

CALIFORNIA RECREATION RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
June 24-25, 2008
Redding, CA
Meeting Notes

June 24, 2008 Field Trip

Members Present: Donald Klusman, Christine Oberti, Linda McMillan, Nathan Rangel, Paul McFarland, Patricia Gatz, Danna Stroud, Bob Warren

Members Absent: Monte Hendricks, Dick Dasmann, Charles Wilson

Designated Federal Official: Marlene Finley

BLM Ex Officio: Mike Ayers, Acting

Forest Service Staff: Tamara Wilton, Anne Carey, Frances Enkoji

Forest Service Representatives: Brenda Tracy; Sharon Heywood, Beth Nicholas

Chairman Bob Warren called the meeting to order at the Oxford Suites Hotel and noted that 8 committee members were present resulting in a quorum.

Marlene Finley, Designated Federal Official welcomed everyone to the third California Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (RRAC) meeting. Shasta-Trinity Forest Supervisor Sharon Heywood provided an overview of the 2.1 million acre forest and expressed gratitude to the members of the RRAC. She talked about her experience working with Resource Advisory Councils in the past and appreciates the breadth of experience and important role they can play. Supervisor Heywood apologized for not being able to accompany the RRAC on the field trip due to the fire situation and she provided an update on the 150 fires that started as a result of Saturday's extensive lightning storm. She also talked about the importance of the recreation fees on the Shasta-Trinity NF. She mentioned the two lost hikers on Mt. Shasta that received extensive media play over the weekend. The fee revenue from the Mt. Shasta Climbing Pass provides funding for additional climbing rangers. These mountain rangers were extremely helpful to the search and rescue efforts to find these two lost hikers.

Brenda Tracy, Acting Public Use Staff Officer for the Shasta Trinity National Forest (STNF), provided an in-depth presentation about the recreation program on the Shasta Trinity National Forest. The presentation described the 2.1 million acre forest and outlined the wide variety of recreation opportunities the forest

provides, the challenges and complexities and the benefits provided with recreation fees.

Beth Nicholas, a member of the Shasta-Trinity Special Uses Team, talked about the successes of the retention of recreation special uses permit fees in the Shasta Trinity National Recreation Area (NRA) for 5 years under the Recreation Fee Demonstration Act. It was brought up that this type of fee is not authorized now under the Federal Lands Enhancement Act (FLREA), although there are attempts to restore this successful program. Beth also talked about some of the recreation fee program accounting procedures that are unique to the STNF, especially the use of Quicken and Quick Books Pro.

The group boarded a bus for the first stop of the day - Fisherman's Point Picnic Area on Shasta Lake. NRA Recreation Staff Officer, Mary Ellen Grigsby, met the group and provided an overview of this day use facility and the proposed day use fee. This popular picnic area is near the dam and provides picnicking, flush toilets, trash, information board, interpretive signing, hardened paths and access to the lake for fishing. A problem at this site is local youths who use this site late into the night and this has resulted in reoccurring vandalism. The proposal is to charge a \$3/day use fee, utilizing a self-service pay station. These funds would be used to provide maintenance at the site such as replacement of the roof on the 40 year old flush toilet and install a gate so the facility could be closed between 10 PM and 6 AM. The Bureau of Reclamation, who operates the adjacent dam facility, has offered to open the gate at 6:00 AM and close the gate at 10:00 PM. Installing and managing the gate will provide a realistic option for controlling late night parties.

The trip continued to the McCloud River Complex – Lower, Middle and Upper Falls day use sites. The group was joined by Shasta-McCloud Management Unit staff, Priscila Franco, Acting District Ranger; Dave Trevisan, District Recreation Staff Officer; and Ed Hatakeda, Assistant Recreation Staff Officer. The McCloud River Complex was acquired by the Forest Service in mid 1980's and developed for public access via numerous capital improvement projects. At Lower Falls there are picnic tables, vault toilets, viewing areas for the falls with interpretive signs, access to the river, and a hardened trail. Members of the RRAC asked why there was not a fee proposal for this area. The District indicated they did not want to propose fee authorization until the development of the facilities is complete. RRAC members encouraged charging fees now and utilize the funds generated to help complete the project as a way to demonstrate how fees are used for ongoing, onsite improvements. The group walked along the hardened trails that connect the lower, middle and upper falls which are the backbone of this complex. At the Upper Falls the group saw some of the work recently completed including new walkways and viewing platforms. A local Youth Conservation Corps crew was busy working on some projects near the Upper Falls overlook.

At the Bunny Flat Trailhead, climbing and staging area for climbing and hiking Mt. Shasta, Eric White, Climbing/Wilderness Ranger, Leif Voltz, Owner Fifth Season Climbing Store; and Don Lee, Front Desk, Information Officer joined the group described the work they perform and expressed their support for the Summit Pass which is sold at District Offices and at various vendors like the Fifth Season. There are 7,000-8,000 climbers per year and since the Summit Pass begun there has been a decrease in injuries on the mountain, an increase in public service and a shift of use so that more climbers are climbing the mountain midweek, easing the weekend pressure. Summit Passes are \$20/person valid for 3 days or \$30/person for an annual pass. Funds are used to employ more climbing/wilderness rangers/front desk staff, supply rescue caches on the mountain and promote the highly successful human waste pack out program which has been mandatory since 1998 and reduced the amount of human waste by 2.5 tons.

The next stop was Sims Campground. The proposal for this campground is to increase the fee from \$12-15. This 19 unit campground which is adjacent to the Sacramento River and a fishing stream has flush toilets and a potable water system. The increased fees will be used to fund maintenance at the sites such as upgrade the water system, replace picnic tables, purchase additional bear proof trash cans and repair the potholes in the roads

The bus returned to Redding at 6:00 PM. It was the consensus of the group that it was an excellent field trip and it provided valuable information and knowledge of how each NF is different. In light of all the fires on the forest, the RRAC really appreciated the Forest staff's efforts and contribution to the field trip.

June 25, 2008

Members Present: Donald Klusman, Christine Oberti, Linda McMillan, Nathan Rangel, Paul McFarland, Patricia Gatz, Danna Stroud, Bob Warren

Members Absent: Monte Hendricks, Dick Dasmann, Charles Wilson

Designated Federal Official: Marlene Finley

BLM Ex Officio: Mike Ayers, Acting

Forest Service Staff: Tamara Wilton, Lester Lubetkin, Frances Enkoji

Chairman Bob Warren called the meeting to order at 8:10 AM. He expressed his appreciation for the field visit. He indicated he had Charlie Wilson's proxy but expressed a concern that this proxy would allow him the majority vote in his category therefore he felt he would not use proxy in most cases. Frances Enkoji

shared that the RRAC discussed at first meeting that a proxy would be used to meet Quorum requirements when there is at least a majority from each voting category. Since there was a quorum and a majority in each category present Bob said he would not vote Charlie's proxy. Bob summarized the June 18 House Subcommittee hearing on the Federal Lands Enhancement Act.

Nate asked that FS post meeting notes on Region 5 (R5) website as draft so public can see them prior to the notes being approved at next RRAC meeting. RRAC would like to review before they are posted as draft. Frances reminded all that their Bylaws state that meeting notes would be completed within 30 days and approved at next RRAC meeting. Members agreed that they would review draft and turn around quickly so FS could post as draft meeting notes on the R5 RRAC web site and then would be approved at the next meeting.

Marlene expressed the agencies appreciation for the input from RRAC members and updated them on activities in R5. She informed them that the FY09 preliminary FS recreation budget is down 10% and trails program 30%. The FS is working on Transformation of RO and WO with goal of 20% reduction. There are two civil lawsuits (Arizona and Colorado) related to recreation fees. Forests continue to work on Travel Management, including a number of Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements. Pat Winters a scientist from our Research branch is working on research project for Sustainable Recreation. Marlene indicated she would send information on this to the members. The Forests have been successful in accomplishing a number of trail projects utilizing partners this summer, including YCC, SCA, CCC, Americorps, and Pacific Crest Trail Association volunteer leaders. Once forests complete Recreation Facility Analysis then Recreation Site Improvement funds are available to address deferred maintenance, R5 received \$3 million in Fiscal Year 08. A Listserv link on RRAC website has been added and if you sign up you will get notification of updates to website.

Don Klusman stated that the FS and BLM are bringing proposals that don't need much discussion; he thought the RRAC would play more of an advisory role, giving insight from public perspective. He would like to see more idea's brought forward, not just specific proposals. Linda McMillan and Nate Rangel said they don't want to see every proposal on a field trip; but feel that field trips are a valuable opportunity to discuss new fee ideas. Don said the RRAC is okay with not having all improvements in place before the agency brings forward fee proposal.

Mike Ayers gave a Bureau of Land Management update and said their preliminary recreation budget is down 11% .BLM will have a Recreation Visitor Services Strategy coming out soon. EPA recommended closure of Clear Creek OHV area due to naturally occurring asbestos. The RRAC had recommended new fees at this site at the November 2007 meeting.

Bob Warren asked for any changes to the January 14-15, 2008 draft meeting minutes Change needed is to correct Don Klusman's name. RRAC voted to approve the minutes with name correction.

Public Comment Period began at 10:00 AM.

Linda Burkhalter spoke about the Forest Glen Recreation Rental fee increase. She felt that with fee increase there must be increased services, cleaning, etc. Cabins currently need some maintenance. Her family has enjoyed the written logs in the cabins.

Sylvia Milligan expressed concern that with current economy, we should not be increasing fees – makes it harder to afford to use the public lands and discourages public use. Concern about cycle of reduced use due to fees, and then closing sites due to lack of use.

Marlene Finley asked if all the members had received the June 3, 2008 letter that she had forwarded from Mr. Peter Wiechers in regards to the Forks of the Kern fee. The RRAC members all acknowledged receiving the letter.

Mike Ayers presented BLM fee proposal and Tamara Wilton presented FS fee proposals.

Proposal Name/Location	RRAC Recommendation
Bear Canisters BLM Mike Ayers During audit of fee program, noticed that BLM has been collecting \$5/trip for rental of bear canisters since 2000. This should have been included in the BLM REA approved fee sites but was overlooked.	Motion to recommend collecting fee for bear canister rental made by Nate Rangel, 2 nd by Paul McFarland, Motion carried
Proposal Name/Location	RRAC Recommendation
Inyo NF – change for Reds Meadow Bus fee (Information only) - will only charge fee when bus is running, rather than in the past when fee was charged when area is open, independent of whether bus was running.	For information, no vote required
Proposal Name/Location	RRAC Recommendation
Sequoia NF– 4 Recreation Rentals – RRAC recommended fee increase at January 2008 meeting. Want to make sure members are aware that it was proposed as a phased in fee – starting with a lower fee, increasing to the higher amount in 2010. Notes weren't clear on what had been approved. Bob and Nate thought they were just voting on initial fee not phase in.	Nate Rangel, Motion to agree that RRAC voted on fee increase at lower amount; and Forest needs to come in with subsequent fee increase – not approving phase-in. 2 nd by Linda McMillan, motion carried

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	RRAC Recommendation
Cleveland NF, Expanded Amenity Fee Changes - Campgrounds		
Blue Jay CG	Increased Expanded Amenity fee from \$15 to \$20 and \$5 extra vehicle fee.	Paul McFarland, motion to recommend fee increase and extra vehicle fee for any extra vehicle which cannot be parked reasonably in campsite spur on surfacing, 2 nd by Danna Stroud. Motion carried.
Boulder Oaks	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$10 to \$14 • Double sites from \$20 to \$28 • Equestrian single sites from \$12 to \$16 • Equestrian double sites from \$24 to \$32 • and new \$5 extra vehicle fee. Note: AP for day use (no change).	
Cibbets Flat	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$10 to \$14 • Double sites from \$20 to \$30 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. 	
Dripping Springs	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$12 to \$15 • Double sites from \$20 to \$30 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. Note: AP for day use (no change).	
Falcon Group	Increased Expanded Amenity fee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sage – from \$50 to \$60 • Lupine – from \$60 to 75 • Yarrow – from \$100 to \$120 	
Fry Creek	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$12 to \$15 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. 	
Indian Flat	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$10 to \$12 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. 	
Oak Grove	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$10 to \$15 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double sites from \$20 to \$30 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. 	
Observatory	<p>Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$12 to \$15 • Double sites from \$20 to \$30 • Shower from \$.10 to \$.25/minute • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. 	
Upper San Juan	<p>Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$15 to \$18 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. 	
Wildomar	<p>Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$10 to \$15 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. 	
Wooded Hill Group	<p>Decreased Expanded Amenity fee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group site from \$165 to \$110. 	Nate Rangel moved to recommend fee decrease as proposed, 2 nd by Linda McMillan, motion carried

Discussion & Questions:

- Campground increases (no new fee sites), and one fee decrease. Reviewed public involvement and input.
- Is extra vehicle charge consistent across the nation? Tamara described R5 policy as presented in campground Concession Prospectus – additional fee charged for any vehicles above 1 vehicle (RV and towed vehicle counts as one). Extensive discussion about extra vehicle fee. Linda and others feel that extra vehicle fee should be for more than 2 vehicles – recognize that this is different than Concessionaire Prospectus. Bob said he does not agree with extra vehicle if it applies to 2nd vehicle rather than 3rd. Don doesn't agree with any extra vehicle fee. Danna and others feel that fee should only apply to vehicles that don't fit into spur. Bob asked for comments from members of the public present and Sylvia Milligan raised issue of day visitors within campground having to pay extra vehicle fee even though not staying overnight. Proposal accepted by RRAC to consider extra vehicle fee for any vehicles that cannot reasonably fit within the campsite spur and be on surfacing, and to use this definition in future proposals.
- Wooded Hill GCG fee decrease proposal – Tamara explained that Forest evaluated the group camping fees across the forest and feels that the fee has been too high when considering the amenities provided at Wooded Hill and that the higher fee was likely one of the reasons use was very low at this site.

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	RRAC Recommendation
Eldorado NF, New Day Use Fee at Woods Lake Picnic Area	New Standard Amenity fee of \$5. Note: The Eldorado/LTBMU Day Use Pass & Interagency Passes	Nate Rangel moved to recommend fee increase, Don Klusman 2 nd , Motion

	will be accepted here.	carried
Discussion & Questions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions about availability of season passes and desire to make the more available. • Question asked about availability of other free areas for picnic and day use, Lester Lubetkin, Eldorado NF, responded with a description of the free picnic and day use opportunities along Highway 88. 		
Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	RRAC Recommendation
Eldorado NF, Increase Expanded Amenity Fee at Big Meadows CG – Group Site	Increased Expanded Amenity fee for the double campsite from \$10 to \$20.	Don Klusman moved to recommend fee increase, Chris Oberti 2 nd , Motion carried
Discussion & Questions:		
Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	RRAC Recommendation
Inyo NF, New Expanded Amenity Fee at Cedar Flat Group Camps	New Expanded Amenity fee of \$25 for the two small camps (Ferguson & Noren), \$35 for the larger camp (Nelson).	Paul McFarland moved to recommend new fee, 2 nd by Don Klusman, Motion carried
Discussion & Questions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested that the forest implement a stewardship program where groups could “work off” their fee for services. Paul McFarland and Danna Stroud shared their personal knowledge of the site and how it is used by universities west of the Rockies for geology field studies and that students pay a fee to attend (in addition to tuition). 		
Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	RRAC Recommendation
Sequoia NF, Increase in Standard Amenity Area Fee – Lake Isabella	Increased Standard Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day/Overnight fee from \$5 to \$10. • Annual Pass from \$35 to \$50 and new annual second vehicle pass of \$10/year • Dump station fee from \$7 to \$10 and extend fee to year round. 	Nate Rangel moved to recommend fee increase, 2 nd by Don Klusman. Motion carried
Discussion & Questions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequoia NF has conducted three rounds of public involvement; including open house and public meetings. • Why isn't there a difference between day and overnight fee amounts? Tamara explained about the difficulty of differentiating between day and overnight visitors and complexity of charging, enforcing, and administering two different fees. • Question about this fee proposal and the January RRAC meeting referred to in the testimony at the June 18 joint sub-committee hearing, is this the proposal discussed at that January meeting? Tamara responded no, the proposal presented at the January RRAC meeting was the Forks of the Kern private boater permit. 		
Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	RRAC Recommendation

Shasta-Trinity NF, Increase in Expanded Amenity Fees – Cabins		
Forest Glen Cabin	Increase fee from \$35/night to \$75	Chris Oberti moved to recommend fee as proposed, Nate Rangel 2 nd , Motion carried. NR moved to recommend allowing FS to adjust (lower) fee during shoulder season and encourage FS to try this variable fee, LM 2 nd , Motion carried.
Post Creek Lookout	Increase fee from \$35/night to \$60	
Girard Ridge Lookout	Increase fee from \$35/night to \$75	
Harris Springs Guard Station	Increase fee from \$35/night to \$75	
Little Mt. Hoffman Lookout	Increase fee from \$35/night to \$75	

Discussion & Questions:

- Is the fee based on facilities, view, or other amenities? Tamara discussed the use of the pricing tool and the amenity based point score as the first step, and that the local market is the critical step in determining a fee. R5 Fee Board members generally feel that prices should be appropriate for local market, rather than consistency across the State.
- Discussion about allowing Forest to reduce fee during low-use shoulder season to encourage more use and increase occupancy.

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	RRAC Recommendation
Shasta-Trinity NF, Increase in Expanded Amenity fees – Campgrounds		
Burnt Ranch	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$8 to \$12 • Winter rate of \$8 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. 	Motion to recommend fee increase as proposed using the same language for extra vehicles as agreed to on the Cleveland NF proposal, made by Don Klusman, 2 nd by Patricia Gatz, motion carried.
AH-DI-NA	Increase Expanded Amenity fee from \$8 to \$10.	
Basin Gulch	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$6 to \$10 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. 	
Big Flat	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$8 to \$12 • Winter rate of \$8 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee. 	
Camp Four Group	Increase Expanded Amenity fee from \$15 to \$30.	

Cattle Camp	Increase Expanded Amenity fee from \$12 to \$15.
Forest Glen	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$6 to \$12 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee.
Fowlers	Increase Expanded Amenity fee from \$12 to \$15.
Hayden Flat	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$10 to \$12 • Group site from \$30 to \$40 • Winter rate of \$8/night • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee.
Hell Gate	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$6 to \$12 • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee.
McBride Springs	Increase Expanded Amenity fee from \$10 to \$15.
Pigeon Point	Increased Expanded Amenity fee as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sites from \$8 to \$12 • Double sites from \$12 to \$15 • Group site from \$50 to \$75 • Winter rate of \$8/night • And new \$5 extra vehicle fee.
Sims Flat	Increase Expanded Amenity fee from \$12 to \$15.
Skunk Point Group	Increase Expanded Amenity fee from \$30 to \$40.

Discussion & Questions:

- Public involvement – in particular day use fees along Trinity River – Outfitters voiced concern and Forest recognized need to coordinate fee with other agencies with nearby river access sites.
- Other public comments – some in favor of fee increases and some against. Recognize need to better describe to the public what we are doing with fees collected.
- Challenge of charging day-use fees; need for education process to explain costs and why FS collects fees, explain what can be provided with a fee vs. without the fee.
- Day use fees and HIRAs may lead to greatest dissatisfaction with fee program. Need for better signing to illustrate how fee are used at the site (used example of Pyramid Trailhead, Eldorado NF where there is no signing). Suggested to provide better info about what percentage of taxes is distributed to BLM and FS for visitor services.
- Suggestion that RRAC put out press release about what was voted on and positions, such as recommendation on extra vehicle and day use. Other members agreed with

value of press release.		
Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	RRAC Recommendation
Shasta-Trinity NF, New Standard Amenity Fee – Fisherman’s Point Day Use	New standard amenity fee of \$3	No motion to recommend fee
Discussion & Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site visited during field trip. • Question about start-up costs? They are needed for gate, barriers, fee tube. • General desire to see some sites stay as free. Suggested working with Bureau of Reclamation, local Rotary, or other groups or agencies to “adopt” as a “community” site. 		
Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	RRAC Recommendation
Shasta-Trinity NF, New Expanded Amenity Fee – Campgrounds		
Big Bar	New fee of \$8/night and \$5 extra vehicle fee.	Nate Rangel motion to recommend fee of \$5/night for all three sites and extra vehicle fee consistent with previous recommendation on Cleveland, 2 nd by Paul McFarland. Motion did not carry (lack of majority in Category 1)
Ripstein	New fee of \$10 night and \$5 extra vehicle fee.	
Scott Flat	New fee of \$10 night and \$5 extra vehicle fee.	
Discussion & Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question on whether fee increases will occur before amenities are in place – answer was yes for some of the amenities, such as new toilets, but FS will improve trash collection and other services at start of fee collection. • Question about why fee at Big Bar is \$8 and others are \$10. Concerns raised about size of fee proposed without potable water and concern about low revenue generation vs. maintaining some free campgrounds. FS reminded RRAC that REA legislation does not state that you need potable water to charge a fee, instead it states that developed campgrounds provide a majority of 9 amenities. • Concern about charging fees at small, low-development campgrounds without water that have been free in the past. Forest representatives indicated they could have been clearer to RRAC about other free sites available to the public. They shared that the Shasta-Trinity has over 200 free camping areas available on the forest. • Recommendation that when Forests present new fee proposals they should present information about alternative camping sites or other recreation sites where there is no fee. • Concerned that for new fee proposals at lower development level that have no water, maximum fee should be \$5 at the beginning. 		

Linda McMillan described an effort going on with Bishop BLM regarding climbers and need to avoid impacts and the message is "Don't Crush the Brush". She felt this could be used in other areas. Don Klusman shared that in NV and other western states, see billboards encouraging camping and staying on trails/roads. He encouraged California to do the same

Discussed next meeting – at this time do not anticipate many new proposals. Consider general discussion about ideas for new fee proposals or research being done on informing the public about use of fees to improve sites or how fees are used.

Next meeting date and location: October 16, Sacramento area.

Bob Warren suggested that a press release be issued to relate the activities of the RRAC and what occurred at the meeting as another avenue to keep the public informed. Bob and Marlene agreed to work on this release.

Meeting adjourned at 1:07.