

Recreation Resource Advisory Committee Roles, Responsibilities, and Duties

Objective

The Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (Recreation RAC) of the Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5) will provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture through a designated federal official (DFO) concerning recreation fees on national forest lands. The Recreation RAC will also provide advice and recommendations to a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) representative concerning recreation fees on BLM-managed land.

Recreation RAC Role

The Recreation RAC makes recommendations to the DFO of the Pacific Southwest. The DFO is responsible for bringing the recommendations forward to the Regional Forester or the BLM Ex Officio. These officials are responsible for bringing the recommendations forward to the Regional Forester or BLM State Director respectively, and they will make the final decisions. The Recreation RAC is composed of a diverse group of 11 citizens, which allows for sharing of knowledge and personal experience. Council members consist of three distinct groups:

- Five people represent recreation users who participate in activities such as summer and winter motorized and non-motorized recreation, and hunting and fishing;
- Three people who represent, as appropriate, the following recreation interest groups: motorized and non-motorized outfitting and guiding as well as environmental groups; and
- Three people who represent: State tourism; Indian tribes; and Local government.

To be useful by the Forest Service and BLM, recommendations by the Recreation RAC should fall within the sideboards established by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA), the Federal Advisory Council Act, and any other pertinent guiding legislation or direction. As stated in the Recreation RAC charter, members provide recommendations to Forest Service and BLM officials on matters including, but not limited to:

- (1) The implementation of a standard amenity recreation fee or an expanded amenity recreation fee or the establishment of a specific recreation fee site;



- (2) The elimination of a standard amenity recreation fee or an expanded amenity recreation fee;
- (3) The expansion or limitation of the recreation fee program;
- (4) The implementation of or elimination of non-commercial, individual special recreation permit fees; and
- (5) The implementation of fee level changes (increases or decreases).

Although the Recreation RAC will make recommendations to the DFO and BLM Ex Officio, the public at-large will be given opportunities to participate as well. All Recreation RAC meetings will be open to the public; however non-committee members will not be able to participate directly in committee discussions or exercises unless invited.

Recreation RAC members will be responsible for being accessible to others, and for bringing forward ideas they receive.

Following the Regional Forester or BLM State Director decisions, the Recreation RAC will be encouraged to monitor the implementation process and actions taken.

Member Responsibilities

1. Represent interests of appropriate groups by 1) generating information necessary from interest groups, and 2) keeping your constituency informed of progress.
2. Determine whether general public support exists for their recommendation. Documentation of public support will be provided to the Recreation RAC.
3. Understand and agree to meeting commitments. This is highly important because if the correct make-up of members is not attending a meeting, recommendations cannot be made. According to the charter:
 - a. A quorum, 8 members, must exist for the Recreation RAC to hold an official meeting.
 - b. A majority of members from each of three member groups (at least 7 members) must be present to make recommendations.
 - c. A majority of total members (at least 6 members) must be present to make decisions such as nominating a chairperson or forming a subcommittee.
4. Work in a team setting and be open to discussing and understanding differing viewpoints.
5. Give everyone a chance to speak and withhold judgment on an idea presented by others until it has a chance to be developed.
6. Focus on issues, needs and opportunities, not on personalities, people, or firm positions.
7. Speak concisely and listen without interrupting.



8. If problems or concerns arise about how the Recreation RAC is operating, members should make these known to the Recreation RAC or facilitators first and attempt to resolve them within the Recreation RAC structure. This will help to avoid undermining the process.

The Recreation RAC helps the Forest Service and BLM be more effective by

- Bringing stakeholder concerns and interests to the table;
- Carrying information back to the stakeholders
- Alerting the Forest Service (and BLM) to emerging issues
- Sharing technical and professional knowledge with the Forest Service and other council members
- Attending meetings
- Being a hands on, problem solving group

Duties

Duties of the DFO:

While Recreation RACs make recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary has designated the duties of DFO to the Regional Forester, who has assigned Marlene Finley DFO. The DFO, or an officer or employee of the Federal Government, must be present during each Recreation RAC meeting. The DFO is authorized, whenever he/she determines it to be in the public interest, to adjourn any such meeting. No Recreation RAC will conduct any meeting in the absence of that officer or employee.

- Approve or call both the Recreation RAC and any subcommittee meetings;
- Approve the agendas;
- Attend the meetings;
- Adjourn the meeting when such an adjournment is in the public interest; and
- Chair the meeting in absence of a Chairperson selected by the Recreation RAC.

Duties of the Agency (including, but not limited to):

- Orient new committee members;
- Ensure notices of meetings are posted in the Federal Register at least 15 days in advance;
- Ensure notices of meetings are posted in local newspapers at least 5 days in advance;
- Ensure public participation opportunities in open advisory committee meetings;
- Maintain the records, reports, transcripts, minutes, appendices, working papers, drafts, studies, agendas, or other documents which are made available for public inspection and copying at a single location in the agency until the advisory committee ceases to exist;



- Maintain detailed minutes;
- Maintain records of costs;
- Ensure committee members are reimbursed for travel and per diem costs;
- Track committee recommendations and obtaining agency responses; and
- File Annual Report to Congress.

Duties of the Chairperson

The Chairperson shall be selected by a majority vote of Recreation RAC members for a period of time that the Recreation RAC determines. Duties include, but are not limited to:

- Presides over committee meetings and must be familiar with the openness provision of the Federal Advisory Committee Act;
- Certifies the accuracy of all minutes; and
- Works with the DFO in the formation of agendas.

