

**COLORADO RECREATION RESOURCE ADVISORY  
FEDERAL LANDS RECREATION ENHANCEMENT ACT  
NEW FEE OR FEE CHANGE  
PROPOSAL FORM**

**1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Name of Project Area/Site: SAGUACHE BUNKHOUSE

Project Contact Person: Kristi Murphy

Position Title Recreation Specialist Phone #: 719-655-2547

Forest: Rio Grande NF County: Saguache

Ranger District: Saguache Congressional District: 3rd

BLM Field Office     

Site Type (Cabin, Campground, Area, etc): Cabin

Capacity: 6 Season of Use: October-April

Fee Type: Standard Amenity      Expanded Amenity X Special Rec. Permit     

Proposed Action: New fee X Change of fee     

Existing Fee: \$  
Proposed Fee: \$ 50.00  
Date of last fee increase:     

Summary of **benefits** the public receives or will receive:

- Nostalgia of staying in a rustic cabin.
- Escaping physical and social pressures.
- Improved health maintenance.
- Greater respect for cultural heritage.
- A secluded site for family and friends to gather.
- Positive contribution to local economy.
- Improve maintenance of physical facilities.

Facilities/Amenities Checklist (check all that apply, list each site separately):

Site Name: Saguache Bunkhouse

1. X Designated developed parking
2. X Permanent toilet facility: X Flush      Vault
3.      Permanent trash receptacle
4.      Interpretive sign, exhibit or kiosk
5. X Picnic tables
6. X Security services

Other Amenities:      Garbage Removal, X Paved Access Road, X Drinking Water,      Information/Directional signs, X Shower/Bath House,      Tent Pads, X Electricity,      RV Hookups,      Fire Rings/Grills, X Other: Telephone, Satellite Television

Photo(s):



Map (HIRA's show boundaries and ID amenities):

Setting & General Description (include description of the site, natural resources/features, scenic values, recreational attractions, amenities, current/projected visitation, etc.):

**The Saguache Bunkhouse** is a working Forest Service facility that serves for half of the year as temporary quarters for the Ranger District's seasonal workforce. The building is one of several in the immediate area that once served as the Saguache Ranger District's headquarters. The building has many interesting historical qualities and was built during the Great Depression by the Civilian Conservation Corps. This facility is located in the tiny, quiet town of Saguache, Colorado with a population of just over 400. Being in town and surrounded by many other historic buildings, renters will have access to all the modern amenities and attractions of the local community. The Bunkhouse itself features electricity, indoor plumbing, cable T.V., radiant heat, a shower, bathroom, and full kitchen. Despite modern convenience in an historic, small-town setting, visitors to the Saguache Bunkhouse can choose to be far removed from civilization and surrounded by some of Colorado's least explored backcountry in just a matter of minutes.

NRHP Eligibility (Cabins/Structures): YES Archeologist's concurrence: X Y \_\_\_ N

Comments: **Saguache Ranger Station, bunkhouse (5SH1468) is officially eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).** State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) consultation is needed prior to any alterations, removals, changes in landscaping, or any other action affecting the integrity of any feature of the site will also need SHPO consultation. Replacement of any element (such as roofs, windows, or porches) would generally have to be in-kind unless specifically approved by the SHPO.

**2. CURRENT AND PROJECTED REVENUES and ANNUAL OPERATION & MAINTENANCE COSTS**

Currently, there are no significant revenues associated with this facility. It typically serves as an administrative site and primary bunk-housing for seasonal employees. Projected revenues and occupancy are based on a comparison of our other rental cabins on the District, scheduled improvements to the facility and future marketability, close proximity to a major U.S. highway and located in a small community that provides for year-round access.

See Attachment A: Revenue/Cost projection spreadsheet.

**3. COST OF BACKLOG WORK NEEDS:**

|                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Roads/Parking Areas: | \$ _                    |
| Building/Facilities: | \$ <u>19,450</u>        |
| Associated Trails:   | \$ _                    |
| Signs:               | \$ _                    |
| Other (list):        | \$ _                    |
| <b>Total:</b>        | <b>\$ <u>19,450</u></b> |

**4. FEE COLLECTION METHOD AND ESTIMATED FEE COLLECTION COSTS**

**Method: NRRS Reservations (Required)**

**Costs: \$0, there are no costs to the Forest for reservations under NRRS**

Note: No collection costs are incurred for sites under the National Recreation Reservation Service (NRRS).

**5. FEE DETERMINATION PROCESS SUMMARY**

Fair Market Value Comparison (compare similar fees at other FS, state, federal, or private recreation sites in the area with similar facilities & services):

**Facility type(s):** Cabins, Motel, Ranch  
**Number of facilities compared:** 13  
**Proximity to project area:** within 200 miles  
**Price range:** \$55 - \$450  
**Selected fee and method:** \$50.00 nightly

Based on a Fair Market Value comparison of government and privately owned cabin rental operations, the Rio Grande National Forest proposes the following rates for its 8 new cabin rental opportunities and 3 existing cabin rentals (Brewery, Carnero, Ellwood).

| <b>Operator</b>              | <b>Location</b>      | <b>Amenities</b>                             | <b>Proposed Nightly Fee</b>       |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Brewery Creek Guard Station  | vic. Bonanza, CO     | Rustic, Propane Appliances/Hand Pumped Water | \$50 (Proposed)<br>\$35 (Current) |
| Carnero Guard Station        | vic. Carnero Pass    | Rustic, Propane Appliances/Hand Pumped Water | \$50 (Proposed)<br>\$35 (Current) |
| Ellwood Cabin                | vic. Summitville, CO | Rustic, Propane Lights/Wood Stove/No Water   | \$50 (Proposed)<br>\$20 (Current) |
| Upper Crossing Guard Station | vic. Saguache, CO    | Standard Municipal                           | \$75                              |
| Stone Cellar Guard Station   | vic. Saguache Park   | Rustic, Propane Appliances/Hand Pumped Water | \$50                              |
| Saguache Bunkhouse           | Saguache, CO         | Standard Municipal                           | \$50                              |
| Alder Creek Guard Station    | South Fork, CO       | Standard Municipal                           | \$50                              |
| Fitton Cabin                 | vic. Bennett Peak    | Rustic, Wood Stove                           | \$50                              |
| River Springs Guard Station  | vic. Antonito, CO    | Standard Municipal                           | \$75                              |
| Platoro Cabin #1             | Platoro, CO          | Standard Municipal                           | \$75                              |
| Platoro Cabin #2             | Platoro, CO          | Standard Municipal                           | \$75                              |

Special economic considerations were made in developing this price structure relative to fair market value, impacts to private operators (competition, capacity, demand, and market segmentation) and impact to local Forest visitors, especially as it relates to the depressed economy of the San Luis Valley. Although the market could easily bear higher rental rates, proposed rental prices have intentionally been set within reason for Valley residents.

**Comments:** A Fair Market Value comparison of numerous cabin rental operators was conducted in order to determine appropriate fees for current and proposed rental cabins on the Rio Grande National Forest. The only government agency that offers rental cabins within our market segment area (within 200 miles of the Forest) is the U.S. Forest Service. Cabins with little or no amenities (i.e. no drinking water) rent at an average of \$50/night. Cabins with significant amenities (i.e. electricity) rent for as much as \$150/night.

In the private sector, there are relatively few cabin rental operators located in the San Luis Valley; the exception being South Fork. Private rental cabins differ significantly from Forest Service cabins in several ways, most notably that they tend to be resort-like with a number of cabins located within that private property and are almost all located along major highways and offer most standard amenities to highway travelers and

vacationers. By comparison, Forest Service Guard Stations tend to be individual cabins located in remote areas of the National Forest well away from many standard services.

6. PLANNED USE OF FEES RETURNED TO SITE (list by priority; include daily O&M if appropriate; add to list if appropriate)

1. Roof Repairs.
2. Replace Vinyl Floor
3. Replace old appliances.
4. Interior furnishing upgrades.

7. CUSTOMER/PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MECHANISM TYPES

- Site Monitoring
- Customer Survey Card
- Comment Log / Cabin Guest Book
- Newspaper Articles
- Website Listing
- E-mails
- Direct Mail
- Personal Contacts
- On-site Posting
- Other (list): County Commissioner Meetings, Congressional Briefings, Fed. Register Notice

See Attachment B: Summary of Public Involvement for details.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RESULTS

See Attachment B: Summary of Public Involvement for details.

9. ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENTS

List and reference additional information (documents) that can be provided upon request to document this project proposal and the public response.

INFRA Deferred Maintenance  
News Releases  
Recreation Facility Analysis  
Federal Register Notice  
Public Comments  
Fair Market Value Study  
Archaeologist's Report

