

Implementation Plan for the Mount Lemmon Standard Amenity Recreation Fee Sites June 24, 2013

Background

This implementation plan replaces the current Mount Lemmon standard amenity recreation fee area with eleven individual standard amenity fee sites.

Area Description

Located adjacent to Tucson, the Mount Lemmon Recreation Area is part of the scenic Santa Catalina Mountain Range and one of the most heavily visited parts of the Coronado National Forest. The Sky Islands Scenic Byway, the primary access to the area, begins in the desert lowlands at 2,724 feet and winds nearly to the top of Mount Lemmon at 9,157 feet. This paved and well-maintained highway provides access to picnic areas, campgrounds, trailheads, a developed ski area, exceptional auto touring, and bicycling.

The Mount Lemmon Recreation Area currently encompasses 18,423 acres. It parallels the Sky Islands Scenic Byway, extending one half mile along each side of the highway beginning at the Forest Service Welcome Station at Molino Basin and terminating near the summit of Mount Lemmon. (See map on page 3)

Implementation Plan – Tasks

1. The implementation plan becomes effective June 24, 2013.
2. A press release and opportunity for public questions and comment will be issued June 27, 2013
3. Fees will be collected at ten of the eleven sites beginning on or about July 4, 2013. See Figure 3 page 5.
5. Physical site changes to the Mt Lemmon Recreation Site at the top of the mountain require phased implementation.
4. The implementation plan replaces the 18,423-acre Mount Lemmon standard amenity recreation fee area (Figure 2 page 4) with 11 standard amenity recreation fee sites collectively encompassing 34.5 acres.
5. Fees will be charged at the following day use recreation sites: Molino Basin (with limited free parking spaces for access to the Arizona National Scenic Trail), Cypress, Middle Bear, Chihuahua Pine, Box Elder, Palisades Visitor Center, Inspiration Rock, Alder, Loma Linda, Marshall Gulch, and Mount Lemmon Recreation Site.
6. More than 99 percent of the original fee area would be excluded from recreation fees.

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7. Information signs will be installed at all 11 sites, the Welcome Station, and along the Sky Islands Scenic Byway conforming to Recreation Enhancement Act Sign Use and Placement Guidelines and the Pima County Department of Transportation highway sign standards.
8. Fee tube payment stations will be installed at all 11 standard amenity fee sites.
9. An information handout will be available at Sabino Canyon Recreation Area and Palisades Visitor Center.
10. Molino Basin Picnic Site will remain a fee site with the exception that seven parking spaces will be signed as free access for the Arizona National Scenic Trail.
11. There will be no changes to expanded amenity recreation fee sites at the Molino Basin Campground, Gordon Hirabayashi Campground, and General Hitchcock Campground.
12. Gordon Hirabayashi Campground will be open seasonally. Parking for the Arizona National Scenic Trail, at the west end of the site, will be maintained during campground closure at the Gordon Hirabayashi Interpretive Site where no fee is charged for parking. Seasonally posted signing will provide the public with this information on campground closure and trail access.
13. Rose Canyon Campground and Group Picnic Areas, Showers Point Group Campground, Whitetail Group Campground, and Spencer Campground will continue as fee sites under a concession permit.
14. A sign and parking area will be constructed for the Summit Trails Parking Area approximately 300 yards below the Mt Lemmon Recreation Site and terminus of the scenic byway. This sign will indicate that there is no fee required.
15. There will be no change to the Coronado Recreation Pass fee (\$5.00/day; \$10/week; and \$20 annually). Interagency passes will continue to be accepted at standard amenity recreation fee areas.

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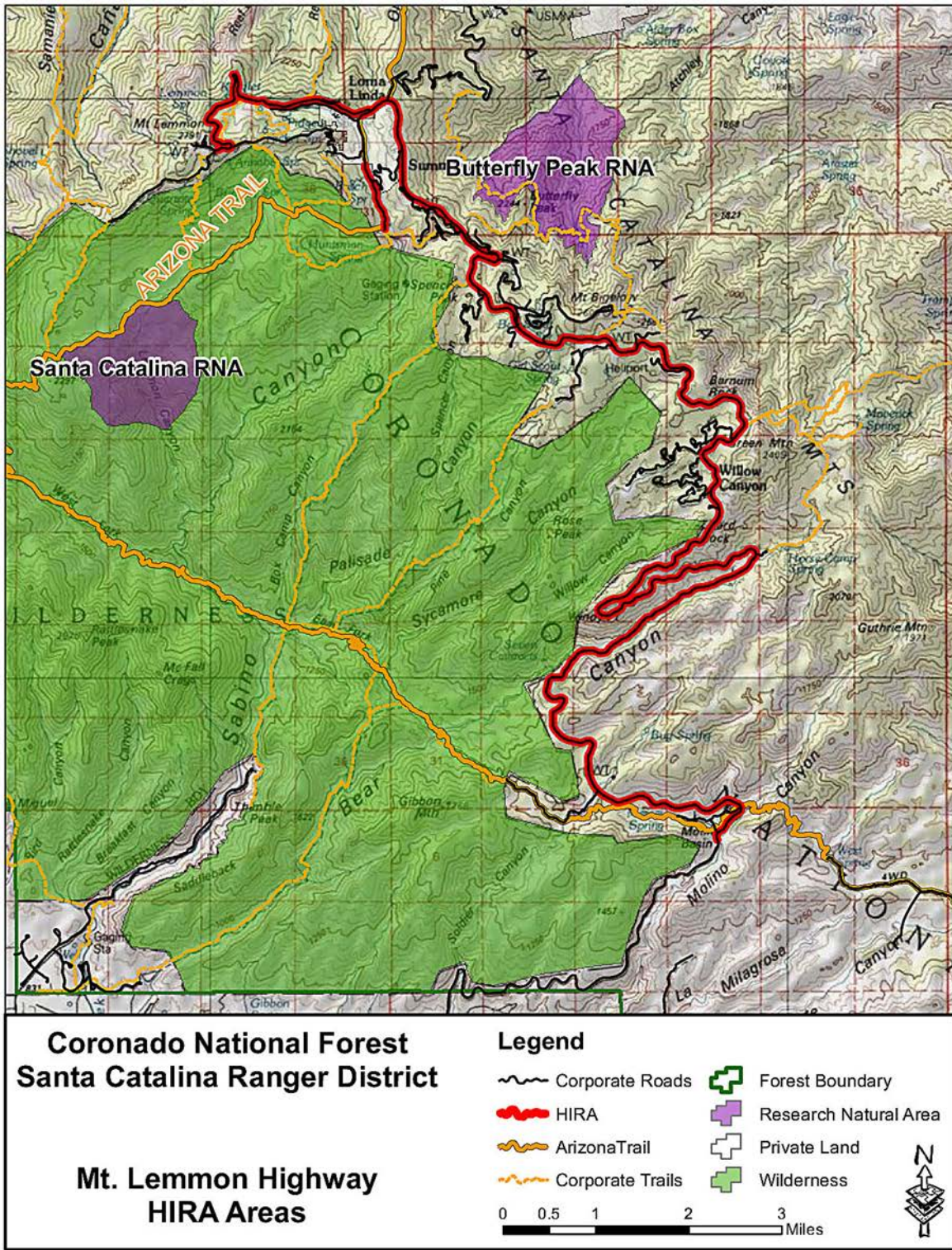
Implementation Plan – Timeline

Figure 1 Implementation Table

Task	Description	Planned Completion
Public Notification and Visitor Information Materials		
Draft Visitor information Materials	Develop language for signs, brochures, website, and other visitor information materials; provide draft language to plaintiffs for review	Completed May 28, 2013
Communications	Develop website updates needed for public notification – first round	Completed May 28, 2013
Finalize and Produce Visitor Information Materials	Finalize website updates (round 2), produce brochures, and other visitor information materials	June 24, 2013 to June 28, 2013
Public Notification	Issue press releases notifying the public of the changes	June 27, 2013
Onsite Implementation		
Fabricate On-Site Informational and Regulatory Signs	Fabricate and install signs to be placed within the individual fee sites, at the welcome station and Palisades Visitor Center, Molino Basin, and Summit Trails Parking Area. Signs will be covered until on or about July 4, 2013	June 24, 2013 to June 28, 2013
Fabricate and Install Highway Signs	Highway signs stating “Recreation Fees Required Where Posted” to be placed along the Sky Islands Scenic Byway – requires fabrication and installation by Pima DOT. Reference National Guidelines for Recreation Fee Signs sign 1a	July 29, 2013 to August 2, 2013
Eleven Standard Amenity Fee Sites	Install fee tubes and kiosks at individual fee sites	Completed by June 28, 2013
Molino Basin (access to Arizona National Scenic Trail)	Install signs to identify free parking spaces for the Arizona National Scenic Trail	Completed by June 28, 2013
Summit Trails Trailhead	Initiate NEPA review, install gravel and barriers to delineate parking. Install sign establishing trailhead parking area as free.	Oct 30, 2013

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Figure 2 Current Mount Lemmon Recreation Fee Area



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Figure 3 New Recreation sites map – illustrating 11 standard amenity fee sites per settlement agreement

