

Appendix 9: Sample Annual Operating Plan for Campgrounds and Day-use

Appendix 9 Annual Operating Plan and Annual Operating Plan Outline

This appendix describes the minimum requirements of the holder's Annual Operating Plan and application regarding the operating season, staffing, operations and maintenance services provided, and minimum standards to be met. The Forest Service will use the information which the applicant provides to rate the applicant against the "Proposed Operating Plan" evaluation criteria. The successful applicant's proposal will become a part of his/her Annual Operating Plan. Please get in touch with Vicki Gullang-Harris, Recreation Program Manager, at (812) 275-5987, if you have any questions.

The holder must also meet the additional standards and requirements specified in this section for the recreation sites listed in this prospectus. Applicants are required to propose how they will meet or exceed the minimum standards described in this appendix (9).

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1. Operating Season:

The permit holder will be responsible for facilities on a year-round basis, including during periods of non-operation. The dates specified in the prospectus under Chapter I, Recreation Site Descriptions, are the minimum operating seasons.

Additional times of operation, both full and partial, may be offered.

2. Staffing:

The holder will be responsible for furnishing all personnel, and for adequately training and supervising their activities while performing under the provisions of the permit.

Appendix 20 contains information regarding recommended staffing, based on past experience with the developed sites offered in this prospectus.

State and Federal laws governing employment, wages, worker safety, etc. must be met. Applicable laws include, but are not limited to, laws governing equal opportunity, civil rights, fair labor standards, minimum wage, Davis-Bacon Wage Rates (for G/T fee off-set), workers' compensation, OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) regulations, ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), and immigration laws regarding employment of legal aliens. In addition, Forest Service policies regarding staff conduct and ethics will be followed.

2a. Supervision/Management

A representative(s) who will serve as the liaison(s) between the Holder and the Forest Service and have full authority to act on the terms of the special use permit must be designated. There may be more than one designee, each of whom has the authority to act on one or more permit terms (i.e., one person may deal with operations issues, one may deal with maintenance issues, and another may deal with financial issues). The designee(s) names, or the appropriate job title(s), must be included in the proposal.

State in the proposal each position title and their area(s) of responsibility.

2b. Personnel

In addition to the requirements outlined in the Supervision/Management section above, the Forest Service recommends that hosts/site managers be located at the sites. A history of operations experience indicates that having personnel stationed at these sites is very useful in providing the quality of services required to meet standards due to the complexity of operations which occurs at these sites. Appendix 20 contains information regarding recommended staffing, based on past experience with the developed sites offered in this prospectus.

The Forest Service will regularly review employee performance and, when appropriate, recommend personnel action to the holder.

Provide an organization chart showing each position. Provide a narrative description of each position shown on the organization chart including the title of the position, duties, and indicating full or part time employment.

2c. Employee Training

It is recommended that, at a minimum, the permittee provide 8 hours of customer service training. Such training should emphasize concepts such as conflict resolution techniques, area-specific recreation opportunities; area specific emergency procedures and contacts; Forest Service Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles; and the permittee's law enforcement policy and procedures. The Forest Service may attend and/or participate in training sessions.

Describe training to be provided to each position listed on your organization chart.

2d. Employee Conduct

The holder is responsible for the conduct of his/her employees. They are expected to comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws, and to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. Federal prohibitions include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging in conduct prohibited by the *Code of Federal Regulations* (36 CFR 261).
- Using or being under the influence of, intoxicating beverages or narcotic drugs while on duty or representing the permit holder.

Provide your company's employee conduct policy.

2e. Uniforms and Vehicle Identification

Employees must wear neat, clean, and professional attire that identifies them as concessionaire employee including a name tag with the concessionaire's identify. The official Forest Service uniform, Forest Service volunteer uniform, and components may not be used.

Describe in detail attire for all employee positions.

Vehicles must be clean, quiet, and well maintained with a professional quality sign containing the concessionaire's name displayed on each side of each vehicle used.

Describe in detail the number and kinds of vehicles proposed.

3. Customer Service

Customers and the visiting public will be responded to in a professional and timely manner to contribute towards a safe and enjoyable experience on the National Forest. A customer service comment card system must be provided to allow for customer feedback on the quality of services being provided. The customer service comment card contained in Appendix 6 may be proposed.

Describe a customer service commitment to include methods and mechanisms for responding to customer's needs in a helpful and professional manner and provide a comment card system.

4. Operations

4a. Safety and Hazard Tree Inspections

A safety inspection, to include hazard tree identification, will be performed on each developed site on an annual basis. This inspection should occur prior to the sites being opened to the public. Each inspection will be documented in writing, in a format acceptable to the FS. The holder will be responsible for correcting any safety deficiencies, including dropping hazardous trees, prior to opening the site to the public. Actions proposed to correct deficiencies must be approved by the Forest Service in order to ensure environmental protection and public safety.

4b. Water Systems

The developed sites included in this offering have potable water systems. The holder is responsible for meeting all applicable health and safety standards. It is the holder's responsibility to operate and maintain these water systems, and have the capability of shutting down and reopening the systems as required for maintenance or seasonal closures. The Forest Service will provide instruction on turning off and reopening the water systems.

The holder is responsible for compliance with all applicable Federal, state, and local drinking water laws and regulations for the operation and maintenance of a public water system. This includes the testing and maintenance of all potable water systems in accordance with the state of Indiana Department of Environmental Management and Forest Service regulations. If current laws and regulations change and it becomes necessary to perform additional or different tests, the holder shall be responsible for compliance and associated costs (Appendix 10, *Form FS 2700-4h, clause V. B. and Appendix F*).

The holder is responsible for all repairs of the water systems which are caused by vandalism, natural events, forces of nature, and events attributed to holder actions or negligence. Valves, water lines, or other system parts which break due to any water being left in the system and subsequently freezing over winter shall be the responsibility of the holder.

When a campground or other facility which typically has a potable water source does not have potable water available, due to system failure, "Unsafe" water samples, or any other reasons, fees charged to the public may not exceed 50% the of normal price. An alternative source of potable water may be provided to remove this fee restriction.

Further information about the potable water systems and state testing requirements may be obtained from the Forest Service and the appropriate state department of health.

A water systems operations-and-maintenance log shall be kept for all water systems. This log shall include, at a minimum, the following information: dates and results of all testing, inspections, cleanings, repairs, or adjustments to pressures; and chlorination amounts. The log will also be available for review at the request of the permit administrator or Authorized Officer.

4c. Interference with Normal Use of Recreation Sites

Operation, maintenance, and cleaning of grounds and facilities can interfere with the recreational use of the areas by the visiting public.

Describe measures to limit inconvenience and disruption of use to the public.

E4. Standards for Site Facility Cleaning and Maintenance

The holder shall be responsible for meeting the standards listed below when cleaning and maintaining facilities.

Describe how the following ten items [4e(1)–4e(10)] will be identified and accomplished.

(1) All Facilities

- Graffiti is removed within 48 hours of discovery or notification.
- Facilities are clean and well maintained.
- Numbers of visitors and vehicles are kept at or below site capacity.
- Site safety inspections are completed annually, and documented in a format acceptable to the Forest Service. Documented high risk conditions are corrected prior to use.
- High risk conditions that develop during the use season are mitigated, or the site is closed.
- Electrical systems meet applicable state and local regulations.
- Facilities, when signed as accessible, meet guidelines in Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation: A Design Guide.
- Grass and over hanging brush must be kept trimmed around tables, bulletin boards, water hydrants, barriers, signs, buildings, parking areas, paths, living spaces, tent sites, and other facilities.

(2) Toilets

- To keep humans from unhealthy exposures to human waste, the waste is removed immediately upon discovery or notification.
- All other types of sewage treatment systems must meet state and federal standards.
- Toilets are clean and free of objectionable odor.
- Restrooms and showers are functional and in good repair.
- Exterior of buildings will be kept free of dirt, debris, spider webs, cob webs, etc.

- Walkways and trails shall be kept free of obstructions or excess vegetation.

(3) Tables

- Excessive grass or vegetation shall be trimmed from table areas.
- There should be adequate vegetation, gravel, or other approved material around tables to prevent mud and erosion.
- Tables shall be level and well maintained.

(4) Fire Rings and Grills

- Fire rings are free of litter.
- Ashes, charcoal, and unburned wood shall be removed from fire rings and grills when there is less than four (4) inches of free side clearance.
- The disposal of ashes must be approved by the Forest Service and in accordance with state and local laws and regulations. Ashes shall not be placed in dumpsters or trash cans while hot.
- There should be adequate gravel, or other approved material around fire rings to prevent mud, erosion, and to minimize fire hazards.

(5) Grounds

- Developed sites are free of litter and domestic animal waste.
- Effects from recreation use that conflict with environmental laws are analyzed and mitigated as needed.
- Loss of vegetation and erosion caused by recreation use is prevented and/or corrected in accordance with approved vegetation management plans.
- Nails, ropes, wire, etc. will be removed from trees whenever found.
- Grass and other ground vegetation shall be trimmed on a regular basis to maintain a comfortable and inviting environment.

(6) Roads and Trails

- Ditches and culverts shall be cleaned and maintained to allow proper drainage.

(7) Barriers (parking, road blocks, etc)

- Excess vegetation around barriers shall be trimmed to keep the barrier visible.

(8) Water Hydrants

- Water hydrants meet state and federal standards.
- Maintain functional gravel sumps
- Each hydrant should be posted with a sign that says "No washing dishes, bathing, washing hair or hands, or cleaning fish", or a similar message.

(9) Trash Receptacles

- Garbage does not exceed the capacity of the garbage containers.
- Garbage locations are clean and free of objectionable odors.
- All trash shall be removed from National Forest lands and disposed of in accordance with all state and local laws and regulations.
- The type, size, number, and locations of garbage dumpsters/containers should be included in the application.

(10) Site Markers

- Site markers shall be well maintained, neatly arranged, and meet Forest Service sign standards.

(11) Signs, Bulletin Boards, and Fee Stations

- Information boards look fresh, professional, uncluttered, and contain appropriate current/seasonal information. Multi-lingual information is provided as needed. Signs, bulletin boards, and fee stations are well maintained, neatly arranged, and meet Forest Service signage standards.

6. Post-Season Operations

When closing a site for the season, the holder will be responsible for meeting the following post-season inspections and operations and maintenance standards:

As services are reduced or campgrounds are closed, visitors should be contacted a day or two prior to the change in service level to let them know about the expected changes. Entrance stations should also have signs posted indicating the change in services. These requirements will help to ensure that the holder meets Meaningful Measures Responsiveness standards.

In addition, the following steps should be taken at all sites:

6a. Water Systems

Shut down water systems prior to freezing temperatures, according to the procedures required for each individual system. These procedures include:

- Draining all pumps, holding tanks, water lines, hydrants, faucets, etc. It is recommended to drain valves and lines by pressurizing them with an air compressor.
- Securing hand pumps so water is not available to the public during the time that it is not being tested.

6b. Utilities

The FS recommends that the holder arrange for utility services to be shut down and final meter readings made. Official final meter readings are required during the final season of operation under the term of the permit.

6c. Year-End Reports and Inspections

Turn in year-end reports required by the Forest Service.

The Forest Service recommends that an annual final inspection of the campground be completed with the Forest Service, and future maintenance needs be documented.

6d. A joint end of season inspection is required during the second to last, and last year of a permit term. These inspections will verify the condition of facilities and help to determine what additional maintenance needs may be required of the holder in order to fulfill the terms of the permit prior to expiration.

7. Site Hazards (Including Hazard Trees)

7a. Annual site safety inspection

An annual site safety inspection is required. Documented high risk conditions are to be noted and corrected prior to opening the following season. During the last year of the permit, the holder will be required to remove the hazards.

7b. High risk sites – closed season

High risk site conditions that develop during the closed season are mitigated or the site will not be opened the following year.

Both of these are critical standards. The safety inspection shall be documented in a format acceptable to the Forest Service. The holder should take all measures necessary to protect the health and safety of all persons affected by the concession activity. More specifically, holder is solely responsible for identifying, correcting, and reporting all safety hazards to the authorized officer. The Forest Service has no duty under the terms of the permit to inspect the permit area or operations of the holder for hazardous conditions or compliance with health and safety standards.

In order to meet safety and security standards, as safety hazards are identified, the holder should take the following steps:

- Inform those who are in immediate danger.
- Take necessary actions to protect the public, at least temporarily.
- Immediately report the hazard to the Forest Service, even if there is no immediate danger to the public.
- Immediately report the hazard to any other employees who might be affected.
- If possible, remove the hazard and document the removal.

The holder will immediately close the affected sites and immediately notify the authorized officer and/or his permit administrator of any hazards in the area that the holder is not able to remedy.

7c. Removal of hazardous objects

Trees shall be kept free of nails, rope, wire, unsafe branches, and other hazards that might endanger users or damage the trees. Rocks, logs, sticks, or other similar natural or man-made objects that create a safety hazard or an unsightly condition should be removed from the permit area daily.

7d. Identification and removal of hazardous trees

The holder is responsible for identifying and removing all hazard trees, subject to Forest Service review. All sites and facilities within 200 feet or two tree lengths (whichever is less) of a standing hazardous tree shall be closed until the condition is corrected. Disposal methods and locations should be described in the Annual Operating Plan.

7e. Forest Service approval for cutting or pruning vegetation

Forest Service approval is required prior to cutting or pruning of any trees. If desired, the Forest Service may perform the required cutting/removal work under a collection agreement with the holder.

The holder would not typically be responsible for hazard tree removal necessitated by atypical situations, such as a major blow down or a large insect infestation. However, responsibility will be determined on a case by case basis.

Trees at the facilities in this prospectus are in an aged condition. Emerald Ash borer has been identified as affecting ash trees in the Hardin Ridge Recreation Area. There is currently a large amount of woody debris in the Recreation Area and the Forest Service is exploring options to reduce this debris.

Indiana has had severe storms in recent years. If severe storms, such as tornado, blow over groups of trees, or a flash flood buckles a road, the FS will work with the holder to quickly remove or repair damaged timber or roads. However, the holder must repair storm damaged facilities according to Clauses III.E and III.F of FS-2700-4h as part of normal maintenance.

7f. Stumps, slash and logs

All stumps from hazard tree removal shall be flush cut to ground level in order to reduce tripping hazards. Slash and logs shall be bucked to a maximum 18" length and stacked for camper use, removed from the site, or scattered to a maximum height of 18".

7g. Disposal of slash and bucked logs

If slash and bucked logs resulting from hazard tree removal are not used by campers within a reasonable length of time, the holder must dispose of it by a method approved by the Forest Service. This requirement is necessary in order to meet Setting standards and to reduce wild fire hazard.

8. Signs and Posters

8a. Entrance board signing

The holder is required to have a sign posted on the entrance board of all sites, stating that the site is under permit from the U.S. Forest Service and including the name of the concessionaire and how to contact them.

8b. Title VI compliance

The holder is required to post signage with approved wording which indicates compliance with Title VI regulations. The *And Justice for All* poster would serve this requirement.

Entrance boards shall include the Unicorn P23-43 "Welcome To Your National Forests..." poster, or an approved equivalent, in order to inform the public of 36 CFR 261 prohibitions.

8c. Signing requirements

All signs must be maintained in a good condition (neat, clean, not faded or torn). Homemade signs or posters are not allowed.

These signing requirements help to ensure meeting Setting, Responsiveness and Safety and Security standards.

8d. Signs and advertising

Additional signs or other advertising posted on National Forest System lands should be reviewed by the authorized officer as to location, design, size, color, and content.

All signs must be supplied by the holder. The FS will furnish information on companies where these signs may be purchased, as needed. If the holder wishes to use "P Code" signs from Unicorn, a collection agreement may be entered into with the Forest Service for the purchase of these signs, if the holder is not able to purchase them on his/her own.

9. Advertising

9a. Accurate representation

The holder shall accurately represent the accommodations and services provided to the public within the permit area, in all advertisements, signs, brochures, and any other materials. The fact that the permit area is located on the Hoosier National Forest shall be made readily apparent in all advertising and signing.

9b. Equal opportunity provider

All forms of advertising must contain the following words: "X Company is an equal opportunity provider."

10. Fire Prevention

10a.

In order to meet Safety and Security standards, the holder must include a fire prevention plan in the Operating Plan that addresses, at a minimum:

- How the applicant will prevent wildfires and structural fires
- Reporting procedures and emergency response, should a fire occur
- Training and experience of employees, relative to fire
- Prevention/suppression
- Fire prevention/suppression tools and equipment that will be on-site

Applicants should also include this plan in their application.

11. Road and Trail Maintenance

11a. At a minimum, the holder is responsible for maintaining vehicular and pedestrian access in a safe and passable condition, and to Forest Service standards. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, mowing around parking barriers for visibility; grading and/or controlling dust on unpaved surfaces; and erosion control through grading, ditching, or use of check dams, regardless of where needed.

The trails within Hardin Ridge Recreation Area and Tipsaw Lake Recreation area that connect the campground to the beach are the responsibility of the permit holder to maintain.

Grading of any gravel surfaced roads is typically required once per year. Culverts should be cleaned at the beginning of each season, and following large storm events.

11b. Applicants should propose a road and trail maintenance schedule to accomplish these needs.

The holder may desire to enter into a collection agreement with the Forest Service to have the interior road grading done in conjunction with other Forest Service road maintenance activities. If so, a proposal should be included in the application.

12. Emergency Response

12a. In order to meet required standards, the holder should be prepared to respond to any emergencies (medical, law enforcement, facility breakdown, fire, flood, etc.) that might occur in and around the facilities covered under the permit.

Applicants should describe how they will be prepared to respond to such emergency situations, including emergency evacuation procedures.

13. Law Enforcement

Forest Service, State, and local law enforcement and the holder each have enforcement roles at concession recreation sites. Appendix 8 clarifies the law enforcement authorities and responsibilities at concession operated recreation sites (FSM ID 2340-96-1).

13a. Applicants should address how they will fulfill the concessionaire's responsibility for law enforcement, including rules of use to be imposed at the recreation sites.

To meet Safety and Security standards, the holder will be expected to inform visitors of the rules and regulations applicable to use and occupancy of the recreation sites under permit. Information regarding the Forest Service "Good Host" and "Customer Service" programs will be given to the holder at the beginning of each operating season during a required one day Good Host training. If a visitor does not comply with the rules and regulations, the holder should gather as much information as possible on the violator without jeopardizing his/her own safety, and immediately (under 24 hours) contact the nearest appropriate law enforcement authority. The holder will be responsible for posting of Recreation Regulations and Rules in these areas, at the direction of the Forest Service.

The holder shall be responsible for reporting acts of vandalism or destruction of Government or personal property to the appropriate Ranger District representative, after notifying the appropriate county sheriff's department. The report shall be made to the authorized Forest Service official within 24 hours that such acts are discovered.

The holder will be responsible for ensuring that vehicle parking is not causing resource damage or inconvenience to other visitors. Vehicle parking will be restricted such that vehicles do not block through traffic, and do not damage vegetation.

14. Communication Systems

The holder is required to provide a means of communication (e.g., two-way radios, cellular phones, etc.) between all employees, the Forest Service, the National Recreation Reservation System, and emergency response agencies. This requirement will help to fulfill the Safety and Security standard which states, "Concessionaires have dependable communications".

14a. Applicants should describe how they will ensure complete, timely, and accurate communication between all affected interests. Applicants should also describe who will be the holder's on-site representative(s) and how that person will communicate with the Forest Service. Please also describe emergency response, availability of weather radios on site, and how emergency alerts will be communicated to area visitors.

The use of equipment owned by the Forest Service will not be authorized.

15. Herbicides, Pesticides, and Noxious Weeds

In order to ensure environmental protection and public safety, herbicides and pesticides may not be used to control undesirable vegetation, aquatic plants, insects, rodents, trash fish, and other pests and weeds, without prior written approval from the Forest Service. A request for approval of planned uses of pesticides shall be submitted annually by the holder on the due date established by the authorized officer. Any request for use shall cover a 12-month period of planned use, beginning 3 months after the reporting date. Only those materials registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the specific purpose planned shall be considered for use on National Forest System lands (refer to FS-2700-4h, V.D).

The holder has the affirmative duty to prevent the infestation and/or spread of noxious weeds in the permit area. This duty includes demonstrating the ability to identify common noxious weeds in the area; performing timely treatment by mechanical or approved chemical means; and performing timely and successful re-vegetation of disturbed areas where noxious weed development can be expected. A collection agreement may be entered into with the Forest Service for certain noxious weed treatments, if agreeable with all parties.

15a. Applicants should describe how they will manage noxious weeds and/or other nuisance vegetation or pests in the permit area.

16. Boating Safety

All use of water craft shall comply with present and future laws, regulations and other legal requirements.

Describe how boating safety will be accomplished.

17. Vandalism

The holder should take reasonable measures to prevent and discourage vandalism and disorderly conduct. When necessary, he/she should contact the appropriate law enforcement office. The holder is responsible for repairing all vandalism that occurs during the permit tenure.

17a. All applicants should describe what measures they will take to minimize vandalism in their permit area.

18. Other Optional Programs

18a. Interpretive Programs

Interpretive services can help to meet several standards. They may enhance visitor experience, increase visitor understanding of their National Forests, aid in fire prevention, and deter damage to facilities and resources. Interpreters educate, entertain, exhibit, inform, and otherwise communicate important natural resource messages to visitors. Presentations may address natural and cultural resources, fisheries and wildlife, fire management, water resources, or other topics relative to the National Forest. Interpretive services can take the form of campfire programs, guided walks, brochures, children's activities, displays, or other similar items.

Interpretive programs shall meet participant accessibility requirements.

The holder may not charge for interpretive services. The holder may subcontract the provision of interpretive services with other organizations such as museums, historic societies. Program content and subcontractors shall be approved by the Forest Service.

Under limited circumstances, the holder may enter into a collection agreement with the Forest Service to provide interpretive services at the concession sites. The holder may not, however, enter into a collection agreement whereby the Forest Service provides routine, ongoing interpretive programs.

The Forest Service retains the right to present programs at any campground or other recreation site on the National Forest, subject to coordination with the holder to avoid conflict with other scheduled activities.

18a1. Applicants should submit an interpretive services plan to describe any proposed services. The plan should describe the following:

- The location, type, and frequency of interpretive services.
- A synopsis of program contents.
- A description of program presenters, and their qualifications.

19b. Recycling

Recycling of all materials is encouraged. A recycling program will help to meet the intent of Health and Cleanliness, Setting, and Responsiveness standards.

19b1. Applicants should include a description of proposed recycling services.

The holder should provide and cover all costs for any recycling programs.

Holder-supplied recycling receptacles will be subject to approval by the Forest Service. The holder will be responsible for emptying recycled materials from the receptacles and removing them from the campground to an appropriate recycling facility. Any proceeds from the sale of recycled materials may be retained by the holder.

20. Additional revenue-producing sales, services, and/or fees

Describe and list all additional revenue-producing sales services or fees you propose to provide.

- ❖ sale of firewood
- ❖ sale of informational and interpretive materials (ie, books)
- ❖ fee for use of dump station by non-campers only (this use is included in the camping fee)
- ❖ fee for full service hook-ups
- ❖ fee for electricity
- ❖ paddle boat or canoe rentals
- ❖ rental of bikes
- ❖ sale of miscellaneous food items (ice, soda, bottled water, etc)
- ❖ miscellaneous clothing sales (t-shirts)