

## Recreation RAC Duties FAQs

### What does a Recreation RAC Do?

The Recreation RAC provides recommendations on recreation fee proposals on federal lands managed by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

### What kinds of fees do Recreation RACs consider?

- The Recreation RACs do provide recommendations on implementing or eliminating standard amenity fees, expanded amenity fees, and non-commercial individual special recreation permit fees; expanding or limiting the recreation fee program; and fee level changes (increases or decreases).
- Recreation RACs do not make recommendations on recreation fee sites operated by a concessionaire or contractor, commercial permits such as outfitting and guiding, or Forest Service special use permits or BLM special recreation permits issued for group events such as bike races.

### Who serves on a Recreation RAC?

A total of 11 members will serve on each Recreation RAC:

- Category One: Five people who represent recreation users and include as appropriate: winter motorized, winter non-motorized, summer motorized, summer non-motorized, and hunting and fishing.
- Category Two: Three people who represent interest groups that include, as appropriate: motorized outfitters and guides, non-motorized outfitter and guides, local environmental groups.
- Category Three: Three people, one in each position: State tourism official, a person who represents affected local government interests, a person who represents affected Indian tribes' issues.

### What are the responsibilities of individual committee members?

1. Represent interests of appropriate groups by 1) generating information necessary from interest groups, and 2) keeping your constituency informed of progress.
2. Understand and agree to meeting commitments:
  - 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 nominate a chairperson.
3. Work in a team setting and be open to discussing and understanding differing viewpoints.

#### Are Recreation RAC meetings open to the public?

Yes. Recreation RACs are chartered committees and therefore will include a public comment period. However non-committee members will not be able to participate directly in committee discussions or exercises unless invited.

#### Can Recreation RACs bring forward their own proposals?

Yes. Recreation RACs can bring forward proposals on fee changes in the same manner as any member of the public. That proposal would then need to go through the same proposal process, with all the accompanying documentation that agency proposals have, including being approved by the regional fee board, Regional Recreation Director and Regional Forester, as appropriate. The proposal would come back to the Recreation RAC, with possible changes, for recommendation.

#### Will Recreation RACs review fees that are already in existence?

No. However, where appropriate, Regions will share how they implemented High Impact Recreation Areas (HIRAs) with Recreation RAC members. Implementation guidelines for HIRAs were developed after the December 2004 Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) was established. For the FS in California, the size of the areas where fees were previously charged were greatly reduced.

#### What States do Recreation RACs cover?

The Forest Service and BLM established a Recreation RAC organization that has been approved by both the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture. This organization includes one Recreation RAC in each of five Forest Service regions (Eastern, Southern, Pacific Northwest, Pacific Southwest and Alaska Regions).

The Forest Service will cooperate with the BLM's Resource Advisory Councils for States not included in the above regions. The Forest Service will also use one existing Forest Service committee (Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board) for the Black Hills National Forest. The Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior accepted the recommendations of the Governors of Wyoming and Nebraska not to establish Recreation RACs in their states.



### Why are there a variety of advisory groups working as Recreation RACs?

To help develop a workable committee organization to carry out the advisory duties of Recreation RACs, the Forest Service and BLM held 11 listening sessions in Idaho, Oregon, California Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, Georgia, and Washington, DC in June and July of 2005 to hear the points of view of key partners, organizations, and existing BLM and Forest Service Resource Advisory Council members. A consistent theme of those meeting was controlling the cost of the committees and the effective use of existing advisory committees. After these public meetings, numerous conversations with congressional staff, internal agency analysis, and legal review, the organization outlined above was established.

