Colorado Recreation Resource Advisory Committee

PRESENTATION TO
THE NORTH WEST BLM COLORADO RESOURCE
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
DEC. 1, 2011
GATEWAY, CO
Recreation Enhancement Act (REA)

- Enacted in 2004
- 10-year authority
- Secretary creates advisory committees
- Advisory committees review fees
Colorado Recreation RAC (RRAC)

- **Purpose to provide fee recommendations**
- Citizens advisory committee
- Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)
- BLM can share RRAC with Forest Service
- 11 members from legislated interest groups
- RRAC & RACs have different appointing authority, scope, & organization
Recreation RAC Does…

Make recommendations on:

- Standard Amenity Fees
- Expanded Amenity Fees
- Special Recreation Permit Fees (Individual permits for special areas)
Standard Amenity Fee

- National Conservation Area;
- Visitor or interpretive center with services; or
- An area with:
  - Significant opportunities for outdoor recreation;
  - Substantial federal investments;
  - Efficient fee collection opportunities; and

  - Developed parking
  - Permanent toilet facility
  - Trash collection
  - Interpretive signs
  - Picnic tables
  - Security services
Expanded Amenity Fee

Any 1 of:
- Built up boat launches
- Cabins, shelters, boats, stock animals, historic structures...
- RV Hookups
- Sanitary dump stations
- Robust interpretive sites
- Reservation services
- Transportation services
- Staffed first-aid services

- Developed campgrounds with at least 5 of:
  Tent or trailer spaces—Picnic tables—Access roads—BLM fee collection—Visitor protection—Drinking water—Refuse containers—Toilet facilities—Campfire containment

- Developed swimming sites with at least 4 of:
  Bathhouses—Trash bins—Lifeguards—Picnic Tables—Swimming area—Paved parking—Swimming deck
Special Recreation Permit Fees

- Permits issued for non-commercial, individual or group use of special areas
Recreation RAC Does Not…

Make recommendations on:

- Concession sites
- Commercial permits (outfitting)
- Special recreation permits for organized group activities (Burning Man) and events (races).
Colorado Fee Review Status

- RRAC Charter expired in 2009
- RRAC has not held a meeting since 2009
- Proposals in limbo
- Potential loss of $$$ for projects
- Potential resource harm
4(d)(1)(D) USE OF OTHER ENTITIES.--In lieu of establishing a Recreation Resource Advisory Committee under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may use a Resource Advisory Committee established pursuant to another provision of law and in accordance with that law or a recreation fee advisory board otherwise established by the Secretary to perform the duties specified in paragraph (2)
RACs passed unanimous resolutions to do RRAC duties for 1 year

BLM informed Forest Service our RACs will review BLM fee proposals for 1 year

REA permits RAC use

RACs will use their charters to guide reviews
BLM RAC Personnel

BLM Designated Federal Official
- District Manager

BLM RAC Coordinator
- Public Affairs Officer

State Office coordination
- State Director (Social & Cultural Resources)

Field Office proponent
- Field Manager (Recreation lead)
RAC Fee Review Process

1. Field Office develops proposal
2. Field Office seeks public input
3. Field Office presents to State Director
4. Washington reviews
5. BLM forwards to RAC
6. RAC Coordinator Posts Notice in FRN and Local Paper at least one week prior to meeting
7. RAC reviews and recommends
8. BLM implements, modifies, or withdraws
Outcomes of RAC Recommendation

If the RAC recommends:

- **Affirmation**, proposal can be implemented
- **Modifications** our State Director agrees to, proposal can be implemented (or withdrawn)
- **No affirmation**, our State Director must decide whether to withdraw or pursue proposal
  - If State Director wishes to pursue the proposal, BLM will issue REA-required written notification to Congress for rejecting recommendation (*very rare*)
1. BLM develops fee proposal → 2. Public involvement process → 3. BLM State Director review → 4. BLM Washington review → 5. BLM presents proposal to RAC → 6. RAC reviews proposal & public comments (RACs use recommendation process in Charter)

RAC recommends to APPROVE

*BLM IMPLEMENTS PROPOSAL*

RAC recommends To AMEND

BLM amends proposal per recommendation

*BLM WITHDRAWS PROPOSAL*

RAC recommends to OPPOSE

BLM writes Congress with reason to reject recommendation
The BLM proponents will:

- Comply with REA and agency rules
- Develop fee proposals
- Ensure public involvement
- Coordinate review
- Assist with public notification requirements
- Provide briefing on fee proposals to RAC
- If a new fee is approved, need to post in the FR and have a waiting period for at least 180 days
- Existing fee change, no Federal Register Notice is required
Fee Review Documents

RACs will use RRAC forms:
- New Fee or Fee Change Proposal
- Summary of Public Involvement
- Fee Revenue Expenditure
- Non-Fee Revenue Expenditure

BLM fee proposals will include Business Plan
Business Plan

- Background
- Project description
- Business rationale and justification
- Compliance with REA
- Financial analysis
- Market assessment of similar sites in region
- Social & economic impacts to users & community
- No action alternative
- Documentation of public participation
RAC Review & Recommendation

The RAC will:

- Schedule meetings
- Include fee proposals in the agenda
- Provide public notice of meetings
- Hear presentations from BLM fee proponents
- Hear public comments
- Approve a motion for a recommendation
- Provide any needed reports to comply with REA
- Provide public education about the RAC
RAC Review?

- Does the proposed fee comply with REA?
- Is there adequate public support for the fee?
- Will the proposed fee benefit visitors?
- Will the proposed fee benefit communities?
- Is the proposed fee reasonable?
- Does the RAC recommend to affirm, modify, or not affirm the proposal?
# Pending Fee Proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Office RAC</th>
<th>Fee Site Name</th>
<th>Fee Type</th>
<th>Existing or New Fee:</th>
<th>Fee Level &amp; Proposed Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grand Junction NW RAC</td>
<td>North Fruita Desert Campground</td>
<td>Expanded</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>$7 – $10 per campsite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Gorge FR RAC</td>
<td>Sand Gulch Campground</td>
<td>Expanded</td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>$4 per site to $10, Group Sites from $8 to $20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Gorge FR RAC</td>
<td>The Bank Campground</td>
<td>Expanded</td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>$4 per site to $11, Group Sites from $8 to $20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Luis Valley FR RAC</td>
<td>Zapata Falls Campground</td>
<td>Expanded</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>$11 per campsite, Group Sites $20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Luis Valley FR RAC</td>
<td>Penitente Campground</td>
<td>Expanded</td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>$5 per site to $10, Group Sites from $15 to $20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunnison SW RAC</td>
<td>Mill Creek Campground</td>
<td>Expanded</td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>$7 to $10; Per campsite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunnison SW RAC</td>
<td>Oh Be Joyful Campground</td>
<td>Expanded</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>$5 per campsite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Minimally, BLM Must Ensure...

- 80% percent of revenue is spent on site
- Revenues and expenses are accounted for
- Public notice and involvement occurs
- Reporting requirements are met
Fee Must...  

- Be balanced with visitor benefits and services
- Be comparable to fees charged nearby
- Not layer recreation fees (nickel & dime)
- Be used for at least 1 of:
  - Repair, maintenance & facility enhancement for visitor enjoyment, access, health and safety
  - Interpretation, information, service, needs assessments
  - Habitat restoration for wildlife-dependent recreation (hunting, fishing, observation or photography)
  - Law enforcement related to public use and recreation
  - Direct operating or capital costs for the fee program
Fee Must Not Be For...

- General access to the area
- General entrance
- Dispersed areas with little BLM investment
- Driving, walking, boating, horseback riding or hiking through federal lands and waters without using the facilities and services
- Use of overlooks or scenic pullouts
- Travel over any road commonly used as a means of travel between two places
Fee Must Not Be For...

- Access to private property
- Hunting or fishing
- Conduct of official business
- Special attention or services for the disabled
- Any person under 16 years old
- Outings for noncommercial educational purposes by schools
Any non-recreational activity permitted under any other Act, including valid grazing permits

Biological monitoring on federal lands and waters under the Endangered Species Act

Employee bonuses
For more information


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