Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest Change in Recreation Fee Structure at American Fork Canyon-Alpine Loop Recreation Fee Area

Background

In June 2011, the Forest Service conducted a national review of the 97 standard amenity recreation fee (SAF) areas on National Forest System lands. As a result of the review, the Forest Service plans to remove the fee area designation for 73 of these SAF areas and reduce the size for the remaining 24 areas.

In response to this review and public comment the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest is proposing changes to the American Fork Canyon-Alpine Loop standard amenity recreation fee area (American Fork Canyon Recreation Area).

The American Fork Canyon Recreation Area is on the Pleasant Grove Ranger District of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest. Fee collection at American Fork was first tested in 1997 under the Recreational Fee Demonstration authority and continued under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA).

Description of the Recreation Area

The American Fork Canyon Recreation Area includes narrow-walled scenic canyons that open up onto mountainous terrain, offering a wide variety, and concentration of recreational activities. Main transportation arteries in the area include the Alpine Loop Scenic Backway (State Route 92), State Route 144 Cascade Springs Scenic Byway, and National Forest System Route 010 in Utah County, Utah. The recreation area provides year-round recreational opportunities to the Wasatch Front with a population base of two million people. Over one million visitors and 400,000 vehicles accessed the fee area in 2012.

American Fork Canyon/Alpine Loop Recreation Fee Proposal

The Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest proposes to:

- Eliminate the American Fork Canyon/Alpine Loop Recreation Fee Area (see map in Appendix A).
- Retain 20 standard amenity fee sites (see Table 1 and maps in Appendix A).
- Visitors staying in one of the developed campgrounds (see Appendix D) would not be required to pay the SAF unless recreating in one of the fee sites listed in Table 1.
- Visitors to Timpanogos Cave National Monument would not be required to pay SAF unless recreating in one of the fee sites listed in Table 1.

Table 1. American Fork Canyon Recreation Area

Name	Parking	Toilet	Trash Receptacle	Interpretive Sign	Picnic Tables	Security Services
Saw Mill Picnic Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Little Mill Groomed-Cross Country Ski-Trail Parking Area*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Grey Cliffs Picnic Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Echo Picnic Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Roadhouse Picnic Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Martin Picnic Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mile Rock Picnic Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tibble Fork Day Use Area & Summer/Winter Staging Area for OHV and Groomed Snowmobile Routes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Granite Flat Horse Transfer Station	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pine Hollow Trailhead/ Winter Staging Area (Parking for Groomed Snowmobile Trail)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Timpooneke Trailhead	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Salamander Flat Designated Camping Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Alpine Summit Trailhead	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mt. Timpanogos Day Use Area and Winter Staging Area for Groomed Snowmobile Routes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Box Elder Trailhead	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Deer Creek/Dry Creek Trailhead	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Theater in the Pines Amphitheater	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cascade Springs Day Use Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Silver Lake Flat Day Use Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Upper Falls Picnic Area (Provo Canyon)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Fee Collection and Compliance

No change is being proposed to recreation fees charged within the American Fork Canyon Recreation Area. Recreation passes and on-site payment will continue to be the fee payment mechanism. Accepted passes are the Forest Service's American Fork Canyon-Alpine Loop Pass ($6.00 per carload for a 1 to 3 day pass, $12.00 for a 7 day pass, or $45.00 for an annual pass) or the Interagency–the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes (Annual – $80; Senior – $10; and Access, Military, and Volunteer – free). The Forest also accepts these recreation passes at the Mirror Lake Scenic Byway.

Four convenient fee-payment methods are in place:

- Eleven self-serve fee stations placed in key locations along the American Fork Canyon Recreation Area (cash or check only).
- Two visitor information stations located on State Route 92 that are staffed by both Forest Service and National Park Service seasonal employees. Stations are open seven days a week from dusk to dawn and credit cards, cash, and checks may be used to purchase recreation passes.
- Recreation passes may be purchased from Forest Service and National Park Service offices.
- Interagency and American Fork passes accepted.

The Forest Service enforces and would continue to enforce recreation fees and issues notices of required fees in the recreation sites and areas identified in Tables 1. Compliance is verified and would continue to be verified by observing recreation passes displayed on vehicles parked within these recreation fee sites.

Anticipated Financial Impacts of the Change

The American Fork Canyon Recreation Area is a highly successful partnership among the Forest Service, the National Park Service, Utah Department of Transportation, and others. The financial impacts of the proposed changes are unknown at this time. It is anticipated that fee revenue may decrease slightly.

Planned Accomplishments

Recreation fee revenue would continue to help fund these planned projects:

- Repave and expand the Timpooneke Trailhead parking lot;
- Replace bridges to the Theater in the Pines Amphitheater;
- Repave and widen the Cascade Springs trail for universal access;
- Complete an extensive re-route of the South Fork of Little Deer Creek Trail (#252); and
- Complete rehabilitation of the Upper Falls Picnic Area in Provo Canyon.

Public Involvement

Accomplished

The Forest Service sought public comments on the proposed changes to the American Fork Canyon Recreation Area and plans to submit the proposal at the Utah Bureau of Land Management Recreation Resource Advisory Committee in June 2014. In the interim, the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest is issuing notices of required fees and enforcing recreation fees only within the recreation sites and areas identified in Tables 1. The following public participation tasks have been completed:

- Distributed a press release regarding the proposal to daily and weekly newspapers.
- Posted information on proposal on the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest website;
- Posted flyers and handed out comment cards at visitor information station, Forest Service offices, and local vendors;
- Posted proposal information and maps at recreation fee sites;
- Briefed local and federal elected officials;
- Spoke to local organized user groups; and
- Briefed partners – Timpanogos Cave National Monument, Utah County, Utah Department of Transportation, Wasatch Mountain State Park, and American Land & Leisure.
- Federal Register Notice has been published for the Upper Falls Picnic Area.

Public notices and press coverage:

- Salt Lake Tribune – Salt Lake based media outlet that serves a population of approximately one million people in Salt Lake valley. A large portion of Forest users come from the Salt Lake valley. Newspaper is published both hard copy and online. Articles were published on May 28, June 27, and July 1, 2013.
- Provo Daily Herald – Primary newspaper for Utah Valley that serves approximately one million people. A large portion of Forest users come from Utah Valley. Newspaper is published both hard copy and online. Article was published s on July 16, 2013.
- KCPW Radio – Radio station covering Summit and Wasatch counties. A large portion of users visiting the Mirror Lake Scenic Byway come from these two counties. Forest Public Affairs Officer participated in a one hour call-in program to discuss fee proposals in Park City on July 1, 2013.
- Park Record – newspaper covering Wasatch and Summit counties. A large portion of users visiting the Mirror Lake Scenic Byway come from these two counties. Article was published on August 8, 2013.

Elected Officials and Partner Briefings

During the fall of 2012, Utah County Commissioners and local Congressional Staff were briefed in person. Upon finalizing the one page information sheet and map on May 21, 2013 a letter (see letter in Appendix C) was sent out to a comprehensive list of elected officials at the State and local levels, and American Fork Canyon partners. No comments were received from elected officials; questions from partners were answered as they arose.

Elected Officials:

Commissioner Larry Ellertson

Councilman Jay Price

Congressman Jason Chaffetz

Senator Orrin Hatch and Senator Mike Lee

Alpine Mayor Hunt Willoughby

American Fork Mayor James H. Hadfield

Cedar Hills Mayor Gary Gygi

Heber City Mayor David Phillips

Highland Mayor Lynn V. Ritchie

Lindon Mayor Jim Dain

Midway Mayor Connie Tatton

Orem Mayor James T. Evans

Pleasant Grove Mayor Bruce W. Call

Provo Mayor John R. Curtis

American Fork Canyon Partners:

Wasatch State Park

Mountainland Association of Governments

Lone Peak

Utah County Sheriff's Office

Timpanogos Cave National Monument

Lone Peak Fire

Utah Department of Transportation

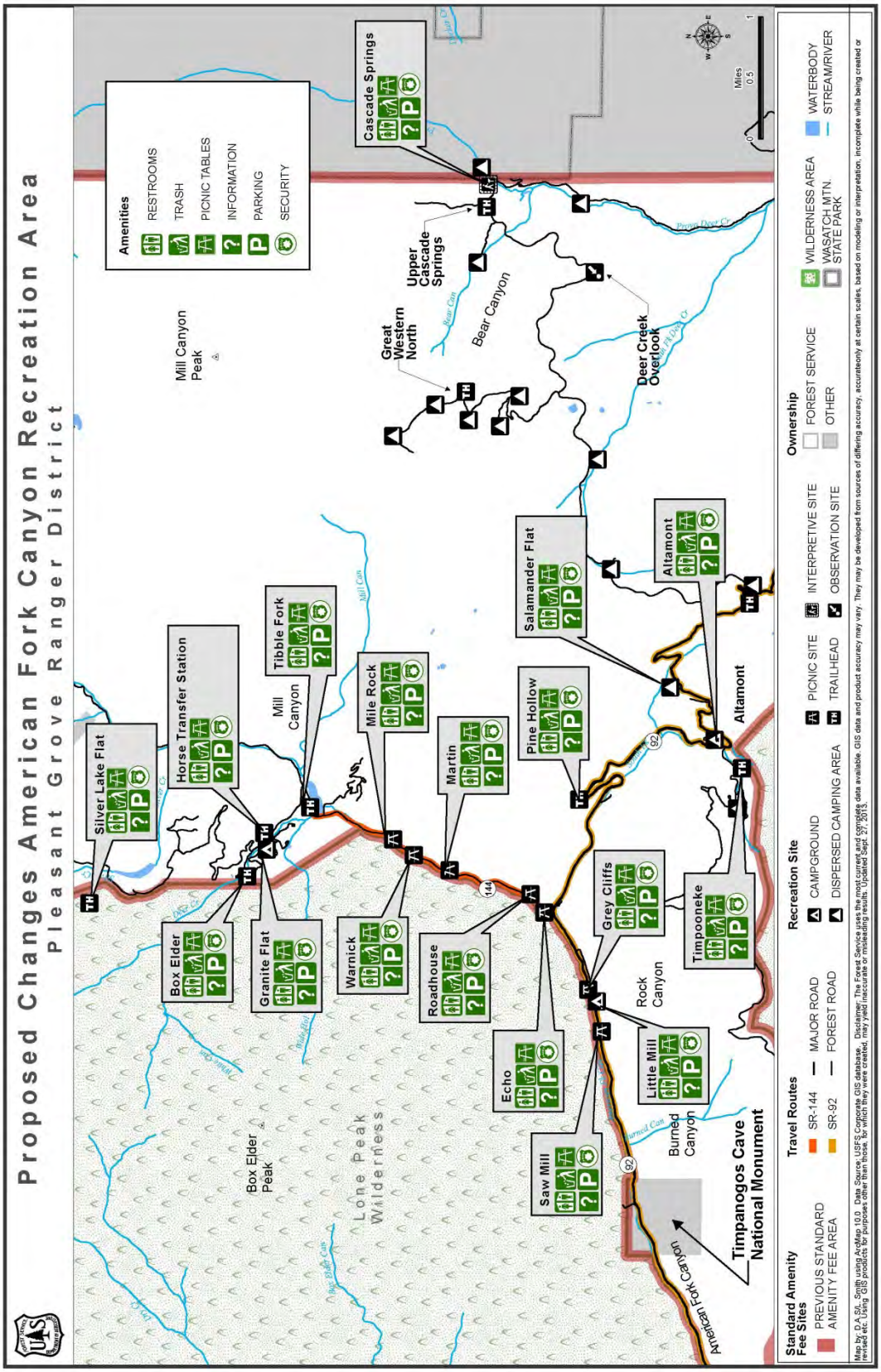
Timpanogos Emergency Response Team

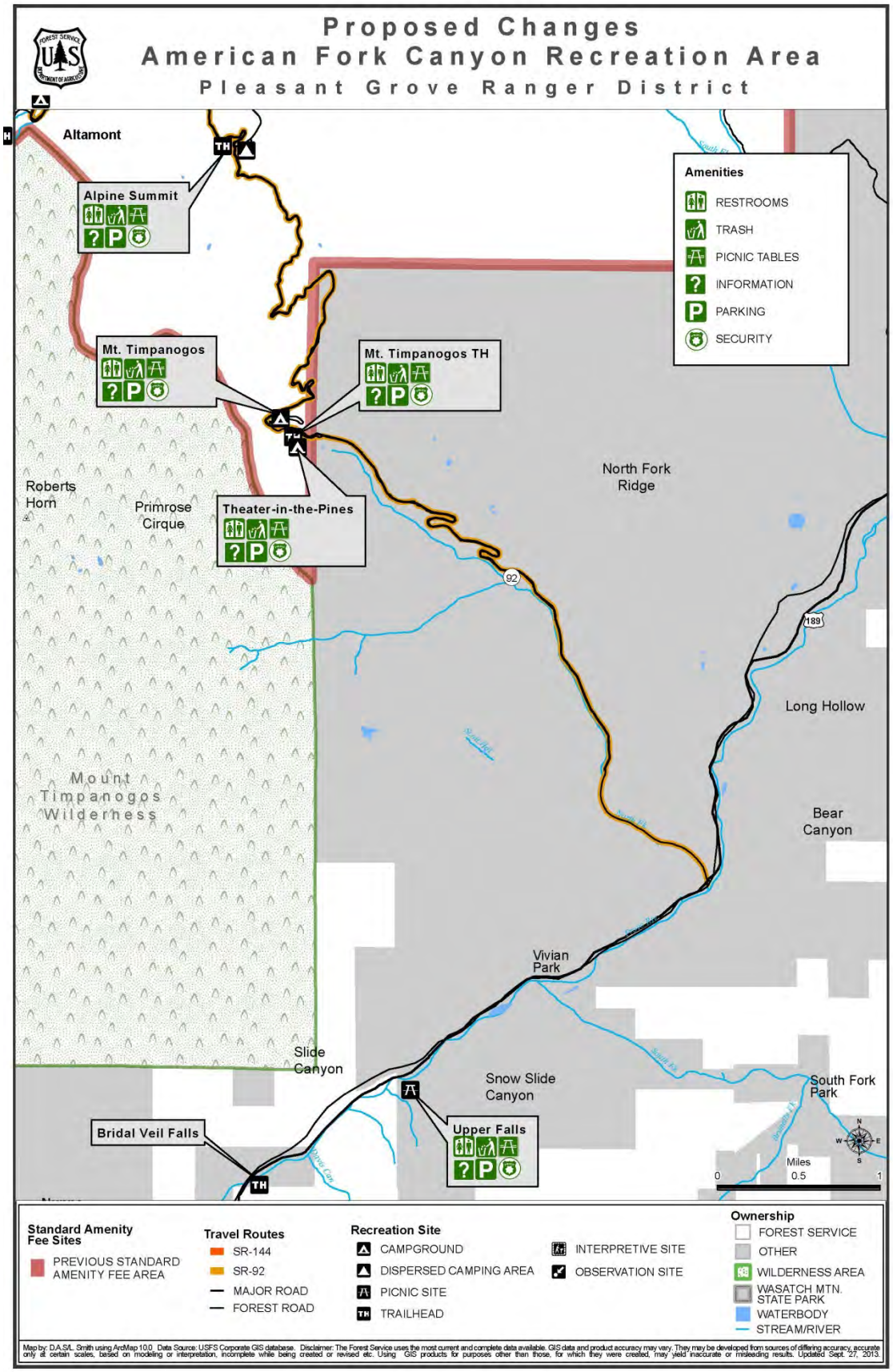
Summary of Comments Received:

Forest Service received 32 comments from the public including ten comments in support of recreation fees, five comments against recreation fees, nine questions, and nine comments asking the Forest Service to bring back the one day pass. Actual comments received are enclosed in Appendix E.

Comments regarding the change in fee structure to include a one day pass were considered for possible inclusion in this proposal. The Forest considered the inclusion of a one day pass but did not include this option in this proposal and will continue to analyze recreation pass options.

Appendix A:


Proposed Changes American Fork Canyon Recreation Area
Pleasant Grove Ranger District
Amenities
RESTROOMS
TRASH
PICNIC TABLES
INFORMATION
PARKING
SECURITY
Silver Lake Flat
Horse Transfer Station
Tibble Fork
Mill Canyon
Mile Rock
Martin
Pine Hollow
Salamander Flat
Altamont
Cascade Springs
Upper Cascade Springs
Great Western North
Bear Canyon
Deer Creek Overlook
Mill Canyon Peak
Box Elder
Granite Flat
Warnick
Roadhouse
Echo
Saw Mill
Grey Cliffs
Little Mill
Timpooneke
Rock Canyon
Burned Canyon
Box Elder Peak
Lone Peak Wilderness
American Fork Canyon
Timpanogos Cave National Monument
Standard Amenity Fee Sites
PREVIOUS STANDARD AMENITY FEE AREA
Travel Routes
SR-144
SR-92
MAJOR ROAD
FOREST ROAD
Recreation Site
CAMPGROUND
DISPERSED CAMPING AREA
PICNIC SITE
TRAILHEAD
INTERPRETIVE SITE
OBSERVATION SITE
Ownership
FOREST SERVICE
OTHER
WILDERNESS AREA
WASATCH MTN. STATE PARK
WATERBODY
STREAM/RIVER
Miles
0 0.5 1
Map by D.A. Sill, Smith using ArcMap 10.0. Data Source: USFS Corporate GIS database. Disclaimer: The Forest Service uses the most current and complete data available. GIS data and product accuracy may vary. They may be developed from sources of differing accuracy, accuratecoly at certain scales, based on modeling or interpretation, incomplete while being created or revised, etc. Using GIS products for purposes other than those for which they were created, may yield inaccurate or misleading results. Updated Sept. 27, 2013.


Proposed Changes
American Fork Canyon Recreation Area
Pleasant Grove Ranger District
Altamont
Alpine Summit
Mt. Timpanogos
Mt. Timpanogos TH
Theater-in-the-Pines
Roberts Horn
Primrose Cirque
Mount Timpanogos Wilderness
North Fork Ridge
Long Hollow
Bear Canyon
Vivian Park
Slide Canyon
Snow Slide Canyon
South Fork Park
Bridal Veil Falls
Upper Falls
Amenities
RESTROOMS
TRASH
PICNIC TABLES
INFORMATION
PARKING
SECURITY
Miles
0
0.5
1
Standard Amenity Fee Sites
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SR-92
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FOREST ROAD
Recreation Site
CAMPGROUND
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PICNIC SITE
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Appendix B:

Roadhouse Picnic Area

Summit Trailhead

Appendix C:

Dear XXXX,

On behalf of the Pleasant Grove Ranger District of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest I'm sending you this information, prior to notifying the public, of proposed changes in the American Fork Canyon Recreation Fee Area.

The American Fork Canyon Recreation Fee Area is designated as a High Impact Recreation Area that is successfully managed due to local, county, state, and federal partners, as well as the collection of fees for maintenance and improvements. In response to the public's concern about how fees were charged in these areas, the Forest Service has recently completed a nationwide review of the Recreation Enhancement Act. Upon completion of this review the following changes are being proposed in the American Fork Canyon Fee Area:

The AF Canyon Fee Area

The standard-amenity fee structure for sites (picnic areas, trailheads, restrooms, etc.) along SR-92 (Alpine Loop) and FS-144 to Tibble Fork reservoir will remain the same, and local passes will still be honored as long as dates are valid. A map detailing this area is shown on the attached map.

Timpanogos Cave National Monument

Visitors to Timpanogos Cave National Monument will not be required to pay the standard-amenity fee. The standard-amenity fee would only apply to visitors leaving the park and utilizing the American Fork Canyon Fee Area or stand-alone sites identified on the attached map.

Developed Campgrounds

Visitors staying in one of the developed campgrounds (Granite Flat CG, Timpooneke CG, Little Mill CG, Mount Timpanogos CG, and Altamont CG) will not be required to pay the standard-amenity fee. The standard-amenity fee would only apply to visitors leaving the campgrounds and utilizing the American Fork Canyon Fee Area or stand-alone sites identified on the attached map.

Stand-Alone Sites

Cascade Springs, Silver Lake Flat, and Upper Falls Picnic Site (Provo Canyon) will be managed as "stand-alone" fee sites. Fees for these sites may be paid at the two information stations, or at self-service fee stations.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact me at the Pleasant Grove Ranger District, 390 North 100 East, Pleasant Grove, Utah 84062, by email at jstansfield@fs.fed.us or at my desk 801-796-4881.

Thank You,

Jon M. Stansfield, Pleasant Grove District Ranger

Appendix D:

Concessionaire Operated Sites:

- Little Mill Campground
- Altamont Campground
- Timpooneke Campground
- Timpanogos Campground
- Granite Flat Campground

Little Mill Campground is used as a cross-country ski day use area during the winter and developed campground during the summer.

Appendix E:

Comments Received

Comment 1:

Although I wished the federal government would give more to parks, I happily pay to use AF canyon and the Mirror Lake highway every year. I backpack and fish in the Uintahs every single year. Please keep ALL fees. It's the price I'll pay to keep those areas pristine, conditioned, and not overrun.

I also am extremely disappointed in the continued use of motor bikes in the AF canyon area. Beautiful single track destroyed, rutted, and pulverized into powdery dust. Certain areas are fine like the dirt roads but my wilderness experience has been minimized by loud dusty motorbikes on too many occasions. Get them off the trails!!

Happy (when I don't get pushed off the trail by motor bikes) season pass holder,

Beckstead

Comment 2:

I'm writing to strongly protest the Recreation Fee Area changes. Both of these areas are already miserably crowded. To remove the fee for accessing the canyon would increase the amount of users, and by extension the amount of trash on the trails and the environmental damage from overuse. It will lead to irreparable damage to the foot trails, horse trails, single track, and 4wd tracks in the area, and you will be forced to close some of them, leading to even worse overcrowding on the ones that remain.

I drove up the Forest Lake Trail on Monday. It was insanely crowded, even for a Memorial Day. The sides of the trail were littered with vehicle body parts and empty beer cans. When we got to the top, the closed grass and mud areas were tracked by jerks who'd ignored the carsonite posts and fences installed by Utah 4x4 Club. Removing the fees will make these problems so much worse.

It is said that high rent keeps out the riff-raff, and it's absolutely true. The fees should be raised, doubled even. There is already way too much crowding in American Fork Canyon and up Mirror Lake Highway. Those of us that appreciate the wilds as something to be protected and enjoyed responsibly will be happy to pay the access fee. Vandals and yahoos that don't respect the mountains or other's right to peaceful recreation will enjoy not paying fees. Which class of recreationists do you want in these areas?

Biddle

Comment 3:

The fee in AF Canyon has been out of balance since its conception. It charged the wrong group, it should have from the start charged all the pedal bikers that go up and down the canyon without paying they are the ones who stop and use the facilities that you are worried about not the person out for drive to go over the loop or just ride up to Tibble Fork. I have watched on many occasions a pedal biker go right passed the toll gate because they did not have to pay and ride up to the Timp Cave and use the restroom facilities, then if they keep going they stop either at the summit or at Tibble Fork Reservoir and use the facilities again still with no charge to them. They create a big traffic hazard and don't have to pay, I have to pay road taxes on my car, truck or motorcycle to go up the canyon, but they don't. Why don't you start charging them for the use of the canyon and then take that money and pave the old railroad bed where is still exists and fill in the places where it doesn't then you can give them a place to get off the road and out of traffic? I also ride an ATV but I will not go up the canyon anymore due to overcrowding and the fact that the forest service has done nothing with the money taken from the toll booth to help the trails out or patrol the canyon, sure you do some for the single tracks but not much more (again because it is used by pedal bikes) plus you close off the canyon to ATV's during the winter months with false claims about snowmobiles and ATV don't mix and damage being done. I have never seen a problem in all the time I have been riding, in fact we helped each other out, as for the damage there will always be a few who ruin it for the many. Now it appears that you want to start charging for hiking or climbing in the canyon but still the pedal bikes go free. AF Canyon is about the only canyon close along the Wasatch front that you can go with an ATV maybe there should be a small access fee for that to help improve the trails and dirt roads. Thank you for what you do I know it is not possible to please everyone, I hope you will consider some of the ideas and see what you can do.

Williams

Comment 4:

Thank you for finally ending the "fee experiment" that has gone on for so long. I have used this canyon for many years and appreciate the removal of this fee. The only comment I wish to make is this or maybe it's a question. If Silver Lake Flats is a fee area how will that work considering I usually park down by granite flats and ride my 4-wheeler up to the lake. Do I need to pay a fee to go up there and through the parking lot while accessing other trails? Rather than have any fees I feel a better use of resources would be to have a constant patrol around Tibble Fork and Silver Lake Flats for polluters and actively ticket them.

Thanks,

Pexton

Comment 5:

As an avid climber living in SLC, I visit AF 20-25 times annually and support the fee structure in place. Every year I buy the Interagency Pass and am glad to do so knowing the fees collected are maintaining and improving facilities (even if I don't use them).

My suggestion would be to have a one day-use fee rather than the current fee of 6.00 for 3 days.

Ryan

Comment 6:

Hello,

I am the Director of the Salt Lake Climbers Alliance and would like to put info regarding the potential fee restructure in American Fork out to our climbing community. I want to make sure I put out the right information so that you solicit the best feedback based on facts.

Could you please help me to understand this phrase in that would the fee still apply to parking areas where climbers park such as the Division Wall, ect? Would it apply to some of the parking areas and not others? If so, which ones would still be fee based?

"Would eliminate the need to pay a recreation fee at some locations in American Fork Canyon."

Thank you for helping me better understand how this may affect our user group.

--

Geisler

Salt Lake Climbers Alliance

Comment 7:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the new fee structure for American Fork Canyon/Alpine Loop fee modifications. The one page summary regarding the changes, as well as the other available online USFS information, is not totally clear, but the concept to drop some of the fees is the right direction. Identifying which areas to and not to charge fees can be confusing. Part of the efforts of the proposed changes should include easy to understand fee and no fee areas which would be located in an easy to access area before you enter the canyon.

Currently fees are paid for three (3) days at a time, which seems, at least to me, to be excessive. I like to hike in the canyons, but I only do it one day at a time and rarely on consecutive days. So in areas, such as the trailhead to Stewart Falls, or the Alpine Loop Summit, would be a one day trip (just a few hours actually) and I would suggest, such day hikes should not be charged a fee. If a fee is assessed for one day hikes, the fee should be for a single day (and not the current 3 day period) for each vehicle and should be limited to no more than $2.00 ($1.00 would be preferable.) Areas like Cascade Springs where I might spend an hour walking the loop, should be no more than $1.00, and a fee station should be conveniently located.

Thanks you for the opportunity to comment and for listening.

Fullmer

Comment 8:

After reading your proposal and studying your map I'm unclear on what would be changed by your proposal. Currently a fee is charged to enter AF Canyon. The map of your proposed new system shows that AF Canyon above Tank Canyon is a "Proposed Fee Area". So does this mean that the fee will now be charged at Tank Canyon? If that's the proposal, it's not much of a change. Or am I reading the map wrong?

-- Walt

Comment 9:

Dear US Forest Service,

The present system is the way to go. Since implementation the backcountry area has improved considerably. There is less obnoxious campfire rings and trash. By making it a fee area it donates a value that users identify with and acknowledge by becoming better users. I encourage you to take the money and continue to fund maintenance and improvement projects. Payments breed respect. Personally, I purchase a season pass even if I don't use it often, just to help. Please reverse the decision and re-enact the fee.

Weston

Comment 10:

Hello....

My feedback on this dropping the "demonstration" Recreation Fee that has lasted 10 yrs is, as a local, that this is long overdue, I support this. We should not be charged to drive though our National Forest on a state highway that was always wrong.

I will take this further and suggest that we should not be charged, as suggested in the plan to park and use a trailhead!! Again, this is charging for access to land we already own as citizens.

Thank you.

Ingraham

Comment 11:

Thank you for removing the fee at the entrance to American Fork Canyon! I was strongly opposed to the fee.

I use trails and roads, but I don't ever use picnic areas or toilets. I mostly hike and climb in the Forest, and sometimes I fish.

I wouldn't mind paying a dollar entrance fee, but six dollars always made me angry and usually I went somewhere else to hike. I don't think the public should have to pay fees to use land that already belongs to the public. I would rather see an income tax increase or a small annual fee to support all national forests ($10 or $15 per year) and not entrance fees when I wish to enjoy hiking in the National Forest.

With regard to the proposed fee areas, I don't understand why the Forest Service is still collecting a fee at Silver Lake Flat. If you use the fee to improve the road to the Silver Lake trail head, then I would gladly pay the fee. If the FS doesn't improve the road, then I am not certain why Silver Lake Flat is a fee area. Does this means that if I want to hike to Silver Lake or climb into the White Baldy area, I have to pay a fee? But if I hike to Box Elder Peak on the Dry Creek trail, I don't have to pay a fee? I don't understand the difference.

Maybe the FS should consider installing pay toilets at popular trail heads.

Also, I don't understand why fees are collected from a few areas for improvements in such a large National Forest. It seems pretty random.

Comment 12:

USFS,

Thank you for your change in policy.

I read with great interest last year when the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Forest Service "could not charge one cent for hiking on Forest Ground".

It was clear that when the quote, unquote, "demonstration project" was instituted in the American Fork Canyon, and In the Uintahs that the intent of the project was to demonstrate that the Forest Service could "demonstrate" that they get away with circumventing the laws passed by congress and charge the public by calling it something else. The Ninth Circuit finally cleared that up.

The Federal Government, Including the USFS sometimes need to be reminded that they don't own the land but We the Citizens own it, and that we have our elected representative hire people… IE the Forest Service to manage OUR LAND for OUR BENEFIT. The governing law clearly reads that there has to be a specific list of services provided before a fee can be charged. This has always been clear, and it has clearly been a blatant violation of law for the Forest Service to charge fees to drive, or park or to hike in the US forests.

I have driven many times over the Alpine Loop and have had to remind the people in the booth that I was only using a Utah State highway and did not have to pay the fee, only to talk to many, many others each of those days who were charged not knowing that they did not have to pay to drive on a state road.

In my business such conduct would be prosecuted as Fraud and also for an ongoing criminal enterprise.

It is my hope that the Uinta Forest will take this time to do some soul searching and see if there are some other areas of Federal Management that are counterproductive. An example of that is the lack of parking at the Timpanogos trailhead. The promise of the "demonstration project" was to use those fees to improve facilities in the areas which they were collected. Clearly a lot of that money was spent in American fork canyon, but clearly, only a portion. Each July through September there is a shortage of parking in the timpanogos trailheads. It is a caricature of Federal ineptitude to see cars parked on the shoulders of the roads for a mile each way, above and below the trailheads when the group campsites (theater in the pines, and Altamont) are locked up. There is no rational reason to not open those parking lots to the public on peak days, if the group sites are not rented out.

Comment 13:

Another monumental failure in management on USFS and BLM land is the removal of grazing which results in the proliferation of weed infestations, loss of revenues, and more importantly tens of millions of dollars in resulting major fires which damage wildlife, watersheds, private property, and comes with a huge firefighting expense in the many tens of millions of dollars. Remember good management goes back to your original purpose of "Multiple Use"

I would hope that the USFS does not use this loss of the American Fork Canyon ill-gotten gain as an excuse to restrict access in terms of numbers of users, in place of the lost revenue. Remember why your organization exists. Service. WE the citizens own the land. Your organization, The U. S. Forest, SERVICE is there to serve we the people.

Again.. Thanks so much for your belated, but much appreciated compliance with 16 U.S.C. § 6802(d)(1)(A), (D) & (E). I had contemplated organizing an effort this summer to educate the public by distributing copies to users of American fork Canyon about the court decision prohibiting the Forest Service from charging these fees but your decision has made this effort unnecessary.

Please, please take the management objective of maximizing access and use. Way to much access is being closed off with the result being concentrating use and impacts on those reduced areas which are still open for use.

And thank you so much for taking comments.

Sincerely,

Compton

Comment 14:

Charge the fee. Our public lands are our collective legacy and I want to see them well-managed and maintained, not only for myself, but for my family for generations to come. I pay the fee with a smile and I know others that do as well. Thanks for all you do.

Comment 15:

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed changes to the American Fork Canyon-Alpine Loop Recreation Fee Area. The basis for my opposition is simple, the new area while greatly reduced in size continues to be an arbitrary and capricious one size fits all solution. That is if a person is parked along State Hwy 92, but not in developed Forest Service parking it is assumed that they are utilizing Forest Service developed facilities.

This assumption has been untrue since the initial implementation of the fee demo program. Both technical rock climbers and fishermen heavily utilize the canyon yet of the six amenities; picnic tables, trash receptacle, toilet, parking, interpretive signing and security none are required as they do not utilize picnic areas, developed trailheads, or destination visitor centers.

I would like to instead propose that the if fees are assessed on a site by site basis. If a person is parked at Gray Cliffs in the developed picnic area parking then a fee should be assessed. If a person is parked further up canyon along the state right-away then no fee should be assessed unless they are found to be using the picnic area,

Such as system has worked in Big Cottonwood Canyon at Storm Mountain Picnic Area for some 15 years. Climbers who park along the state right-away are allowed to pass through the picnic area on their way to climbs. However, if they do so little as set their pack on a picnic table they are obligated to pay the fee. The only facility that climbers are actively encourage to use sans fees are the restrooms. In discussions I have had in the past with the picnic area host management they have found the arrangement to work satisfactory. From time to time a few problems with climbers and the summer hosts not understanding the rules have occurred, but have been few and far between. Similar arrangements have been at other picnic areas in both Big and Little Cottonwood canyons.

Based this experience I believe that such a system should be put in place with in American Fork Canyon.

Sincerely,

Sanderson

Comment 16:

Dear Pleasant Grove Ranger District:

The Salt Lake Climbers Alliance appreciates the opportunity to comment on the USFS American Fork Canyon-Alpine Loop Recreation Fee Area Proposed Changes. The Salt Lake Climbers Alliance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit founded in 2002 with the mission to preserve access, encourage environmental stewardship, and educate climbers at rock climbing areas in the Wasatch. We are a membership-based organization and offer a joint membership with the national climbing advocacy group, the Access Fund, and represent climbers both locally and nationally. These comments are submitted jointly by the SLCA and Access Fund (AF).

In American Fork Canyon, thousands of rock climbing routes exists as referenced in "Climber's Guide to American Fork/Rock Canyon" by Bret and Stuart Ruckman. American Fork is a world class rock climbing destination and used frequently by climbers in Salt Lake, Park City, and the surrounding towns. Many SLCA members have climbed in these areas and will continue to do so in the future.

On behalf of its membership, the SLCA and AF would like to bring to light the following concerns regarding the Fee Re-Structure Proposal:

- The SLCA supports recreation fees when there is a direct correlation between the fee and improvements to trails and amenities in and around the climbing resource.
- The USFS should consider reinstituting a $3 day pass option. This option would appeal to our user group as many climbers using the American Fork rock climbing resource stay for only one day.
- The SLCA suggests a clear and easy payment structure to limit the amount of driving to fee station sites and confusion about what climbing areas are fee based and which are not. To this end, the SLCA suggests that the USFS and SLCA meet to discuss the locating of fee stations and how those locations relate to climbers' use of the climbing resource.

Thank you again for considering this input from the SLCA and please contact me with any further questions or concerns. We look forward to partnering to protect and enhance the places we enjoy recreating.

Sincerely,

Geisler

Salt Lake Climbers Alliance

Comment 17:

The purpose of fees:

1. it is a proven fact that when humans pay for something rendered (use of areas) they are more likely to take care of the areas
2. it is NOT a hardship on families to incorporate the outlay of fees into their cost for the planned trip or use.
3. fees are a sure protection of the areas from abuse and insure a written record of who is using the areas
4. it is important to monitor the use of areas. One way this is accomplished is by day passes, month passes, year passes. Persons should be ready and willing to be identified as the user of the areas. Only those persons who have an illegal agenda (ie, robbery, drugs, etc) will be for open use with no monitoring
5. speaking from experience, I worked in the BSA for 20 years in CA and we ALWAYS paid the fee entrance - for the day or for longer, whichever.
6. it is rather shortsighted to be concerned by the pollutions of autos on the flatland, and then to put forth no regulatory rules for the areas in question.
7. I find it most annoying to read the comments about how fees are impacting "their" use of areas, as if the areas were theirs alone. This is called the entitlement approach to community.
8. Perhaps, what is needed are not only fees, but some sort of penalties (ie cleanup, trail building, waterway cleanup, etc.) for those that violate the collection of fees and feel they are above the use of fees.

Pryor

Comment 18:

Dear Mr Resare,

I have been instructed by Jon Stansfield to direct comments on the substance of the American Fork fee change proposals to you. On July 16, 2013 I sent Mr Stansfield an email asking for some information clarifying the material published on the website about this proposal. I have not received the requested clarification, therefore I have insufficient information on which to base a comment. Please accept my July 16 message, pasted below, as my official comment, enter it into the record, and list me as an Interested Party for future communications.

Thank you.

<begin pasted quote>

I read with interest the recent articles in the SLC press about the changes being proposed for the American Fork Canyon HIRA and I have reviewed the materials posted at your website. I would like to submit a substantive and informed comment prior to the July 31 deadline, however there is insufficient information on which to base it. Can you please provide clarification regarding the following questions raised by your published information?

1. Under what provision of FLREA are the three "standalone EAF sites" (Cascade Springs Day Use Area, Silver Lake Flat Day Use Area, Upper Falls Picnic Area) authorized to charge EAFs? They are neither campgrounds nor highly developed boat launch/swimming facilities nor any of the other categories for which EAFs are allowed.
2. What provision of FLREA authorizes you to accept interagency and site-specific passes for EAF sites?
3. The following trailheads were previously listed as being within the HIRA. Since they are not mentioned in the current proposal, can you confirm that they are no longer fee sites?
    - Alta Dry Fork
    - Box Elder
    - Deer Flat
    - Granite Flat
    - Mt Timpanogos
    - Pittsburg Lake
    - Pole Line Pass
4. Is the Summit Trailhead listed in the current plan the same site as the Alpine Summit Trailhead previously listed as part of the HIRA?
5. Of the 14 SAF sites listed in your chart, five of them - 36% - do not have all six amenities required for charging a SAF. What provision of FLREA authorizes you to charge a fee at these sites?
6. Of the 14 SAF sites, seven of them - 50% - are trailheads, parking areas, dispersed camping, or staging areas for backcountry access. What accommodation will be made (as required by the 9th

Circuit Court of Appeals in Adams v USFS) for free parking at or near those sites for those who use them only to gain backcountry access, without using the facilities and services?

7. What is the nature of the site called "Horse Transfer Station"? This site was not previously listed as part of the HIRA and is not described on your website.
8. The Upper Falls Picnic Site was not previously listed as part of the American Fork Canyon HIRA and is not described on your website. When were fees approved for this site?

Benzar

Western Slope No-Fee Coalition

Answer:

Kitty,

Thank you for your interest in the proposed changes for the American Fork Canyon Recreation Fee Area. You may submit your comments on the substance of the proposal by July 31, 2013 to Duane Resare, Pleasant Grove/Spanish Fork District Recreation Staff Officer, at dresare@fs.fed.us.

Thanks,

Jon Stansfield

District Ranger

Pleasant Grove Ranger District

Comment 19:

I am currently, and have been for the past several years, an annual pass holder for American Fork Canyon/Alpine Loop, etc. Because I live close to the entrance to American Fork Canyon, I am willing to pay this fee, and have access to wherever I choose to go in the canyon. I do object to additional fees, or special fees to visit Silver Lake Flat, or Cascade Springs. If I purchase the annual pass that should allow me to visit anyplace I choose in the canyon.

It seems very confusing to me to be able to visit Tibble Fork for no fee, but if I choose to take my ATV to Silver Lake Flat, then I would be charged a fee.

Thanks,

Whittaker

Comment 20:

My only concern would be if you wanted to visit more than one of the stand-alone fee sites in a day, would you end up paying more than the standard fee currently in place? Otherwise it sounds like a good idea.

Henry

Comment 21:

Quick question,

If I choose to go up AF canyon for some fishing, but I DO NOT use any of the camping/restroom facilities, do I still need to pay the fees? The road itself is managed by my taxes and I should be able to use the road without paying canyon fees. Only if I use the amenities the fees are maintaining should I then have to pay the fee, correct?

I this is incorrect, can you please provide an explanation?

Thanks,

Magnusson

Alpine, UT

Comment 22:

We would approve of this change and as a result, be more willing to visit the cave and canyon on a regular basis.

McDonald

Sheely

Comment 23:

Sir:

I am writing to recommend a $2.00 per vehicle fee be charged for American Fork Canyon entry. It would help offset maintenance costs and work toward minimizing vandalism by requiring all vehicles stop before entering canyon. I recommend runners, walkers and bicyclists be allowed free access.

Thank you!

Comment 24:

The fees to get into or stay at National Parks is very low and could be doubled. Users should be the people who pay for the up keep and Park Rangers. However, I would like the receipt to include a list of the various expenses to operate the Park for each of the two most recent years where the fees are known. Give the users an idea of how much it costs for labor, fire control, construction, liability insurance, repair etc. and what those expenses are divided by the number of people who use that particular Park. I do not want the National Parks to close for lack of funding. I am old and the system gives me a good deal.

THANKS,

Warren

Comment 25:

I would like to see day only passes for the American Fork Canyon area.

Because the area is close to our metropolitan area, we use it for day hikes.

A fee per vehicle of $2 or $3 or even a $1 fee per person in the vehicle would be fairer.

Thank you

Drennan

Comment 26:

Although I wished the federal government would give more to parks, I happily pay to use AF canyon and the Mirror Lake highway every year. Please keep ALL fees. It's the price I'll pay to keep those areas pristine, conditioned, and not overrun.

I also am extremely disappointed in the continued use of motor bikes in the AF canyon area. Beautiful single track destroyed, rutted, and pulverized into powdery dust. Certain areas are fine like the dirt roads but my wilderness experience has been minimized by loud dusty motorbikes on too many occasions. Get them off the trails!!

Happy (when i don't get pushed off the trail by motor bikes) season pass holder,

Beckstead

Comment 27:

I think the current fee structure makes great sense. Please do not change it. Why?

- User pay fees make sense because not all tax payers use the area.

A couple of times a month I use the trails. It's fair for me to pay for my use.

- Trying to segment users by type of use will be a mess. Conformance will be a big problem.
- AF Canyon is a very well maintained park. Resources enable a great experience for visitors.

Haynes

Comment 28:

First of all. Comments on your page are not easy to leave. Most people's email will not automatically pull up your email address--comments cannot be left. An email address of phone number should be written and very obvious on the feedback page.

My main comment (which I'm sure you've heard for years) is the 3-day fee schedule. I'm sure you know that the vast majority of use of AF Canyon comes from local people who return home for the evening. There should be a one-day pass for two dollars.

Comment 29:

Private concessionaires and Timpanogas Cave area parking should absolutely be exempt, but there should be a modest ($3/day) fee to park and recreate elsewhere, and moderately increased special, heavy-use area fees. Otherwise, we will not be able to have service at restrooms and campsites.

Thank you for asking for comment!

Lawler, Oakley, Utah

Comment 30:

To whom it concerns,

I came across the article about the fees no longer being collected at the entrance of the canyon. As a climber and as someone who frequents the canyon on a regular basis, not paying a fee to spend a couple hours in the canyon gives me more incentive to spend more time in the canyon. I have no problem paying the $45 for the annual pass as I fully support giving back to the areas that I use for recreation. LNT. I just hope that the people who use the canyon more now that there is no initial fee to enter the canyon keeps the canyon in the beautiful state that it is. I would hate to see a decrease in fee revenue keep the Forest Service from being able to maintain facilities, trails, and recreation areas and protect the wildlife. Thank you!

Ashby

Momentum Indoor Climbing

Comment 31:

There was an article:

http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/news/56361317-78/lake-forest-mirror-american.html.csp

Stating that there would no longer be a fee for climbers (specifically we were at the Division Wall). However on Saturday, 5/25, we were still charged $6.00. The young lady working the station knew nothing about the elimination of the fee. So are we or are we not supposed to be charged a fee to climb in AF? Thanks.

Comment 32:

I am a bit unclear about these changes.

Granted, I have a year pass for AF Canyon, and will likely continue to do so, as I like to camp, etc, but I also take up friends in their trucks for daytime trips as well.

So, my confusion is that we like to go to places like Forest Lake, Mineral Basin, etc. Even some the couple trails on the other side of Silver Lake Flat. I noticed that none of these are marked with yellow on the map, but often we will stop at Tibble Fork parking to air down before the dirt roads. Am I understanding this correct that if we do not use the facilities, parking, camping, etc at the yellow marked places (basically Tibble Fork would be the only place we'd pass through), there would be no fee? If we stopped to air down in Tibble Fork parking, would we then need to pay the fee?

What about camping at non-yellow locations? There's a few camping spots in Forest Lake, along the dirt road, on the way to Mineral Basin, etc. They are not marked with yellow either.

Thanks much,

Greg