

Los Padres National Forest Change in Recreation Fee Structure: Figueroa Mountain Recreation Fee Area

Background

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

Within the Los Padres National Forest, the national review resulted in a proposal to eliminate the SAF area designation for four areas (Ballinger, Figueroa Mountain, Goldhill, and Rose Valley); change the type of recreation fee charged from an SAF to a special recreation permit (SRP) fee for winter recreation at Mt. Pinos and OHV use at Pozo-La Panza; and significantly reduce the size of the remaining Santa Ynez SAF area. Based on direction regarding implementation of the national review, in June 2012, the Los Padres National Forest began issuing notices of required fees and enforcing recreation fees consistent with this proposal, while preparing to submit it to the California Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (R-RAC). This proposal addresses the recreation fee changes for the Figueroa Mountain area.

Description of the Recreation Area

The Figueroa Mountain area is located approximately 30 miles from Santa Barbara and 10 miles from Solvang, California. Thousands of visitors come to the area to enjoy a wide variety of recreation opportunities which include hiking, camping, picnicking, bicycling, horseback riding, fishing, and snow play. Figueroa Mountain is especially well known for spectacular wildflower and bird viewing. Figueroa Mountain borders the San Rafael Wilderness, offering spectacular hunting opportunities for different varieties of game.

Figueroa Mountain Recreation Fee Proposal

The Los Padres National Forest is proposing to:

- Eliminate the Figueroa Mountain SAF area designation (see enclosed map);
- Retain three SAF sites and areas (see Table 1);
- Retain three expanded amenity recreation fee (EAF) sites (see Table 2);
- Eliminate recreation fee at ten sites: Catway Day Use Area, Davy Brown Trailhead, La Jolla/Ballard Trailhead, McKinley Trailhead, Lower Manzana Trailhead, Munch Canyon Trailhead, Pino Alto Interpretive Trail, Sunset Valley Trailhead, White Rock Trailhead, and Willow Springs Trailhead; and

- Continue to accept local and national passes for payment of recreation fees.

Table 1. Standard Amenity Recreation Fee Sites (Passes Accepted)

Site Name	Parking	Toilet	Trash Receptacle	Interpretive Sign	Picnic Tables	Security Services
Cumbre Day Use Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Figueroa Lookout Day Use Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pino Alto Picnic Area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Table 2. Expanded Amenity Recreation Fee Sites (Passes Accepted)

Site Name	Tent or Trailer Space	Picnic Tables	Drinking Water	Access Roads	Fee Collection by FS	Security Services	Trash Receptacle	Toilet	Campfire Devices
Davy Brown Campground	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Nira Campground (Includes Upper Manzana Trailhead)	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Figueroa Campground	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Fee Collection and Compliance

If the proposal is implemented the recreation fee area would be available to the public free of charge. No change is being proposed to the recreation fees charged at the recreation fee sites listed in Tables 1 and 2. The fee payment mechanism would continue to be through recreation passes: the Adventure Pass (\$5 per day, \$30 annually, and \$5 for a second vehicle) or the America the Beautiful –the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes (Annual: \$80, Senior: \$10, and Access, Military, and Volunteer: free).

The Forest Service’s Adventure Pass is available at Forest Service offices, local vendors, and on line. The use of recreation passes as a fee payment mechanism would continue to enhance efficiencies in fee collection and compliance while providing the customer convenience visitors have come to expect. The Forest Service enforces and would continue to enforce recreation fees and issue notices of required fees at the recreation site identified in Tables 1 and 2. Compliance is and would continue to be verified by observing recreation passes displayed on vehicles parked within the recreation sites and areas.

Anticipated Impacts of the Change

The financial impacts of the proposed changes are unknown at this time. Shifts in visitor use patterns may result from the proposed changes. Impacts on recreation facilities, sanitation, public health and safety, and resources are unknown and would be monitored.

Planned Accomplishments

Fee revenue would fund operation and maintenance activities including trash and litter removal, graffiti removal, security patrols, facility cleaning, repair, and maintenance, and hazard tree removal.

Public Involvement

Planned

The Forest Service is seeking public comment on the proposed changes and plans to submit the proposal to the R-RAC in the winter of 2014.

The Forest will:

- Post information on the proposed changes at the affected sites;
- Send press release for publication to the local newspapers, including the *San Luis Obispo Telegram Tribune*;
- Post information on the proposal on the Los Padres National Forest's website;
- Brief local and federal elected officials; and
- Present the proposal to the R-RAC.

R. 30W

R. 29W

Legend

- Recreation Sites - Fee
- Recreation Sites - Free
- Previous Standard Amenity Recreation Fee Area
- National Forest
- Other Ownership
- Road
- Trail
- Streams

12/3/2013



Amenity Legend

- X = Tent or Trailer Space
- T = Picnic Table
- D = Drinking Water
- A = Access Road
- F = Fee Collection
- S = Security Services
- G = Trash Receptacle
- R = Toilet Facility
- C = Campfire Device
- I = Interpretive Signing
- P = Parking

PROPOSED CHANGES
FIGUEROA MOUNTAIN
RECREATION FEE AREA



USDA - Forest Service
Los Padres National Forest
Santa Lucia Ranger District

Lower Manzana Trailhead

Davy Brown Campground
X, T, A, F, S, G, T, C

Nira Campground &
Upper Manzana Trailhead
X, T, A, F, S, B, T, C

Munch Canyon Trailhead

Figueroa Lookout Day Use
T, S, G, R, I, P

Sunset Valley
Trailhead

Cumbre Day Use Area
T, S, G, R, I, P

White Rock
Trailhead

Catway Day Use Area

La Jolla/Ballard Trailhead

Figueroa CG
X, T, A, F, S, G, T, C

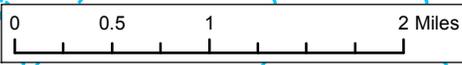
Willow Springs Trailhead

Pino Alto Picnic Area
T, S, G, R, I, P

Davy Brown Trailhead

McKinley Trailhead

Pino Alto Interpretive Trail



T. 8N

T. 7N