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Bureau of Land Management
Salem District Office

DRAFT-Nestucca River Corridor Recreation Sites Business Plan

Bureau of Land Management
Salem District Office
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Business Plan for Nestucca River Corridor Recreation Sites – OR26

Approval Process

This business plan was prepared pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) of December 2004 (P.L. 108-447, as amended), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recreation fee program policy and manual (Manual 2930 – Recreation Permits and Fees) and handbook (H-2930-1 Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook) guidance for Nestucca River Recreation Sites.

This Business Plan provides a regional comparative market study of fees charged for other similar recreation facilities. The BLM will implement the following fee schedule after approval by the BLM Deputy State Director, consultation with the BLM Resource Advisory Council, and proper public notification.

Fee Schedule and Definitions

The fee schedule outlines the existing and proposed changes for expanded and standard amenity recreation fees at recreation sites within the Nestucca River Corridor.

Standard Amenity	Existing Fees	Proposed Fees
Day-Use Sites	**NEW**	$5
Annual District Day-Use pass		$30 (Northwest Oregon BLM Pass)

Expanded Amenity	Existing Fees	Proposed Fees
Basic Campsite	$10	$15
Group Campsite	**NEW**	$75 (up to 30 people) $2.50 for each additional person
Small Group Picnic Shelter	Free	$50
Extra Vehicle	$5	$5
Firewood (half cart)	**NEW**	$5
Firewood (full cart)		$10

Definitions of Standard and Expanded Amenities taken from H-2930-1 BLM Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook for area covered under this business plan:

- **Standard Amenities** fees cover outdoor recreation sites and services for a well-defined area or developed day-use recreation site that has all of the following amenities: (1) parking, (2) permanent toilet facility, (3) permanent trash receptacle, (4) interpretive sign, exhibit, or kiosk, (5) picnic tables, (6) security services, (7) convenient and effective fee collection (8) identification and informational signs (p. 2-11 to 2-12).

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- **Expanded Amenities** fees cover specialized outdoor recreation sites and services including but not limited to developed campgrounds with at least five of the following amenities: (1) tent or trailer spaces, (2) picnic tables, (3) drinking water, (4) access roads, (5) fee collection by an employee or agent of the BLM, (6) visitor protection, (7) refuse containers, (8) toilet facilities, (9) devices for containing a campfire; group overnight sites; and use of reservation services (p. 2-13 to 2-14).

Contact Person for Business Plan

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Business Plan Approval

Recommended By:

Jeff McCusker, Salem District Supervisory Recreation Planner — Date

Approved By:

Kim Titus, Salem District Manager — Date

Concurrence By:

Oregon Deputy State Director for Resources (Acting) — Date

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Fee Site Description – OR26

The Nestucca River Corridor has four Bureau of Land Management (BLM) campgrounds, Alder Glen, Dovre, Elk Bend, and Fan Creek located along the Nestucca River in the Tillamook Field Office of the Salem District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Department of the Interior. The Nestucca sites are in Oregon's 5th Congressional District.

The Nestucca River Corridor is part of the Nestucca Back Country Byway and designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern for scenic qualities, fisheries production, botanical and recreational values within a setting of high-quality commercial timberlands. The Nestucca River is known for its steelhead fishing opportunities and is one of the most productive anadromous fisheries in Oregon. The nearby Upper Nestucca Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) trail system provides 24 miles of motorcycle and all-terrain vehicle use.

The small, 3-5 acre campgrounds contain 10-11 sites each with the exception of Elk Bend, which offers 5 walk-in campsites. Each campground is equipped with designated sites, fire rings, picnic tables, potable water, and vault toilets. Elk Bend has parking located a short distance from the camp sites.

Visitors

A visitor satisfaction survey was conducted at the Nestucca River Corridor campgrounds during the primary use season of the fiscal year 2015. The demographics for the visitors during this time were 64% of visitors being adults and of those adults 65% of them were between the ages of 31-60. The gender of the visitors were split nearly in half at 49% female and 51% male; with the majority (55%) of the visitors not having children with them. The primary activities of those surveyed were camping (88%), hiking (56%), swimming (49%), picnicking (47%) and sightseeing (44%). The reason for use changes during the months of September through November to be more oriented toward the vast hunting opportunities that the Nestucca River Corridor offers. Fishing sees greater emphasis during the peak Steelhead fishing season. The survey concluded that 92 percent of visitors were satisfied with the value received and opportunities experienced while visiting the Nestucca River Corridor and over half the visitation is from repeat users.

The majority of visitors to the Nestucca River Corridor come from the nearby communities of the Willamette Valley. However the popularity of the corridor has grown in the past few years as a bicycle travel route to the coast and as a more rustic camping opportunity for people from the larger metropolitan areas of Salem and Portland. According to a report done by The Oregon Community Foundation in 2011, 75% of the population of the Northern Willamette Valley is Caucasian, 18.6% his Hispanic and 6.3% is other. The median family income is $59,000, with only 23% of the population having a bachelor's degree.

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Fee Collection and Enforcement

The Nestucca River Corridor fees are enforceable through the presence of onsite volunteer hosts that patrol the sites and a rotation of BLM recreation staff that monitor the site. OHV trailheads and day-use sites will be monitored and enforced in the same fashion. Campers and day-use visitors post the envelope stub as a receipt on the campsite post, for record keeping and compliance. If problems arise, the host is in contact with employees from the Salem District Office and Tillamook Field Office. Yamhill and Tillamook County Sherriff's Deputies patrol the area under a contract with the BLM.

Conditions for Recreation Use Permit Fee Waivers

Section 803(d) of the REA provides that standard amenity recreation fees shall not be charged for (shortened list): use of overlooks or scenic pullouts, any person engaged in the conduct of official Federal, State, Tribal, or local government business, special attention or extra services necessary to meet the needs of the disabled, any person under 16 years of age, outings conducted for noncommercial educational purposes by schools or bona fide academic institutions, and others. Waivers of fees both for purposes of traditional cultural importance and education may be obtained in writing by contacting the Northwest Oregon District Office.

Fee Discounts

Section 805 of the REA provided for the establishment of a single interagency national pass known as the "America the Beautiful – the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass," which provides the bearer full coverage of standard amenity fees and holders of the Interagency Senior and Access Passes half-off some expanded amenity fees. The national interagency pass replaces the popular Golden Passports, which provide for free standard amenity day-use, and half-off some expanded amenity fees, in the case of Golden Age and Access Passports. No discount is allowed for group use sites, shelters, yurts or cabins. The BLM would honor existing Golden Passports until they expire or are exchanged for interagency passes. It is not expected that this pass would make a substantial impact on fee revenue in the near future.

Projected Development Costs

The Nestucca River Corridor campgrounds are already developed recreation sites. The BLM has plans to improve campground and day use amenities by adding additional hiking and biking trails, continue to develop day use sites into standard amenity sites, improve overall day-use accessibility, replace old infrastructure like the day-use shelter at Dovre. For the OHV area the BLM plans to develop approximately 10 miles of OHV trails, and make improvements to OHV trailheads such as restrooms, signage and fencing. It is too early in the development and scoping process to give an accurate estimate on costs and exact projects.

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Operations and Maintenance Costs

Costs for fee collections are approximately $1,500 annually. This includes fee collection, installation, and maintenance of self-service fee stations and costs associated with the purchase of daily and annual passes.

Overall the Nestucca Recreation Area costs the BLM about $196,000 each year to operate and conduct annual maintenance, which includes staff salary, vehicles, supplies, law enforcement and operations. The Nestucca River Corridor recreation facilities represent well over $1 million dollars in capitalized infrastructure investment. In addition, alternative program funds, including recreation pipeline funding, have been invested in improving and maintaining the Nestucca River Corridors facilities and infrastructure over the last 17 years. With continual stagnation or decreases in annual recreation budgets, the fee collection program is necessary to continue maintenance, improvements and for development of new user demanded experiences, such as the Nestucca OHV trail system and trailheads.

Below is a list of recent improvements and maintenance and their costs:

- CXT Restrooms at campgrounds (2012, 2013, $153,150)
- CXT sidewalks (2013, $7,312)
- Universal trail to fishing platform at Alder Glen (2013, $16,000)
- Fishing platform repair (2013, $12,000)

Projected Fee Revenue

The expanded amenity fees collected at the Nestucca River Corridor in the FY of 2015 were nearly $18,000. The revenue collected at the Nestucca River Corridor has remained steady over the past 5 years, aside from a drop in 2012 due to byway construction. This steady revenue is largely due to the lack of fee increases the past decade and no standard amenity fee.

The projected revenue collected from campground visitation at the 30 percent occupancy rate for the 184-day long camping season would be $26,469 for individual campsites. Elk Bend's group site projected fee revenue would be $4,140. The projected revenue for day-use using 2015 day-use visitor numbers to the OHV trailheads and newly constructed day-use areas would be $11,100. This would results in total projected revenue collected from fee changes for the Nestucca River Corridor of $41,709.

Proposed Use of Additional Fee Revenue

- Supplement the continued current level of annual maintenance needed.
- Improve site accessibility, trails, interpretation, and signing.
- Make facilities appealing and enjoyable to use.
- Expand, maintain and improve the trail system, river access, and add more day-use locations.

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- Reduce a backlog of critical deferred maintenance to site infrastructure such as trails, roads, footbridges, and buildings.

Financial Analysis of Existing Private and Public Facilities

The BLM charges expanded amenity fees for camping within the Nestucca River Corridor at Alder Glen, Dover, and Fan Creek Campgrounds. Camping at the walk-in Elk Bend campground is free. Current fees have not changed since 2005. A comparative analysis conducted by the BLM Salem District recreation staff in 2016 reviewed expanded amenity fees at similar state, federal, and local park facilities. Fees would increase expanded amenity fees and begin implementing a standard amenity day-use fee in 2017 based on this comparative market analysis (see Table 1).

Expanded and standard amenity fees for the Nestucca River Corridor are based on a fair market value analysis. A review of State, federal, and local parks in a 50-mile radius of the Nestucca River Corridor in the counties of Yamhill and Tillamook resulted in the 2017 proposed fee changes, which are based on what the public sector currently charge for similar visitor facilities, number of campsites, access, and services. No comparable sites in the private sector currently exist; RV parks are available but do not provide the same amenities and were not included in the fee comparisons charts.

Individual campsite Factors we evaluated in determining price comparisons were size of sites and accessibility, as the existence of fire pits, close potable water, and naturalness of setting, and vegetation screening between campsites. Within the market area the average fee for basic individual sites is $16.87. Comparable campgrounds managed by Oregon Department of Forestry fees range from $8 to $27. The Trask River and Kilchis River County Campgrounds are similar to the Nestucca River Corridor campground in amenities offered and size. However, the County campgrounds offer more amenities or higher quality facilities than the Nestucca River Corridor campgrounds, and we adjusted downwards approximately 10 percent for individual sites. The proposed fee for individual campsites is $15.

Group campsite fees in the market area range from $50 to $100 per night based on allowable group size and amenities provided. Group campsite prices have a wide range and maximum amount of people allowed per site. We determined that the best method to analyze the fee prices for group sites is by a per person method, dividing the stated capacity of a site, into the maximum fee charged. The average group camping fee per person is $2.50. The minimum camping fee for a group campsite would be set at $75 per-night for the first 30 people, not including additional vehicles. Any additional vehicles or people above the allotted amount will pay $5 per vehicle and $2.50 fee per person. The entire Elk Bend campground would be reservable by groups, and we feel the privacy and exclusiveness of this arrangement offsets the difference in amenities between Elk Bend and comparable campgrounds.

Small group day-use shelters: Currently there are no fees established in the area for day-use shelters. The BLM will apply a modest $1.00 per person fee rate for day-use shelters in the analysis area. The fee for the day-use shelter at Dovre will be $50, and will allow for a maximum of 50 people at the shelter.

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Day-use fees in the market area range from $2 to $6 per vehicle for standard amenities. Surrounding counties and large cities offer numerous opportunities for day-use with the majority being free; rental fees for group day-use facilities and shelters vary (Table 1). To stay consistent with the additional vehicle fee already in place at the campgrounds, the day-use fee would be set to $5. In the Nestucca corridor, as day use sites and OHV trail heads with enough standard amenities are developed, they will be designated as fee sites and the standard districtwide annual pass being valid as well.

Firewood is an important part of resource protection for campgrounds and the area surrounding the campgrounds. Providing local sourced firewood for campers reduces the amount of introduced invasive weeds into the area. Campers are also less likely to cut down trees, remove small woody undergrowth and to collect fallen wood that is important to the ecology of a natural area. The price for firewood was determined from years of firewood vending; the price has to be at a low enough rates for campers to be willing to purchase, but high enough for local residents not to want to purchase for their own wood stoves. The fee is $5 for a half cart and $10 for a full cart. Each cart holds roughly 2 cubic feet of firewood (about two standard bundles).

Stakeholders and Partnerships

The BLM has a Cooperative Management Agreement with Applegate Rough Riders Motorcycle Club to conduct annual trail clean-ups, maintain the trail system, and propose new or re-routes of existing trails and donates an average of 270 hours of volunteer time.

Oregon State Parks and Recreation, Oregon Department of Forestry both have been valuable in the management and maintenance of the OHV trail system. They have assisted with grants, emergency trail work, and their trail expertise.

Public Communication and Marketing Plan

- Public notice of the proposed fee changes will be posted onsite until implemented.
- News releases will appear in local newspapers informing the public of fee changes the Salem District BLM is planning.
- Both the public notice and news release will contain contact information for public comments on the proposed fee changes.
- Website information will inform the public of the proposed fee changes.
- Fee signs and paper materials will reflect proposed fee change.

The BLM monitors visitor use to detect changes in site utilization and document written and oral communication from the public. Business plan review occurs on a biennial schedule from the date of the last signature. Future adjustments to the Nestucca River Corridor Recreation Sites' fee schedule will reflect public comment and program implementation needs.

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Ways to Inform Public of Fee Expenditures

Fee expenditure information is collected on an annual basis and presented in the Federal Statistics document available online. More specifically, each area will post fee expenditure information on site to inform the public where and on what services, maintenance, operations their fees are spent.

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Table 1: Analysis of Existing Campgrounds

Expanded Amenities: Green colored campgrounds have all 9, Orange colored campground have 7-8, Red colored campgrounds have 5-6.
*Partial Hookup is water and electric. *Full hookup is water, electric and sewer. *Basic is no hookups

Campground	Fee														
Nestucca River Corridor (BLM)	***Proposed Fees*** Basic campsite $15 Extra vehicle $5 Day-use shelter $50 Day-use $5 (Including OHV) Group campsite $75 ($2.50 per past 30)	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔				✔		
Trask River (Tillamook County)	Tent $21 $8 per extra tent RV/Trailer $27 $8 per extra tent Day-use $4 Extra vehicle $6 Pet $6 Group campsite $100 $8 per extra tent	✔	✔		✔	✔		✔	✔	✔		✔			
Kilchis River (Tillamook County)	Tent $21 $8 per extra tent Rv/Trailer $27 $8 per extra tent Day-use $4 Extra vehicle $6 Pet $6	✔	✔		✔	✔		✔		✔	✔	✔			✔
Jones Creek (ODF)	***Proposed Fees*** Basic campsite $15 Walk-in campsite $8 Extra vehicle $4 Group campsite $50	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔						
Browns Camp (ODF)	***Proposed Fees*** Basic campsite $15 Extra vehicle $4 Group campsite $50						✔	✔							
Gales Creek (ODF)	***Proposed Fees*** Basic campsite $15 Walk-in campsite $8 Extra vehicle $4	✔	✔	✔				✔							

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Campground	Fee														
Reehers Camp (ODF)	***Proposed Fees*** Basic campsite $15 Extra vehicle $4	✔	✔	✔				✔					✔		
Nehalem Falls (ODF)	***Proposed Fees*** Basic campsite $15 Walk-in campsite $8 Extra vehicle $4 Group campsite $50	✔	✔		✔	✔		✔	✔						
Hebo Lake Campground (USFS)	***Proposed Fees*** Basic campsite $18	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔							✔		
Rocky Bend Group Campground (USFS)	***Proposed Fees*** Group campsite $75	✔	✔		✔	✔			✔						
Castle Rock Group Campground (USFS)	***Proposed Fees*** Group campsite $75	✔	✔		✔	✔			✔						

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