \$75 to \$90/night
<b>New Fee Sites</b>			
1	Ranger’s Rental	Ochoco Ranger Station Lookout Mountain Ranger District	New fee: \$90/night

**Summary of presentation:**

- Kent Koeller began the presentation by characterizing the Ochoco National Forest as a small, rural forest with very few recreation sites which tend to be rural in nature. Currently they have

only one rental cabin, with another one being proposed at the meeting. The Ochoco's recreation niche is "At the Edge of Solitude". Kent gave a background on the Ochoco, which is mainly used for dispersed camping, as well as a high level of mining.

**Key presentation points:**

- Public participation included:
  - Notice of fee changes and proposals were published in the Federal Register.
  - An article in the local newspaper, the Bend Bulletin.
  - A notice was posted at the forest offices.
- Results of public participation:
  - One phone call was received which in support of the new site.
  - Other comments were received, which were generally in support of the fee increases. People stated that they loved the Cold Springs Cabin and were willing to support a fee increase if it meant the cabin would be taken care of.

**Summary of discussion/questions/comments:**

- Gus Bekker began the discussion by asking when the last fee increase occurred in 2007 was there a change in the level of occupancy (at the Cold Springs Cabin). Kent answered by saying there was very little to no change in the occupancy rate, and they did not expect one now.
- Gus Bekker next pointed out that for the Cold Springs Cabin there was a large difference between the operation and maintenance (O&M) costs and revenue, and asked what happens to all the surplus money. Kent answered that since he was relatively new to the forest, he was not sure what it was used for. Jocelyn Biro offered that the money will likely be used to do water tests and provide propane for gas appliances, as well as cover the general increased cost of doing business. Kent added that the money does not accumulate.
- Todd Davidson stated that he assumed that any money generated goes into a general fund, but he would like to know how or where exactly on a forest that money is used. Dan Harkenrider interjected to clear up any confusion over whether the discussion was focusing on the difference between current and projected revenues, or whether it was over the general positive difference between O&M costs and total revenues. It was the general difference between O&M costs and total revenues. After the confusion was cleared up Dan said that the Forest Service does subsidize low occupancy cabins with revenue generated from more popular ones, and it is possible this is where the extra revenues from Cold Springs Cabin may go.
- Todd Davidson next asked if now was the time to be increasing fees since Cold Springs Cabin was still generating so much revenue, even after O&M costs had been included. Jocelyn Biro answered that yes, now is still a good time to increase fees because the surplus revenues are gathered and saved for emergency repairs. This banked money can also be earmarked for future uses, such as roof repairs or other capital improvements.
- Gus Bekker pointed out that Kent had mentioned that he did not really know where surplus dollars were spent, and asked if Kent did not, know who did? Secondly, how is all the surplus money accounted for? Jocelyn Biro answered by indicating that the Ochoco only has one recreation rental, and the accomplishment report describes what the extra money has been used for. This report documents both revenues and expenditures.
- Charles Hurliman remarked that he would not be bothered if forests wished to increase their recreation cabin fees anywhere from \$120 to \$200 dollars. He is in support of using surplus monies to subsidize trail and other facilities, and in fact would suggest increasing fees even

higher. Charles continued by recalling that in the first RRAC meeting there was a discussion about getting to know more about the type of people that generally use these facilities, and using this information to market towards users, providing more focused marketing, and theoretically, more business.

- Kevin Gorman reminded the group that the RRAC was set up to provide more transparency to the public in the area of recreation fees and Forest Service processes. He continued by saying that the public wants to have information about where recreation fees are being spent. Kevin commented that, in opposition to the current general list of accomplishments, the more a forest can keep revenues from recreation fees truly dedicated to the site from which they are generated the better off the Forest Service will be in the public's eye. Kevin finished by saying that, in general, the public perceives federal agencies as "guilty until proven innocent," and suggested that a more detailed accounting method would be better than a general list of accomplishments. Dan Harkenrider answered that the accomplishment reports are an attempt to do that, but in summary form. He informed the group that the law requires the Forest Service to account for dollars spent and to provide this information to the public but there is nothing unlawful about using excess revenues to subsidize other sites.
- Kevin followed up by asking for clarification on where excess fee revenues go. Dan answered that they are generally used on site, but can be used off site at other recreation sites where fees are charged.
- Dennis Oliphant asked where the other buildings were located in the picture of the proposed site, the Ranger's Rental. Kent Koeller provided a description of the site, which is sited on a complex of many buildings, none of which are too near the proposed recreation cabin, but are still within view.
- Gus Bekker asked if the Ranger Rental is near any Nordic trails. Kent answered that the cabin is located right at the base of several trails, as well as only being five miles away from Walton Lake, which has a Nordic park. The terrain surrounding the rental is very mellow and friendly to Nordic skiing.
- John Walker recalled a previous meeting in which there was a proposal to set the recreation fee at Cold Springs Cabin at \$75 dollars while the committee recommended that the fee be set at \$90. John suggested that next time something like this happens that the forest take the committee's recommendation in order to prevent the forest having to come to another meeting, as is the case here. Jocelyn Biro answered that because the proposal was presented to the public to increase the fee to \$75 dollars that is all they could vote on. She suggested that it may be beneficial to provide a range of potential fee levels, in which case the RRAC could then decide on an appropriate fee level.
- Richard Fahey expressed agreement with John Walker that the Ochoco should have originally gone with a fee increase to \$90. He also commented that he feels that the Ranger's Rental is underpriced in this case because of the great amenities it provides. Kent Koeller answered that he understood Richard's position, but that since the Ranger's Rental lacks the solitude that other cabins provide, such as the Cold Springs Cabin, that it does not demand a higher price. He conceded that it is a conservative price, but that this was done intentionally to the public response to the proposed fee. Richard next pointed out that if the Ochoco had originally gone with the \$90 fee for the Cold Springs Cabin they would have received an additional \$4,000 dollars in revenue. John Walker reminded everyone that was not possible because of the level the public was originally made aware of.
- Elizabeth Lunney asked what funded the initial improvements on the Ranger's Rental, since

recreation fees for the cabin were not being gathered at the time. Jocelyn Biro answered that any improvements on sites that are being brought into the system for the first time must be made using appropriated funds, not with surplus revenues from other fee sites. Elizabeth thought that recreation fee revenues were fluid across rental sites. Jocelyn said that is correct, but only once the rental is in the system. Kent commented that he remembered that the funds for improving the Ranger's Rental came from the Ochoco's recreation budget.

- Charles Hurliman asked that when a recreation rental is actually making money, is this money used to pay wages of the employees who do work on the rentals. He wondered if there is some sort of national pool that money is pulled from to pay these wages. Dennis Oliphant noted that wages are not separated in a facility's O&M. Jocelyn Biro said that the \$9-10 dollar reservation surcharge covers items related to the operations of the reservation system, and that 95% of revenues go back to the forest, while the other 5% goes to supporting overhead, such as costs associated with RRAC operations.
- Todd Davidson asked whether seasonal pricing is an option, such as higher prices in the summer and lower in the winter. Ken Koeller answered that yes, this is an option, but they decided that it would be better to have a flat rate to keep accounting simple. Todd expressed support to keeping things simple, especially considering the lack of rental staff. Kent thanked him for his support, and re-iterated that seasonal pricing is an option for the future. Todd then commented that he believed \$90 is a great deal for these recreation cabins. Richard Fahey asked if it is under the committee's authority to increase the proposed fee. Dan Harkenrider reminded the group that they can only vote on what has been presented to the public, but this question supports the idea of providing the public with a range of proposed fee increases, which would allow the committee to recommend a higher price, as well as seasonal pricing. Jocelyn Biro commented that more seasonal pricing proposals are likely; noting that previously the RRAC recommended seasonal pricing on the Umatilla National Forest and a later presentation (the Mt. Hood National Forest) includes proposals that have weekday and weekend prices.
- Charles Hurliman noted that the Ranger's Rental really resembles a vacation rental and is much nicer than most other Forest Service rentals. He asked if these are the type of people the Forest Service is trying to market too. Kevin Gorman reminded the group that the Ranger's Rental is lacking the ambiance that can be garnered at other sites. Kent Koeller re-iterated that it is this lack of ambiance and wildness was the basis for such a relatively low price.

A discussion proceeded about the low price, and whether approval now disallows suggestion of higher fees in the future. It does not.

Charles Hurliman moved to recommend the fees as presented.

**Vote:** Unanimous approval (Category 1=3; Category 2=3; Category 3=3)

After the vote Charles Hurliman suggested to the group that the next presenter, the Deschutes National Forest, give their presentation before breaking for the scheduled lunch time. The committee agreed to this, and lunch was postponed until after the Deschutes National Forest presentation.

Presenters: Les Moscoso (FS)

**Fee Proposals:**

	Site Name	Location	Proposal
<b>New Fee Sites</b>			
1	Crescent Lake Boat Launch	Crescent Lake Crescent Ranger District	New fee: \$5/day
2	Princess Creek Boat Launch	Odell Lake Crescent Ranger District	New fee: \$5/day
3	Simax Beach Day Use	Crescent Lake Crescent Ranger District	New fee: \$5/day
4	Spring Creek Boat Launch	Crescent Lake Crescent Ranger District	New fee: \$5/day
5	Sunset Cove Boat Launch	Odell Lake Crescent Ranger District	New fee: \$5/day
6	Tranquil Cover Day Use	Crescent Lake Crescent Ranger District	New fee: \$5/day
7	Trapper Creek Boat Launch	Odell Lake Crescent Ranger District	New fee: \$5/day
8	Windy-Oldenberg Trailhead	Odell Lake Crescent Ranger District	New fee: \$5/day

**Summary of Presentation:**

Les began by presenting the Deschutes National Forest’s recreation niche, “Fun in the Sun!” He followed by providing the background and setting of the Deschutes, characterizing the Deschutes National Forest as not having the best of anything, but having a lot of everything. Les next showed the committee maps of the areas where new fees were being proposed. All the sites are very popular and some need upgrades and restoration. Improvements include increasing and improving parking areas, improving boat launches to be in line with State Marine Board regulations, and providing more interpretive signs.

**Key presentation points:**

- Public participation included:
  - A meeting with a local Community Action group took place in the previous October.
  - Notice of new fee proposals was published in the Federal Register.
  - Fee proposals were published in several local newspapers.
  - Letters explaining the new fees were sent out to local user groups.
- Results of public participation:
  - General support was expressed at the meeting with the local Community Action group, as long as it was demonstrated that fees were being used to improve sites.
  - Very few comments were received. Those that were received were generally opposed to the new fees.

**Summary of Discussion/Questions/Comments:**

- Robert Hamlyn began the discussion by asking if improvements to the boat launch areas are being made with State Marine Board money. Les Moscoso answered yes, they are. Jocelyn Biro

commented that improvements to recreation areas are also being made with the money made available with the initiation of the fee program.

- Kevin Gorman asked if the majority of other trailheads in the Deschutes National Forest have the \$5 dollar fee. Les answered that they do, and the purpose of the proposed fees is to bring these sites in line with other trailheads throughout the forest
- John Walker noted that a slide during the presentation stated that there had been no fees at the boat launch areas since 2000, where there had been previously. He asked if this was because before 2000 the sites were owned and operated by another party. Les answered that the areas were Forest Service, but prior to 2000 were managed separately, not through recreation.
- Gus Bekker noted that every single public comment provided was opposed to the fees, and asked if they received any comments in favor of the proposed fees. Les answered that they received no calls in favor of the fees, but the local community group was in support of the fees as long as site improvements are visible.
- Kevin Gorman noted that on the information provided to the committee it is apparent that not all sites currently have the necessary amenities to charge a recreation fee. He asked if this was putting the cart before the horse, and if it was appropriate for the committee to recommend a fee proposal if not all the necessary amenities are currently available, even if the fees are intended to provide money to put the amenities in place. Les Moscoso answered that they currently have money set aside to improve the sites, independent of the proposed fees. By the time the forest institutes the proposed fees, the sites will be in compliance with REA.
- John Walker commented, in reference to Gus Bekker's previous comment, that with any new proposed fee the forest is going to receive comments predominantly opposed to it.
- Gus Bekker expressed concern that it appears that the committee is simply rubber stamping every proposal they see. He continued by saying that to avoid this perception, it is appropriate that a forest show general public support for fee proposals, per the committee's by-laws. Gus pointed out that there appeared to be a lack of documented general public support for the Deschutes' fee proposals. Dennis Oliphant answered by reminding committee members that they represented particular constituency groups and that it is appropriate for committee members to consider how their constituency would feel about a proposed fee, and to vote along those lines. Dennis used the example that his constituents generally support fees in order to prevent sites from falling into disrepair, and this support exists even if a forest cannot document general public support. Todd Davidson recalled a discussion from a previous meeting where the group decided that if a site has a high level of use and a proposed fee receives relatively few public comments, even if all are in opposition to the proposed fee, that this still demonstrates general public support. Further, it would be good to know exactly the number of opposing comments received rather describing the comments as "several" or "less than ten."
- Jocelyn Biro commented that she also recalled that discussion, and asked Julie Cox to provide further background information on how general public support can be demonstrated. Julie answered by saying that general public support is a difficult concept, and REA left it open for broad interpretation. She had sought definitions on general public support through the legal community, and reminded the group that the role of the RRAC is to determine if the forest did an adequate job in making fee proposals available to the public for comment. In this way, if the public was concerned, they would have a sufficient opportunity to respond. Dan Harkenrider added that it is important to keep in mind the number of comments received in comparison to the site's use level. If particular recreation site is very heavily used and only receives a small amount of comments in comparison that would indicate general public support for the fee proposal.

Elizabeth Lunney commented that a lack public comments supporting fees does not necessarily indicate a lack of support, but a large influx of negative comments would.

- Kevin Gorman commented that he was more concerned about showing the public that the RRAC and their procedures are as transparent and open as possible. He was concerned that the sites presented did not have the full suite of necessary amenities. All the amenities need to be in place before he could support a fee proposal. Otherwise, he continued, it sends a message to the public that we are trying to sneak fees through before the sites are legally able to charge fees. Dan Harkenrider responded to Kevin by stating that he could absolutely guarantee that a forest would not bring a fee proposal forward if the site was not ready, or plans are in place to get a site ready, and if there was a sufficient lack of public support. Dan continued by saying the Forest Service is bound by regulations, and would be breaking the law if they did not adhere to them, and that is something the Forest Service is not interested in doing.
- Todd Davidson asked if the committee could rest assured that the amenities issue would be taken care of using appropriated funds, or some other source of money. Dan Harkenrider answered, yes. Jocelyn Biro commented that every recreation fee site she has been to in the off-season has black plastic covering the fee signs because amenities have been removed. Jocelyn continued by saying that this gives her confidence that the forest will not implement fees until all the necessary amenities are in place.
- Dennis Oliphant commented that, in order to work efficiently, there needs to be a certain level of trust between the committee and the Forest Service, something which he felt is there. And if that trust is broken, there are legal means in place to deal with that situation. Kevin Gorman responded by saying that this is not an issue over whether the committee trusts the Forest Service or not. Kevin gave the example of an individual who wishes to get a permit from the Forest Service, saying that there are all sorts of hoops one must jump through prior to the issuance of a permit. He asked why the Forest Service should be treated differently when it comes to fee proposals. He continued by saying that if the committee gets in the habit of recommending fee proposals before sites are ready it starts to take the RRAC down a bad path and could negatively influence public perception of the committee. He finished by saying that it is not unreasonable to ask a forest to have all the necessary amenities in place before bringing a fee proposal in front of the RRAC.
- Robert Hamlyn asked if it is appropriate to put in the motion that all the necessary amenities must be in place before recommended fees are implemented. Kevin Gorman thought that recommending the fee proposals at sites that lack all the amenities compromises the transparency of the process. To him, this is an issue of whether the necessary amenities are in place on site, not about trust.
- Todd Davidson added that it is not the goal or desire of the committee to simply rubber stamp all fee proposals, but he understands that it must be challenging for the meeting coordinators to get the committee together. Accordingly, there may be times when a proposal is brought forward before a site is entirely ready, and he is comfortable with recommending fees before all the necessary amenities are in place because the law says the Forest Service cannot implement fees before those amenities are in place.
- Dan Harkenrider reminded the group that in an earlier presentation the committee voted to recommend fees on the recreation cabin rentals, even though some of them were not entirely in line with REA as far as amenities. He said this is the same issue the committee was dealing with in this case. He continued by stating that the Deschutes' proposal was very systematic, and well done. It makes sense to present all the sites even though some are not ready. It gives the public a

sense of the more comprehensive program plan.

- Gus Bekker asked if it was in the committee's by-laws or rules that the committee is allowed to vote on fees for sites that do not have all the necessary amenities ready at time of the presentation. He continued by asking if the Deschutes National Forest was able to show that some general public support had been documented, which is required by REA? He was worried that at some point someone will recognize the lack of public support, and use this as a legal avenue to challenge recreation fees. Dan Harkenrider responded that the Forest Service is required to demonstrate that they provided adequate information to the public to allow the public a chance to comment on fee proposals. It is then up to the committee to look at the public response and balance the level of use versus the number of responses received, and uses this balance to determine whether support exists. Todd Davidson added that it is important for presenters to provide exact numbers on the level of public response, instead of vague descriptions, such as "several."

Charles Hurliman moved to recommend the fees as presented

**Vote:** (Category 1=2 in favor, 1 opposed; Category 2=2 in favor, 1 opposed; Category 3=3 in favor).

After the vote there was confusion over the meaning of vote, and another discussion ensued. It was decided to break for lunch to allow Dennis Oliphant and Dan Harkenrider an opportunity to review the by-laws and determine a course of action.

### **Lunch break from 12:40 to 1:35**

**Topic: Deschutes National Forest**

**1:35**

Presenters: Les Moscoso (FS)

#### **Continuation of Discussion**

- Dan Harkenrider explained to the committee that when there is a minimum number of members in a category present at a meeting, as in the case of Category 1, any opposing vote results in the motion not passing. This does not mean that the committee has voted to not recommend the fees, rather that the committee did not reach agreement on a recommendation. Further, the by-laws require the Designated Federal Official (DFO) determine the issues related to the proposal that created the lack of agreement. Dan continued by saying there appeared to be two issues in this case that resulted in the no votes: (1) the incomplete status of all the site amenities and (2) the apparent lack of documented general public support for the fee proposals. Dan followed by stating that there are four options outlined in the bylaws that the RRAC can now follow: a subcommittee could be formed to investigate the proposal further, the DFO can return the proposal to the forest for refinement, the members can consult with their constituent groups, or more work could be done to determine general public support. He felt that, based on the presentation, that it was unlikely that a subcommittee would be able to garner more general public support. He suggested returning the proposal to the forest for further refinement and documentation of general public support. Dan reminded the group once again that there had been inconsistencies in the voting when it came to approving sites before all the necessary amenities were in place. Dan finished by saying that the law does not require a site to be complete before the committee recommends a fee proposal.
- Dennis Oliphant talked about the lack of documented general public support, saying that when a small number of comments are received, the "silence" can be either interpreted as acceptance of a

fee proposal or as a lack of understanding on the public's part. Dennis continued by stating that proposals will always appear to lack clear general public support if the committee is looking for a certain number or level of support. This, in his view, puts the committee at a crossroad. John Walker added that now, to ensure the committee votes consistently, every proposal must contain two things: (1) tangible and documented general public support and (2) whatever amenities being used to qualify a site to charge recreation fees must be in place at the time the fees are proposed.

- Gus Bekker next asked if REA explicitly states whether or not the necessary number of amenities must be in place before the RRAC is allowed to vote on a fee proposal. Julie Cox answered by saying that the law is silent on whether or not the committee is allowed to vote on an incomplete sites proposed fees, and that it merely says that those amenities must be in place before the forest can implement a fee. Likewise, Julie continued, a new fee proposal must be published in the Federal Register six months before implementation, but not before a forest is allowed to present a fee proposal to the RRAC for recommendation. Gus Bekker conceded that it appears that the committee is therefore allowed to vote on the proposed fees as presented. Gus echoed John Walkers sentiment about consistency, adding as long as they are consistently being lawful in their decisions.
- Dan Harkenrider addressed the concerns about public sentiment expressed by Kevin Gorman, stating that the real question should be whether or not the Forest Service did enough to give the public the opportunity to comment on fee proposals if they so desired. Dan informed the group that the majority of the documentation that a forest will provide is that of their efforts to make the public aware of the fee proposals. Dan went on to draw attention to the fact that the Deschutes National Forest did have a meeting with a local Community Action group, at which the overall sentiment was a support of recreation fees as long as it was apparent that the fees were being well spent and on site. He continued by stating that, in general, federal agencies do not receive comments from the public that are supportive of actions taking place on public lands, and that it is much more common to hear negative comments. Dan finished by restating that if a reasonable effort at outreach to the public is made, and there is a relative lack of comments, that may be as good as the federal agencies are going to be able to do.
- Todd Davidson next reminded the group that the issue of how to define general public support was one that the committee had struggled with in the past. In the past, the committee had requested that Dan get legal consultation on the topic, and the committee had then reached the conclusion if reasonable effort was made to inform the public of proposed fee changes, then the relative lack of comments could be seen as general public support.
- Gus Bekker pointed out that in the case of the Deschutes National Forest around twelve comments were received, all of them in opposition to the fee proposals. He asked how the committee is comfortable with recommending these fees; to him, it felt like the committee is not even considering the public's opinion. In Gus's opinion, this was an example of rubber stamping the fee proposals. Todd Davidson responded to Gus's concerns, saying that he was aware that Gus had missed the meeting where they discussed the issue of general public support and that in previous instances the committee had voted to recommend fees, even though the only comments received were in opposition to the proposed fees. Todd restated Dennis Oliphant's earlier comment that each committee member represented a particular constituency group, and can vote how he thinks their constituency would feel about a particular fee proposal. Gus responded by stating that he was personally comfortable with the proposed fees, but questioned whether the committee was following its by-laws if they recommended proposed fees that did not demonstrate general public support. Todd replied by saying when the committee was writing the by-laws they

wrestled with the definition of general public support, and decided that a relative lack of public opposition was considered to be documented general public support. Todd restated that the committee needs to focus on whether federal agencies did an adequate job at reaching out to the public.

- Dan Harkenrider next asked the committee what the Forest Service could do in addition to what they are doing to add significance to the decision of whether or not there was general public support. Secondly, Dan asked what is the threshold at where comments become relevant, that is how many positive or negative comments constitute general public support, or lack thereof. John Walker responded by saying that the committee's decisions should be based on a more holistic examination of the proposed fees, not just on whether or not general public support had been demonstrated. He continued by saying that the reality is that no one wants to pay to go into the woods and we need to look at public support as just one piece of the bigger recommendation puzzle. Charles Hurliman informed the committee that he uses the Deschutes sites being presented and supports the proposed fees, but did not submit written support. He said that he probably should have, though.
- Kevin Gorman questioned the notion that the Forest Service was doing everything it could to outreach to the public. He countered the idea that if every member of the public has only their own self-interest in mind in regards to recreation fees, they would likely always be opposed to fees. Kevin suggested that the Forest Service reach out to interest groups specifically instead of just reaching out to individual members of the public. He felt in this way, the Forest Service may be able to garner more support for recreation fees. Dan Harkenrider responded by saying that the Forest Service usually does inform the relevant interest groups.
- John Walker asked if the committee could consider the Deschutes' proposals at the next meeting. Charles Hurliman asked specifically what Gus Bekker would like to see as a motion. Gus answered by saying it would have been nice to see specifically what the comments were. Charles responded to Gus by saying that when he is looking for a solution to a disagreement he tends to ask what the person who disagrees would like to see.
- Dan Harkenrider informed the committee that during lunch he had talked to Les Moscoso and asked him if the forest had the amenities in question. Les responded to Dan that yes the forest had them in their possession; they just had not been placed on site yet. Dan suggested that the committee could motion to have the Deschutes' bring back their proposals to the next meeting.
- Dan continued by saying that if the Forest Service is doing their job in terms of fee proposal preparation, then the committee most likely will feel like they are rubber stamping every proposal. The committee's job is to ensure that the Forest Service is following the law. Kevin Gorman mentioned that he did not have a copy of the committee's by-laws and that he lacks a clear understanding of what the committee's actual role is. Kevin continued by asking if the committee had the leeway to recommend fees for sites where the necessary amenities are not yet in place, and if the committee decides yes, then he is OK with that. He finished by cautioning that it felt as if the committee was comfortable with moving into the "gray-zone" on issues. Todd Davidson responded by suggesting that forests articulate specifically what the level of support or opposition is, and that it would be helpful to have copies available of the actual comments for members to review at the meeting, if desired.

The committee did not reach an agreement on a recommendation, Dan agreed to inform the forest of the committees concerns related to their proposals, and offer them the opportunity to come back to the next meeting to present again.

Presenters: Zack Jarrett (BLM), Traci Meredith (BLM)

**Fee Proposals:**

	Site Name	Location	Proposal
<b>New Fee Sites</b>			
1	Alsea Falls Day Use	Mary's Peak Resource Area Salem District	New fee: \$3/day/vehicle; \$15/year/vehicle
2	Canyon Creek Rec Site	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	New fee: \$5/day/vehicle; \$25/year/vehicle
2	Elkhorn Valley Day Use	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	New fee: \$5/day/vehicle; \$25/year/vehicle
<b>Campground Fee Increases</b>			
4	Alsea Falls Standard Campsite	Mary's Peak Resource Area Salem District	Fee increase: \$10/day to \$12/day
5	Alsea Falls Group Campsite	Mary's Peak Resource Area Salem District	Fee increase: \$10/day to \$20/day
6	Elkhorn Valley Campsites	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	Fee Increase: \$10/day to \$14/day
7	Fishermen's Bend Rsv Sites	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	Fee Increase: \$22/day to \$28/day
8	Fishermen's Bend Electric Only	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	Fee Increase: \$12/day to \$16/day
9	Fishermen's Bend Full Hookup	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	Fee Increase: \$18/day to \$22/day
10	Fishermen's Bend Shelter - Wkday	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	Fee Increase: \$65/day to \$85/day
11	Fishermen's Bend Shelter - Wkend	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	Fee Increase: \$85/day to \$105/day
12	Fishermen's Bend Picnic Shelter	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	Fee Increase: \$60/day to \$110/day
13	Old Miner's Meadow Weekday	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	Fee Increase: \$30/day to \$40/day
14	Old Miner's Meadow Weekend	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	Fee Increase: \$40/day to \$50/day
15	Yellowbottom Recreation Site	Cascades Resource Area Salem District	Fee Increase: \$8/day to \$12/day

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Zack Jarrett began the presentation by giving a brief overview of the BLM Salem District. It is a district that receives fairly high use and is considered an urban district.
- Next, Traci Meredith gave an in depth overview of each individual recreation site. In general, the new fee proposals and increases all had restrooms, interpretive signs, parking, available water, picnic tables, and campground hosts. The BLM did a market analysis to determine if their proposed fees were in line with others in the area, and they found that they were. With the revenue generated from recreation fees, they hoped to continue with general maintenance and improvements, and to save for big purchase items.

**Key presentation points:**

- Public participation included:
  - Proposals were posted on site and in BLM offices.
  - Proposals were posted on BLM websites.
  - Legislators and county commissioners were sent letters.
  - Press releases were sent to newspapers.
  - The proposal for Canyon Creek was published in the Federal Register.
- Results of public participation:
  - Few public comments were received, most were in favor of proposals.
  - One phone call was received in support “as long as the money goes back to the site.”

**Summary of Discussion/Questions/Comments:**

- Kevin Gorman began the discussion by asking if users are going to see anything demonstrably different at the previously free sites with the implementation of fees. Zack Jarrett and Traci Meredith both offered up suggestions, answering that improvements have been made in the past without the use of recreation fee monies and that the BLM is seeking to lower usage at the areas that are getting overused.
- Richard Fahey asked if the campground hosts are paid. Traci Meredith answered that no they are not, but they get reimbursed for any expenses they incur.
- Kevin Gorman asked why the day use site has no fee (referring to a site presented earlier in the presentation), when the other areas of the site have a fee. Traci Meredith answered by saying that the day use area at that particular site is just a boat ramp and lacks the necessary amenities to implement a day use fee.
- John Walker asked why the BLM was shortening their recreation season by 5 weeks. Traci Meredith answered by saying the decision was budgetary; they could not afford staff for the additional month.
- Gus Bekker questioned the apparently large increase in the new fee sites, thinking they were going from \$5 dollars to \$25 dollars. Traci answered that these are new fees and represent the price for a day pass and the price for an annual pass, respectively.

Charles Hurliman motioned to recommend the fees as presented.

**Vote:** Unanimous approval (Category 1=3, Category 2=3, Category 3=3)

**Break**

**2:20**

Presenters: Malcolm Hamilton (FS), Kathleen Walker (FS)

**Fee Proposals:**

	Site Name	Location	Proposal
<b>Recreation Rental Fee Increases</b>			
1	Clackamas Lake Ranger's Cabin	Zigzag Ranger District	Fee increase: \$80/day to \$140/day
2	Clear Lake Butte Lookout	Hood River Ranger District	Fee increase: \$30/day to \$50/day
3	Fivemile Butte Lookout	Barlow Ranger District	Fee increase: \$30/day to \$50/day
4	Flag Point Lookout	Barlow Ranger District	Fee increase: \$30/day to \$50/day

**Summary of Presentation:**

Malcolm Hamilton began the presentation by informing the group that all the proposals were fee increases with no new fees. The Mt. Hood National Forest's recreation niche is "A Mountain of Possibilities." Over 4 million people per year visit the Mt. Hood National Forest, mostly for single day activities. The forest stresses citizen stewards and sustainable partnerships. Though a lot of recreation takes place in dispersed areas on the forest, there is also plenty of day use in the form of driving for pleasure. Malcolm then gave a detailed description of the four sites that increased fees were being proposed for. The revenue from the proposed fee increases will be used to improve services, and align fees with local markets.

**Key Presentation Points:**

- Public participation included:
  - Proposals were posted on site.
  - A press release was published in the Oregonian in August.
  - The fee proposals were placed on the forest website.
  - Emails were sent and phone calls made to each federal legislator.
- Results of public participation:
  - Received no written public comments.
  - Users of sites regularly express support verbally for increased fees.

**Summary of Discussion/Questions/Comments:**

- Kevin Gorman asked if the reason the Ranger's Cabin was not open in the winter was because the road does not get plowed. Kathleen Walker answered that, no, the road does not get plowed because it is a snowmobile route. However, the main reason the cabin is not open in the winter is concern over pipes freezing.
- Marlene Orchard asked about the comments in the journals kept in the lookout towers, and if anyone reads them. Kathleen Walker answered that she reads them and sees only positive comments. Kathleen added that users tend to be the same people annually and are thrilled that the towers and cabins are so cheap, but at the same time express that they are willing to pay more.
- Kevin Gorman added that he thought this was a very well laid out presentation.

Kevin Gorman motioned to recommend the fees as presented.

**Vote:** Unanimous approval (Category 1=3, Category 2=3, Category 3=3)

<b>Topic: Final Discussion Time – Summarize Recommendations</b>	<b>3:05</b>
Leader: Dennis Oliphant	
<b>Summary of Discussion/Questions/Comments:</b> The committee recommended all fees as presented with the exception of the proposals from the Deschutes National Forest. Dan will return the proposals to the forest for refinement and presentation at the next meeting.	

<b>Topic: A Look at Area Fees</b>	<b>3:15</b>
Presenter: Julie Cox	
<b>Summary of presentation:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Julie Cox gave a presentation about recreation area fees. One of the main goals of the recreation fee program is to ensure that the public has access to recreation opportunities now and into the future. Historically appropriated funds have not been adequate. The money in the fee program is much more flexible in the manner in which it can be spent in comparison to appropriated funds. The program is under constant evaluation and is reworked if it is found it is not meeting its goals.</li> <li>• Julie then described the evolution of recreation area fees, concerns about and benefits of them, and wrapped up by sharing some details about the recreation areas in Region 6.</li> </ul> <p>A new Forest Service Handbook is in the process of being written which includes language related to management of recreation areas. A public comment period will occur once the handbook is completed. Julie finished her presentation by mentioning that legislation currently being proposed to modify REA is likely to be introduced in early 2010.</p>	
<b>Summary of Discussion/Questions/Comments:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kevin Gorman asked if Julie had any ideas of what might be included in the proposed amendments to REA. Julie answered by saying legislators will probably seek to create some restrictions, as well as take another look at the entire program.</li> <li>• Charles Hurliman commented with Safety Net (Secure Rural Schools Legislation) about to expire counties are going to have to come to an agreement with federal agencies about how to share recreation fees. Gus Bekker asked Charles if, in years past, counties received money from the Forest Service to maintain county roads. Charles answered yes they did, and this money came from revenues provided from logging, which largely no longer exist. Charles asked, without forest management (extraction), where is this money going to come from? Charles finished his comments by saying that he is going to suggest to counties that they become involved in pursuing recreation fee revenue sharing. Elizabeth Lunney asked about the several lawsuits that exist surrounding High Impact Recreation Areas (HIRAs), and whether or not they have been resolved. Julie Cox answered by saying that the big case is involving Mt. Lemmon. Though it originally resulted in a ruling against the Forest Service, the Forest Service appealed and won. The Mt. Lemon ruling set a precedent and resulted in new case law. Julie continued by saying there are currently two more cases in process, another surrounding Mt. Lemmon and a second surrounding Mt. Evans. The Mt. Evans case was initially dismissed, but the plaintiffs are in the process of bringing it back to court. The same group is involved in both cases.</li> </ul>	

<b>Topic: Members Terms</b>	<b>3:45</b>
Presenters: Shandra Terry	
<b>Summary of presentation:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shandra began her presentation by informing the committee member that they had the opportunity to apply for re-appointment if their terms were set to expire and they were interested.</li> <li>• Next, Shandra congratulated and thanked Richard Fahey and Kevin Gorman for stepping up and filling vacant positions.</li> <li>• Shandra then read the list of members who needed to re-apply. She also mentioned that there is an open position, Summer Motorized Recreation, for which recruitment was necessary. She asked which of the members who needed to re-apply would like to. Dennis Oliphant, Richard Fahey and Kevin Gorman said they wanted to, and began filling out the necessary paperwork. John Walker said he would think about it, and that he needed to talk to his people. Robert Hamlyn said that he did not wish to re-apply and his term will expire in 2010.</li> </ul>	

<b>Topic: Wrap Up/Critique</b>	<b>3:55</b>
Leader for group discussion: Dan Harkenrider	
<b>Summary of Discussion/Questions/Comments:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dan Harkenrider summarized the decisions the committee had made during the meeting: no recommendation for the Deschutes National Forest proposals, with the others proposals receiving recommendation.</li> <li>• Dan also expressed the importance of meeting attendance and thanked the committee for all their input and ideas. Their involvement improves the recreation fee program. He said he understands that the legislation does not give the committee all of the flexibility they may like in order to change proposals, and he is sensitive to that issue. Dan finished by saying that the Forest Service is always looking for more ways to perform public outreach in an attempt to garner more public response, particularly that which displays general public support.</li> <li>• Del Orchard from Backcountry Horsemen asked if it is true that the committee is only interested in individual citizen's comments on proposed fees. Dan Harkenrider answered that federal agencies take all user comments into consideration, whether they come from a group or an individual.</li> </ul>	

**Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm**