

CALIFORNIA RECREATION RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

June 23-24, 2010
Mammoth Lakes, CA
Draft Meeting Notes

June 23, 2010 Field Trip

Members Present: Don Amador, Linda McMillan, Paul McFarland, Danna Stroud, Monte Hendricks, Charlie Wilson

Members Absent: Bob Warren, Nathan Rangel

Designated Federal Official: Marlene Finley

BLM Ex Officio: Mike Ayers, Acting

Forest Service Staff: Tamara Wilton, Frances Enkoji

Forest Service Representatives: Jim Upchurch, Jeff Marsolais, Mike Schlafmann, Nancy Upham, Katy Kabbe, Matt Peterson, Maki Grossnick, David Ilse

The group met at the Sierra Nevada Lodge in Mammoth Lakes at 8:00 am and after a Welcome from Forest Supervisor Jim Upchurch, and introductions, they boarded the bus for the Mammoth Mtn Ski Area Adventure Center.

At the Adventure Center, Deputy District Ranger Mike Schlafmann, Forest Recreation Staff Officer Jeff Marsolais, and Mammoth Lakes Tourism and Recreation Director Danna Stroud all gave background information about Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, which is the second largest in the nation. They noted that the Inyo National Forest ranks from 5th to 7th in recreation use in the nation. They also gave background on Reds Meadow and the shuttle system, and the agreement with the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA) who now runs the shuttles. There was discussion about how the Mammoth area transit system and ESTA have future plans to tie in to regional transit systems such as YARTS, the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation system which would then cover the Eastern Sierras. Marlene Finley brought up issues with scheduling that need to be resolved, but complimented the Inyo Forest and Town of Mammoth Lakes for their forward thinking in making local and regional transit systems a reality.

Next stop was at Minaret Vista, where a recreation crew was hard at work getting the vista point ready to open to visitors the next day. Heavy snow and a very late winter have delayed the opening of most recreation facilities in the Mammoth area. The shuttle into Reds Meadow was scheduled to begin on the June 24th. Jeff Marsolais gave an orientation to the group as to what they were looking at from this spectacular vantage point. He discussed the history of the Devils Postpile National Monument, which is managed by the Park Service, and the joint planning efforts currently being undertaken by the Park Service and Forest Service. Seamless service to the public and

management of the resources is the goal. Of the 55,000 acres that make up the Upper San Joaquin area, only 800 acres are managed by the Park Service at the Postpile. Mike Schlafmann talked about the management of this vista point and how the goal for rehabbing the site will be to separate cars and people so that people have a better experience and a better view, without cars in the way. Many visitors just come to the Vista and never enter the valley. He discussed the difficulty in maintaining the site due to high winds and snow levels. Minarets Vista is outside the Reds Meadow fee area and provides orientation to the valley and scenic opportunities for visitors. Landscape Architect Katy Kabbe discussed the plans for the site including increased interpretation orienting people to what is down in the Reds Meadow Valley, increased disabled accessibility, and the potential construction of a disabled accessible trail out on to the ridge. There are plans for an interagency design charette later on this summer.

Mike Schlafmann then discussed the reason for the Reds Meadow shuttle with the primary reason being safety of the visitors, due to the very windy narrow road, and also lack of parking down in the valley. He also informed the group that all visitors ride the shuttle bus but there is exception vehicles allowed in the valley and this intensive management is needed to protect the ecosystem and to provided a natural experience for visitors. He said that there are over 400 species of plants and animals in the valley in addition to 10 fly fishing outfitters and guides, half dozen hiking outfitter and guides, Disabled Sport Eastern Sierra outfitter and guide, two packs stations along with the many visitors. There are many types of recreation happening at once so the Forest is trying to be smart about facilities and improvements to support visitors and provide an outstanding experience. One goal is to establish more trails for people to walk on down in the valley.

Jeff Marsolais gave an orientation to the fee proposal which would be presented to the RRAC the next day. He explained how the transportation system currently works.

Jeff introduced Debbie Nelson of the District Recreation Staff who has worked with the Reds Meadow shuttle system and entrance station for almost 30 years. She explained that 66% of visitors to the Mammoth area spend at least one day going to Reds Meadow. Average length of stay is 4 ½ hours.

Next stop was at Devils Postpile National Monument down in Reds Meadow Valley. Jeff Marsolais explained how the Forest Service and Park Service work together in management and planning. He used a map of the area to describe what is at each of the sites around the valley. He described Pumice Flat as a hub for interpretation and scientific research. Mark Andrews, Acting Superintendent of the Postpile emphasized how they are working on seamless management. He also reflected on the history of the monument. Maureen Finnerty from the Park Service then talked about the upcoming Interpretive Master Plan that they will be working on, and working with the Forest Service for operational efficiencies. They will continue to help staff the Welcome Center in town and will have increased presence at the Adventure Center at Mammoth Mountain. They want to provide a holistic experience for the visitor since their experience begins in the Town of Mammoth Lakes. They want to make people comfortable to be away from their car. As part of the Interpretive Master Plan they will

be working on exhibits for the Adventure Center and Minaret Vista – this will be done collaboratively with the Forest Service. She reflected on the fact that the Park Service is putting many more people on the ground these days, and are delighted that Friends of the Inyo will be providing volunteers to help out this summer. Both agencies will have personnel throughout the Valley this season as a direct result of shifting shuttle to ESTA which allows personnel to be shifted to the valley as opposed to managing shuttle and fee station. She then handed out the latest edition of the interagency newspaper format brochure that is published by the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association (ESIA).

On July 6, 2011 they will be celebrating the Devils Postpile Centennial, working with the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Sequoia Natural History Association, and ESIA.

Maureen then gave some brief natural history of the Postpile and the group headed down to see it for themselves.

Once back on the bus, a quick trip was made to drive past Reds Meadow Pack Station and Resort and then a brief stop at Sotcher Lake. At Sotcher Jeff Marsolais discussed the amenities that were provided at the different day use areas in the valley and talked about how the bus fare and the fee the public pays all works together to manage capacity. Jim Upchurch discussed the advantages of mass transit in the Valley and how without it they would need to build lots of infrastructure.

At Lee Vining, Mike Schlafmann gave an orientation to the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area and its linkage to Yosemite National Park through the transition zone of Lee Vining Canyon. The Forest Service inherited most of the campgrounds in Lower Lee Vining Canyon – and they were, and are not, in good condition. One mutual NPS/USFS goal is to have these campgrounds pick up the overflow from the Yosemite National Park. The two agencies are taking advantage of opportunities to collaborate on administration and recreation management. They are working on transit opportunities and coordinating on the planning for the Tuolumne Meadows area and Lee Vining Canyon. They are currently working on a Highway 120 Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan, which encompasses the Lee Vining Canyon National Forest Scenic Byway and the National Scenic Byway through the Park. The focus now is on packaging opportunities and looking for funding. Improvement of the campgrounds is key to providing what is envisioned as the portal to Mono Basin Scenic Area and Yosemite National Park. Linda McMillan asked the question about fishermen and ice climbers and other campers who love the campgrounds just as they are. She wanted to know what they thought of this plan. Jeff said they had heard from the public that they don't want a monoculture of family campgrounds and to look at a diversity of uses. Five sites were acquired, looking at improving two of the sites, eliminating the fee at one site and converting to day use and are working on the planning and design for the other two sites. They are working with the public in design charettes.

The next stop was at Aspen Campground where Mike Schlafmann talked about the condition of the campgrounds that were inherited by the Forest Service through a land exchange. He said they needed a better configuration to utilize space, for example they have roads that go nowhere, roads in meadow and pit toilets, etc. Jeff Marsolais and

Katy Kabbe talked a little further about the plans for the campgrounds and the improvements that have all ready been completed and Jim Upchurch stated that the Forest Service wants to do what is best for the land and resources. He said the area Federal land managers are looking at the whole ecosystem and providing the same experience as the National Park. Katy talked about looking at how to provide access to the river, while also protecting the resources. She said a number of alternatives are being considered. She explained that the Forest Service is looking at the canyon as a whole for planning purposes. Mike added that they are designing to the strength of each campground site.

Linda McMillan pointed out that the campgrounds are already serving as overflow for Yosemite, and she said that she is glad that the Forest Service is holding on to the management of these campgrounds and not putting them on to concession. Don Amador agreed and said that the Forest Service is always more professional.

The final stop of the Field Trip was at the Twin Lakes Overlook in the Mammoth Lakes Basin. Jeff Marsolais and Mike Schlafmann described the collaborative planning efforts that are taking place with the public throughout the Mammoth area. The group had driven past the trail being completed from the Town of Mammoth to the Lakes Basin. Linda McMillan asked what the town is doing to educate visitors on ecosystems. Mike said the town is 24 square miles and 20 miles of it borders National Forest. In the last few years the Town has been working with non-profits for sustainable recreation. There was discussion on sustainable ecotourism and the need for this to protect and use fragile ecosystems. Jeff stated that they want the RRAC to be involved in developing proposals so they aren't presented with something out of left field, and asked for suggestions on how this can happen. Don Amador said he understands the need to have plans early so encouraged the FS to start early with engaging groups and begin collaboration. Linda McMillan suggested that the RRAC members can speak to their communities earlier rather than coming from the government. There was good discussion about proactive planning and collaboration with stakeholders. Jim Upchurch stated that in all that we have seen today and all we have discussed that fees are just a part of the answer. He stated that the Forest wanted to make the day useful for showing challenges and solutions and that he hoped they felt the money they collect will be put to good use and that they can be accountable to the public.

The tour ended back at the Sierra Nevada Lodge at 5:30 pm.

June 24, 2010 Sierra Nevada Lodge

Members Present: Don Amador, Linda McMillan, Paul McFarland, Danna Stroud, Monte Hendricks, Charlie Wilson, Bob Warren, and Nate Rangel (via teleconference)

Members Absent: None

Designated Federal Official: Marlene Finley

BLM Ex Officio: Mike Ayers, Acting

Forest Service Staff: Katy Kabbe, David Ilse, Maki Grossnik, Nancy Upham, Matt Peterson, Jeff Marsolais, Mike Schlafmann, Jon Kazmierski, Priscilla Summers, Valerie Guardia, Tamara Wilton, Frances Enkoji

BLM Staff: Tracy Rowland

Meeting began with introductions of RRAC members and the audience.

The RRAC approved the meeting notes from last RRAC meeting that was held on May 13, 2009 Motion to accept was made by Monte, second by Linda. All voted yes and the notes were approved.

Marlene asked for the opportunity to reflect on Inyo field trip.

Comments from RRAC members:

- Complimented the forest on setting standard.
- Inyo has set bar for how they approach programs and future of implementation. Good at engaging public and more importantly strategic thinking. Hopefully other forests are looking at as a model. Forest looks at opportunities as a business model. Looking out at the future (2010).
- Good positive outlook focused on the land and the people.
- Impressed with improvements in Lee Vining canyon, both ecologically and for recreationists. Liked Inyo was looking at future heritage sites.
- Commend interagency efforts and strategizing together.

Agenda was approved by Marlene and Bob. They agreed to set time to discuss written comments submitted.

Marlene gave updates from the Forest Service. She said the FS is sensitive to current economics. When there is an opportunity for legal discretion relative to fees, the FS can delay implementation. The FS may delay new proposals as well. In the cases of new recreational opportunities for the public such as cabins and lookouts, we may go forward with implementing fee proposals, but implementing fee proposals at other sites may be delayed. The FS is working on the Forest Planning Rule and the public has wanted to see more emphasis on recreation and have more opportunities for input.

There will be a round table in DC next month. Registration is via web site. Marlene also gave information on the Presidents 'Great Outdoors' program announcement.

Michael Ayers shared a BLM brochure that had pictures of various fee projects and a description of the improvements that were made using fee dollars.

Tamara Wilton provided a comparison showing trends and where Region 5 stands this fiscal year (FY). Spread sheet was broken down by forest, FY expenses, and FY revenue. There are fluctuations in collections and expenses due to when payments and collections hit the books. Overall fee revenue is up from 2009. Special Uses revenue is down (FY09). Six year average is about \$6.9 million regionally. Bob Warren asked question about revenues of the Shasta-Trinity and how they're spending more money than the report shows they are collecting. Tamara explained that their fee collections from each year are retained until expended and carry forward each year. Paul McFarland asked where pass sales are up and Tamara answered the San Bernardino, Angeles, Inyo and Eldorado NFs. She explained in Fiscal Year 2010 there were changes in FS accounting for recreation fees. The change for Interagency Passes: 95% of funds retained on forest where sold (Fee Demo Site Specific-FDDS account) and 5% to the Regional Office (Fee Demo Agency Specific-FDAS account). Prior to FY10 80% was retained on forest where sold (FDDS) and 20% to the WO (FDAS). Beginning in FY10 each Regional Office is going to provide 1% to the WO to support national FDAS, for envelopes, photo contest for interagency passes, and other WO support national services. Danna Stroud asked if the public has been made aware of changes in formula and Tamara responded that it had not. Bob Warren asked if as a committee we can make a recommendation to make that information available at the point of sale. Don Amador stated that it would be good news to share with users. Bob Warren suggested use of signage would be good. Linda McMillan felt that in the Yosemite area, with new visitor information, and welcome centers, regional tourist centers would be good points of sale.

Tamara gave a briefing on the FS Point of Sale system. This is a new nationwide system with a pilot on Angeles and San Bernardino NF. It is computer based and one of the goals is to reduce cash handling by use of plastic cards. There is built in check scanner and it makes revenue collection and depositing more efficient for the forests. Implementation may begin in October. They plan on testing hand held collection devices for the Adventure Pass. Danna asked since you are capturing data and information is there any thoughts to use for further use in marketing? Tamara responded that Agency is very sensitive to personal information. Bob Warren said that you can request to use personal information. Marlene Finley responded that the FS would have to go through the Office of Management and Budget. Linda McMillan suggested that maybe an additional card with a thank -you and some information as well as the information that 95% of the funds stay on Forest could be used.

Tamara let the RRAC know that all reservations need to be made through the National Reservation System. We will be moving Wilderness reservations to the NRS. She used Desolation Wilderness as an example, they are moving to NRS in the fall. Price

charged for reservations varies depends on if walk-in, call-in, or online. Campgrounds have a different pricing structure for reservations.

Tamara Wilton presented a spreadsheet that displayed predicted versus actual revenue by Forest. The RRAC had asked for this comparison at their last meeting. The economy hasn't really changed folks desire to camp. Bob Warren said that National Parks reservations are up.

Don asked about the Plumas' improvements: Tamara stated that campers appreciated additional face time and cleaner bathrooms

Tamara stated it was difficult to predict revenue when going from a free to a fee campground. Forests use their experience with other fee campgrounds to project revenue.

Tamara displayed a power point presentation on FDAS fund and what is being done with that revenue. When recreation fees are collected 95% stays on forest 5% is deposited the Regional office FDAS account. That 5% is managed by the R5 Fee Board reporting to Regional Forester.

Bob asked how many students have become full time employees and are they meeting the desire to increase diversity? Tamara answered that students have become employees and they are meeting diversity needs. Michael Ayers mentioned and commended the FS Central California Consortium program which is aimed at meeting these diverse needs.

Start Public Comment Period

Bob wants the public to be able to speak after each proposal.

Kitty Benzar (phone): Submitted written comments about Dumont Dunes, San Joaquin River proposal. She questions the timing of the BLM briefing paper, which was dated March 2010, but was not posted until June 2010. Raised question about back dating, and that BLM has not done due diligence. Media coverage was single line in the newspaper. She requests that this is denied. Not opposed to fees, but questioning the timing considering the economic atmosphere.

Dick Holiday of the California Desert District Advisory Council (phone): Agrees with Kitty. There was little effort to inform the public. Not on website or in newspaper. Need to get public comment before passing fee. By requiring every vehicle to pay a fee, it is essentially a de facto entry fee. At the Imperial Sand Dunes, 35% to 40% paid to contractor, with 50% going to administration, and not to the ground. Suggests that BLM reviews the percentage of fees collected, and where these fees are being spent.

Peter Wiechers handed out packets to RRAC members, including a letter submitted by him requesting that Region 5 suspend fee increases on the Sequoia NF. He questioned where funds are being spent and listed twelve problems. He included discussions from past RRAC meeting, and read meeting notes quoting Tamara and Tina's discussion

regarding accounting system. Mr. Wiechers stated that the Inyo Forest Supervisor talked the day before about loss of funds and he showed a graph that shows the FS budget increased. He read an article from the Bakersfield newspaper. Showed a spreadsheet where the Kernville numbers don't add up. The spreadsheet was changed on the forest website, and there was no explanation of the "new" numbers. Request that the Sequoia NF be put on probation, and that every forest post their recreation fee accounting to the internet.

Walt Atwood (Phone from Pennsylvania): Comments that it is a good idea to have a teleconference, but he is having difficulty hearing RRAC. He wasn't able to get on the RRAC website. Kitty Benzar provided the documentation with him. The Forest Service needs to try harder to maintain the website and make sure the public can get involved. In regards to the Black Mountain Lookout (Plumas NF), why would agency say they are investing time and funding into facility when they are just leaving a pit toilet? Why wouldn't the Forest Service use a composting toilet? Consideration is requested before action is taken FS webcast for fires should be used as a template for recreation and planning because it is a good form of outreach. He hopes to have meeting by teleconference in the future.

Nate Rangel confirmed inability to access the information online.

Dick (phone): Suggested that public comments are allowed on each proposal. Suggested a way to conserve time was to only talk about things not on agenda during this public comment time. Feels that the RRAC process is in danger and needs to be addressed. Appointment process for members is slow. The back log is getting worse and needs to be addressed. Need to speed up the process, and have regularly scheduled meetings and possibly longer meetings. Need time to fully consider proposals. Region needs to set standards for projects and involving the public. Forests should increase the amount of public participation. Fees will not be able to cover costs in the future. Need to take on business approach. Advertise and look at sources of revenue. Increase retail.

Marlene appreciates feedback on teleconference. Apologize for shut down on Forest Service website. Website shut down due to a security breach. Teleconference is new and we'll work on the technology glitches.

Proposal Review

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	R-RAC Recommendation
Dumont Dunes, Barstow Field Office, BLM, Special Recreation Permit Restructure	Fee structure change to eliminate Weekly Holiday Pass, Annual Recreation Pass-Holidays not included, and Pass used	Proposal Postponed

	in lieu of paying for each holiday used. New fee schedule of \$120.00 for Annual Recreation Pass, Weekly Recreation Pass \$30.00 and Weekly Recreation Pass on site purchase \$50.00	
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Discussion & Questions:

- Michael Ayers postponed presenting this proposal. Will restructure before presenting, not actually a fee increase. Just go to an annual pass, weekly pass and on-site pass. Will go through appropriate advisory council.
- Don said user groups concerned with agency transparency and public outreach was not up to standard and suggested same process as FS. Mike Ayers said they would look in to it.
- Paul concurred with Don's comments and reminded BLM that this had happened before.
- Monte echoed and thanked BLM for postponing.

San Joaquin River Gorge Special Recreation Management Area, Bakersfield Field Office, BLM, New Standard Amenity, Expanded Amenity Fees	<p>New Standard Amenity of \$5.00 per vehicle, Annual Pass \$25-\$50.</p> <p>New Expanded Amenity Fees of \$10 per single site, \$15 per double site, \$5 second vehicle fee, group camp \$175 per day, equestrian camp \$25 per day, Learning Center rental \$300 per day, guided interpretive/educational activities \$15 per person half day/\$20 per person full day</p>	Don Amador motions to approve, Monte Hendricks seconds. All approved with unanimous vote except that annual pass was specified at \$40.
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Discussion & Questions:

- Bob asked Tracy to explain her public involvement process before she presents the proposal and if it is sufficient she can continue presenting her proposal.
- Tracy explained the public involvement for the proposal. Presented to the

Central CA Resource Advisory Committee. Press releases two weeks prior to public meeting May 18 and 19 in Prather and Clovis and published in three newspapers. Follow up was in Fresno Bee June 10th. Briefing paper was not put on website until last week. Notice was posted on site. Comment cards were made available on site starting day after public meeting. Two letters received which did not oppose. Tracy read from a couple of comments two pro, one con. One local person was opposed to fees because he is involved with search and rescue and thought it would hinder those events. But she explained to him that they have an agreement with the local sheriff department. Commenter was then okay with proposal. Another didn't want to see too much development, wanted it left primitive.

- Don asked what RAC said and Tracy said they approved proposal.
- Bob asked to explain the interface with school groups. Tracy talked about programs and working with the Sierra, Fresno and Madera schools. Doing them since 1996. Won a national award and discussed working with education standards and a volunteer force. Just started expanding last year. On second five year agreement with group to make sure the programs are grade-level appropriate. Tracy spoke of work with low income school groups. Able to market to larger area. Do not charge them; schools are exempt from area fee. This year, they did charge a special use permit fee, \$5/student. They were ok with that because they felt it is worth it for the experience they gain. School groups entering on their own will pay a fee – if they are not a sponsored group, under special user permit.
- Bob mentioned someone was opposed because a question about how the schools will be treated.
- Bob asked if there was criteria for notice required time period before proposal is reviewed by RRAC. Tracy said Federal Register notice has not been published and that BLM process was to wait until RRAC recommended implementation before publishing in the Federal Register. Marlene read verbatim from law relative to this question.
- Danna asked about timing of briefing paper in relation to public meeting and press release and if there was information that was not presented in public meeting or press release. Tracy said everything in briefing paper was presented in one form or another at the public meeting.
- Paul asked to clarify what was being voted on today; did it include the interpretation fees? Paul said he did not see it listed anywhere or specified. Tracy said it was and was under the expanded amenity fee in the business plan on page 41.
- Don asked if briefing paper was presented to Central RAC and Tracy said it was and they approved.
- Public comment period-Kitty Benzar – asked date notice published in Fresno Bee and about the timeline for public comment and was it met, where does the money come for school groups? She also stated that the notice appeared on Monday the 21st. She said that the Federal Register is

required for advanced notice for the public. Kitty said that this would be establishing a new HIRA and that was controversial. Bob clarified that it was public comment period on the proposal not a question and answer period. Bob asked for clarification on laws and bylaws on Federal Register Notice and Marlene read from the bylaws and said that BLM met the requirements.

- Public comment period-Dick Holiday said that he thought the public deserves as much notice as possible. BLM is prohibited from charging an entrance fee and he didn't see anything about San Joaquin Canyon proposal in the Federal Register Notice about this meeting agenda. Public comment period closed.
- Danna asked how many people attended the two public meetings and Tracy responded 3 at each meeting. She said local community is well aware of the proposal and she talks to visitors and has contacted 70-80% of the visitors and discussed proposal. Most responded favorably about the fee and were surprised there was no fee now. When was the notice published in the Fresno Bee? Tracy responded she was not sure of date but that the other two were published a week before the meetings. There was a meeting at Prather at the local school district and another at Clovis at the police department office. The meetings were held 6-8pm in the evening.
- Nate said he had nothing to add.
- Bob asked for vote on if BLM met the requirement for public notice. All voted yes so he said to proceed with presenting proposal.
- Tracy presented same proposal that was presented to public and discussed location and environment. It is currently managed as a special recreation management area with existing facilities and toilets. She described visitation, financial investments, operating costs, fees for vehicles and annual pass.
- Danna asked, at group camp is the 60 days or groups? Answer was 60 groups.
- Bob asked why the use number in estimate was lower than presented in historical use. Tracy said the numbers are down this year and felt it was a reasonable conservative estimate. Put in a traffic counter to help with estimates and made estimates based on what they have logged so far.
- Bob also asked for clarification on vehicle fee waiver. Tracy answered that there is no vehicle fee waiver. The fee is for camping. Camping is \$10 for single site, \$15 for double site. Bob has gone on record being opposed to extra vehicle fees. He is more comfortable to charge for each vehicle or include in the campsite. Don supports more simplification. He would like to see all the fees included in a camping fee and not deal with all the separate vehicle fees.
- Danna asked if there is a \$5.00 charge for every vehicle using the group camp. Tracy said that because they are under a use permit, the fee would be waived.
- Danna asked about Pole Barn and if vehicles are charged for this? Tracy

said was included in the \$300 fee and that the Field Manager wants to rent this space under special use permit due to insurance.

- Don said he leans towards simplification. He liked the \$10 fee including parking.
- Tracy clarified that the Pole Barn and group sites have separate gated access. There is a central location for fee collection via an iron ranger.
- Paul asked if there was an entrance kiosk? Tracy said there was no kiosk and that most folks have to go through a pinch point at the top of the canyon where informational signage can be located.
- Tracy continued with presentation, moving onto discussion about the Annual Pass. Linda asked if the Annual Pass would be just for this area, and if fees would go straight into the account. Tracy answered yes and yes. Linda mentioned geotourism in Yosemite and encouraged BLM to look in to. Tracy stated that they are considering ecotourism, heritage tourism, and geotourism. Linda expressed that the idea of improving trails and connecting people to this resource is very important.
- Don expressed frustration that few showed up to the public meeting (three members of the public). He said shame on recreationists.
- Monte asked if they were voting on an annual fee and Bob said yes. He also expressed being uncomfortable with agency process (i.e. “slipped through the crack”) it causes discomfort with public. He wants to make sure that we are doing our due diligence to get information out to the public, doesn't like that the briefing paper was only posted on their website last week.
- Paul appreciates written support from public, as it is very helpful and cuts through a lot of perception issues. Tracy stated that she has partner support letters, but she didn't bring them.
- Bob expressed being uncomfortable on voting on a range (i.e. \$25-\$50 Annual Fee), and proposes voting on a set amount and proposed \$40.00 for the Annual Pass.
- Public Comment Period– Kitty Benzar submitted written comments. Interagency passes must be accepted. Yes, interagency passes will be accepted. What about senior or access passes? These passes will be accepted. Tracy answered that these passes will be accepted. Will bicycles be counted as vehicles? Bicycles will not be counted as vehicles. Bicycles, equestrian, and hikers will not be charged.
- Public Comment Period- Dick Holiday – Charging vehicle fees is and entrance fee and BLM cannot charge entrance fee. Marlene clarified what standard amenity fee can be charged for, and that a standard amenity fee can be charged per vehicle as long as required amenities are available, and they are. Public comment period closed.
- Bob still concerned about \$10 camping fee including parking. Proposes to modify the proposal to be a \$5 camping fee and a \$5 vehicle fee. Don is concerned about changing the proposal because this is different than what was presented to the public and the Central RAC. Monte asked to reviewed slide on exceptions to the \$5.00 standard amenity fee for

<p>vehicles, and he was comfortable with what is proposed and agrees with Don on the public involvement issue of changing the proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion as proposed, except that Annual Pass is specified at \$40. • Don moved to accept as proposed and Monte seconded. Unanimously approved. 		
Inyo NF, Expanded Amenity Fee Changes- Campgrounds		<p>Don Amador motions to approve, Monte Hendricks seconds. Bob Warren and Linda McMillan vote no, six others voted yes. Sent back to the Inyo to refine.</p> <p>2nd go-round at end of meeting, Bob Warren motions to approve fee increases with no vehicle fee, Monte Hendricks seconds. Nate Rangel voted no, seven other voted yes. Did not pass – sent back to forest to refine.</p>
Lower Lee Vining Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity fee from \$14.00 to \$16.00	
Aspen Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity fee from \$14.00 to \$18.00	
<p>Discussion & Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal presented by Tamara. • Extensive public involvement completed. Posted notice of possible changes at the sites in Lee Vining Canyon CGs, Mono Basin Visitor Center, Mammoth Welcome Center, press release to local area, published in Federal Register, local politicians and concerned citizens were notified. FS met with interested stake holders throughout the season. Nine emails 		

were received that endorsed the proposal. Four email comments opposed the fee due to tough economic times, and not wanting change. Thought improvements would be detrimental to the experience. Website link on Google map had over 1200 hits.

- Executive summary, business plan and market analysis referenced. Fees were referenced, including what they would be used for and the need for change. New fire rings, site delineation, signing, restroom cleaning, other O&M activities, upgraded infrastructure, and improved accessibility are planned with the revenue.
- Don – Comment/Question about public outreach. Thinks it is important that the Inyo NF made contacts with the local elected officials, and it should be included in future presentations. What was the tone and direction from the elected officials? Jeff Marsolais answered that the Inyo NF has been talking with local elected officials since the USFS first took over the campgrounds, and they are incredibly supportive. They want to see resources protected and a diversity of recreation opportunities provided. They see these facilities as opportunities for expansion of amenities. Mike Schlafmann echoed Jeff's answer and added that fee increases were no surprise to them, as there has been a need in this area for a long time.
- Linda – Question about occupancy? What is capacity of each site? Jeff answered: FS standard 6 persons per site. The goal is 6 persons and 2 vehicles per site, which is consistent with the other sites across the Forest and the Region. However, there is no vehicle limitation at this time because enforcement is not realistic with this site. This could change with a re-design of the site.
- Linda made a comment that the stakeholders are a larger universe than just the local citizens. With both sides of the Sierra Nevada and Yosemite NP. Linda offered to contact these stakeholders from Yosemite and the west side of the Sierras to inform the public about the fee change and the need for the fee change.
- Bob – Asks for clarification on the extra vehicle fee. Jeff states that there is an additional fee for the second vehicle, but that is not part of this proposal. Bob goes on record as opposing the second vehicle fee, and that the proposal will probably get a no from him. Tamara clarified that this is not a part of this fee change proposal. Mike stated this was consistent with all other campgrounds on the Forest.
- Public comment opened, but there were no comments.
- Don moves to accept the proposal as it stands. Monte seconded.
- Motion did not pass – 4 yes and 2 no votes (Bob and Linda)
- Discussion continued on the extra vehicle fee. Linda agrees with Bob regarding opposing the extra vehicle fee. It was clarified again that the extra vehicle fee is not in this proposal. Paul stated that the extra vehicle fee is standard in many parks, and that these sites are destination campgrounds. The proposal was to focus on what we can do with the two campgrounds to truly improve them. Bob will continue to oppose vehicle

fees as they discriminate against diverse groups of campers. These people are not being represented in the outreach that we are doing.

- Don – Understands that the Forest is going to phase this in as the sites get defined? Jeff talked about the land exchange. He said that all four sites have different experiences. They wanted to collect and direct fees only in specific areas in order to improve those campgrounds in a thought out and logical way that is why fee proposal for only two campgrounds. Then there will be opportunities to look at the cars. All that is proposed right now is the increased camping fee, not the \$5.00 extra vehicle fee currently being charged.
- Bob feels that someone needs to represent diverse ethnic groups, and he is opposed to extra vehicle fees.
- Marlene proposed to return the proposal to the forest for refinement.
- Linda liked the intent but is also opposed to the extra vehicle fees, as these extra fees will displace the people that she represents.
- Mike stated that they will respond to the need of diverse ethnic groups by looking at the opportunities to develop group sites.
- Re-opened the discussion at the end of the meeting dropping the extra vehicle fee. The Inyo NF came back with a refined proposal to drop the \$5 per vehicle. So, it would be the same proposal for the fee increase, but would drop the \$5 extra vehicle fee.
- Public Comment Period- Kitty B. stated that the proposal in this format has not been presented to the public. Dick H. responded that it had been done in the past, and he didn't see it as a problem.
- Don moved to approve \$18 on Aspen CG and \$16 on Lower Lee Vining CG and to drop \$5 fee for extra vehicle, Monte seconded.
- Bob – Opposed to extra vehicle fee but appreciates the Inyo coming back with this. He does not believe that what we are doing here is outside the RRAC authority. Marlene supported that this is not wrong, and Bob supported the proposal.
- Nate was not comfortable with this proposal and voted No. All others voted Yes.
- Does not pass – Tabled and sent back to Inyo NF for Public Involvement with elimination of extra vehicle fee. Monte and Danna asked the Inyo NF to go back and review and re-propose at a future date.

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	R-RAC Recommendation
Inyo NF, Eliminate Boulder Day Use Area	Eliminate \$14.00 Expanded Amenity fee, operate as free day use site	Paul McFarland moved to approve, Monte Hendricks seconds. All unanimously approved.

Discussion & Questions:

- Tamara presented proposal and described public involvement.

- Site was closed in 2009, and is now converted to a free day use site.
- Public comment opened, but there were no comments.

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	R-RAC Recommendation
Inyo NF, Restructure Standard Amenity Fee-Reds Meadow	Fee structure change to \$10 per vehicle for 1 day/overnight, \$20/vehicle for 3 day pass, \$35.00 season pass, \$140/21+ passenger tour bus, \$70/20 person passenger tour bus or smaller.	Don Amador moved to approve, Danna Stroud seconds. All unanimously approved.

Discussion & Questions:

- Tamara presented proposal.
- Initial proposal presented to the RRAC in October of 2008.
- Extensive comprehensive public involvement, including public notices, FS employees talking to visitors in the Reds Meadow area about possible fee changes, letters to stakeholders and elected officials and following up in person, open-house, second letter in September, 2009 to stakeholders and elected officials.
- Summary of public comments: Would like to see senior pass, volunteer pass and interagency pass accepted. Not wanting to improve or add facilities because too crowded now. Forest wants to maintain experience and shuttle service is the key. Shuttle bus is necessary for resource protection and recreation experience. Received 42 emails, 27 emails that support, 12 that were opposed. Four of those were not clear on the proposal and may have been confused. Five were not against the fee but were either against the suggested improvements or wanted higher fees.
- 79 people contacted in person in Reds Meadow. 55 people were in favor, and 6 people thought fees were too low. Some thought there should only be bus fares and not other fees – only need to cover transportation.
- The fee would support trash pick up, toilet cleaning, visitor newspapers, interpretive activities, accessible improvements, signing, toilet replacement, trails, parking barriers, etc.
- Danna – Do you anticipate changes in the bus fare? Jeff answered that the Forest will continue to work with ESTA, which was a success in the first year. As we get grants to support rolling stock, we can help support their efforts. It is likely that as they expand their services, they may be able to reduce their bus fare. Jim stated that the intent is to get the public

to utilize the shuttle system.

- Bob – Clarification on fees and camping. Do campers pay this fee? Tamara clarified that the current fee is \$7.00 per person and proposed fee change is \$10 per car and identified what qualifies as exception cars. Is camping included? Tamara answered no because there is an expanded amenity fee associated with the concessionaire operated campgrounds.
- Monte – If you arrive early, how do you get charged? Minaret kiosk is staffed from 0700-1900 7 days a week. If you go in early, then you pay on the way out.
- Public Comment Period -Ted Weintraub: - How many private contractors are handling campgrounds in Reds Meadow? All 6 campgrounds are run by a concessionaire.
- Public Comment Period-Dick Dasmann – He wants to see enhancements implemented right away without delay after fees are collected. Jeff - Some things like picnic tables would happen immediately. Probably half of the items could be implemented this summer. The activity we showed in Lee Vining Canyon is a good example of this ability to implement.
- Don motioned to approve, seconded by Danna
- Unanimously approved

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	R-RAC Recommendation
Modoc NF, Expanded Amenity Fee Changes- Campgrounds		Don Amador moved to approve, Charlie Wilson seconds. All unanimously approved
Hemlock Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$7.00 to \$14.00	
Medicine Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$7.00 to \$14.00	
Blue Lake Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$7.00 to \$14.00	
Soup Springs Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$6.00 to \$12.00	
Mill Creek Falls Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$6.00 to \$12.00	

Willow Creek Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$6.00 to \$12.00	
A.H. Hogue Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$7.00 to \$14.00	
Headquarters Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$7.00 to \$14.00	
Howard's Gulch Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$6.00 to \$12.00	

Discussion & Questions:

- Proposal presented by Tamara.
- Bob - Is there a reason why we wouldn't bundle these campground proposals together? Tamara answered no. Bob said then proposals will be bundled.
- Extensive public involvement. Started in 2007 including public notices and meetings, primarily with local visitors. Tamara provided executive summary of each campground. Last fee increase was 1998. The fees are mainly used for cleaning and maintenance of restrooms, garbage collection, new directional signage, repair and maintenance of amenities, new bulletin boards and fire ring replacement. The Modoc NF also has 8 free campgrounds with full amenities.
- Public comment opened, but there were no comments.
- Dick Dasmann – Question operating season (May to October) that campgrounds close in October, is that for weather? What about hunters? Tamara answered that sometimes they will keep some of these campgrounds open, but without water. Water gets turned off due to freezing and the fee is no longer charged. There are also free campgrounds in the vicinity.
- Public comment period-Ted W. said 100% increase is concerning. The public needs to get something for the increase – what about solar showers? This fee increase may out price some people. Bob responded that the fees have not increased in 12 years, and think about the inflation that has happened over that time. Ted said he still feels this will out price some people. Bob said that the fees most often benefit the user. Tamara also mentioned that the Modoc NF has a number of free sites and showed a spreadsheet with all of the sites.
- Don motioned to approve, Charlie seconded.
- Unanimously approved

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	R-RAC Recommendation
Plumas NF, New Expanded Amenity Fee at Black Mountain Lookout	New Expanded Amenity fee of \$60.00 per night	Monte Hendricks motions to approve, Paul McFarland seconds. .All unanimously approved

Discussion & Questions:

- Tamara presented proposal.
- New fee for recreation rental – expanded amenity fee.
- Public notification and solicitation of comments included Federal Register notice as part of initial public involvement, press releases in local newspapers, congressional representatives were notified, notices were posted at the Supervisor’s Office and District Office, and notices were posted at the lookout. Approximately 15 people attended a public meeting, which is a good turnout for this area. People are excited about this rental opportunity. There were no negative comments.
- Monte had question about modern electricity and appliances. Tamara said yes there is a stove, refrigerator, cabinets, and dry sink provided. People have to bring their own water.
- Public comment opened, but there were no comments.
- Monte moved, Paul seconded – Unanimously Approved

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	R-RAC Recommendation
Sequoia NF, New Expanded Amenity Fees- Cabins		Monte Hendricks moved to approve, Charlie Wilson seconds. All unanimously approved
Upper Grouse Barn Cabin	New Expanded Amenity fee of \$175.00 per night	
Upper Grouse Main Cabin	New Expanded Amenity fee of \$250.00 per night	
Upper Grouse Guest Cabin	New Expanded Amenity fee of \$200.00 per night	

Discussion & Questions:

- Tamara presented proposal.
- Extensive public involvement and discussion with the public. Open house in June, 2009, public meetings in 2009. Published in Federal Register, forest website, notice in several local newspapers and contacted elected officials. Newspapers and Public comments were all supportive. Elected

officials were supportive. Comments from public meetings were supportive.

- These facilities are very different than usual cabins, as they are more like vacation homes. Unusual opportunity for the public. They were acquired through a land purchase.
- Bob requested to combine these and vote for all 3 proposals at once. It was agreed to do that.
- Don felt that the right groups were outreached. Likes that the clubs were approached in the public involvement efforts, as they are not always considered (i.e. Lions Club, Backcountry Horsemen, CA Houndsmen).
- Bob said an earlier speaker suggested that we put the Sequoia on probation; to punish the Sequoia, and not approve any of their requests. This is not within the purview of the RRAC. Although they can encourage the forest, the RRAC's job is to review what is on the table.
- Monte had question about location and access. How far away are these facilities from other developed sites/communities? Priscilla answered that these facilities are incredibly isolated. They are about 8 miles from a state park, 12 miles from town on a windy road, and 30 miles from the nearest campground. Does the public have access? It is behind a locked gate, so public access is limited to foot travel. It is really far out there for foot access.
- Monte asked question about occupancy. Tamara answered that each cabin sleeps 10 people and if you rented all three cabins, then you could camp outside as well.
- Danna asked if there is a limit on number of people. Priscilla answered that restrooms are the limiting factor, but they could bring in porta-potties if needed. There is water at the site.
- Danna asked if there are any other facilities like this. Marlene said the Tahoe NF has some similar facilities. Sometimes we get these kinds of facilities through land exchanges, for example.
- Public comment opened, but there were no comments.
- Danna – Are landlines available for telephones? Priscilla answered that there is one in the main cabin.
- Dick Dasmann – What about equestrian use? Is there a limit or equestrian fee? Priscilla answered that there are none proposed at this time.
- Monte – Question about proximity between cabins. What if three different groups all rent at the same time – could there be an opportunity for conflict? That should not be an issue because there are about 400 ft between the main and upper cabins (guest and barn), and about 200 feet between the guest and barn cabin.
- Monte moved to approve, Charlie seconded. Unanimously approved

Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	R-RAC Recommendation
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Stanislaus NF, Expanded Amenity Fee Changes- Campgrounds		Monte Hendricks moved to approve, Linda McMillan seconds. All unanimously approved
Hull Creek Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$5.00 to \$12.00	
Mill Creek Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$5.00 to \$8.00	
Mosquito Lakes Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$5.00 to \$8.00	
Niagara OHV Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$5.00 to \$8.00	
Bloomfield Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$8.00 to \$12.00	
Highland Lakes Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$8.00 to \$12.00	
Sandbar Flat Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$7.00 to \$12.00	
Cascade Creek Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$5.00 to \$8.00	
Wakaluu Hep Yoo Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$16.00 to \$20.00	
Niagara Creek Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$5.00 to \$8.00	
Stanislaus River Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$8.00	

	to \$12.00	
Fence Creek Campground	Increase Expanded Amenity Fee from \$5.00 to \$8.00	
<p>Discussion & Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tamara presented the proposal. • Public involvement included outreach for Recreation Facility Analysis (RFA), posted notices in campgrounds, press releases and articles in newspapers, forest web site, local radio interview and elected officials. 2 commenters proposed a lower fee at Sandbar Flat campground. • Bob asked to confirm that Charlie (RRAC member) is not economically involved in the campground and therefore it is okay for him to vote on the proposal. Charlie confirmed he is a campground host at Wakaluu Hep Yoo CG but does not have a financial interest or benefit from the campground fee. • Bob asked to vote on all campgrounds in one vote. Agreed to bundle all the campgrounds. • Monte – likes the idea that these are all Forest Service run campgrounds and that is really nice to see – need to continue to offer this type of recreation. Want to continue to support these kinds of campgrounds, and help keep them viable. • Public comment opened – Kitty B. said she could not get in during public comment period for the Modoc proposal but she concurs with Bob that extra vehicle costs are not fair – the agency gets more money, but there is not any real extra impact. Feels that more cars mean more money which is an incentive to allow more parking that could damage the resource. Modoc does charge extra vehicle fees according to their website. (Stanislaus is not proposing any extra vehicle charges). Bob asked if that were true. Tamara said that it was not correct, some sites charge a per vehicle per night charge like Hemlock CG but their proposal was to change to a per site fee. She said the regional Fee Board did cover this with the Modoc. Kitty B. said that the website needs to be corrected. Tamara said that when the website comes back up we will look at the website and make sure it is correct as part of this recommendation. • Charlie said that there was not extra vehicle charge in the campground where he is host. • Public comment period-Ted W.-Appreciates no extra vehicle fee, as extra vehicle charges are hard to collect. Good presentation. • Monte moved, Paul seconded • Unanimously approved 		
Proposal Name/Location	Proposal	R-RAC Recommendation

Stanislaus NF, New Expanded Amenity Fee at Pacific Valley Campground	New Expanded Amenity fee of \$10.00	Monte Hendricks moved to approve, Danna Stroud seconds. All unanimously approved
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Discussion & Questions:

- Tamara presented proposal. Same public involvement effort as previous proposal. There is currently no fee.
- Bob asked what is the reasoning for changing a campground from free to fee? Marlene answered that this is left up to the Forest. Tamara stated that fees will be used to cover annual operation, maintenance and upkeep of new amenities. The forest has added a toilet, vehicle barriers, and a water system.
- Tamara said that there are free campgrounds evenly spaced throughout the Forest.
- Linda asked if there are bear boxes and was surprised to hear that there are no bear boxes, especially at this elevation. Tamara responded that she has not heard proposals for any from the Stanislaus. Linda suggested that bear boxes need to be recommended.
- Public comment opened, but there were no comments.
- Monte moved to approve, Danna seconded
- Unanimously approved