

**SOUTHERN REGION RECREATION
RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
February 26-27, 2014**

A meeting of the Southern Region Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (RRAC) convened at 8:00 am on Wednesday, February 26, 2014 at the Marriott Courtyard in Decatur, Georgia. Eight of the eleven member committee participated (7 present, 1 by teleconference).

Members in attendance: Jack Terrell, Ron Fox, Morgan Sommerville, Lewis Ledford, Theresa Herrick, Larry Mashburn, and Billy Smith.

Member in attendance via teleconference: Hilda Morales

Forest Service present: Ann Christensen, Alison Koopman (Designated Federal Official), and Caroline Mitchell

Public via teleconference: Kitty Benzar (partial attendance, see page two)

Public in attendance: Roger Murphy (partial attendance, see page three)

Alison Koopman introduced herself as the Designated Federal Official, welcomed the committee, and began the meeting with Forest Service introductions.

Ann Christensen, Southern Region Recreation Director, expressed her thanks to the group for their interest in the Committee, and for taking the time to attend and serve.

Koopman discussed safety items, meeting protocols, and oriented members to the meeting facility and location. Koopman then provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

Committee members introduced themselves. Each person answered the following questions: 1) Name, 2) Where they were from, 3) Occupation, 4) Recreation interests, 5) Expectations for the group and why the interest to serve on the committee.

BREAK

Koopman presented a PowerPoint (attached) to orient the committee to the following topics:

- Forest Service Recreation Overview
- Recreation Enhancement Act (REA)
- Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)
- Public Involvement and Your Role
- Advisory Committee Organization
- Charter, By-Laws, and Responsibilities
- Introduction to the Southern Region

Throughout the presentation, Koopman referenced a notebook which was mailed to each member of the committee prior to the meeting. The notebook contained reference materials, such as information regarding the Southern Region of the Forest Service, a member list, the RRAC process, a copy of the Recreation Enhancement Act, Forest Service Charter, draft by-laws, Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), etc.

BREAK

The group worked through the draft bylaws incorporating edits and suggestions for this committee's operations. Changes, additions, and edits follow (in italics):

- Added a statement under Meeting Access: *The chair may extend the 3 minute maximum when appropriate.*
- Corrected a typo in Section VI: Proposals and Recommendations A: Proposal Process The Southern Region Recreation RAC may request a 'bundling' of like proposals if this improves the efficiency *of* reviewing proposals.

Terrell made a motion to approve the bylaws with the two changes. Herrick seconded the motion.

All members were in favor of adopting the bylaws with changes made.

The group then elected Jack Terrell as Chairperson.

The group established the order of proposals to consider. It was decided to review proposals by Forest. Koopman was asked to display photographs of the locations as they were being discussed.

The RRAC then took a break for lunch at 11:18am scheduled to return at 1:00pm.

After a slight delay to reconnect the teleconference line, the meeting resumed at 1:14pm. All members returned from the morning session, including Hilda Morales via teleconference.

The RRAC was provided a letter received from the Blazing Saddles Trail Riders regarding Rattlesnake Bay Trail System. All other public comments were forwarded to the RRAC prior to the meeting.

Kitty Benzar (member of the public joining by teleconference) asked to comment earlier than the scheduled public forum due to an unexpected conflict. The RRAC agreed to allow her time to comment.

Ms. Benzar stated that she sent a letter to the committee prior to the meeting, in which she outlined her concerns. She stated that she believed the RRAC members were not serving a valid appointment term under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), because they were all most recently appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture to three year terms beginning on June 14, 2010—terms which, according to Ms. Benzar, ended on June 14, 2013.

Terrell confirmed that the RRAC had received the letter from Ms. Benzar prior to the meeting and stated that determining the legality of such matters was outside the scope of their duties. He thanked Ms. Benzar for her comments, and Ms. Benzar signed off the call.

The RRAC then moved into reviewing the fee proposals. In the tables shown on the following pages, proposed prices are presented in the last column.

PROPOSAL FOR NFS IN MISSISSIPPI

Forest Annual OHV Permit	New Fee/Special Recreation Permit Fee Type	Not currently offered	\$60/operator/year
Bethel Motorized Trail System (Motorcycle Loop & ATV Trail)	Increase Fee/Special Recreation Permit Fee Type	Current: Motorized Trail System - \$5/person/day	Motorized Trail System - \$10/operator/day
Chickasaw ATV Trail System	New Fee/Special Recreation Permit Fee Type	Current: Motorized Trail System - \$0	Motorized Trail System - \$10/operator/day
Little Tiger ATV Trail System	Increase Fee/Special Recreation Permit Fee Type	Current: Motorized Trail System - \$5/person/day	Motorized Trail System - \$10/operator/day
Rattlesnake Bay ATV Trail System	New Fee/Special Recreation Permit Fee Type	Current: Motorized Trail System - \$0	Motorized Trail System - \$10/operator/day

Discussion Points:

- Public notices were posted at the trails during heavy use periods. Public input is more likely when this is done.
- Pricing is important to state agencies, as well, for comparison purposes.
- Will this fee increase be used to control erosion? Yes, fees will be used to maintain the trails, including for protection of water and erosion control.
- Do volunteer groups actively partner with the Forest Service to maintain these trails? Yes, but to what extent is not clear. The Bethel Trail System has an associated club.
- What are the economic benefits to the area by providing this type of activity? The Rattlesnake Bay Trail System proposal was supported by the Mississippi Development Authority which stated that, "Trails bring not only enjoyment to many types of users, but also critical economic benefits to local communities." A member noted that studies have shown that for every dollar spent on recreation, there is \$3-\$4 spent elsewhere in the community.

After the discussion regarding economic benefits of motorized trails in Mississippi, Herrick made a motion to table the proposal until the next day to allow time for more documentation to be provided.

No members of the public were in attendance to make comments at 3:30.

At 3:59pm, Roger Murphy, a member of the public, arrived to speak to the RRAC. He mentioned that he attended to observe the RRAC in action. He said that he hoped the RRAC would not raise fees at campgrounds too significantly so that everyone can continue to camp. He also hoped that there would not be changes to hiking trails and Wilderness areas. Lastly, he noted the importance of, and willingness for, volunteerism on National Forest system lands. Murphy left at 4:20pm.

CHEROKEE NF

<p>Rock Creek Campground</p>	<p>Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type</p>	<p>Current: Non-electric, Tent Sites - \$10/night Basic Single Electric Hookup - \$5/night Basic Double Electric Hookup - \$10/night</p>	<p>Non-electric, Tent Sites - \$12/night Basic Single Electric Hookup - \$10/night Basic Double Electric Hookup - \$20/night</p>
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Discussion Points:

- Clarification that the site fee and electrical hook-up fee are separate charges, but when combined equal the total fee for an electrified site. The proposal includes both non-electric and electric sites.
- The proposal is in line with what TN State Parks is currently charging.
- Discussion regarding the services offered at the campground and its condition of facilities.
- Discussion regarding the site's season.

Fox made a motion to approve the proposal. Mashburn seconded the motion.

Voting Outcome:

- Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)
- Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)
- Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

NF'S IN NORTH CAROLINA

<p>Arrowhead Campground</p>	<p>Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type</p>	<p>Current: Basic Single Site - \$12/night Basic Single Electric Hookup - \$3/night Basic Double Site - \$24/night Basic Double Electric Hookup - \$6/night</p>	<p>Basic Single Site (2014) - \$15/night Basic Single Site (2016) - \$18/night Basic Single Electric Hookup (2014) - \$5/night Basic Single Electric Hookup (2016) - \$7/night Basic Double Site (2014) - \$30/night Basic Double Site (2016) - \$36/night Basic Double Electric Hookup (2014) - \$10/night Basic Double Electric Hookup (2016) - \$14/night</p>
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Discussion Points:

- Discussion regarding the services offered at the campground and its condition of facilities. Are water spigots provided? Yes

Ledford made a motion to approve. Herrick seconded the motion.

Voting Outcome:

- Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)
- Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)
- Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

Cedar Point Campground	Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type	Current: Basic Single Site - \$12/night Basic Single Electric Hookup - \$5/night	Basic Single Site (2014) - \$15/night Basic Single Site (2016) - \$20/night Basic Single Hookup (2014) - \$7/night
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Discussion Points:

- RRAC reviewed pictures of the area.
- Discussion regarding the services offered at the campground and its condition of facilities.

Sommerville made a motion to approve. Ledford seconded the motion.

Voting Outcome:

- Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)
- Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)
- Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

Canebrake Horse Camp	Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type	Current: Basic Single Site - \$12/night Basic Single Electric Hookup - \$0 Basic Double Site - \$24/night Basic Double Electric Hookup - \$0	Basic Single Site (2014) - \$15/night Basic Single Site (2016) - \$18/night Basic Single Electric Hookup (2014) - \$5/night Basic Single Electric Hookup (2016) - \$7/night Basic Double Site (2014) - \$30/night Basic Double Site (2016) - \$36/night Basic Double Electric Hookup (2014) - \$10/night Basic Double Electric Hookup (2016) - \$14/night
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Discussion Points:

- Discussion regarding the services offered at the campground and its condition of facilities. Water hookups? Yes. Horse cleaning station provided.
- What is meant by manure disposal? Manure is deposited into an on-site storage container and taken elsewhere.

Sommerville made a motion to approve. Ledford seconded the motion.

Voting Outcome:

Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)

Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)

Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

Sliding Rock Recreation Area	Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type	Current: Swim Site - \$1/person	Swim Site - \$2/person
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Discussion Points:

- Some members noted they had taken a field trip to the area during a previous meeting.
- Discussion regarding the services offered at the swim site and its condition of facilities.
- How is the area closed? Gated. However, the popularity of this area makes it extremely difficult to keep the public from entering.
- Fee is only charged when lifeguards are on duty. Lifeguard oversight is extremely important during heavy use periods. Increased fees will be used to expand lifeguard services.

Herrick made a motion to approve. Fox seconded the motion.

Voting Outcome:

Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)

Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)

Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

Dirty John Shooting Range	Increase Fee/Special Recreation Permit Fee Type	Current: Shooting Range - \$3/vehicle/day Annual Permit - \$7/vehicle/year	Shooting Range - \$3/shooter/day Annual Permit - \$25/shooter/year
Moss Knob Shooting Range	New Fee/Special Recreation Permit Fee Type	Current: Shooting Range - \$0	Shooting Range - \$3/shooter/day Annual Permit - \$25/shooter/year
Panther Top Shooting Range	Increase Fee/Special Recreation Permit Fee Type	Current: Shooting Range - \$2/person/day Annual Permit - \$7/vehicle/year	Shooting Range - \$3/shooter/day Annual Permit - \$25/shooter/year

Discussion Points:

- Discussion regarding the services offered at the ranges and their condition of facilities.
- Shooting ranges help concentrate the activity to particular locations rather than across the forest.

Herrick made a motion to recommend all three shooting range proposals. Mashburn seconded.

Voting Outcome:

- Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)
- Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)
- Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

Meeting adjourned at 5pm.

February 27, 2014

Members in attendance: Jack Terrell, Ron Fox, Morgan Sommerville, Lewis Ledford, Theresa Herrick, Larry Mashburn, and Billy Smith

Member in attendance via teleconference: Hilda Morales

Forest Service present: Alison Koopman and Caroline Mitchell

Meeting began at 8:09am.

Alison welcomed the group and briefed the committee on ethical codes of conduct as described in section 13 of the Charter.

NF'S IN ALABAMA

Coleman Lake Campground	Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type	Current: Basic Single Site - \$7/night	Basic Single Site - \$12/night
		Basic Single Electric Hookup - \$5/night	Basic Single Hookup - \$4/night

Discussion Points:

- Discussion regarding the services offered at the campground and its condition of facilities.
- RRAC expressed concerns that the electrical hookup fees are not aligned with other proposals and should be reviewed in the future.

Sommerville made a motion to recommend. Ledford seconded the motion.

Voting Outcome:

- Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)
- Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)
- Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

Open Pond Campground	Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type	Current: Basic Single Site - \$8 /night	Basic Single Site - \$10/night
		Basic Single Electric Hookup - \$4/night	Basic Single Hookup - \$6/night
		Non-electric, Tent Sites - \$6/night	Non-electric, Tent Sites - \$8/night

Discussion Points:

- Discussion regarding the services offered at the campground and its condition of facilities.

Sommerville made a motion to recommend. Fox seconded the motion

Voting Outcome:

- Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)
- Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)
- Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

NF'S IN TEXAS

Stubblefield Lake Campground	Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type	Current: Basic Single Site - \$10/night	Basic Single Site - \$15/night

Discussion Points:

- Discussion regarding the services offered at the campground and its condition of facilities. Hookups? No individual hook-ups available.
- Campground location is close to Houston.
- Public Involvement reviewed for completion.

Herrick made a motion to recommend. Mashburn seconded.

Voting Outcome:

- Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)
- Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)
- Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

Cagle Campground	Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type	Current: Basic Single Site - \$20/night	Basic Single Site - \$16/night
		Basic Single Electric Hookup - \$0	Basic Single Electric Hookup - \$11/night

Discussion Points:

- Day Use? Yes, several day use activities also provided, including swimming, picnicking and boating.
- Campground location is close to Houston.
- Occupancy rate? Very high. Reviewed available reservation dates online at rec.gov.

Sommerville made a motion to recommend. Ledford seconded.

Voting Outcome:

- Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)
- Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)
- Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

Ratcliff Lake Campground	Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type	Current: Basic Single, Non-electric Site - \$10/night	Basic Single, Non-electric Site - \$15/night
		Single Site with Electric - \$15/night	Single Site with Electric - \$20/night
		Extra Vehicle at Campsite - \$3/vehicle	Extra Vehicle at Campsite - \$5/vehicle
		Dump Station Fee - \$3/occurrence	Dump Station Fee - \$5/occurrence

Discussion Points:

- Discussion regarding the services offered at the campground and its condition of facilities.
- Not located near a major city.
- Dump Station fee common? Yes

Ledford made a motion to recommend. Herrick seconded.

Voting Outcome:

- Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)
- Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)
- Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

KISATCHIE NF

Camp Claiborne, Camp Livingston, Enduro and Sandstone System Trail	Eliminate-Reduce Fee/Special Recreation Permit Fee Type	Current: \$25 Forest Annual Pass for Youth Under 16	Eliminate \$25 Forest Annual Pass for Youth Under 16
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Discussion Points:

- Background Rider Safety Course is required to purchase the youth permit, and the cost of course and finding a course is a deterrent for most parents. They prefer to purchase the non-discounted permit and attend safety training through a local club. Safety courses are not a state requirement.
- Very few have been purchased (less than 5).
- Comments from the public when first proposed? Koopman indicated that there were no specific comments regarding the youth annual pass when it was first proposed.

Herrick made a motion to recommend. Fox seconded.

Voting Outcome:

Category 1: 3 in favor (1 member absent, Terrell abstained)

Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)

Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

CHATTAHOOCHEE- OCONEE NF

Cedar Creek Shooting Range	New Fee/Special Recreation Permit Fee Type	Current: Shooting Range - \$0	Shooting Range - \$5/shooter/day
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Discussion Points:

- Do other ranges require an attendant on site? The other range proposals from NC did not, however, more forests are seeking to have on-site attendants, where feasible.

Fox made a motion to recommend. Herrick seconded motion

Voting Outcome:

Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)

Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)

Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

DANIEL BOONE NF

Koomer Ridge Campground	Increase Fee/Expanded Amenity Fee Type	Current: Basic Single/Double Site - \$7/night	Basic Single/Double Site (2014) - \$10/night Basic Single/Double Site (2016) - \$14/night
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Discussion Points:

- Only developed campground in the Red River Gorge.
- Operated by concessionaire part of the year.
- What level campground? Level 4 when bathhouse is open. Level 3 during winter.
- Price seems high for the services offered.
- Concessionaire price? \$18
- No other providers open at this time of year.
- Call to forest to confirm availability of water. Year round water system, trash pick-up also.
- Occupancy during winter? Heavy use from mid-Nov to Dec 15. Then low us to Feb. 1. Then depends on weather, could pick up.
- Are all the sites double sites? 7-10 double sites.
- Double Site – no difference in single/double fee. Simplicity and historical pricing structure.

Forest Service withdraws the second 2016 increment of \$14.

Proposal is to recommend the first increment to \$10.

Herrick made a motion to recommend. Mashburn seconded.

Voting Outcome:

Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)

Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)

Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

RRAC continues tabled discussion from Wednesday (page three) regarding the Mississippi motorized trails.

Jack Terrell provided the RRAC with an economic study done by University of Florida showing economic benefit to areas outside the recreation area.

Morales wanted to note that there was currently not an environmental group representative.

Sommerville asked that the Forest Service not take actions that would deter volunteerism.

Chairman called for a vote on the tabled motion to approve all 5 of the projects.

Voting Outcome:

Category 1: 4 in favor (1 member absent)

Category 2: 2 in favor (1 vacancy)

Category 3: 2 in favor (1 member absent)

BREAK

Chairman thanked the members for their participation. Chairman also commented that the committee values the opportunity to review proposals prior to the meeting. It proved to be very beneficial. The committee commended the Forest Supervisor's offices and Ranger Districts for the quality and completeness of their recreation fee change proposals.

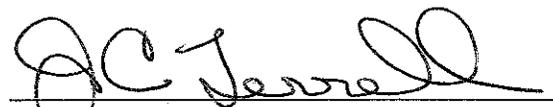
Koopman thanked the group for their efforts in attending and participating.

Travel instructions were discussed and travel forms handed out.

Herrick made a motion to adjourn. Smith seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:28am.

I certify that each member of the Southern Region Recreation Resource Advisory Committee has been given an opportunity to review and comment on the February 2014 meeting notes; and I officially approve the above notes.



JACK TERRELL
Southern Region RRAC Chairperson

3/13/14

DATE