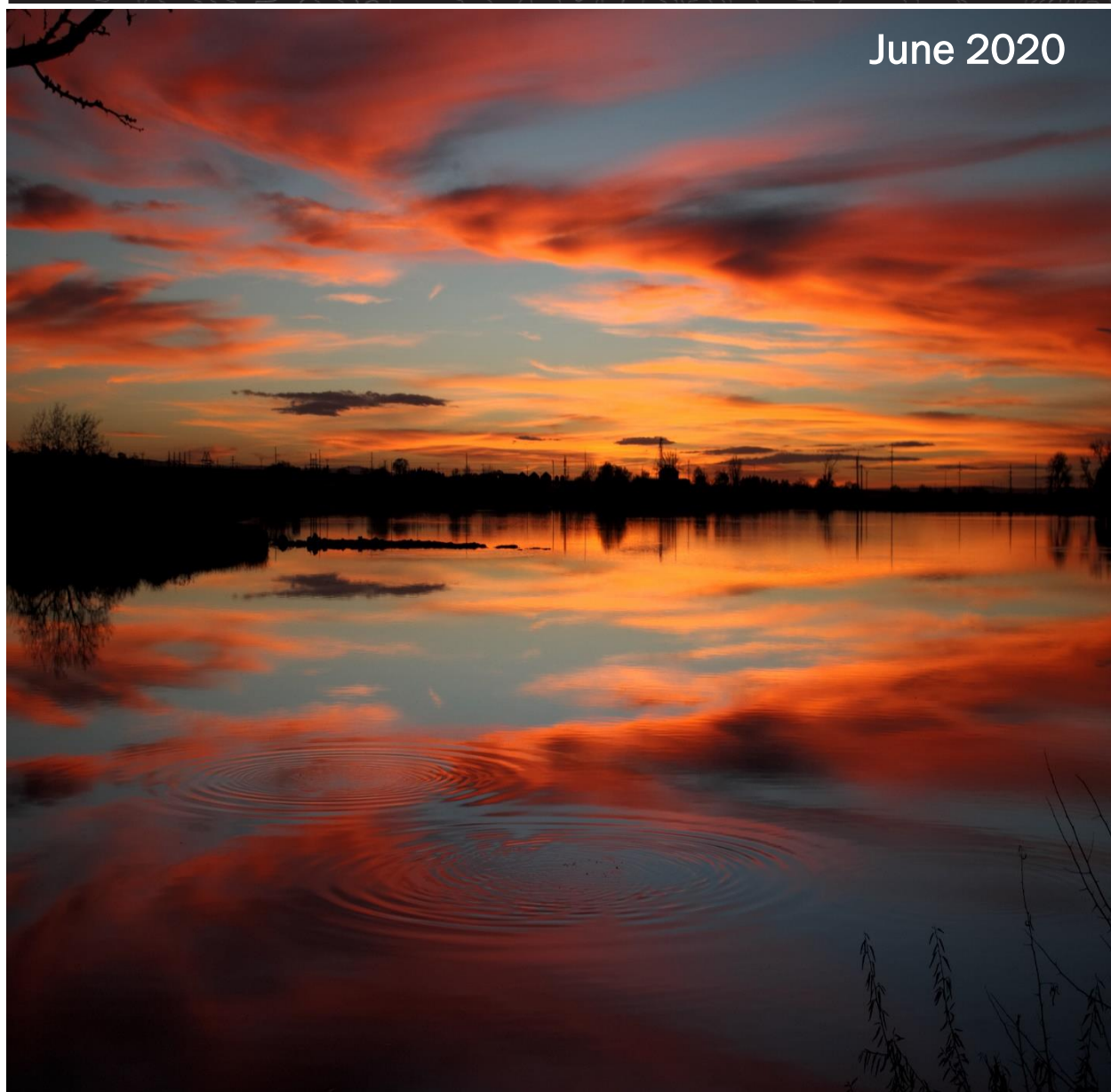




U.S. Department of the Interior | Bureau of Land Management | Idaho

Burley Field Office Business Plan Lud Drexler Park and Milner Historic Recreation

June 2020



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

Twin Falls District
Burley Field Office
15 East 200 South
Burley, ID 83318

Burley Field Office Business Plan

Milner Historic Recreation Area and Lud Drexler Park

I. Executive Summary

The following document introduces a proposed fee increase by the Burley Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management for the recreation fee areas it manages in southern Idaho. The need for this action as well as the history of the fee program, expenses generated by the recreation sites and plans for future expenditures are outlined and explained in the pages below.

The BLM Twin Falls District has two recreation fee sites, Milner Historic Recreation Area and Lud Drexler Park, both located in the Burley Field Office. The sites are the most popular recreation sites within the District hosting 40,000 plus people annually per site, with visits steadily increasing every year. This visitor increase along with aging infrastructure is contributing to resource damage and decreasing visitor safety and experiences, while budgets are stretched to keep up with maintenance and growing needs for improvements.

Milner Historic Recreation Area

The Milner Historic Recreation Area (MHRA) is situated along the Snake River, 9 miles west of Burley, Idaho. Both primitive and developed camp sites and boating facilities dot the 4.5-mile shoreline. The area's basalt cliffs, sagebrush, and grasslands provide habitat to a variety of songbirds and waterfowl. Bass, channel catfish, yellow perch and trout provide yearlong fishing opportunities. About 4.5 miles of the Oregon National Historic Trail winds through the recreation area. Emigrants heading west traveled this area over 150 years ago, and remnants of the Oregon Trail are visible today. An interpretive shelter gives the history of the immigrants and an Americans with Disabilities (ADA) accessible hiking path leads to some of the wagon wheel ruts.

Increased use, visitor conflict, and resource damage highlight the need for improved recreational site management. In 2012 the field office analyzed numerous upgrades and enhancements to increase visitor satisfaction and ease BLM compliance enforcement in EA- DOI-BLM-ID-T020-2012-0022-EA. These upgrades were authorized in a 2013 Decision Record. Since 2014, the field office has been upgrading camp sites, picnic areas, restrooms, boat ramps and access to the Snake River. Hiking trails along the Oregon Trail and Snake River have been established and interpretive signs tell the rich history of the area.



Campsite at Muskrat Bend, Milner Historic Recreation Area.

The BLM has invested significant resources to modernize the recreation site, which is still in progress. The upgrades and improvements require a substantial amount of money to build and maintain. Facility improvements have created a more family friendly site, which has reduced vandalism and other crimes. Recreational use will continue to increase, especially as the population grows in the Magic Valley, so keeping the site operable is imperative for public use and BLM investment.

Lud Drexler

Lud Drexler Park is located on the north end of Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir near the Idaho/Nevada border, about 36 miles south of Twin Falls, Idaho. The reservoir was created in 1910 to provide irrigation water to nearly 25,000 acres of farmland. The recreation site was developed in 1974 in response to increased use of the reservoir. The recreation site is a cooperative effort by local sportsmen, Twin Falls County, Salmon River Canal Company and the BLM. In 1981, it was renamed in

honor of Lud Drexler, a local sportsman who contributed significantly to developing the site.



Dedication plaque at Lud Drexler Park.

Lud Drexler Park offers 20 developed campsites with shade cabanas, fire rings and picnic tables, irrigated landscaping, restrooms, reservoir shore access, a boat ramp, maintained road access and dispersed camping sites. Potable water and a RV dump are available on-site. The reservoir is popular for boating, fishing and camping. Anglers find trout, smallmouth bass, yellow perch and walleye throughout the year. During the fall season, the campground is a popular place to stay for hunters due to abundant game found near the reservoir.

This business plan addresses standard and expanded amenity fees at both the MHRA and Lud Drexler Park. It includes research and analysis of fees charged at comparative sites in the surrounding area. Fees were established at Lud Drexler in 1992, MHRA in 1997 and have not changed since that time.

II. **Introduction Regulatory Framework**

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). REA provides the BLM current authority to establish, modify, charge and collect recreation fees at Federal recreational lands and waters. REA authorizes the BLM to locally retain collected recreation fees and outlines how

revenues may be used for such things as facility repair, maintenance, facility enhancement directly related to public use and operating or capital costs associated with the Recreation and Visitor Services program. Under REA, a Standard Amenity fee and an Expanded Amenity fee may be charged for the use of certain facilities or services, which include developed day-use sites and campgrounds. The developed recreational sites must meet the criteria that are defined below. These fees are usually implemented through the issuance of a recreation use permit (RUP), or through a specific annual pass. BLM policy requires that revenue from RUPs be deposited into a separate account (pg. 2-3 of H-2930-1). Doing so allows the BLM to more readily track and report collections and ensures that RUP revenue is spent at or near the site of collection. Definitions of Standard and Expanded Amenities taken from 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) for the area covered under this business plan:

Standard Amenity Recreation Fees cover outdoor recreation areas that provide significant opportunities for outdoor recreation; have substantial Federal investments; provide areas where fees can be effectively collected, and have all of the following amenities: (1) designated developed parking, (2) a permanent toilet facility, (3) a permanent trash receptacle, (4) interpretive sign, exhibit or kiosk, (5) picnic tables, (6) and security services (Sec. 803.(f)(4)(D) of REA).

Expanded Amenity Recreation Fees cover specialized outdoor recreation sites and services including but not limited to developed campgrounds with at least a majority 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) reasonable visitor protection, (7) refuse containers, (8) toilet facilities, (9) simple devices for containing a campfire (Sec. 803.(g)(2)(A) of REA).

Additional Expanded Amenity recreation facilities or services include rental of cabins, group day-use or overnight sites, binoculars or other equipment (Sec.803.(g)(2)(C) of REA); use of hookups for electricity, cable or sewer.

III. Purpose of Document

The BLM Handbook H-2930-1, Recreation Permits and Fee Administration (Rel. 2-300, dated Nov. 17, 2014), requires that each recreation fee program have an approved business plan which thoroughly discusses fees and explains how fees are consistent with the criteria set forth in REA. Business plans are to assist management in determining the appropriateness and level of fees, the cost of administering a fee program and the expected benefits for the public. The primary purpose of the plan is to serve as public notification of the objectives for use of recreation fee revenues and

to provide the public an opportunity to comment on these objectives. The finalized business plan guides the expenditure of collected REA funds and ensures public accountability. The business plan will specifically cover a description of the fee site, proposed changes in fees to these sites, associated operating costs, planned expenditures of fee revenue, a financial analysis utilizing a regional comparative market study of fees charged for other similar recreation facilities, and the impacts of proposed fee changes. The data used to analyze and prepare this business plan was obtained through internal BLM tracking and accounting mechanisms such as the Federal Business Management System (FBMS), Recreation Management Information System (RMIS), Collections and Billing Systems (CBS), and other locally generated recreation and visitor use tracking spreadsheets.

Prohibitions on Charging REA Fees Section 803(d) of the REA provides that standard or expanded amenity recreation fees shall not be charged for (shortened list): parking only, undesignated parking, or picnicking along roads or trailsides, general access, low investment sites or areas, persons moving through without using the facilities or services, for camping at undeveloped sites that do not provide a minimum number of facilities or services as described above (expanded amenity recreation fee), 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.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (Public Law 94-579) has the BLM's general land use management authority over public lands and establishes outdoor recreation as one of the principle uses of those lands. Section 302(b) authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to regulate public lands uses through permits or other instruments.

This business plan has been prepared pursuant to all applicable BLM recreation fee program policies and guidance outlined in the BLM Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook (H-2930-1).

IV. Burley Field Office Recreation Fee Program

A. Administrative Unit

The Burley Field Office is in the Twin Falls District and manages about 834,700 acres of public lands in southern Idaho. Here, the Oregon-California National Historic Trail hosts some of the best-preserved evidence of early pioneer trail sections. The Burley Field Office recreation program is prominent, seeing hundreds of thousands of visitors per year on lands managed by the office. Visitors enjoy plentiful opportunities for camping, hunting, fishing, mountain biking, rock climbing and motorized recreation. The only two recreation fee sites in the Twin Falls District are in the Burley Field Office; MHRA and Lud Drexler Park.

B. Burley Field Office Recreation Program and Visitation.

MHRA

The MHRA is on the south bank of the Snake River just upstream from the Milner Dam. The area includes camping, picnic areas, restrooms, interpretive signage and boating facilities and is popular for a variety of recreation purposes. In the 84 miles of river from Salmon Falls Creek to Lake Walcott, MHRA boasts the largest continuous block of public lands along the south side of the Snake River with 2055 acres and 4.5 miles of Snake River shoreline. Over 100 years ago, emigrants on the Oregon Trail passed through the area. Today nearly 4.5 miles of the Oregon Trail are visible in the MHRA. In 2019, Burley Field Office completed 1.3 miles of ADA compliant walking path which borders the historic trail. North of the west entrance is the Bicentennial Site with an interpretive shelter and a hiking trail leading to some of the deep ruts.



Boat dock at Perch Point, Milner Historic Recreation Area

Several developed and primitive recreation sites dot the 4.5 mile Snake River shoreline offering amenities such as river access, fire rings, picnic tables, paved and maintained road access, designated parking, restrooms, trash disposal, shade cabanas, a boat ramp and a new boat ramp that was installed the spring of 2020. The area's basalt cliffs and surrounding sagebrush/grassland provide a haven for songbirds, upland game and waterfowl. Fishing is excellent for smallmouth bass, channel catfish, yellow perch and rainbow trout.

There are more than 44,000 visits to the historic recreation area annually to take advantage of the ample opportunity for outdoor recreation. Visits are defined as one person at the park for one day or part of one day. For example, a car with four people that stay for two days equals eight visits. Visitors include local residents and out of state visitors looking to camp and fish. Area residents commonly use the site for picnicking, averaging 2-6 hours per visit. Visitors who come to see the historical resources are typically on-site for two hours or less. All socio-economic classes are represented in the visitor demographic. The MHRA sees day use visitors year-round with camping being popular April through October.

Idaho Power Company (IPC) conducted a survey of the MHRA from Oct. 1, 2013 through Sept. 30, 2014. IPC survey clerks also conducted roving recreational-use and creel surveys at the Milner Hydroelectric Project. IPC based their surveys on methodologies suggested by Malvestuto et al. (1978), Malvestuto (1983), and Hoenig et al. (1983). Throughout the study period,

surveyors counted recreationists during randomly selected survey periods. Also, they conducted on-site interviews with recreationists to get information on their demographics, recreational use and attitudes.



Picnic area at Milner Historic Recreation Area.

Recreational use measured at the MHRA totaled 59,467 hours of recreational use in one year. Lounging was the activity most often observed, at 27,832 hours (39 percent of use). Bank angling was next, with 19,982 hours (28 percent of use); followed by boat angling at 7,136 hours (10 percent of use). Other activities with more than 3,500 hours included swimming (4,995 hours), dock angling (4,282 hours), and picnicking (3,568 hours). Other activities observed included sightseeing, horseback riding and jet skiing. All these activities had 2 percent of the overall use or 1,427 hours each.

All interviewees in the 2014 survey were from the United States. Some reported being from two different states: 99 percent from Idaho and 0.8 percent from Wyoming. Most of the Idaho residents were from cities near the MHRA, primarily Burley (36 percent) and Twin Falls (21 percent). The average age of interviewees was 35.7. When divided into age categories of 10 years, the most common group was age 30–39 (18.5 percent of interviewees). Age group 10–19 was almost identical (18.4 percent). The next 3 age groups had more than 10 percent of interviewees: 20–29 (17.6 percent); 40–49 (14.8 percent); and 60–69 (11.0 percent). Most interviewees (63 percent) were male. IPC is planning to conduct a new survey in 2020.

Lud Drexler Park

Located on the north end of Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir near the Idaho/Nevada border, Lud Drexler Park is about 36 miles south of Twin Falls, Idaho. Lud Drexler Park offers 20 developed campsites with shade cabanas, fire rings and picnic tables, irrigated landscaping, restrooms, reservoir shore access, boat ramp, maintained road access and dispersed primitive camping opportunity. Potable water and a RV dump are available on-site. The reservoir is popular for boating, fishing and camping. Anglers find trout, smallmouth bass, yellow perch and walleye and enjoy ice fishing in the winter.



Campsite at Lud Drexler Park with Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir view.

According to the BLM's Recreation Management Information System (RMIS), recorded use levels at Lud Drexler Park are estimated at 55,000 visitors in 2015, 55,000 in 2016, 54,500 in 2017, 54,490 in 2018 and 54,540 in 2019 based on BLM observations. Visits are defined as one person at the park for one day or part of one day. For example, a car with four people that stay for two days equals eight visits.



CXT vault toilet and campsite at Lud Drexler Park.

A visitor survey conducted in September 2019 by the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center of Washington State University assessed visitor use at Lud Drexler Park. Surveys were distributed to a random sample of visitors between July 19 and Sept. 16, 2019. 95 percent of surveys were returned which were then electronically scanned and the data analyzed. Most visitors said fishing was the primary activity at this site (74 percent), followed by camping (53 percent). The next major activities included motorized boating (18 percent), picnicking (14 percent), and sightseeing (12 percent). Other activities composing less than 20 percent of the primary activities included birdwatching/wildlife viewing, swimming, motorized vehicle recreation, non-motorized boating/rafting, education and interpretation, and bicycling. When asked how appropriate was the fee charged for the site? 79 percent rated it to be about right with only 3 percent stating it was too high. While 18 percent of respondents believed the current price to be too low. This survey information shows 53 percent of people surveyed were on-site for the purpose of camping. The survey did not differentiate between camping in the developed sites or along the shoreline. But the numbers certainly show that the majority of public use of Lud Drexler park and facilities is coming from day use activities or camping outside of the developed sites. Supporting the case for a day use fee.

C. Applicable Plans (RMP's and EA's)

The 1985 Cassia Resource Management Plan guides management of the MHRA. The plan directs the Burley Field Office to protect cultural and historic resources including the 4.5 miles of Oregon Trail. The office also manages for diverse recreation such as hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing and picnicking. This includes interpreting historical values and providing water-based recreation while providing quality wildlife habitat.

In 2012, the MHRA Environmental Assessment (EA) addressed an increase in visitor use at the site and greater protection for historical and cultural values. The EA analysis evaluated a plan to renovate and improve the overall design of the amenities offered at the MHRA and improve sustainability, attractiveness, functionality and cost-effectiveness. The redesign and buildout of existing campsites, installation of a new boat ramp, and installation of an interpretive walking path along the 4.5 miles of Oregon Trail also analyzed in the EA received no public protest during scoping periods and was finalized without issue.

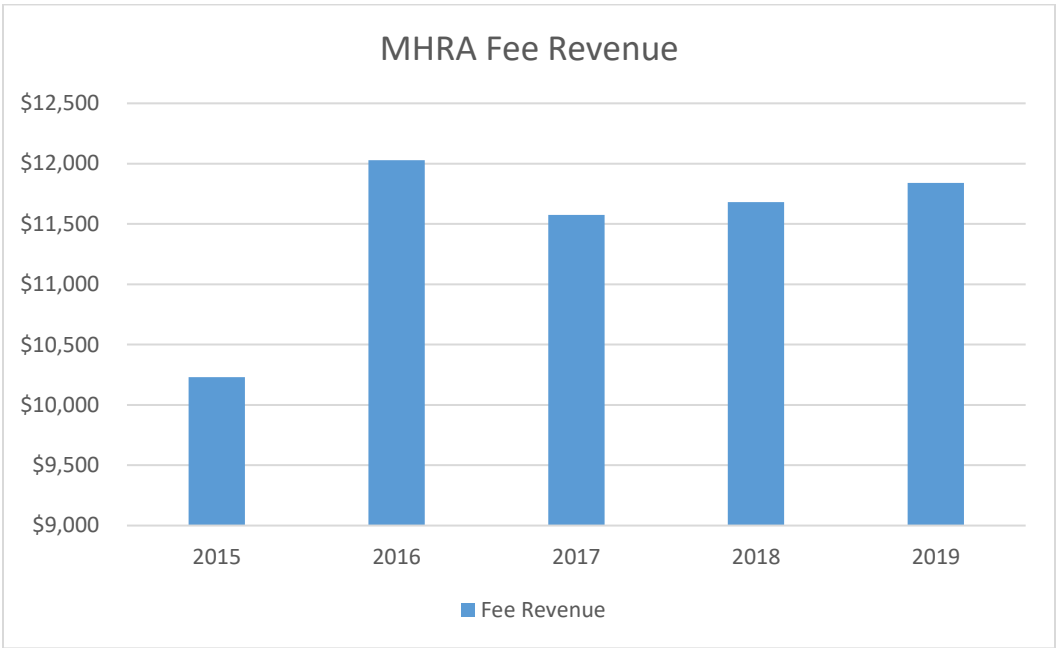
The 1982 Twin Falls Management Framework Plan (MFP) guides management of the Lud Drexler Park. In the MFP, the Salmon Falls Reservoir area was designated as a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) and includes Lud Drexler Park. The increasing recreation use and demand triggered the development of a recreation management plan. The goal of the SRMA is to provide optimum levels of recreational opportunities to meet current and future recreation demands. Visitor and resource management strives to enhance opportunities for high quality recreation experiences.

The Salmon Falls Recreation Management Plan's highest management priority is providing reservoir-based recreation. This is accomplished by maintaining existing facilities and improvements in good condition and developing additional facilities as needed. The Bureau also provides camping and picnicking facilities as support to the reservoir-based activities.

D. Current Fee Program Revenues

The MHRA charges standard and expanded amenity fees. The current fees are \$3 per vehicle for day use and \$5 per vehicle per night for camping. Day use and overnight permits are paid at the two Iron Rangers self-service pay stations at each entrance. Site specific annual passes for \$25 and \$15 sportsman passes are available at the Burley Field Office. Sportsman passes are valid during hunting

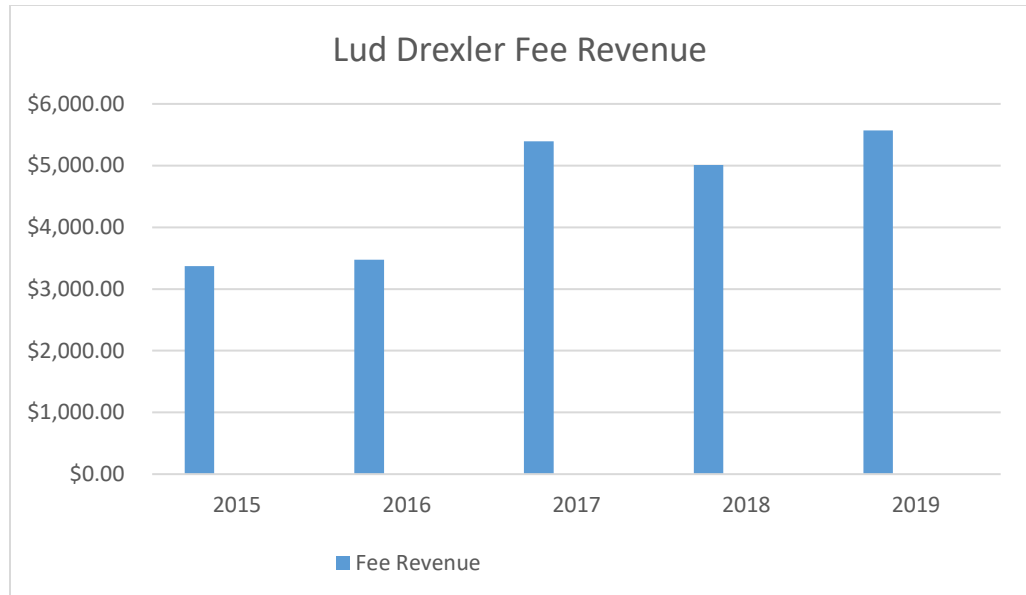
season which is Sept. through March. On-site fees are charged “per vehicle”; therefore, every vehicle entering the MHRA must buy a day use permit, overnight use permit, annual pass or sportsman pass. The annual and sportsman passes cover all vehicle fees entering the MHRA. Fee revenue has fluctuated over the past five years: \$10,229.70 (2015), \$12,027.65 (2016), \$11,576.49 (2017), \$11,681.09 (2018), and \$11,840.61 (2019) totaling \$57,355.54. Making an annual average of \$11,471.11.





West entrance fee station, Milner Historic Recreation Area. Iron Rangers as seen in this photo provide secure fee collection points with fee information available on the adjacent fee kiosk.

Lud Drexler Park has 20 camping units, including two units with electric hookups, drinking water, restroom facilities and an RV dump. The fee is \$5 per night to camp overnight. There are currently no fees for day-use or to use the RV dump. Camping permits are available on-site at the self-service pay station at the park entrance. Fee revenues have steadily increased over the past five years: \$3,370.17 (2015), \$3,473.81 (2016), \$5,392.19 (2017), \$5,009.20 (2018), \$5,571.05 (2019) totaling \$22,816.42. This shows an increase in visitor use and averages \$4,563.28 annually.



Fees collected at MHRA (\$57,355.54) and Lud Drexler (\$22,816.42) from 2015 – 2019 totaled \$80,171.70



Fee station at Lud Drexler Park.

As seen in the photo above, the fee station at Lud Drexler consists of an Iron Ranger and a kiosk with fee information available. Both the kiosks and the Iron Ranger need updated to be consistent with MHRA and fee collection policies. Increases in fee revenue will support this renovation.

E. Expenditures and Operating Costs

Operating costs for recreation sites include, but are not limited to, employee wages, fee collection costs, vehicle expenses and maintenance. Maintenance includes garbage dumpster service, vault toilet pumping, toilet paper, garbage bags, mowing, weed control, painting, and fire ring and picnic table repair. During the busy season of April through October, seasonal recreation technicians cover the maintenance needs of both recreation sites. On average, recreation technicians need to visit the MHRA three days a week and Lud Drexler two days a week. The cost of seasonal employees is typically \$36,470 per year with annual vehicle costs reaching \$8,000. The cost of maintenance supplies and services averages \$17,430 and \$3,000 for a camp host at Lud Drexler. These operating costs total more than \$64,900 per year.

Aging infrastructure at both recreation sites need maintenance and upgrades to be sustainable into the future. Facilities in disrepair can threaten visitor health and the resources in the area. For example, windstorms can blow off aging roofing sections of cabanas, possibly causing physical injury or property damage and littering the landscape. These sections get bolted down and fixed as needed, however, an increase in fee revenue could replace the entire cabana, increasing public safety and enhancing the overall experience while using the facilities.



Cabana in need of repair Milner Historic Recreation Area.

Since 2009, the BLM has invested \$300,000 (2009) for new vault toilets, \$1,839,855 (2014) for upgrading and paving the main road, \$396,845 (2019) for new paved interpretive trail, and about \$800,000 (2019) for a new boat ramp. Altogether, \$3,236,700 has been spent on improvements at the Milner Historic Recreation Area. The BLM has also invested \$150,000 (2009) for new vault toilets and \$105,296 (2016) for new cabanas at Lud Drexler for \$255,296 in improvements. Six more cabanas are scheduled for replacement in 2020 with an estimated cost of \$156,000.

Lud Drexler Park and the fee structure does not address an issue common to BLM campgrounds along reservoirs throughout the west. As the water recedes and shoreline becomes available, campers drive through the campground and camp

for free along the shoreline. These recreators do not pay for the use of the boat ramp, docks, trash, vault toilets and RV dump on the public lands. It is not uncommon during the summer months to find more campers along the shoreline than in the developed Lud Drexler park. According to traffic counter data collected in the summer of 2019, an average of 50 vehicles per day drive into Lud Drexler Park. As there are only 20 developed campsites, it shows that the majority of use at Lud Drexler is by day use occupants. This is further corroborated by the 2019 visitor survey results. This use contributes significantly to the operating costs and will be addressed in section G (Proposed fee structure) below.



Boat ramp at Lud Drexler Park, Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir.

F. Future Expenditure Priorities

The MHRA conceptual design plan expands user amenities in the future. In this multi-step process, the field office will improve camp sites and add more camping locations, large group use sites, camp host facilities with water and power, ADA compliant pathways and trails, additional interpretive facilities, potable water access and additional river access. A new boat ramp was installed the spring of 2020 to provide easier launching and additional boat trailer parking. Camp site improvements will add tent pads, updated fire rings, shade structures, electric

hook ups, potable water access, improved roadways, and campsite designations to reduce disturbance and erosion. A major priority at this site is to develop a camp host site. The camp host will maintain the site and reduce vandalism and conflict that sometimes occurs in the camp sites. A camp host presence increases fee compliance and is necessary as the area grows in popularity. These improvements will require several million dollars to complete and require cooperative match and grant funding.

Updating fire rings and improving campsites will protect area resources through reducing wildfire threat on the landscape. In 2019, MHRA experienced a wildfire caused by an escaped warming fire by a user in a popular fishing area. Developing areas such as this will reduce future dangers to surrounding resources and visitors alike while providing a better user experience.



Original boat ramp and parking at Milner Historic Recreation Area.

Proposed renovations at Lud Drexler Park include upgrading camp sites and replacing deteriorated cabanas and picnic tables and constructing tent pads. Additionally, upgrading the gravel road accessing Lud Drexler and winding through the site is planned. This road is heavily used by boaters, campers and other recreators who pass through the recreation site to use the boat ramp or access the shoreline of the reservoir. These users significantly impact the road, garbage, toilet, and water facilities in the recreation site without contributing to the maintenance funds through site fees. The RV dump also needs an upgrade to be more user-friendly, safe and sustainable. These improvements will cost several hundred thousand dollars upon completion.

Operating costs will increase at both recreation areas due to installation of new infrastructure, increased use and demand on facilities and general inflation. Maintaining and replacing aging infrastructure will also impact operating costs. The need for law enforcement patrols in the areas will also increase as more people put pressure on resources. Currently the law enforcement program does not use any funds from fee accounts as these accounts do not currently cover even routine maintenance costs. Increased revenue from this funding can support additional law enforcement support when needed. Increased law enforcement presence provides greater public safety and resource protection in these highly recreated areas. Increases to the current fee structure will provide additional funding that will allow the Burley Field Office to improve existing facilities, create new facilities, provide labor needed to maintain the recreation sites, and meet the public's growing demand for outdoor recreational opportunities.

G. Current and Proposed Fee Changes

MHRA

The BLM began collecting fees at MHRA in 1997 and has not increased these fees for the past 23 years. Currently the MHRA camping fee is \$5 per vehicle per night with a day use fee of \$3 per vehicle.

The Burley Field Office proposes to change the fee structure of the MHRA to more closely reflect the demands on the area. The day use fee will increase from \$3 to \$5 per vehicle. Camping will increase from \$5 per vehicle per night to \$15 per campsite per night with a limit of two vehicles per site. Each additional vehicle at a site is an additional \$5 per vehicle per night charge. When electric hookup is added, those sites specifically will increase to \$20 per night for the use of the added amenity of electricity. Plans are in the works for this completion in the next 3-5 years.

Lud Drexler Park

Lud Drexler Park camping fees were instituted in 1992 and have remained unchanged for the past 28 years. Currently there is a \$5 per day per vehicle fee for camping in designated camping sites. There are no fees for day-use, boat launching, camping on the reservoir or use of the RV dump.

The Burley Field Office proposes to change the fee structure of Lud Drexler Park. The camping fee will be increased from \$5 per vehicle per night to \$15 per

campsite per night for standard campsites in the campground with a limit of two vehicles per site. Each additional vehicle at a site is an additional \$5 per vehicle per night charge. Two campsites with electrical hook ups would be \$20 per night for the added amenity of electricity use. A day use fee of \$5 per vehicle per day would be implemented for anyone accessing the shoreline. The use of the boat ramp, docks, camping along shoreline and use of RV dump would be included in this day use fee.

Annual Passes

Currently the MHRA offers an annual pass for unlimited day use and camping for \$25 per calendar year. A Sportsman's Pass is available for \$15 to users for unlimited access to MHRA during the timeframe of September to March to correspond with hunting seasons. Lud Drexler Park has no annual passes.

The BLM proposes a Field Office specific annual pass be instituted that would be valid for both MHRA and Lud Drexler Park based on the calendar year. The fee would be \$50 per year and allow the pass holder unlimited day use access to both sites and to the amenities included as day use. The annual pass would then provide a reduced camping rate of \$5 per night per campsite to the pass holder at MHRA and Lud Drexler camping sites. The Annual Pass will permit two vehicles for the \$5 per night per site rate. Each additional vehicle is a \$5 charge. The Sportsman's pass will be eliminated due to a historic lack of public interest.

Consumer Price Index

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, "the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change over time in the prices paid by urban consumers for a market basket of consumer goods and services" (bls.gov/cpi). The BLM proposes the option to further increase overnight camping rates by \$5 a night per 10 percent increase in the CPI from the date this business plan is approved. This increase could occur at a CPI of 283.77 as it is 257.97 as of January 2020 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

H. Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates

1. Cost Recovery Analysis

When establishing the current fee rates at the MHRA in 1997, BLM determined it cost a minimum of \$2,970 per month to operate the recreation

site, or \$35,640 annually. The average cost per year to maintain and operate both recreation sites has increased to more than \$65,000. Combined fee revenue from both sites averaged \$16,033 over the past five years, only 25 percent of annual operation costs. With the suggested fee increase fee revenue would increase to \$45,000 annually covering 75 percent of current operating costs.

2. Fair Market Value Analysis

Market research of the area's comparable camping and recreation sites shows current fees in the Burley Field Office are well below the area market costs. The average fee of comparable camping is \$26 per night per campsite while the fees of MHRA and Lud Drexler are \$5 a night per vehicle. The two sites' current camp fees are only 19 percent of the area average for overnight camping. The proposed fee of \$15 per campsite per night would increase the camp fee to about 58 percent of the average cost of other comparable sites in the area.

Comparable site fees in the area for day use or amenity use fees are \$5 per day for use of the site, boat ramps or RV dumps. MHRA current day use fees are \$3 a day per vehicle, 60 percent of the average area costs. The proposed fee increase to \$5 a day per vehicle would make the MHRA fee schedule consistent with fees of comparable sites in the area.

All comparable sites offer similar amenities as MHRA and Lud Drexler Park such as river or lake access with boat ramps, restrooms, camping sites with picnic tables and fire rings, and paved or maintained access roads. Nine comparable sites average 73 miles from MHRA and 110 miles from Lud Drexler Park and have similar socioeconomics, demographics and visitor use patterns.

Federal and State managed comparable sites:

Site Name	Management	Day Use Fee	Camping Fee	Annual Pass	Amenities
BFO Rec Sites proposed fees	Burley Field Office BLM	\$5 per vehicle	\$15 per standard site \$20 per electric hook up site \$5 additional vehicle	\$50- covers day use admission and reduced \$5 camping rate.	River/ Lake access, boat ramp, restrooms, electric, picnic tables, fire rings, paved access, dump station, potable water
Mackay Reservoir Joe T. Fallini Campground	Challis Field Office BLM	\$25 reservable large group site	\$10 tent sites \$14 water/ electric sites \$16 double sites/ \$4 each power pedestal used	No annual pass	Lake access, boat ramp, restrooms, electric, picnic tables, fire rings, paved access, dump station, potable water
Cove Recreation Site	Bruneau Field Office BLM	\$2 per vehicle	\$5 tent camping \$12 RV/ Trailer camping	No annual pass	Lake access, boat ramp, restrooms, electric, dump station, potable water
Lake Walcott State Park	Idaho State Parks	\$5 per vehicle	\$21 standard camping \$29 service camping \$40 group camping	\$10- waives the \$5 entry fee. No discount on camping.	River access, boat ramp, restrooms, picnic tables, fire rings, paved access, dump station, disc golf, visitor center
Massacre Rocks State Park	Idaho State Parks	\$5 per vehicle	\$21 standard camping \$29 service camping	\$10- waives the \$5 entry fee. No	River access, boat ramp, restrooms, picnic tables,

Site Name	Management	Day Use Fee	Camping Fee	Annual Pass	Amenities
				discount on camping.	fire rings, paved access, dump station, disc golf, visitor center
Alturas Inlet Campground	Forest Service	No Day Use Fee	\$18 one vehicle site, \$36 two vehicle sites, \$9 additional vehicle	No annual pass	Lake Access, boat ramp, restrooms, picnic tables, fire rings, paved access, drinking water
Smokey Bear Campground	Forest Service	No Day Use Fee	\$16 one vehicle site, \$32 two vehicle sites, \$8 additional vehicle.	No annual pass	Lake Access, boat ramp, restrooms, picnic tables, fire rings, paved access, drinking water

Private and Municipal managed comparable sites:

Site Name	Management	Day Use Fee	Camping Fee	Annual Pass	Amenities
Village of Trees RV Park	Private	No Day Use Fee	\$19- tent camping \$32- RV camping	No annual pass	River access, boat ramp, restrooms, picnic tables, paved access, showers, pool, concessions
1000 Springs Resort	Private	\$5 boat launch	\$25- tent camping \$35- RV camping	No annual pass	River access, boat ramp, restrooms, picnic tables, fire rings,

					paved access, showers, pool
Willow Bay Recreation Area	City of American Falls	\$5 boat launch	\$20- tent camping \$45- RV camping \$5- extra vehicle parking	\$50- annual boat launch pass	River access, boat ramp, restrooms, picnic tables, fire rings, paved access, concessions
Heyburn Riverside RV Park	City of Heyburn	No Day Use Fee	\$20- tent camping \$28- RV camping	No annual pass	River access, restrooms, showers, RV hook ups.
Cottonwood Park	Idaho Power	No Day Use Fee	\$18- camping \$75- group shelter reservation	No annual pass	River access, boat ramp, picnic tables, vault toilets, fire pits, drinking water, RV dump

3. Impacts from Changing and Not Changing Fee Structure

a. Anticipated results of fee increase

i. Anticipated impacts to local economy

Local economies can benefit from added recreation opportunities from increased user fees that will build, improve and better maintain facilities. No negative impacts are foreseen.

ii. Anticipated socioeconomic impacts

Impacts to low-income or minority groups will not occur from the proposed fee schedule increase. Less than 1 percent of visitors to the MHRA are purchasing annual passes at this time, meaning doubling the price will not impact the majority of site users. Increasing camp fees from \$5 to \$15 remains well below market average providing an inexpensive outdoor experience.

Additionally, BLM provides and maintains many free recreation sites and dispersed camping is a viable alternative for those who do not want to pay a fee.

iii. Anticipated environmental impacts

The proposed fee structure will allow the Burley Field Office to better maintain existing facilities with continued garbage removal and seasonal staff monitoring of recreation areas. Proposed site improvements paid with increased fees will benefit the recreation and human environment by providing recreational users a more comfortable and safe experience. It will also reduce user conflict through development of designated camping, parking and trail areas. Additionally, resource disturbance from campers and day use visitors expanding camp sites and parking areas will be prevented by carefully placed barriers in parking and camping areas and by creating group sites to accommodate larger numbers of people wanting to camp together.

iv. Anticipated results of no-change

Only 25 percent of operational costs for the MHRA and Lud Drexler Park come from fee revenues generated on-site. This means the Burley Field Office must pay 75 percent of the cost with appropriated funding which is typically static funding or at risk of decrease. With increasing costs of operation, the current model is not sustainable. The Burley Field Office will not be able to maintain recreation sites or develop recreation opportunities at these locations under the current fee schedule. It can be expected that without improved funding opportunities some of the existing amenities would need to be scaled back to stay within existing budgets. This may include fewer restrooms, decreased garbage service and decommissioning the RV dump at Lud Drexler. Eliminating the RV dump at Lud Drexler may increase visitations to the RV dump at the Rogerson gas station.

Without improved infrastructure and compliance, increased visitor use will likely cause disturbance to valuable resources such as the Oregon National Historic Trail at MHRA.



Motor vehicle tracks down the Oregon National Historic Trail in the MHRA. Resource damage such as this increases as visitor use increases at recreation sites. With current fee revenues it is impossible to address addition of resource protection measures such as fences or pathways.

4. Public Outreach

- a. The Burley Field Office will work with the Twin Falls District Public Affairs Specialist to distribute a press release that informs the public about potential fee increases to regional print and broadcast media outlets. The information will also be shared on BLM Idaho's social media platforms. Additionally, informational bulletins and posters will be posted at the entrances to both MHRA and Lud Drexler Park providing contact information to receive comments. This business plan will be available on the BLM website where other business plans can be found. Public meetings will be offered based on public response to initial outreach efforts.