

## **Nevada Recreation RAC Protocol**

1. **Background:** The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement act (REA; Public Law 108-447) requires the Departments of Interior and Agriculture to establish a Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (RRAC) to provide advice and recommendations on recreation fees and fee areas in each State or region for Federal recreational lands and waters managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or Forest Service. The law allows the agencies to use existing RACs or to establish new RRACs. For the state of Nevada, the three existing RACs have been designated to perform the RRAC responsibilities pertaining to both BLM and Forest Service managed Federal lands and waters per the inter-agency agreement between the Forest Service and BLM. The RRAC role is part of a larger public participation role described in REA.

2. **Purpose:** The purpose of this document is to lay out the general process and protocol for the Nevada RACs to perform their responsibilities under REA. Additionally, the intent of this document is to facilitate the review of agency proposals by suggesting standard guidelines and schedules for submission of agency fee proposals.

3. **Administrative Support:** The Nevada BLM and forest Service staffs will assist the RACs with administrative support, including the following actions: conducting public outreach and notification of RAC meetings (Federal Register, news releases, mailing lists, etc.) involving fee proposals; coordinating RAC meeting locations and dates; keeping minutes of RAC meetings; posting information on agency websites as required; and assisting the RACs with record keeping and reports.

4. **RAC Business Cycle:** To assist agencies in planning their fee proposals for RAC review, the frequency and timing of RAC, and if necessary, Work Group meetings could be established up to a year in advance. The schedule can be adjusted as needed but is intended to help the agencies and RACs plan their annual cycle. Also, depending on the number and timing of agency fee proposals, the number and frequency of RAC meetings may be adjusted with concurrence of the RAC chair and DFO. The schedule presumes that agencies have already complied with the internal actions necessary to comply with REA such as conducting prior public review of their fee proposals.

5. **Scope:** Initially, recreation fee proposals for standard amenity, expanded amenity and non-commercial individual special recreation permit fees, whether new or revised, will be submitted to the RAC whose ecoregion contains the area where the proposed fee will occur. As the RACs and agencies gain experience with this process, the RACs may elect to establish criteria to modify the scope of proposals to be reviewed.

### **6. RRAC Process**

A. **Agencies.** The agency proponents for recreation fee proposals should:

- accomplish actions required by REA and their internal agency rules, including opportunities for public involvement, prior to the submission of proposals to the RAC.
- work proactively with the RAC early in the process and provide a timeline with ample time for the RAC members to provide feedback.

- coordinate with the BLM Nevada State Office (Recreation Program Lead and RAC coordinator) and appropriate RAC Chair to arrange for their fee proposals to be scheduled for discussion at a RAC meeting.
- submit fee proposals to the BLM Nevada State Office staff and RAC at least two weeks prior to the RAC meeting. Content of the fee proposals should follow internal agency practices and Guidelines for Recreation Fee Proposals (Attachment 1). The BLM Nevada State Office and Humboldt-Toiyabe Forest Supervisor's Office will determine whether agency fee proposals are ready for RAC consideration and provide feedback to agency fee proponents if their proposals need additional work.
- assist the BLM Nevada State Office staff with public outreach and notification of the RAC meetings involving fee proposals by providing press releases and comments related to the proposals.
- present their fee proposals to the RAC when scheduled on the meeting agendas.
- provide administrative support for minutes, proposals, etc.

B. The RAC should:

- receive and review the agency proposal prior to agency presentation at the RAC meeting. The RAC will receive proposals as early as possible, but at least two weeks before the meeting date.
- hear presentations by agency fee proposal proponents and opponents at RAC meetings and include agency fee proposals in the agenda and public notice of the meeting.
- if needed, due to significant public interest or controversy, convene RAC meetings to hear agency fee proposals and public comments (preferably at locations that best facilitate participation by local public most affected by the agency fee proposals). The BLM, Forest Service and RAC will coordinate the meetings.
- assist in contacting knowledgeable members of the public and recreational users when additional input is needed, e.g., for recreation sites that are unfamiliar to the RAC.
- provide a written recommendation to the agencies
- approve a motion that provides the RAC's recommendation to the DFO. This shall include a summary of the discussion during public meetings, public comments and the agency's fee proposal in the standard fee proposal format.

## **Attachment 1**

### **Nevada RAC Guidelines for Recreation Fee Proposals**

1. Project Summary. Document the business rationale, financial analysis and justification for the fee proposal. The following items should be addressed:

- REA Criteria. Using the REA Criteria Checklist (Attachment 2) demonstrate how the proposal complies with REA criteria for amenity fees , expanded amenity fees or special permit fees as applicable.
- Background about the recreation site and public usage.
- Project Description (name, location, map, fee type, photos if possible)
- Business rationale and justification for the proposed fee. Include the project's objectives, and how the proposal fits in with the overall recreation budget and program strategy.
- Financial analysis including services/benefits to be provided, fee calculation, service costs covered by appropriated funding or other agency resources, proposed use of anticipated fee revenues and percent of revenues to be expended at the site.
- Market assessment including a market survey of similar recreation sites or projects in the regional are, number of fee and no fee sites and level of fees.
- Social/Economic impacts describing the affected users and the anticipated positive and negative impacts of the fee proposal on recreational use and local communities.
- No action alternative describing the impact of a status quo alternative including services/benefits to be reduced or eliminated and whether the recreation site would still be viable for public use.

2. Public Participation.

- Describe the agency's efforts to solicit public involvement.
- Summarize the number and content of public comments. Identify organized recreational groups and their comments.
- Public involvement includes: Federal Register Notice, posting a notice on site, news releases, media contacts, website posts, and sending information to interested parties including RACs, local governments and Congressional delegations.

## **Attachment 2**

### **Checklist of REA Criteria**

**Amenities & Requirements:** Amenities listed below are the requirements outlined in REA

#### **Standard Amenity**

##### **Amenities -- Must have all 6:**

- Permanent Toilet
- Permanent Trash
- Picnic Table
- Parking Area
- Interpretive Sign, Exhibit or Kiosk
- Security Services

#### **Requirement:**

Efficient collection of fees

#### **Characteristics of a Standard Amenity Fee Site:**

Significant Recreation Opportunity

Substantial Federal Investment

#### **Expanded Amenity**

##### **Developed Campgrounds**

##### **(Must have a majority of the following)**

- Tent or trailer space
- Picnic tables
- Drinking water
- Access roads
- Fee collection services
- Reasonable visitor protection
- Refuse containers
- Toilet facilities
- Simple devices for containing a campfire

##### **Highly developed boat launch (Includes any combination of):**

- Mechanical or hydraulic boat lifts or facilities
- Multi-lane paved ramps
- Paved parking
- Toilet facilities
- Lighting for parking and ramp use;
- Security services
- Changing rooms

- Boarding floats or docks
- Mooring floats/buoys, moorage docks
- Loading ramps
- Fish cleaning stations
- Picnic area
- Refuse containers
- Play ground areas

**Highly developed swimming area (must have a majority of):**

- Bathhouse with showers and flush toilets
- Refuse containers
- Picnic areas
- Paved parking
- Attendants including lifeguards
- Floats/buoys, encompassing the swimming area
- Swimming deck

**Expanded-Other**

**Rentals (no minimum amenities required), examples are:**

- Cabins
- Boats
- Stock animals
- Lookout towers
- Historic structures
- Trail shelters
- Group day-use or overnight sites
- Audio tour devices
- Portable sanitation devices
- Binoculars or other equipment

**Use of hookups and/or sanitary dump stations (no minimum amenities required)**

**Participation in enhance interpretive programs or tours (no minimum amenities required)**

**Use of transportation services (no minimum amenities required)**

**Non-Commercial Individual Special Recreation Permits**

(no minimum amenities required), examples include:

- Wilderness permits
- River rafting/float permits
- Wildlife viewing areas
- Hot springs

- Specialized trail systems including OHV, snowmobile, equestrian, hiking and mountain bike trails
- Target shooting ranges
- Cross-country ski trail grooming
- Snow play areas
- Christmas tree permits
- Rock Hounding/Recreational mining areas