

Los Padres National Forest

Change in Recreation Fee Structure: Pozo–La Panza 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 Pozo –La Panza area.

Description of the Recreation Area

The Pozo –La Panza Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area is located approximately 30 miles from San Luis Obispo, California. The area is best known for the year-round OHV riding opportunities, with 18 riding trails ranging from easy to most difficult, totaling 47 miles. The area is also a favorite wildflower viewing area, with a popular annually occurring, ranger-led wildflower tour. This area borders the Machesna Wilderness, offering spectacular hunting opportunities for different varieties of game. Other recreational activities include cycling, camping, and horseback riding.

Pozo–La Panza Recreation Fee Proposal

The Los Padres National Forest is proposing to:

- Change the type of recreation fee charged for the Pozo –La Panza OHV Area from an SAF to an SRP fee (see attached map); and
- Continue to accept local and national passes for payment of the recreation fee.

Fee Collection and Compliance

No change is being proposed to the recreation fee charged at the Pozo–La Panza OHV Area. 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 Adventure Pass is available at Forest Service offices, local vendors, and on line. The use of recreation passes as a fee payment mechanism for the SRP fee 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 issue notices of required fees and enforce recreation fees within the Pozo–La Panza OHV Area. Compliance is and would continue to be verified by observing recreation passes displayed on vehicles parked within this recreation area.

Anticipated Impacts of the Change

There are no anticipated financial impacts from the proposal. There are no anticipated impacts on natural resources from the proposal. There are no anticipated changes in visitor use from the proposal. There would be no change in operation or management of the Pozo–La Panza OHV Area as a result of the proposed changes.

Planned Accomplishments

Recreation fee revenue would fund operation and maintenance of recreation sites, including trash and litter removal, toilet cleaning and pumping, graffiti removal, security patrols, facility repairs, compliance with designations for OHV use, specialized trail maintenance, erosion control, and hazard tree removal. Recreation fee revenue would also support facility enhancements such as toilet replacement and trail signing.

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

- Present the proposal to the R-RAC.

DRAFT

R. 15E

R. 16E

R. 17E

**PROPOSED CHANGES
POZO-LA PANZA
RECREATION FEE AREA**



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

Navajo Flat Campground/OHV Staging Area

Friis Campground

La Panza Campground

Turkey Flat OHV Staging Area

T. 29S

T. 30S

Legend

-  Special Recreation Permit - Fee
-  Recreation Sites
-  National Forest
-  Other Ownership
-  Trails
-  Road
-  Streams and Rivers

12/3/2013


