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**Bureau of Land Management  
Northwest Oregon District Office**

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# **Alsea Falls Recreation Site Business Plan**



**Bureau of Land Management  
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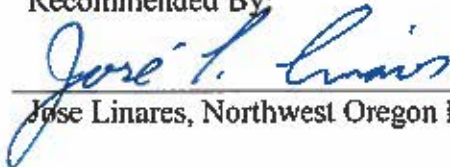
Reviewed By:



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8/23/17  
Date

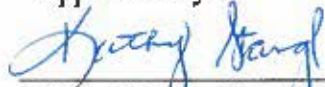
Recommended By:



Jose Linares, Northwest Oregon District Manager

8/23/17  
Date

Approved By:



Kathy Stangl, Deputy State Director for Resources

8/25/17  
Date

## **Executive Summary**

This business plan was prepared pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) of December 2004 (P.L. 108-447, as amended), and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recreation fee program policy and manual direction. REA provides the BLM current authority to establish, modify, charge, and collect recreation fees at Federal recreational lands and waters. Section 804 of REA addresses the minimum public outreach requirements that an agency must consider when developing or changing recreation fees. This outreach process includes the involvement of a Resource Advisory Council (RAC). RACs provide recommendations to agency officials on matters including, but not limited to:

- **Implementing or eliminating fees;**
- **Expanding or limiting the recreation fee program; and**
- **Implementing fee level changes.**

The fee analysis portion of this business plan was based on a comparative review of fees charged elsewhere and by other public agencies within the geographic area of the Alsea Falls Recreation Site that provide similar services. Based on the comparative fee analysis, this business plan proposes to revise the day-use and camping fee for the Alsea Falls Recreation Site.

The **Alsea Falls Recreation Site** is located in Benton County, Oregon approximately 27 miles southwest of Corvallis between the small communities of Alpine and Alsea. The recreation site includes a day-use area, a campground, and a day-use trailhead facility. The site is located on BLM-administered Oregon and California Grant Lands (O&C Lands) and was developed; maintained, and operated over the past 40 years using O&C appropriated funding and recreation use fees.

The recreation site includes 16 picnic units, five tent campsites, 14 basic campsites, and two double campsites designed for twice as many people. Amenities include paved or surfaced access and parking, picnic tables, barbecues and fire pits, potable water, interpretive or informational kiosks, garbage cans, and toilet facilities that access many recreation opportunities.

Fee revenue for the recreation site has historically been generated from day-use fees, camping fees, extra vehicle parking in the campground, and annual day-use passes. The following fee schedule outlines the existing and proposed changes for recreation fees at the Alsea Falls Recreation Site. Detailed discussion on this fee proposal occurs in the body of this business plan.

**Table 1: Existing Fees and Proposed Fee Changes**

<b>Standard Amenity</b>	<b>Existing Fee</b>	<b>Proposed Fee</b>
Day-Use	\$3	\$5
Annual Day-Use Pass <sup>1</sup>	\$15	\$30
<b>Expanded Amenity</b>	<b>Existing Fee</b>	<b>Proposed Fee</b>
Extra Vehicle Fee	\$5	\$5
Tent Campsite	\$0	\$15
Basic Campsite	\$12	\$20
Double Campsite	\$20	\$40

## **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. This business plan and these fee sites are associated with the **Alsea Falls Fee Project Area**.

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 provides significant opportunities for outdoor recreation; has substantial Federal investments; where fees can be effectively collected, and that has all of the following amenities: (1) designated developed parking, (2) a permanent toilet facility, (3) a permanent trash

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<sup>1</sup> The proposed revision of the annual day-use pass is covered in a separate business plan for the Northwest Oregon BLM Pass which is designed to cover multiple recreation sites, but is shown for informational purposes only as one of the fee types for the Alsea Falls Recreation Site.

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 (Sec.803.(g)(2)(D) of REA); use of sanitary dump stations (SEC.803.(g)(2)(E) of REA); and use of reservation services (Sec.803.(g)(2)(G) of REA).

## **Purpose of Document**

The BLM Handbook H-2930-1, Recreation Permits and Fee Administration (Rel. 2-300, Dated November 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, the expected benefits to be derived for the public and to provide a structured communication and marketing plan. 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 insures 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. For additional detailed information, contact the BLM Northwest Oregon District. Much of our data is available, but some Personally Identifiable Information contained in these systems may be subject to Privacy Act requirements.

## **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): solely for parking, undesignated parking, or picnicking along roads or trails, 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.

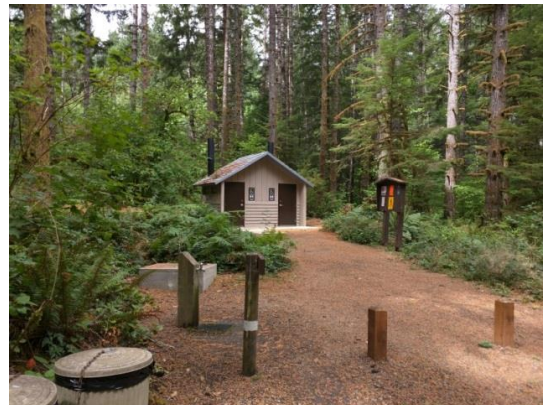
## **Fee Discounts**

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 a 50 percent discount on some expanded amenity fees. The national interagency Senior and Access Passes replaced the Golden Age and Access Passports in 2007; the BLM continues to honor these passes. The Northwest Oregon District Pass provides only provides the bearer full coverage for standard amenity fees, with no discounts for expanded amenity fees. No discount is allowed for expanded amenity group use sites, shelters, yurts or cabins. It is not expected that the total use from passes would make a substantial impact on fee revenue for the Alsea Falls Recreation Site in the near future.

## **Background**

### **Fee Site Description**

The **Alsea Falls Recreation Site** is located approximately 27 miles southwest of Corvallis, Oregon near the small town of Alsea in Benton County. The recreation site includes a day-use area, a campground, and a day-use trailhead facility (see Figure 1). Surrounding the recreation site is an extensive non-motorized trail system. The site is located on BLM-administered Oregon and California Grant Lands (O&C Lands) and was developed; maintained, and operated over the past 40 years using O&C appropriated funding and user fees. The site is located near the banks of the South Fork Alsea River in the forested foothills of the Coast Range Mountains, and along the South Fork Alsea Backcountry Byway. The recreation site lies within Oregon’s 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.



The **Day-Use Area** includes 15 picnic units, each with elevated barbecue grills and fire pits. Other amenities include potable water, interpretive kiosks, paved access and parking, garbage cans, and vault toilets. Due to the demand for tent camping, the 2013 Alsea Falls Recreation Area Management Plan laid out the possibility of converting under-utilized picnic sites to camp sites. Initially, we are converting five sites to meet demand for tent camping, and reduce competition with RV campers. Additional picnic units may be converted in the future. The primary activities by visitors to the day-use area include picnicking, waterfall viewing, hiking, and mountain bike use.



The **Campground** includes 14 basic campsites and 2 double campsites. The double campsite is designed to allow two families to camp together. All campsites include a picnic table, barbecue grill, and fire pit (double campsites include two of each). Other amenities in the campground include potable water, interpretive kiosks, paved access and parking spurs, garbage cans, and vault toilet facilities. The primary activities by visitors to the campground include tent/RV/trailer camping, waterfall viewing, hiking, and mountain bike use.

The **Fall Creek Day-Use Trailhead** was reconstructed in 2013 and includes a gravelled parking area with designated parking for 18 vehicles, 1 picnic unit with a table (additional units are planned for the future), an information kiosk, garbage cans, and vault toilet facilities. The primary activities by visitors to the day-use trailhead are mountain biking, picnicking and hiking.



### **Amenity Descriptions**

Each individual site allows up to 8 people and 2 vehicles. An additional tent is allowed at each site in addition to their primary camping type. For example, an RV site allows for 1 RV and a tent, a tent site allows for 2 tents. An RV and camper trailer at one site is not allowed, 2 camper trailers or 2 RVs are not allowed.

**Basic Campsites** offer BBQ grills, picnic tables, tent pad, assigned parking and a fire ring. The sites allow for RVs, camper trailer or large vehicles to park in for overnight camping.

**Individual Tent Sites** offer a picnic table, fire ring, BBQ grill, tent pad, and assigned parking. No hookups would be available and only tents would be allowed at the site.

**Double Tent Sites** allow twice the amount of people, vehicles and tents, and would offer picnic tables, fire rings, BBQ grills, tent pads and assigned parking. No hookups would be available and only tents would be allowed at the site.

### **Season of Use**

The campground portion of the **Alsea Falls Recreation Site** is open to vehicles from May through October, with the option to expand or shorten the season based on user demand and budget. The Day-Use Area that contains the picnic units and tent campsites is now open year round; the decision to keep these areas open year round was due to the popularity of the surrounding non-motorized trail system and the ease of access to the waterfalls.

The **Fall Creek Day-Use Trailhead** is open year round, with temporary closures based on public safety or resource damage concerns. Examples of when the day-use trailhead and surrounding trail system are closed are during severe weather conditions such as excessive rain, high winds, snow, or ice storms. Another example of a temporary closure would be based on administrative actions such as timber harvest or large-scale landscape maintenance projects like thinning or brush treatments. Public safety and resource protection are top priorities for the BLM.



Figure 1: Map of Alsea Falls Recreation Site



## Recreation Use

Visitation at the **Alsea Falls Recreation Site** is recorded annually in the BLM’s Recreation Management Information System (RMIS) database. The use at a specific site is captured as “visits” which equates to one person entering onto lands or waters, administered by the BLM for pursuit of recreational experiences. The applicable rule is that one entrance per individual per day to public lands is reportable as a visit. Visitation in RMIS also follows the federal fiscal year (FY) cycle that begins on October 1, and runs through September 30 of the following year. Calculating or estimating visitor use is derived through several methods including tallying the information from recreation use permits (fee envelopes and passes), traffic counters, trail counters, and through simple observation. In most cases, the number of visits is a combination of these methods. Table 2 captures the visits at the sites within the Alsea Falls Recreation Site.

**Table 2: Annual Visitation**

Site	FY12*	FY13*	FY14**	FY15	FY16
Alsea Falls Campground	0	0	0	2,570	2,854
Alsea Falls Day-Use Area	0	0	0	5,549	7,175
Fall Creek Day-Use Trailhead	0	0	0	15,000	14,203
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,437</b>	<b>18,051</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>23,119</b>	<b>24,052</b>

\* Use for all 3 sites were combined under Alsea Falls Camping

\*\* Day-use and trailhead visitation were not reported

The majority of visits occur in July and August with camping, picnicking, mountain biking and waterfall viewing being primary activities. Visitation varies from year to year, based on factors including weather and regional economics. Many visitors are repeat users from surrounding communities. The overall occupancy rate for the year is usually about 40 percent, with most of the use on weekends, when the campground is often full.

The new and growing non-motorized Fall Creek Trail System has been a welcome addition to the Alsea Falls Recreation Site, increasing use not only at the day-use trailhead but also at the campground and day-use area. Use at the campground and day-use areas is expected to grow significantly in future years with the success of the Fall Creek Trail System. The Fall Creek Trail System has already received national attention through magazine articles, website articles, and word-of-mouth accolades in the mountain biking community.

## Fee Revenue

Table 3 displays the annual amounts collected at the Alsea Falls Recreation Site since 2014.

**Table 3: Annual Fee Collection and 3-Year Average**

FY14	FY15	FY16	3-Year Average
\$21,122	\$19,687	\$18,082	\$19,914

## **Fee Collection and Enforcement**

All vehicles entering the **Alsea Falls Recreation Site** (campground, day-use area or day-use trailhead) are required to obtain a recreation use permit for overnight camping (expanded amenity fee); or day-use (standard amenity fee). Currently, the day-use areas can also be accessed by obtaining one of the annual passes. Visitors can purchase the recreation use permits at self-service fee stations located near the entrance of each area, and the annual pass can be purchased from BLM offices. All passes must be displayed either on the campsite post or within view from the vehicle's front window. The BLM is considering placing some or all of the campsites on Recreation.gov, the Federal government's one-stop center for reservations and trip-planning information. Visits would be expected to increase as a result of adding Alsea Falls Recreation Site to the reservation system.

The Alsea Falls Recreation Site fees are enforced through the presence of an onsite host and BLM recreation staff that manage and administer the site. If problems arise during the host's rounds, they contact BLM staff or law enforcement in the Northwest Oregon District Office for assistance with compliance. Benton County Law Enforcement patrols the area and is available to assist with other issues at the site when needed.

Fee compliance at the campground exceeds 90 percent. This high compliance rate is primarily based on the presence of the host, which is located in one of the basic campsites. Day-use compliance is a little more problematic. For fiscal year 2016, recreation staff compared the vehicle count with the number of recreation use permits purchased for day-use. The compliance rate based on that analysis showed that only about 55 percent of the vehicles paid the required fee. This low compliance rate is primarily based on the fact that the sites are operated year-round and patrols are less frequent outside of the summer months. Additionally, the host is also not present during that time period. During the primary recreation season additional patrols will occur to help increase day-use compliance rate, unfortunately this is not an option during the shoulder season due to the unavailability of seasonal staffing.

School groups and educational organizations can arrange free access at any time of the year for authorized educational activities by contacting the BLM and providing a curriculum of their planned educational activities (see Prohibitions on Charging REA Fees). Other recreational events must be held under a special recreation permit issued by the Northwest Oregon District.

## **Operations and Maintenance Costs**

The BLM spends about \$110,350 each year to operate and maintain the site, which includes staff salary, vehicles, supplies, law enforcement, and operations. The cost for fee collections is approximately \$3,000 annually, which includes collection, maintenance of self-service fee stations, and costs associated with the sale of annual passes. As use increases to the Alsea Falls Recreation Site due to the popularity of the Fall Creek Trail System, operation and maintenance costs will likely increase as well. Any future facility development is unlikely to significantly impact the operation and maintenance expenses, beyond upkeep and replacement of the facilities

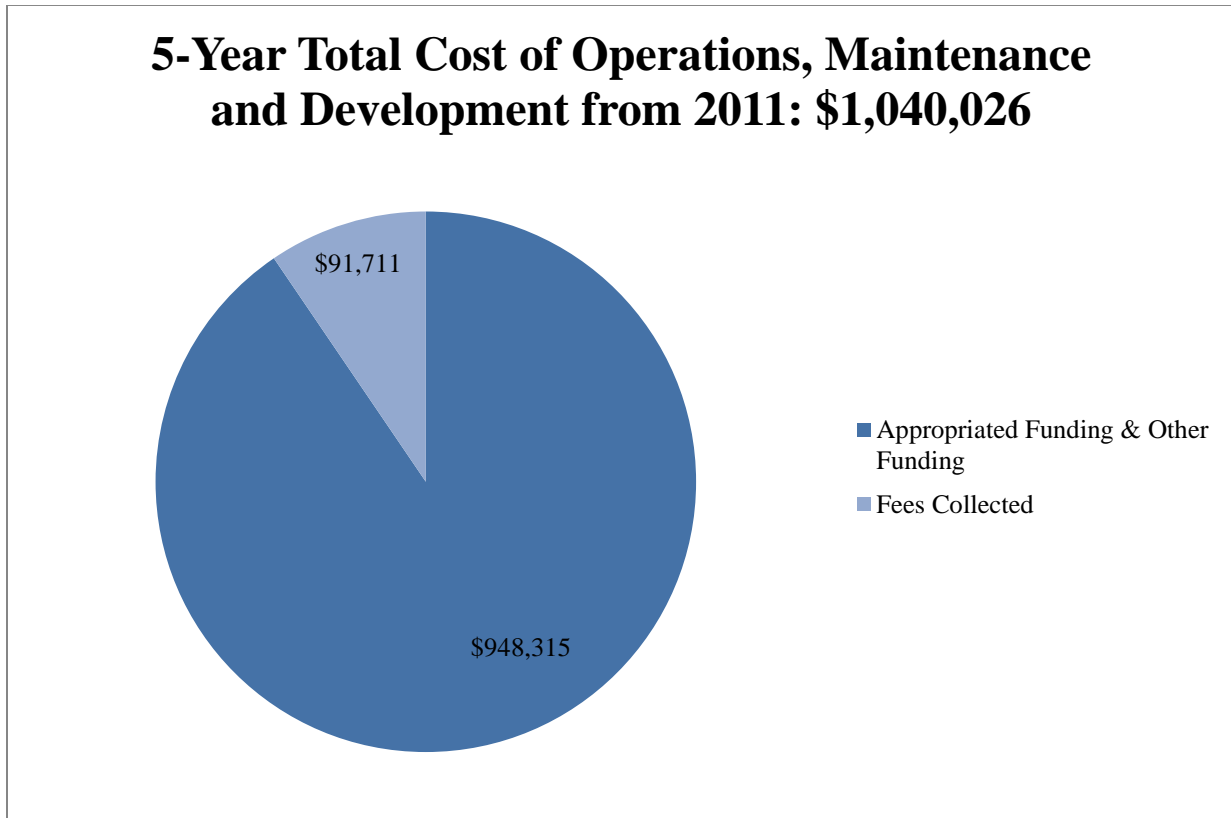
as they become unserviceable. The largest rise in operations and maintenance costs would be for additional staff time, youth corps work, and supplies.

**Table 4: Annual Expenditures by Expense Cost Category**

<b>Cost Type</b> (These costs are the averages and include benefits.)	<b>Current</b>	<b>Projected Year 2021</b>
Park Rangers (6 months)	\$24,000 (1 ranger)	\$27,850 (1 ranger)
Other Staff Labor (outdoor recreation planners, specialists, other rangers...etc.)	\$34,000	\$45,200
Youth Corps Labor	\$14,400 (2 weeks)	\$25,050 (3 weeks)
Vehicles	\$3,500	\$4,050
Equipment/Supplies	\$7,500	\$14,500
Services (water testing, waste pumping, trash pickup...etc.)	\$5,000	\$7,000
Camp host stipend	\$4,700 (1 host)	\$5,450 (1 host)
Law Enforcement	\$17,250 (15% present)	\$20,000 (15% present)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$110,350</b>	<b>\$149,100</b>

Alsea Falls' recreation facilities represent over \$1,550,000 in capitalized infrastructure investments over the past 47 years. In addition, alternative program funds, including recreation pipeline funding, which is O&C railroad investment funds derived from timber sales receipts, have been invested in improving and maintaining Alsea Falls' 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 development of new facilities as demand warrants, such as the Fall Creek trail system and day-use trailhead.

**Figure 2: Five-Year Total Costs of Operations, Maintenance, Development and Fees Collected**



Below is a list of recent improvements, repairs and their costs:

- Alsea Falls Campground Vault Toilet Facilities (2013, \$74,072)
- Alsea Falls Trail (2013, \$37,545)
- Alsea Falls Waterline Replacement (2011, \$325,869)
- Fall Creek Trail Footbridge (2013, \$29,790)
- Fall Creek Day-Use Trailhead Vault Toilet Facility (2016, \$21,000)

### **Projected Costs for Development and Maintenance Projects**

The Alsea Falls Recreation Site, including the Fall Creek Day-Use Trailhead, is already largely developed as a recreation site. Development costs for expanding the trail system and other plan implementation costs are described below.

- Picnic unit conversion to tent campsites (\$7,000)
- Trail development (\$7,000-\$14,000 per mile)
- Shelter at day-use site (\$60,000)
- Kiosk update and replacement (\$5,000)
- Concrete fencing (\$10,000)
- Double campsite conversion (\$5,000)
- Security Improvements, increased patrols, cameras...etc. ( \$10,000)

## **Fee Proposal**

### **Summary**

The fee analysis portion of this business plan was based on a comparative cost review of fees at other existing private and public facilities that provide similar services within the geographic area of the Alsea Falls Recreation Site. Based on the comparative fee analysis, this business plan proposes to revise the day-use and camping fees. It is important to note that visitors have been, and will continue to pay the basic campsite fee to tent camp in the campground where sites can accommodate RVs and trailers. The development of the individual tent campsites now offer a reduced fee option for visitors that only require a tent pad.

Fee revenue for the recreation site has historically been generated from day-use fees, camping fees, and extra vehicle parking in the campground. The following fee schedule outlines the existing and proposed changes for recreation fees at the Alsea Falls Recreation Site.

**Table 5: Existing Fees and Proposed Fee Changes**

<b>Standard Amenity</b>	<b>Existing Fee</b>	<b>Proposed Fee</b>
Day-Use	\$3	\$5
Annual Day-Use Pass <sup>2</sup>	\$15	\$30
<b>Expanded Amenity</b>	<b>Existing Fee</b>	<b>Proposed Fee</b>
Extra Vehicle Fee	\$5	\$5
Tent Campsite	\$0	\$15
Basic Campsite	\$12	\$20
Double Campsite	\$20	\$40

### **Financial Analysis of Existing Private and Public Facilities**

An analysis conducted by the BLM Northwest Oregon District recreation staff in 2016, reviewed comparable fees charged elsewhere by similar state, federal, and local park facilities. A review of comparable state, federal, and local park facilities in Benton, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, and Marion counties, Oregon. The analysis resulted in the proposed fee changes, which are based on what other public sector agencies are currently charging for similar sites, facilities, equipment, and services. No comparable sites in the private sector currently exist; RV parks are available but do

<sup>2</sup> The proposed revision of the annual day-use pass is covered in a separate business plan for the Northwest Oregon BLM Pass which is designed to cover multiple recreation sites, but is shown for informational purposes only as one of the fee types for the Alsea Falls Recreation Site.

not provide the same amenities and were not included in the fee comparisons charts. Appendix 1 displays in a table format the comparative analysis by the type of services and amenities each recreation site offers. The following information summarizes the comparative analysis by fee type.

**Basic Campsite:** Camping fees range from \$8 to \$30 per individual site, with the average for basic individual sites being \$19 after rounding to the nearest whole dollar. However, the proposed fee will be rounded to \$20, due to the lack of ability for the BLM to provide the visitor change at the site, resulting in lower fee compliance. The quality and extent of Alsea Falls' facilities are comparable to those of other parks with the same amenities, especially in the size of campsites, accessibility and recreation values. The Salmonberry, Sutton, Blackberry, and Cascadia campgrounds managed by various state and local agencies are similar to Alsea Falls campground based on amenities and size, but offer more amenities, services or higher quality facilities such as flushable toilets and showers.

**Double Campsite:** The campgrounds in the analysis do not provide a solid comparable for the double sites at the Alsea Falls Campgrounds. The Alsea Falls Campground double campsites can accommodate twice as many visitors as the basic site. However, they are not as large, nor do they offer comparable amenities, as the group campsites found at comparable campgrounds in the analysis. Therefore, the \$40 proposed nightly fee reflects the double capacity of these sites compared to a basic site, but recognizes these sites are not *full* group sites at comparable campgrounds.

**Tent Campsite:** Tent campsite fees ranged from \$17 to \$19 per night, with the average for tent sites being \$18 after rounding to the nearest whole dollar. However, with the sites being walk-in accessible from the parking area, and the lack of ability for the BLM to make change, resulting in lower fee compliance, the proposed fee will be lowered to \$15 per night.

**Day-Use:** Day-use fees range from \$3 to \$6 per vehicle for standard amenities at sites that charge fees. Cascadia, Moonshine Park, and Blackberry have similar day-use amenities compared to Alsea Falls' and represent the best comparison for day-use fees. After market analysis of comparable sites that have day-use fee, the proposed day-use fee is \$5. The surrounding counties and large cities offer numerous opportunities for free day-use (Appendix 1), but do not offer similar amenities to Alsea Falls.

### **Projected Fee Revenue**

For the day-use fee projection, total visits were divided by the average number of occupants per vehicle, then multiplied by the compliance rate of 55 percent, and finally multiplied by the fee.  $20,855 \text{ (visits)} / 2.25 \text{ (occupants per vehicle)} \times .55 \times \$5 \text{ (fee)} = \$25,489$

It is unlikely that the district pass will have a significant impact on the amount of fee revenue collected at Alsea Falls. Purchases of the pass will most likely be done by local community members that frequent the site and by avid mountain bikers that make weekly trips to the Fall Creek Trailhead. The determination was made by using the 2016 pass conversion rate for Wildwood which was 3.5 percent.

For the campsites, the estimated revenue was derived by multiplying the number of available campsites by the regional occupancy rate of 40 percent, then multiplying that by the average 184 day season, and finally multiplying that number by the fee. For example; 5 (tent sites) x .4 (occupancy rate) x 184 (season) x \$15 (fee) = \$5,520.

The 3-year average for fees collected at Alsea Falls Recreation Site since 2014 is \$19,914 per year, with the largest portion of fees collected comes from camping. Based on the proposed fee increases, the projected annual fee revenue for the Alsea Falls Recreation Site is approximately **\$57,505** (see Table 6).

**Table 6: Estimated Fee Revenue by Site Type**

Type	Amount	Occupancy Rate	Days Available	Cost Per Night	Revenue
Tent Campsite	5	40%	184	\$15	\$5,520
Basic Campsite	14	40%	184	\$20	\$20,608
Double Campsite	2	40%	184	\$40	\$5,888
Camping	Total				\$32,016
Day-Use	Total				\$25,489
Combined	Total				\$57,505

Based on both our current and projected fees, operation and maintenance costs for the Alsea Falls Recreation Site (see Table 7), the site will become more self-sufficient and will allow for improved maintenance and visitor services, as well as other enhancements in the recreation site.

**Table 7: Difference Between Revenue Collected and Expenditure Costs**

	Current	Projected After Fee Increases	Projected 2021 No Fee Increase
<b>Fees Collected</b>	\$19,914	\$57,505	\$57,505
<b>Operation &amp; Maintenance</b>	\$110,350	\$110,350	<b>\$149,100</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>-\$90,436</b>	<b>-\$52,845</b>	<b>-\$129,186</b>

### Proposed Use of Additional Fee Revenue

The Northwest Oregon District’s primary goal for recreation sites is to provide high-quality recreation opportunities and experiences for all visitors. Labor will continue to be the highest operating cost for the recreation sites. BLM staff provides visitor information and interpretive programming; conducts field patrols; maintains facilities; collects and reconciles fees; and rehabilitates natural resource damage. Recreation fee revenue is needed to help support the operation and maintenance of these developed recreation sites. The following is an initial list of how the proposed recreation fee revenue would be used:

- Service contracts for garbage collection, septic pumping, water testing, and firewood.
- Increased patrols for visitor safety, property protection and compliance.
- Renewal of county and state drinking and wastewater permits.



- Supplies including but not limited to cleaning supplies, toilet paper, hand soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, fuel for motorized equipment, paint, lumber, rock, concrete...etc.
- Maintain, improve and replace recreation site infrastructure such as trails, signage, barbeque grills, fire rings, picnic tables, cement and wood fencing, restroom buildings, kiosks, lighting, roadway striping, maintenance building, communication devices, curb stops, non-motorized...etc.
- Maintain and replace equipment such as lawn mowers, leaf blowers, weed trimmers, hand tools, golf carts, ATVs, pressure washers, chain saws, drills...etc.
- Operating or capital costs associated with government vehicles, trailers, tractors, and bobcats.
- Information material such as maps, brochures, and interpretive signage.
- Fee collection equipment and upkeep.
- Audits and evaluations.
- Construction of recreation facilities, such as additional camp sites, trailheads and trails.
- Campground Host stipend payments.
- Purchase native trees and shrubs to prevent social trailing through sensitive areas,
- new interpretive panels could be installed to educate visitors on the importance of the natural resources and how a healthy forest system works
- increased effort to eradicate invasive species from recreation sites could occur

Due to continued stagnation or decreases in the BLM budget there is a growing need for the recreation program to become more self-sufficient, while recognizing that appropriated funds still provide the majority of the recreation program funding. Over the next five years, the recreation program is looking to achieve greater self-sufficiency and resiliency through market rated fee increases, repurposing low visitation recreation sites and designing purpose built recreation sites that fill popular recreation needs. The Bureau of Land Management's Recreation Strategy "Connecting with Communities", provides a vision to increase and improve collaboration with the local community network of service providers to help communities produce greater well-being and socioeconomic health to deliver outstanding recreation experiences to visitors while sustaining the distinctive character of public land recreation settings. The Northwest Oregon District is also striving to continue relationships with local youth groups in helping to promote a positive experience for youth on public lands and to inspire them to take a greater interest in public land issues.

### **Impacts of Implementing or Not Implementing Fee Changes**

**Positive Impacts** – Fees at the Alsea Falls Recreation Site have not been changed since 2009, yet the costs of goods, labor, and services have steadily increased. As the costs of goods, labor, and services increase, the purchasing power from recreation fees decreases proportionately. If the proposed fee increases were adopted, current services would continue to be offered and additional services (tent specific camping) would be available. Some of the revenue would be used to gradually reduce the maintenance backlog. Also benefiting would be additional law enforcement, employee oversight of the sites that would reduce vandalism, negative behavior and increased visitor safety. Site infrastructure, cleanliness, and visitor services and information would be benefited as well. All of these combine to improve the overall visitor experience.

Benefits to the local economy could also be realized. It is imperative to the local economy to keep recreation site infrastructure in good condition, clean and serviced to high standards. Maintaining these high standards and creating new opportunities improves the overall recreational experience for current and new visitors alike.

Increased fees also add benefit to the environment. It would allow the Northwest Oregon District to improve, manage, and operate recreational facilities to the fullest. By providing day-use trailheads, campgrounds, and day-use areas for visitors, it allows the District to consolidate resource impacts to a much smaller area. Human waste and garbage are dealt with in an appropriate manner in areas where infrastructure is provided. If these services were not available, the impacts would be felt across a wide area, as illegal dumping would increase. Increased fees would also allow for more purchasing power to acquire items that help reduce negative impacts to the environment. For example, native trees and shrubs could be purchased to prevent social trailing through sensitive areas, new interpretive panels could be installed to educate visitors on the importance of the natural resources and how a healthy forest system works and an increased effort to eradicate invasive species from recreation sites could occur.

**Negative Impacts** – If proposed fees are not adopted, the existing facilities could see a loss of functionality as operation and maintenance efforts may not be able to keep pace with the increased use of the site due to the rising popularity of the mountain bike trail system. As costs continue to increase, maintenance may not happen as quickly or as often as needed and some services may be reduced. Deferred maintenance costs would increase as facilities age and deteriorate without proper annual maintenance. Maintenance which is deferred because of insufficient funding may result in increased safety hazards, reduced service to the public, higher costs in the future and inefficient operations.

A reduction in recreation and maintenance staff could occur as those positions may not be filled if vacated due to lack of funds. Law enforcement patrols are not expected to be affected. Recreation demands will continue to increase as the Northwest Oregon District is seeing some of the highest population growth in the nation, which in turn increases visitation, thus the costs to operate the fee sites would become more dependent on the fluctuating appropriated funding. The opportunities for future planned developments would be constrained and likely dropped from implementation.

Negative impacts to the environment could also occur. Fewer trash pickups and pumping of toilets could occur, thus creating human waste and garbage impacts. Less-frequent patrols from recreation staff to maintain trails, signage and education materials may allow some visitors to act inappropriately by cutting new trails and vandalizing facilities.

## **Outreach**

### **Stakeholders and Partnerships**

As part of its Connecting with Communities Recreation Strategy, BLM seeks engagement and partnerships with local stakeholders to accomplish mutual objectives for public access and recreation. One example is Team Dirt. Team Dirt is the local chapter of the International Mount

Biking Association (IMBA), which is comprised of a core group of extremely dedicated volunteers who have been an integral force in creating the newly developed downhill mountain biking trails. The first phase of the mountain bike system is near completion with Team Dirt donating over 7,500 hours of time on the system, with 220 volunteers. Team Dirt has also fund raised over \$40,000 in a capital campaign and was awarded grants of over \$37,000 to continue work on the trail system. Team Dirt and IMBA will be key partners moving forward in continued development and maintenance of the mountain bike trail system.

The BLM would use the success of Sandy Ridge Trail to further promote the Fall Creek Trail System to the mountain biking community. This will allow the BLM to reach a broader audience that may not know of the **Alsea Falls Recreation Site**, further increasing the success of the campground and day-use areas. Marketing the campground and day-use areas as part of the mountain bike trail system is an essential step in ensuring the continued growth and success of the Alsea Falls Recreation Site.

The BLM will continue partnerships with Benton County youth, scouts, sheriff department, and individuals. The BLM hosts annual trail maintenance, campground maintenance and clean up events for volunteers; in addition to work parties, the BLM has also hosted information sessions, like the mushroom identification class that was offered at Alsea Falls Campground to any interested parties of the public in 2016. The accomplished work includes firewood preparation, trail, and site maintenance projects completed throughout the year would continue. A priority will be to increase the number of partnerships and agreements associated with the Northwest Oregon District as a whole, to further generate the highest return on fee dollars.

## **Public Comments**

Partners realize fees are a part of using developed facilities and continually ask when fee changes will be implemented. Partners understand that fee collection allows for a greater amount of available money for the completion, operation and maintenance of developed sites. Fees also act as a tool for resource protection helping prevent misuse and individuals using locations as housing.

On August 11, 2016, information about the Northwest Oregon District's Proposed Fee Changes was posted onsite at the Alsea Falls Recreation Site; simultaneous news releases were pushed to local newspapers. The news release was also published in the Statesman Journal, which prints for the upper Willamette Valley area on August 14, 2016. The Northwest Oregon District also posted news releases online for viewing. All documents provided an email address where public comments related to any recreation project may be submitted ([blm\\_or\\_no\\_rec\\_publiccomments@blm.gov](mailto:blm_or_no_rec_publiccomments@blm.gov)); the email is monitored daily during the workweek. As of March 22, 2017, the Northwest Oregon District has received seven comments, nothing specific to Alsea Falls Recreation Site. Commenters generally were confused about the America the Beautiful-The National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass and in general support of fee increases.

## **Public Communication and Marketing Plan**

1. Public notice of the proposed fee changes will continue to be posted onsite until implemented.
2. News releases will appear in local newspapers informing the public of fee changes the Northwest Oregon 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 the proposed fee changes, including notice of the fee rate(s), the passes that are accepted, and where the fees are charged.
6. A Notice of Intent to Collect Recreation Fees will be published in the *Federal Register* six months before establishing any new recreation fees sites.

In addition, the Northwest Oregon District will be presenting the campground fee proposals to the Coastal Oregon and Northwest Oregon Recreation Resource Advisory Council (RAC) for its formal review. The RAC is a 15-member advisory panel which provides advice and recommendations to the BLM on resource and land management issues for approximately 720,000 acres of public lands in Oregon. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act mandates that the appropriate Recreation RAC or District RAC will be consulted and given opportunities to provide recommendations to the BLM on all recreation fee proposals prior to implementation. Comments from both the public at large and the BLM RAC will be considered prior to the implementation of the proposed recreation fees.















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 Alsea Falls' 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 Public Land Statistics available online at [https://www.blm.gov/public\\_land\\_statistics/](https://www.blm.gov/public_land_statistics/). More specifically, each area will post fee expenditure information on site and online to inform the public where and on what services, maintenance, operations their fees are spent.















**Appendix 1: Analysis of Existing Recreation Site's Standard and Expanded Amenities:**

Campgrounds below have all 9 expanded amenities listed above. \*Full hookup is water, electric, and sewer. \*Basic is no hookups

Campground	Fee														
<b>Alsea Falls (BLM)</b>	<b>Proposed Fees</b>														
	Basic site \$20	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
	Double site \$40														
	Tent site \$15														
	Extra vehicle \$5														
Day-use \$5															
<b>River Bend (Linn County)</b>	Basic site \$24														
	Partial hookup \$30														
	Cabin \$65	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Extra vehicle \$7														
	Group shelter \$125														
	Group gazebo \$175														
<b>Whitcomb Creek (Linn County)</b>	Basic site \$22														
	Extra vehicle \$7	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓				
	Group campsite \$200														
<b>Salmonberry (Benton County)</b>	Electric site \$25														
	Basic site \$20	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓			✓	✓
	Yurt (electric) \$40														
	Cabin (electric) \$50														
	Extra vehicle \$5														
<b>Richardson (Lane County)</b>	Electric campsite \$25														
	Premier electric \$28														
	Extra vehicle \$4				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Day-use \$4														
Group shelter \$150															
<b>Moonshine Park (Lincoln County)</b>	Basic site \$20														
	Extra vehicle \$5														
	Day-use \$3														
	Group day-use \$30				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					
	Group RV site \$85 (Max 10)														

Campground	Fee														
<b>Elk City Park (Lincoln County)</b>	Basic site \$20 Extra vehicle \$5				✓	✓					✓				
<b>Jack Morgan Park (Lincoln County)</b>	Basic site \$20 Extra vehicle \$5				✓	✓		✓			✓				
<b>Cascadia (State Parks)</b>	Tent site \$17 Extra vehicle \$7 Day-use \$5 Picnic area \$50 Group campsite \$71 ( \$3 each over 25 people)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		
<b>Detroit Lake (State Parks)</b>	Partial hookup \$28 Electric only \$26 Tent site \$19 Extra vehicle \$7 Day-use \$5	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
<b>Silver Falls (State Parks)</b>	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)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
<b>Blackberry (USFS Siuslaw)</b>	Basic \$22 Day-use \$6 Extra vehicle \$6	✓	✓		✓	✓									

Campground	Fee														
<b>Mary's Peak (USFS Siuslaw)</b>	<i>Proposed</i> Basic \$12 Extra vehicle \$10	✓	✓												
<b>Canal Creek (USFS Siuslaw)</b>	Group campsite \$125 Max 50 Group campsite \$180 Max 100	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓						
<b>Alder Dune (USFS Siuslaw)</b>	Basic \$22 Extra vehicle \$6	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓							
<b>Rock Creek (USFS Siuslaw)</b>	Basic \$24 Extra vehicle \$6 Day-use \$6	✓	✓		✓										
<b>River Edge (USFS Siuslaw)</b>	Group campsite \$180 Max 100	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		
<b>Sutton (USFS Siuslaw)</b>	Basic \$22 Electric \$26 Extra Vehicle \$6 Day-use \$6 Group tent \$85 Max 30 Group campsite C \$130 Max 100 Group campsite D \$150 Max 100	✓	✓		✓	✓							✓		

Campground	Fee															
<b>Tillicum (USFS Siuslaw)</b>	Basic \$24															
	Electric \$30															
	Extra vehicle \$6	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓								
	Day-use \$6															
<b>Cape Perpetua (USFS Siuslaw)</b>	Basic \$24															
	Extra vehicle \$6															
	Day-use \$6	✓	✓													
	Group campsite \$125 Max 50												✓			