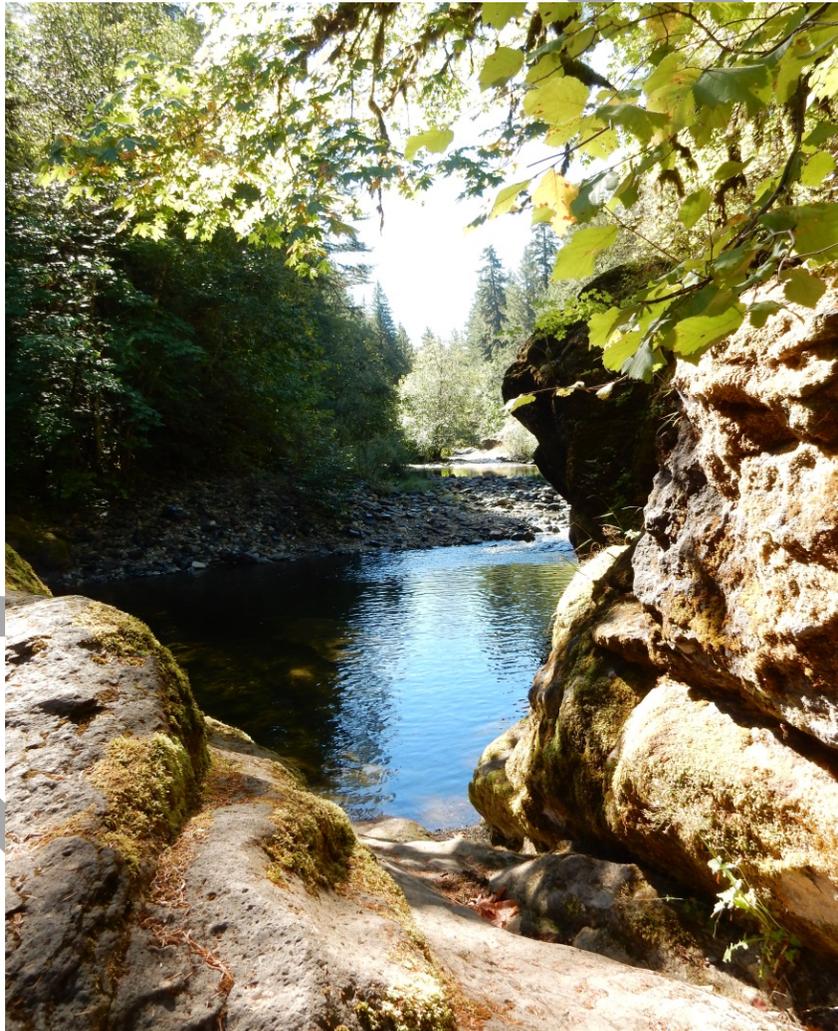


July 2016



**Bureau of Land Management
Eugene District Office**

DRAFT-Sharps Creek Recreation Site Business Plan



**Bureau of Land Management
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Business Plan for Sharp Creek Recreation Site – OR-19

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 Sharps Creek Recreation Site (SCRS).

The 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 comparison outlines the existing and proposed changes for expanded and standard amenity recreation fees at Sharps Creek Recreation Site.

Expanded Amenity	Existing Fees	Proposed Fees
Basic Campsite	\$8	\$15 (2017) \$20 (2019)
Extra Camping Vehicle (maximum 3 per campsite)	\$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).
- **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; cabins; group overnight sites; group day-use sites; use of reservation services; use of hookups; and use of dump stations (p. 2-13 to 2-14).

Fee Site Description – OR-19

Sharps Creek Recreation Site (SCRS) is a 20-acre campground and day-use recreation facility nestled in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains, 18 miles southeast of Cottage Grove. Part of Lane County, Sharps Creek is within the fourth Congressional District, represented by Representative Peter DeFazio. The recreation site is located on BLM-managed Oregon and California Grant Lands (O&C Lands) and was developed, maintained and operated since the early 1960s using O&C funding and user fees.

Located in evergreen forest, the site consists of an 11-unit campground and a naturally-formed swimming area ringed by large rock outcroppings and fed by the clear, cool waters of Sharps Creek. Here, visitors find opportunities for hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing camping, picnicking, swimming and gold panning. In addition to the recreational activities provided at SCRS, there are several appealing attractions nearby. The Bohemia Mining District and covered bridges offer a glimpse into the area's historic past. Dorena Lake provides opportunities for fishing, swimming, boating, windsurfing and wildlife viewing. Hikers, bikers, runners and equestrians can enjoy the area's remarkable scenery while traveling the 17-mile Row River Trail, a National Recreation Trail and State Scenic Bikeway (pending final designation, winter 2012) located approximately 3 miles north of the SCRS. The Row River Trail is an abandoned railway that has been developed into a paved, multi-use recreational trail linking downtown Cottage Grove to the small community of Culp Creek.

Campground amenities include tables, potable water, fire rings and grills, pet waste stations, 3 toilet buildings, garbage service, group campsite, accessible campsite, and site host accommodations that include electrical hook up. Visitors pay expanded amenity fees for first-come-first-served individual campsites. There is no charge for standard amenity day use at the picnicking site or swimming area.

Season of Use

The site is open to allow for vehicle traffic from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. during the camping season of approximately Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Visitors

Sharps Creek received approximately 1820 visits in 2015, with the majority of visits occurring June through September. Visitation rates vary from year to year based on a number of factors including economic conditions and seasonal weather influences. Visitation at SCRS remains stable with many repeat visitors returning to the site year after year to enjoy its beauty, amenities and valued recreation opportunities.

Oregon is represented by a diverse population seeking varied types of recreation opportunities to satisfy important needs: adventure, solitude, relaxation, companionship, challenge, discovery, exercise, etc. Sharps Creek is comprised of a desirable mix of recreation opportunities that address multiple needs and cater to a wide spectrum of visitor demographics (e.g., age, physical ability, economic strata, etc.). Also, while nestled in a forested environment that offers high

scenic value, and a sense of escape and natural respite, Sharps Creek renders visitors a sense of being “off the beaten track” while only being 18 miles from Cottage Grove, a full-service community.

Primary users of this recreation site include people from nearby cities such as Eugene, Springfield and Cottage Grove. Other demographic user types are those from the surrounding rural communities (e.g., Oakridge, Pleasant Hill, and Creswell). Furthermore, as travel and tourism marketing efforts intensify that feature the nearby Row River Trail, a growth in user demand for the campground is anticipated as a means of accommodating out-of-area visitors.

Visitor satisfaction ratings obtained from the 2011 Customer Satisfaction Survey the BLM contracted through the University of Idaho were highly favorable. Ninety five percent of site visitors who participated in the survey expressed satisfaction overall with appropriate facilities, services and recreational opportunities (51% very good; 44% good). The remaining survey respondents 5%) responded with an average rating. Echoing this strong support are visitor statements submitted to the BLM during the 2011 summer season in response to being asked their reason for choosing to visit the BLM recreation site:

Very helpful and charming campground hosts, location & design of campsites, [and] topography

Because we have been coming here for years and enjoy it very much

Nice area, nice swimming hole

I actually love the small campgrounds with less people. It's worth the sacrifice of facilities for the quiet and seclusion. Thank you

My family likes it here, fresh water, clean restrooms, swimming across the street. Feel safe here

I use[d] to come here as a kid and wanted to bring my kids here

Because it's awesome!!

Fee Collection and Enforcement

Sharps Creek fees are enforceable through the presence of the onsite host who patrols the site. Campers post the envelope stub receipt on the vehicle window, which is easily accessible for record keeping and compliance. If problems arise, the host is in contact with Eugene District Law Enforcement and other Eugene BLM district personnel through radio communication. Lane County Officers patrol the road and are available to assist.

Sharps Creek currently charges no fees to day-use visitors. If visitation of this user group increases, standard amenity fees would be easily implemented and enforceable by utilizing self-service pay stations.

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 exchanged for interagency passes. It is not expected that this pass would make a substantial impact on fee revenue in the near future.

Operations and Maintenance Costs

Operations and maintenance costs at SCRS are approximately \$43,000 annually, which includes staff salary, vehicles, supplies, fee collection, and maintenance of self-service fee stations. Approximately 90 percent of the fee receipts go directly for physical site maintenance and improvements with nearly 10 percent towards fee collection costs.

Normal site annual operation and maintenance funding will continue to come primarily from base budget sources supplemented with fee receipts. These base funding dollars have decreased over the past seven years due to inflation and flat or at times decreasing budgets.

The BLM utilizes several alternative funding sources to maintain the site, including special approved programs such as recreation pipeline funding and payments from counties for site maintenance projects and improvements. Both depend on periodic renewal and may not be future sources of funding. Staff has made extensive use of volunteers, service programs, and organizations such as the county corrections programs, Student Conservation Association, Americorp, Northwest Youth Corp, local scout groups, county environmental youth programs, and other community service programs, to help conduct maintenance and construction projects. These programs allow the BLM to complete numerous needed projects that would otherwise not likely be completed. Volunteers and special programs make efficient use of limited funding and staff resources, but require additional levels of staff supervision.

Recreational facilities at SCRS represent well over \$400,000 in capitalized infrastructure investment over the last 40 years. In addition, alternative program funds, including recreation pipeline funding, have been invested in improving and maintaining the facilities and infrastructure at SCRS over the last 16 years. With continual decreases in annual recreation budgets, the fee collection program is necessary to continue operations, and to maintain and enhance the site's high quality recreational opportunities for the public.

Recent work at SCRS has included needed site repairs related to fencing, bollards, signs and sign supports, fire rings/grates, tables, roads, access routes, toilet buildings etc. Provision of a new well casing, pump unit, fire rings and pet waste stations are examples of upgraded amenities provided at the site to better address visitor needs.

Projected Development Costs

The Sharps Creek Recreation Area is an existing recreation site. No foreseeable development is planned.

Projected Fee Revenue

Fees collected in 2015 totaled approximately \$3,400. Anticipated revenue from 2017 fee increases could result in approximately \$4,000 in fees annually, based on recent fee receipt trends and operating season.

Proposed Use of Additional Fee Revenue

SCRS's infrastructure and facilities are nearly 40 years old. Unfortunately, much of the proper scheduled maintenance for these aging facilities has been deferred due to lack of adequate funding. A majority of work at the site has included fixes when needed for immediate safety or overall park appearance. Customer service has driven many of the past projects at SCRS.

Additional fee revenue would be used to:

- Supplement the continued current level of annual maintenance needed.
- Improve site accessibility, trails, interpretation, and signing.
- Make facilities appealing and enjoyable to use.
- 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 at Whittaker Creek. Current fees have not changed in over 20 years. A comparative analysis conducted in 2016 reviewed user fees at similar state, regional, and local park facilities. This analysis (Table 1) concluded that fees for campsites are currently on the low end of the spectrum compared to nearby recreation areas

offering the same or comparable amenities. Fees would increase in 2017 based on this analysis, pending committee consultation and Deputy State Director for Resources approval.

The BLM conducted a comparative market study of similar public facilities in the region (Table 1). State, federal, and local parks were surveyed near the Willamette Valley urban areas, and coast range within 60 miles of WCRS. Proposed fees are based on what the public sector currently charges for similar visitor facilities, number of campsites, access, and service. In summary, all campgrounds charge fees. RV parks are available but do not provide the same amenities offered at SCRS and were not included in the fee comparisons charts. Additionally, some parks may charge a day-use fee if visiting other areas of the park.

The proposed fees were determined through the analysis of comparable sites and their current fee rates. The aforementioned proposed fee table shows the results of averaging for each type of site and amenity.

Basic Campsite fees were determined from averaging the fees from comparable campgrounds. The range for tent sites is \$12 to \$26 per basic campsite, the average fee for these sites after being rounded to the nearest whole dollar is \$20 per night. The quality and extent of Sharp's Creek's facilities are comparable to other parks in the region. However, due to this large increase in fees due to the large amount of time between increases, a phased approach will be used. The phased approach will increase fees to \$15 in 2017 and then \$20 in 2019.

Firewood: Providing firewood is an important part of resource protection for campgrounds and the area surrounding campgrounds. Having local sourced firewood for campers reduces the amount of invasive weeds that are introduced to 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 to not 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.

Stakeholders and Partnerships

The BLM will seek to continue partnerships with Lane County Corrections, Division of Youth Services, Northwest Youth Corps, scouting organizations, emergency responders and others whose needs and skill mix contribute to the management objectives associated with the SCRS. Accomplished work such as hazard tree removal, firewood provision and pre-season site readiness preparations are examples of site benefits realized through this collaboration.

Recently, a new partnership with Travel Oregon, Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department, the cities of Cottage Grove and Creswell, Lane County and others was formed as a result of efforts to include the nearby *Row River National Recreation Trail* as part of a larger, 24-mile State Scenic Bikeway route. Being as this route is within 3 miles of the Sharps Creek Recreation Site, existing partnerships have been strengthened and new ones formed in growing recognition of the exceptional recreation opportunities that exist within the area, and a focused effort to promote quality travel and tourism interest and associated accommodations.

The BLM is a partner with other Willamette Valley recreation providers including the Willamette National Forest, Lane County Parks and Recreation Department, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Oregon State Parks for information- and resource-sharing relative to the region's recreational facilities and services. This has enabled all parties to benefit in important ways (e.g., technology sharing, issue identifications and solution development, improved efficiencies, lowered maintenance and operational costs, etc.). Ultimately, the public benefits as improvements, savings and operational changes are realized.

The BLM will continue nurturing existing partnerships and pursuing new ones that complement the agency's mission. In a fiscal environment that cannot sustain wasteful spending and program inefficiency the agency continues to act on opportunities that will support a healthy, robust, relevant and accountable recreation program for the public.

Public Communication and Marketing Plan

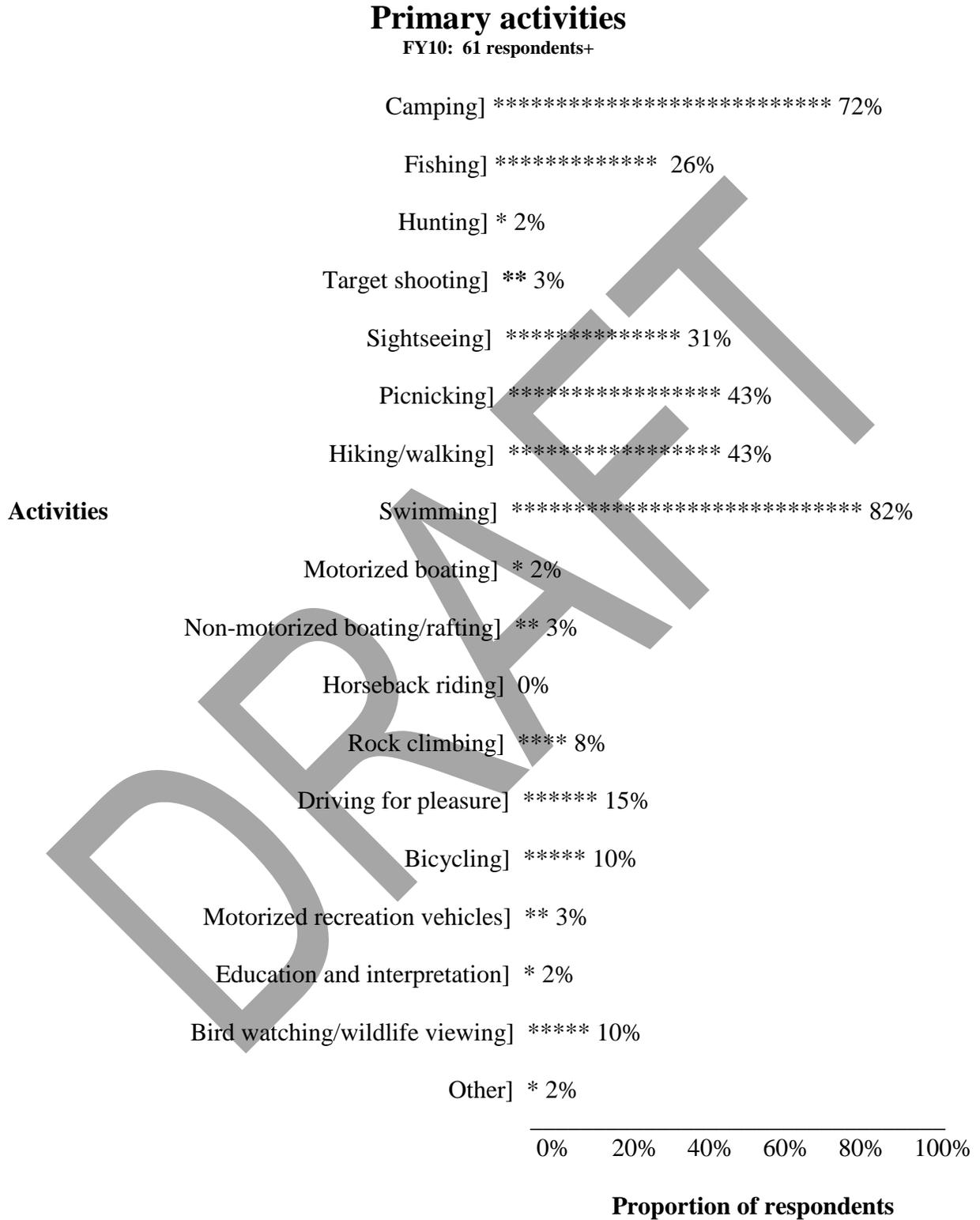
1. Public notice of the proposed fee changes will be posted onsite until implemented.
2. News releases will appear in local newspapers informing the public of fee changes the Salem District BLM is planning.
3. Both the public notice and news release will contain contact information for public comments on the proposed fee changes.
4. Website information will inform the public of the proposed fee changes.
5. 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 SCRS fee schedule will reflect public comment and program implementation needs.

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.

Figure 1 – Primary Activities



+Percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could choose more than one activity.

Table 1: Analysis of Existing Campgrounds

Each site has at least 5 of the following amenities: 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. Additional amenities are shown in Table 1.

*Partial Hookup is water and electric. *Full hookup is water, electric and sewer. *Basic is no hookups

Recreation Site	Fee															
Alsea Falls (BLM)	Proposed Fees															
	Individual tent site \$15															
	Basic site \$20															
	Double site \$40	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓							
	Extra vehicle \$5	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓							
	Day-use \$5	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓							
Group campsite \$50 (up to 20 people; \$2.50 each additional person)																
Clay Creek (BLM)	Proposed Fees															
	Basic site \$20															
	Group picnic shelter \$75 (up to 50 people; \$1.50 for each additional person)	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓				✓		
	Extra vehicle \$5	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓				✓		
Sharps Creek (BLM)	Proposed Fees															
	Basic site \$20	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓					
	Extra vehicle \$5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓					
Whittaker Creek (BLM)	Proposed Fees															
	Basic site \$20	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓					
Extra vehicle \$5	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓						
Loon Lake (BLM)	Basic site \$18	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					
	Day-use \$5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					
River Bend (Linn County)	Basic site \$24															
	Partial hookup \$30															
	Cabin \$65	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Extra vehicle \$7	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Group shelter \$125															
Group gazebo \$175																

Recreation Site	Fee														
Whitcomb Creek (Linn County)	Basic site \$22	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓				
	Extra vehicle \$7	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓				
	Group campsite \$200														
Salmonberry (Benton County)	Electric site \$25														
	Basic site \$20	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓			✓	✓
	Yurt (electric) \$40	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓				
	Cabin (electric) \$50													✓	✓
	Extra vehicle \$5														
Richardson (Lane County)	Electric campsite \$25														
	Premier electric \$28				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Extra vehicle \$4				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Day-use \$4														
	Group shelter \$150														
Cascadia (State Parks)	Tent site \$17														
	Extra vehicle \$7														
	Day-use \$5	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		
	Picnic area \$50	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		
	Group campsite \$71 (\$3 each over 25 people)														
Detroit Lake (State Parks)	Partial hookup \$28														
	Electric only \$26														
	Tent site \$19	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
	Extra vehicle \$7														
	Day-use \$5														
Silver Falls (State Parks)	Horse campsite \$19/\$58														
	Electric only site \$26														
	Tent site \$19														
	Extra vehicle \$7														
	Cabin \$40/\$50	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
	Day-use \$5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
	Group shelter \$50/\$100														
	Group campsite \$71 (\$3 each over 25 people)														
	Group RV \$101 (\$10 per after 10)														
Blackberry (USFS Siuslaw)	Basic \$24	✓	✓		✓	✓									
	Day-use \$6	✓	✓		✓	✓									
	Extra vehicle \$7														

Recreation Site	Fee															
Mary's Peak (USFS Siuslaw)	<i>Proposed</i>															
	Basic \$12	✓	✓													
	Extra vehicle \$10															
Alder Dune (USFS Siuslaw)	Basic \$24	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓								
	Extra vehicle \$7	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓								
Rock Creek (USFS Siuslaw)	Basic \$26	✓	✓		✓											
	Extra vehicle \$7	✓	✓		✓											
	Day-use \$6															
Tillicum (USFS Siuslaw)	Basic \$26	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓								
	Electric \$33	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓								
	Extra vehicle \$7	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓								
	Day-use \$6															
Cape Perpetua (USFS Siuslaw)	Basic \$26	✓	✓													
	Extra vehicle \$7	✓	✓													
	Day-use \$6	✓	✓													
	Group campsite \$125 Max 50												✓			
Schwarz Park (Corps of Engineers)	Basic \$18	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓					
	Double site \$36	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓					
	Extra vehicle \$6															
Cavitt Creek Falls Recreation Site (Roseburg BLM)	Basic \$14				✓	✓										
	Extra vehicle \$5				✓	✓										
Millpond Recreation Site (Roseburg BLM)	Basic \$14	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓					
	Extra vehicle \$5	✓	✓	✓	✓											
	Day-use shelter \$130													✓		
Susan Creek Recreation Site (Roseburg BLM)	Basic \$20	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓										
	Extra vehicle \$5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓										
Rock Creek Recreation Site (Roseburg BLM)	Basic \$14	✓	✓	✓											✓	
	Extra vehicle \$5	✓	✓	✓											✓	
Tyee Recreation Site (Roseburg BLM)	Basic \$14				✓	✓										✓
	Extra vehicle \$5				✓	✓										✓
	Day-use shelter \$55															