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Cost of Doing Business and Improvements Prompt Fee Increase Proposal For Rock Creek

GREENEVILLE, TN - October 9, 2008... Forest Service, USDA officials at the Cherokee National Forest say the increasing costs of campground operation and maintenance along with facility improvements that have been made at Rock Creek Recreation Area have created the need to increase camping user fees.

The proposed recreation fee increases at Rock Creek Recreation Area will effect camping only. The single sites currently \$15 per site per night will increase to \$20 per site per night (\$15 with pass discount), double sites that are currently \$30 per sight per night will increase to \$40 per site per night (\$30 with pass discount) and the \$10 walk-in tent sites will increase to \$12 (\$6 with pass discount.)

A number of significant improvements; such as reconstruction of Loop C, the 1940s CCC bathhouse reconstruction and trail improvements, have been made at Rock Creek over the last several years. Fees have remained at their current level for over ten years. The proposed fee increase would be consistent with inflationary costs; especially the increased cost of utilities scheduled for 2009. In addition, the fee increase would bring camping fees inline with other Cherokee National Forest Campgrounds with similar amenities.

“We recognize how important these sites are to our local communities and those who use the sites. These fee increases will help us maintain Rock Creek.” said District Ranger Terry Bowerman.

All fee change proposals will be presented before a citizen’s advisory committee, called Recreation Resource Advisory Committee, or RRAC. Committee members represent a broad array of recreation interest groups throughout the southeastern United States. The RRAC committee’s mission is to help oversee the fee process and ensure the Forest Service is proposing reasonable and publicly acceptable fee changes. A fee change proposal to the RRAC includes public feedback.

Comments about the fee change proposal can be made to Terry Bowerman at (423)638-4109, 4900 Asheville Highway, Greeneville, TN 37743 or you can email csummers@fs.fed.us.

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