



News Release

Monongahela National Forest

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Fee Increase Proposed at Blue Bend Recreation Area

(White Sulphur, WV) Blue Bend Recreation Area, located on the Marlinton/White Sulphur Ranger District, is seeking input regarding proposed fee increases. In recent years over \$625,000 in improvements to the recreation area have been made including construction of a shower house with flush toilets and hot showers, a sewage treatment plant, electric service at two sites, and a new playground.

Blue Bend Recreation Area is a very popular site which has a 21-unit family campground, a 17-unit group campground, and a day use area with picnic sites, two pavilions, a playground, and a swimming beach. No fees are charged at the day use area. Constructed in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the campground and its CCC-era facilities are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Blue Bend Recreation Area is located along Anthony Creek and is the gateway to the Big Draft Wilderness.

“We listened to campground visitors who really love and enjoy this historic campground and put a lot of investment into the site in 2010,” stated Rondi Fischer, District Ranger. “Our goal now is to keep the high quality of this site. We believe these proposed fee increases are consistent with the investments we’ve made and will help ensure that they last long into the future.”

The Forest Service proposes to increase the existing fee for both the family campground and the group campground. The following table reflects the proposed changes:

Campsite Type	Electric Hookup	Current Fee	Proposed Fee	Shoulder season fee
Single	No	\$10	\$16	\$14
Single	Yes	\$10	\$20	\$18
Double	Yes	\$20	\$40	\$36
Group Camp	No	\$50	\$75	NA

Notices in the local newspapers and announcements at the Recreation Area occurred in 2010. In June 2010 recreation fee changes were put on hold due to the economy. Because it has been over 2-years since original public notices were made, the Forest is starting from the beginning with our public involvement effort.

In 2004, Congress passed the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act which allows the Forest Service to keep up to 95 percent of fees collected at certain recreation sites and use these funds locally to operate, maintain and enhance these sites. Fee revenue generated from the Blue Bend Recreation Area is used for operations and maintenance and future enhancements.

All fee change proposals will be presented before a citizen's advisory committee, called the Eastern Region Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (RRAC). Council members represent a broad array of recreation interest groups and ensure public issues and concerns about recreation fees are considered. The public is welcome to attend and comment at all advisory committee meetings. The Eastern Region RRAC is in the process of being formed and the next meeting is expected to be held in the spring of 2016. The exact meeting time, location and agenda will be announced through local media.

Reservations are required for the group campground. First come, first serve camping is available in the family campground. Reservations are made through the National Recreation Reservation Service (NRRS) at www.recreation.gov or by calling 1-877-444-6777. The NRRS charges a \$9.00 reservation fee for internet reservations and \$10 fee for phone reservations.

If you have any comments or questions regarding the proposed fee, contact the Forest Service office in White Sulphur Springs at 304-536-2144, Elkins at 304-636-1800 or visit the forest website at <http://fs.usda.gov/mnf> for information. Please submit comments to: Matt Edwards, 1627 Cemetery Road, Marlinton, WV 24954 by November 30, 2015 so comments can be compiled, analyzed, and shared with the Eastern Region R-RAC during the spring of 2016.