Business Plan for Royal Gorge Field Office Campgrounds



Bureau of Land Management Royal Gorge Field Office May 2023



Typical Site at Turtle Rock Campground



Typical Site at The Bank Campground



Typical Site at The Bank Campground



Typical Site at Sand Gulch Campground

Draft Business Plan for Royal Gorge Field Office Campgrounds

RECOMMENDATIONS, REVIEWS, AND APPROVALS

Recommended by:

Outdoor Recreation Planner	Date
Reviewed by:	
Assistant Field Manager	Date
Approved By:	

Field Office Manager

This business plan was prepared pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (Public Law 108-447) and BLM recreation fee program policy. It establishes future management goals and priorities for the recreation fee program for campgrounds in the Royal Gorge Field Office.

Date



In Reply Refer to: 2930 (LLCOF0200)

Dear Reader,

United States Department of the Interior BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT ROYAL GORGE FIELD OFFICE 3028 E. Main Street Canon City, Colorado 81212



I would like to present for your review and comment the *Draft Business Plan for Royal Gorge Field Office Campgrounds*. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Royal Gorge Field Office (RGFO) currently manages three campgrounds that annually provide over 100,000 visitors with outstanding camping opportunities on their public lands. Additional campgrounds are also being contemplated to address ongoing camping demand within the field office. The draft business plan proposes to establish a field office wide campground business plan that standardizes fees for all campgrounds within the field office including any campgrounds developed in the future. This includes; adding a fee to the Turtle Rock Campground; adjusting the fee at The Bank and Sand Gulch campgrounds to modern market rates that covers agency expenses to manage the sites; establishing a basic and primitive campground level fee structure; and establish an "overflow" fee structure.

The camping fees at Royal Gorge Field Office BLM's campgrounds, set in 2010, are \$7 (Sand Gulch and The Bank) per night per individual site. Each of these campgrounds also offer group sites for \$14 per night that allow 20 people per group site. There is currently no fee for the Turtle Rock Campground. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FPLMA) authorizes the BLM to regulate the use of public lands, and the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) authorizes the BLM to collect recreational fees when sites and areas meet specific criteria. With the increase in use and necessary facilities the Turtle Rock Campground now meets the criteria outlined in FLREA. Other campgrounds may necessitate facilities in the future and will also meet FLREA guidelines.

The proposed fees outlined in this business plan would be initiated on May 1st, 2024 or 180 days following federal register notice publishing. This includes a proposed cost of \$20 per night per individual site and \$40 per group site for basic level sites; \$10/night per site for primitive level campgrounds; and \$10/night per vehicle for overflow use (where amenities are provided and all other campsites are full). The rationale for these fees, including comparison of other campgrounds with similar amenities, various fee scenarios contemplated, and a breakdown of operating costs versus anticipated revenue, is found in this document.

The objective of the *Draft Business Plan for Royal Gorge Field Office Campgrounds* is to provide you with the opportunity to submit comments on the proposed fee changes. Comments may be mailed to "BLM, Campground Business Plan Comment, 3028 E. Main Street, Canon City, CO, 81212" or email to jlenard@blm.gov (subject line: "campground business plan comment"). Comments are due by June 18, 2023. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. BLM will not consider anonymous comments. Thank you for your interest in your public lands.

Sincerely,

Keith Berger, Field Manager

Executive Summary

The Royal Gorge Field Office proposes to implement an Expanded Amenity Fee at all of it's camping facilities that provide the level of services required by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) to provide sufficient resources to manage the sites. Services include providing clean and sanitary facilities, appropriate locations and structures for campfires, and an agency presence. To cover current management and operations costs three different fee structures are proposed. Basic level sites would be \$20/night for individual sites and \$40/night for group sites (where available). This fee would apply to the Turtle Rock Campground and the Bank and Sand Gulch Campground. A primitive level site would be \$10/night per site. This fee would apply to the Shavano, Burmac, County Road 304 and Browns Grotto camping areas when facilities are installed following guidance found in the Chaffee County Camping Management Plan. An overflow camping fee of \$10/vehicle is also proposed to address management costs and resource impacts for periods of camping demand that exceeds campsite availability such as holiday weekends. This overflow fee would only be charged where the necessary level of facilities are provided and as indicated by management plans.

This business plan may be amended in the future if additional camping areas are developed within the field office. In accordance with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act and BLM policies, the areas in this business plan currently meet or will meet the criteria for the BLM to charge a camping fee based on amenities provided and fees charged at comparable campgrounds in the geographic area. A fee will be set for all campgrounds managed by the Royal Gorge Field Office that offer similar amenities.

Recent data have shown significant increases in visitor use in the Royal Gorge Field Office over the last 12 years, with recreational visits increasing 47% from 2010 to 2022 (Recreation Management Information System). This does not include the use spike in 2020 associated with COVID 19. The camping fee will serve to move the campgrounds managed by RGFO toward desired natural resource and visitor use conditions. This business plan presents financial analysis of the field office's camping management operations, examines various financial scenarios based on visitation, and demonstrates how the revenue collected will improve camping management operations, resource conditions, and improve visitor experience.

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Background and Authorities

This business plan was prepared in accordance with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), 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). FLREA provides the BLM current authority to establish, modify, charge, and collect recreation fees at Federal recreational lands and waters.

FLREA guidelines and the BLM 2930 Manual and Handbook require that each fee program have a business plan which thoroughly discusses fees and explains how fees are consistent with the criteria set forth in the Act. Business plans are to assist management in determining the appropriateness and level of fees, cost of administering fee programs, outline how fees will be used, and 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.

Under FLREA, the BLM can charge an Expanded Amenity fee for the use of certain recreational facilities or services, which includes developed campgrounds. FLREA authorizes the BLM to retain Expanded Amenity Fees locally 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.

The laws and policy that provide authority for this Business Plan, including fee collection for campgrounds, are:

- The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), 1976, [Public Law 94-579], contains BLM's general land use management authority over the public lands, and establishes outdoor recreation as one of the principle uses of those lands. Section 302 (b) of FLPMA directs the Secretary of the Interior to regulate through permits or other instruments the use of the public lands. Section 303 of FLPMA contains BLM's authority to enforce the regulations and impose penalties.
- The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), 2004, repealed applicable portions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and replaced BLM's authority to collect recreation fees in 2004. This current law authorizes BLM to collect recreation fees at sites that meet certain requirements, allows BLM to keep the fee revenues at the local offices where they were collected, and directs how BLM will manage and utilize these revenues. FLREA also established the America the Beautiful The National Parks and Federal Recreational Pass Program.
- 43 CFR 2930: Permits for Recreation on Public Land
- BLM Recreation Permits and Fees Manual 2930
- BLM Recreation and Fees Administration Handbook (2930-1 Handbook)

Definitions of Standard and Expanded Amenities taken from FLREA and the BLM recreation fee program policy and manual for the area covered under this business plan:

• 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).

The BLM strives to manage recreation opportunities sustainably. The goals for recreation on BLM-administered public lands are to serve the American people by:

- Improving access to a diversity of quality recreation opportunities;
- Ensuring protection of natural and cultural resources; and
- Providing recreation services for fair value.

This business plan will assist the Royal Gorge Field Office in meeting these recreation and visitor service goals. This plan covers both existing campgrounds operated by the field office that charge a fee, including Turtle Rock, and establish a business plan framework if additional facilities are built and/or upgraded to the level outlined by FLREA as identified in the Chaffee County Camping and Travel Management Plan. This plan would be updated in the future if additional camping facilities are developed in the Royal Gorge Field Office.

Overview Royal Gorge Field Office Recreation Program

The Royal Gorge Field Office (RGFO) is responsible for the management and stewardship of more than 660,000 acres of public land along the Front Range, south-eastern and south-central Colorado, including parts of the Arkansas River Basin. The RGFO lands include ecosystems from dry sagebrush steppes and canyons to alpine environments to the riparian zones along the Arkansas River. This vast and diverse landscape provides for equally diverse recreational opportunities. RGFO lands are a recreation destination for visitors from around the world.

The popular recreation sites within the RGFO include Guffey Gorge, Turtle Rock Campground and rock climbing area, Shelf Road climbing area, multiple high-profile trail systems and offhighway vehicle areas, Cache Creek area, and the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA). The Upper Arkansas River Valley has nationally significant natural resources. The Arkansas River has the most commercial rafting use of any river in the United States In addition to rafting, visitors come to the Upper Arkansas region to fish, hike, mountain bike, rock climb, camp, and enjoy the scenery.

The RGFO currently manages three developed campgrounds, The Bank, Sand Gulch and Turtle Rock Campground. The Bank and Sand Gulch currently charge Expanded Amenity fees for camping and have reservable sites. A fee is currently not in place for Turtle Rock Campground. Additional campsites have been identified through recent planning efforts to address increased demand for camping. All of the campgrounds identified in this plan are in Congressional District 5 unless otherwise noted.

The RGFO recorded 4.6 million recreational visits in FY20 (RMIS), a 121% increase over FY19. Across the US during summer 2020, there was a major increase in outdoor recreation as Americans took advantage of public lands for pandemic-safe, socially-distance activities like hiking and camping (Leave No Trace, 2020 & Outdoor Industry Association, 2021). Based on national trends, it is reasonable to correlate the increase in recreational visits on RGFO lands in 2020 with effects of the pandemic. Survey research indicates many new participants in outdoor recreation during the pandemic intend to continue recreating after the pandemic, indicating that increases in recreational visits will likely continue (Outdoor Industry Association, 2021).

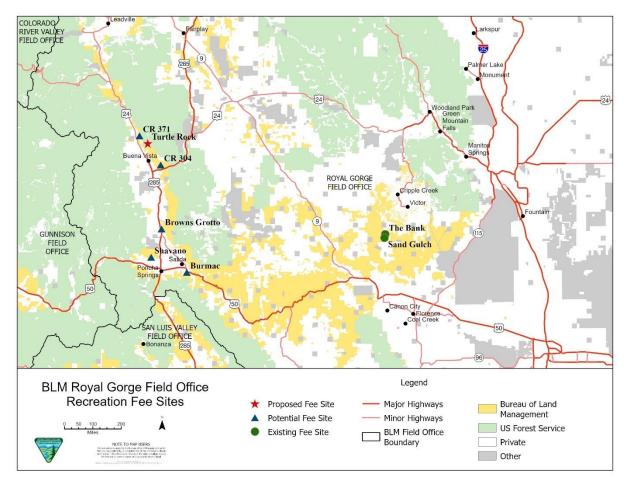


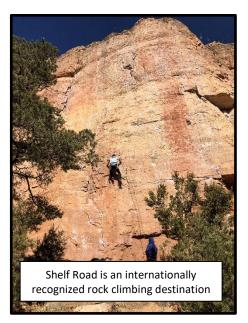
Figure 1-Overview Map of Royal Gorge Field Office

Description and Background of Campgrounds/Camp Areas

The Bank and Sand Gulch Campgrounds

The Bank and Sand Gulch Campgrounds are 12 miles north of Cañon City, Colorado. The campgrounds are within the Shelf Road Recreation Area, adjacent to the Gold Belt Tour Scenic and Historic Byway. The two campgrounds are located approximately one mile apart accessing a network of designated roads and trails and an extensive number of rock-climbing routes.

The Bank Campground was doubled in size in 2019 to include 33 standard individual campsites, two group sites, a camphost site, and a large day-use parking area with restrooms. Sand Gulch Campground has 16 standard individual campsites and one group site. An expansion project is planned to add sites and day-use parking at Sand Gulch in 2023. Campsites for both campgrounds are at the basic level and include a graveled area for a tent pad, kitchen area with picnic table and campfire



grate, and a graveled parking space to accommodate one or two vehicles. Both campgrounds have vault toilets, visitor information kiosks, fee stations, a gravel/improved access road, day-use parking and rock climbing access trails. The current fee is \$7/night for individual sites and \$14 for a group site. Due to recent fee tube theft both campgrounds are currently reservation only through the interagency approved Recreation.gov system.. Field Office staff have been exploring options for electronic first-come first served campsites in combination with reservation only sites.

Given the proximity to well maintained county roads and high volume of use the physical and social recreation setting of the site would be considered front-country to rural. The operational setting is also front-country with campground regulations and a campground host making contacts with visitors.

Shelf Road Recreation Area is managed by the Royal Gorge Field Office in partnership with the Pike's Peak Climbers Alliance and Rocky Mountain Field Institute. These non-profit organizations contribute time, money, and expertise to the management and maintenance of the area.

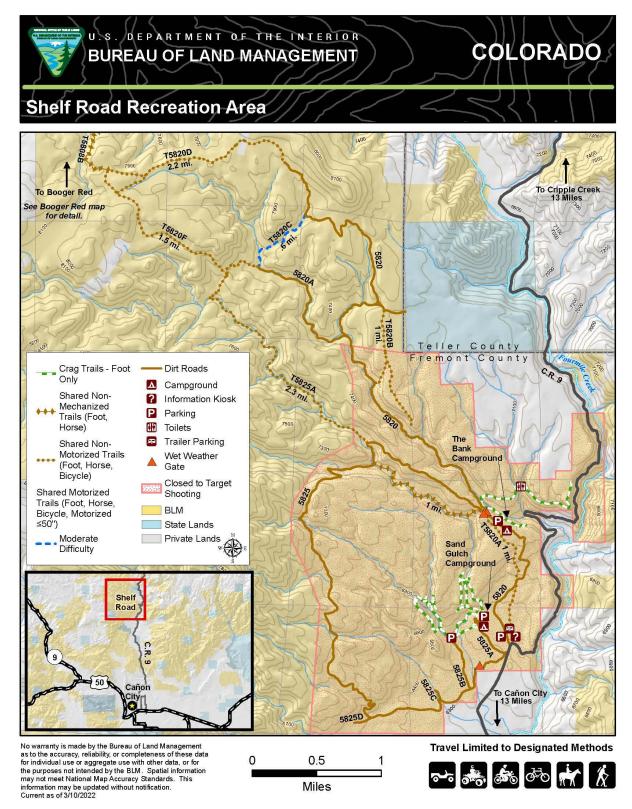
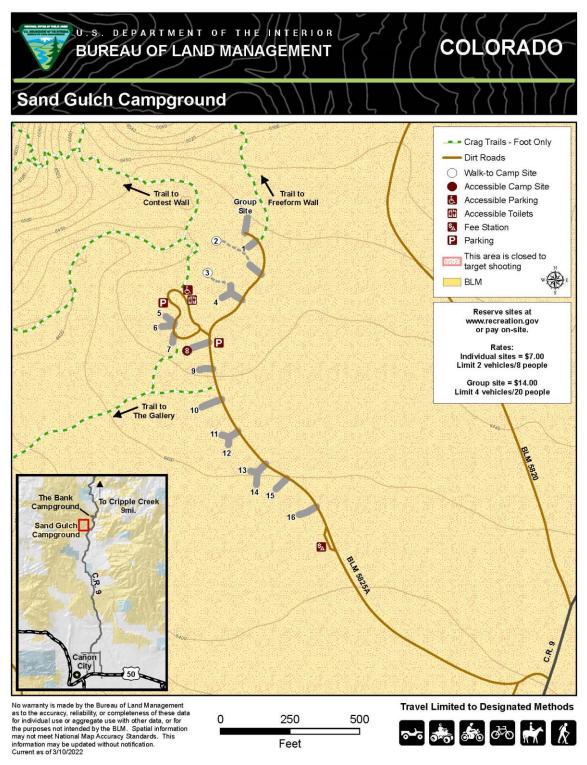
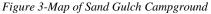


Figure 2-Overview Map of Shelf Road Recreation Area





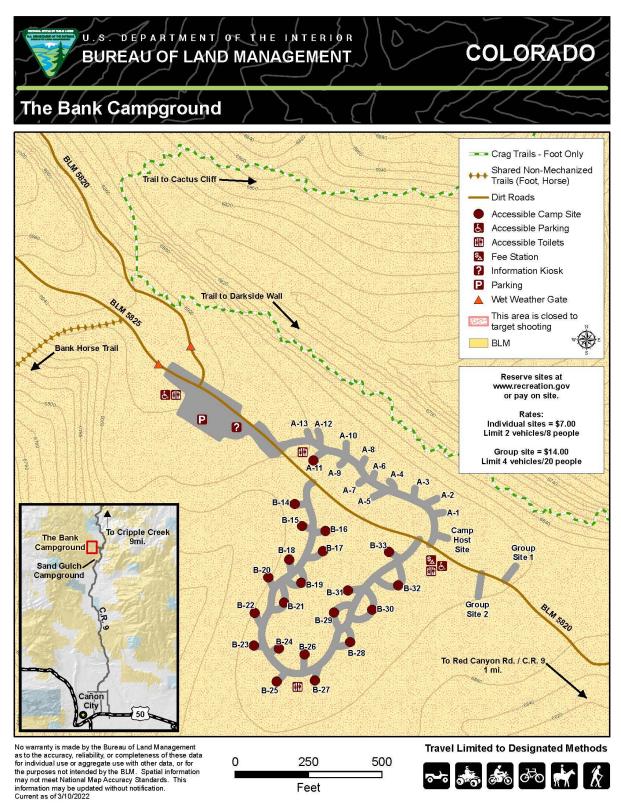


Figure 4-Map of The Bank Campground

Turtle Rock Campground

Turtle Rock Campground is located 3.5 miles north of Buena Vista off of Chaffee County Road 375. The campground is located within the Fourmile Travel Management Area, a popular destination for a multitude of recreation opportunities. The campground consists of 22 standard individual campsites, each with a marked numbered post, situated on the campground's gravel loop road. Each site has a metal, in-ground fire ring, and a picnic table. The campground has a permanent, double vault toilet. In summer 2022 a campground host has been on site. A day-use parking area within the campground accesses a popular rock-climbing area. Currently no fee is charged for the Turtle Rock Campground but it would be considered a basic level campground due to the level of facilities provided. Given the proximity to wellmaintained county roads and high volume of use the physical and social recreation setting of the site would be considered front-country to rural. The operational setting has shifted over time with the addition of campground



The Fourmile area is popular for a variety of activities and events

regulations and a campground host making contacts with visitors.

The campground is a basecamp for local recreational opportunities in the greater Buena Vista area. Visitors descend on the upper Arkansas River for water sports, especially white-water kayaking, rafting, and fly-fishing. The area is popular among rock climbers, drawn to the ease of access and range of difficulties among the routes. Visitors reported taking part in mountain biking, hiking, trail running, dirt biking, OHV-ing, and bird-watching. A key 20 year partnership with Friends of Fourmile provides volunteer assistance through observations, data collection, and on the ground project assistance for the area, including the campground.

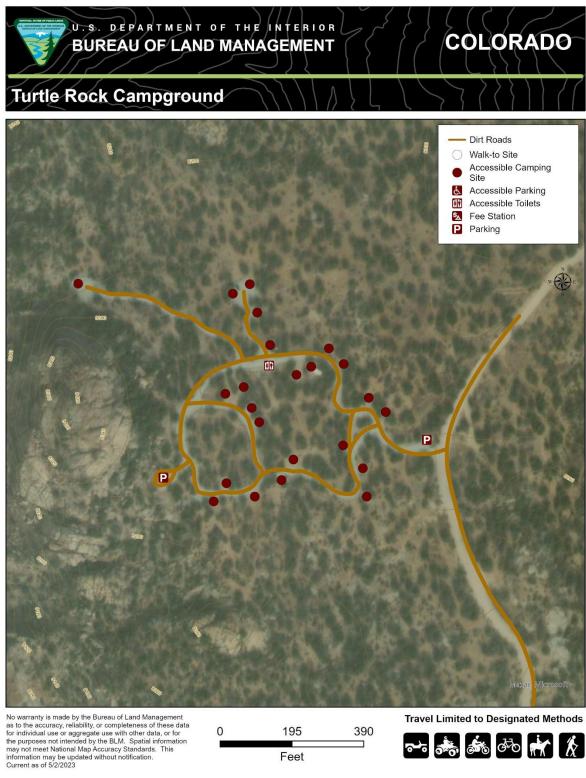


Figure 5-Map of Turtle Rock Campground

Shavano

The Chaffee County Camping and Travel Management Plan Decision (signed February 2023) called for an increase in camping management in the Shavano area. Shavano is located near the town of Poncha Springs, Colorado off of Chaffee County Road 250, a primary US Forest Service access road. The area is relatively open and flat and has seen dramatic increases in dispersed camping volume and impacts over the past 5 years. Per the Camping and Travel Management Plan the current physical and social recreation setting of the area is primarily front-country to rural given the easy access from County Road 250 and the high evidence of use and high number of contacts a visitor experiences. The operational setting is closer to primitive or backcountry due to the lack of regulations in place for the area resulting in minimal regulatory signing and rare staff presence.

The BLM Shavano area has become a popular destination for those wishing to visit the greater Arkansas River Area with visitors participating in all the recreation activities that the area has to offer. There isn't one primary recreation activity for the area and a variety of camping setups are often found ranging from tents, van campers to large Class A motorhomes and 5th Wheels. Based on staff observations including conversations with visitors it appears that people visit the area for short stays as more of an overflow location to people wishing to maximize the 14 day stay limit while vacationing in the greater Chaffee County area. A number of people violate the law and attempt to reside in this area.

Per the Chaffee County Camping and Travel Management Plan, the overall camping management goal for the Shavano sub-unit is to adjust the facilities, visitor services and management controls to a more front country setting in alignment with the location and volume of use. Following camping monitoring and need for facilities; appropriate fees that are commensurate with the services provided and necessary to protect resources and public health will be pursued. The plan calls for phasing in the construction of camping loops and approximately 80 designated campsites and transition the site to provide essential support facilities such as restrooms, fire rings, information kiosks and a campground host site over time as funding allows and monitoring indicates. Fees would be commensurate with the facilities provided and start at the primitive level if warranted. Currently there is not a fee for camping in this area. The management plans calls for developing partnerships, including "Friends of" groups to assist with ongoing monitoring and management.

Burmac

Increased camping management in the are referred to as Burmac is called for in the Chaffee County Camping and Travel Management Plan. It is located near the town of Salida, Colorado off of Highway 50. Per the management plan, the area currently sees moderate to low levels of recreational camping but due to the proximity to Salida many areas within this sub-unit have become a popular destination for people wishing to illegally reside on public land. This has resulted in high volumes of trash, human waste and drug paraphernalia creating an unsafe environment for visitors and staff. BLM staff assumes that this environment has displaced what would normally be a high level of camping demand in association with the trail system and people visiting the greater area.

The overall camping management goal for this sub-unit per the management plan is to adjust the facilities, visitor services and management controls to a more front country setting in alignment with the location and volume of use. Near the Burmac Trailhead designate 10-15 campsites as terrain and topography allow and that are in close proximity to a restroom at the trailhead. Construct a larger trailhead as well as a vault toilet and consider overflow camping options in the design as well as additional campsites. Transition the Burmac area to provide essential support facilities such as restrooms, fire rings, information kiosks and a camp host following the monitoring plan. Appropriate fees that are commensurate with the services provided and necessary to protect resources and public health will be pursued. This would likely be at the primitive level initially. Currently there is not a fee for camping in this area. The management plans calls for developing partnerships, including "Friends of" groups to assist with ongoing monitoring and management. For Burmac, Salida Mountain Trails would likely be a key partner.

CR 304 Trailhead

Increased camping management in the vicinity of the CR 304 Trailhead is called for in the Chaffee County Camping and Travel Management Plan. Located near the town of Buena Vista, Colorado, the CR 304 Trailhead is off of Highway 285 and Chaffee County Road 304. Per the management plan, the recreation setting of this sub-unit is primarily front-country due to the ease of access, modified landscape, volume of people, visitor contacts and evidence of use. The operational setting is middle country to back country since travel management designations are in place allowing for regulatory signing. Kiosks contain maps and recreation information while brochures are also available for the area. Staff are infrequently present due to staffing limitations and workload.

The overall camping management goal for this sub-unit is to adjust the facilities, visitor services and management controls to a more front country setting in alignment with the location and volume of use. In the CR304 area do not designate any campsites West of the CR304 trailhead to minimize traffic and safety concerns. Attempt to designate 8-12 campsites in appropriate locations closer to the trailhead at the junction of CR304 and 376. This would follow the campsite criteria while installing management controls and facilities where necessary to protect resources including visitor facilities. Construct a larger CR304 trailhead as well as a vault toilet and consider overflow camping options and additional campsites in the design. Appropriate fees that are commensurate with the services provided and necessary to protect resources and public health will be pursued. This would likely be at the primitive level initially. Currently there is not a fee for camping in this area. A key 20 year partnership with Friends of Fourmile provides volunteer assistance through observations, data collection, and on the ground project assistance for the area, including this area.

Browns Grotto

Increased camping management in the Browns Grotto area is called for under in the Chaffee County Camping and Travel Management Plan. It is located between the towns of Salida and Buena Vista, Colorado off of Highway 285 and Chaffee County Road 194. The 500 acres of BLM land located along County Road 194 accesses Hecla Junction, the primary river take-out for Browns Canyon and designated fee site campground and day-use area. Hecla Junction is also one of two primary gateways to Browns Canyon National Monument. These 500 acres are outside of the National Monument boundaries.

The physical and social component of the setting for this area is primarily front-country due to the ease of access, modified landscape, volume of people, visitor contacts and evidence of use. The operational setting is back country since travel management designations are in place but the area has very little regulatory signing or evidence of management controls. Staff are infrequently present due to staffing limitations and workload.

Per the management plan, the overall camping management goal for this sub-unit is to adjust the facilities, visitor services and management controls to a more front country setting in alignment with the location and volume of use following monitoring and adaptive management. Improvements will be done in a professional and attractive manner aligning with its location as the entrance to Browns Canyon National Monument. 10-15 sites would be designated while directing future increased demand to other sub-units or non-BLM sites. Appropriate fees that are commensurate with the services provided and necessary to protect resources and public health will be pursued following monitoring and adaptive management. This would likely be at the primitive level initially. Currently there is not a fee for camping in this area. The management plans calls for developing partnerships, including "Friends of" groups to assist with ongoing monitoring and management. For Browns Grotto, Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area would be a likely partner as they manage the river recreation assets in this area and frequently travel in this area.

Recreation Site Visitation

Similar to many recreation sites throughout Colorado, visitation to Royal Gorge Field Office has increased substantially over the past decade. Data supporting increased visitation numbers is summarized in this section from the BLM's annual recreation management statistics, an automated traffic counter, annual surveys of the Fourmile Area, and two visitor use studies. In addition, this section addresses how the pandemic has affected recreational use.

Visitation to the Royal Gorge Field Office recreation sites 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 lands or waters managed by the BLM for the purposes of recreation. The BLM also reports "visitor days" which is a unit of measure the presence of a person in an area for 12 hours.

Visitation in RMIS is reported for the federal fiscal year, which runs from October 1 through September 30 of the following year. For example, fiscal year 2010 was October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010. The RMIS visitation numbers are derived from multiple methods including records from recreation permits, such as campground fee envelopes, data from traffic counters, and simple observation.



Motorcycle Riding in Fourmile

Table 1 and Chart 1 show a slow increase in numbers between 2010 and 2018 and a jump in visitation in 2019 across the field

office area. Chart 2 shows developed campground trends versus revenue collected in the field office. The RGFO had 4.6 million visits in FY20, a 121% increase from the previous year. This enormous increase in recreational visits is likely a function of the Covid pandemic. 2022 saw 2.2 million visits; a decrease from the 2020 spike but still up from pre-COVID levels.

Fiscal	2010	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Year								
Visits	1,522,965	1,598,912	1,586,622	1,663,429	2,084,652	4,618,763	2,685,629	2,238,077
(AHRA)				(815,651)	(882,443)	(1,073,203)	(1,085,725)	(1,152,907)
Visitor	572,229	739,267	752,487	940,969	993,573	1,725,698	1,327,679	984,676
Days								

Table 1-Field Office Visits

Chart 1-Field Office Visits

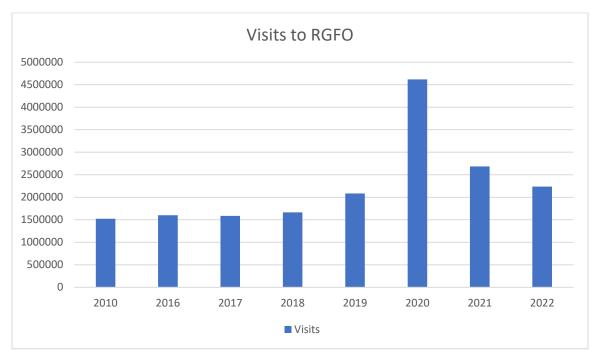
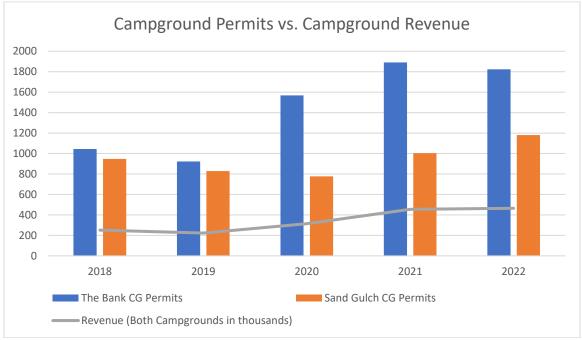


Chart 2-Campground Permits vs. Revenue Collected



*Permit Numbers and Revenue estimates are only available for The Bank and Sand Gulch Campgrounds. **In 2020 The Bank Campground was expanded from 13 sites to 33 sites ***2021 a campground host was at The Bank Campground during the busy season

Pandemic Effects on Outdoor Recreation

Early research on the effects of the Covid pandemic on outdoor recreation shows substantial increases in recreation on public lands. The 2020 Outdoor Industry Report found that there was an increase in new participants in outdoor recreation as Americans sought safe, socially-distant activities, and the study found the majority of these new participants reported they want to continue their new recreation activities after the pandemic (Outdoor Industry Association, 2021). These findings suggest that the major increases in visitation during summer 2020 are likely to persist.

Current Amenities

The table below identifies the number of sites and types of amenities offered or potentially offered at each of the campgrounds/camp areas within the field office. For the existing campgrounds (The Bank, Sand Gulch and Turtle Rock) management includes regular patrols by BLM law enforcement and staff as well as routine maintenance and cleaning as well as campground hosts if available. For the proposed primitive camping areas (Shavano, Burmac, CR304, Browns Grotto); delineated sites with camping information, tent/trail space, fire rings, basic access roads, and portable toilets would be installed prior to implementing a primitive fee. The installation of these amenities would follow the monitoring and adaptive management strategies outlined in the Chaffee County Camping and Travel Management Plan or any subsequent plans that address camping management. Primitive sites could become basic sites if monitoring and public demand indicate additional facilities are needed.

Campground	Sites/Fee	Group Site/Fee	Tent/Trailer Space	Picnic Tables	Drinking Water	Access Roads	Fee Collection	Visitor Protection	Trash	Toilet	Fire Rings
The Bank	33/\$7	2/\$14	Improved	Yes	No	Improved	Yes	Yes	Proposed	Yes	Yes
Sand Gulch	16/\$7	1/\$14	Improved	Yes	No	Improved	Yes	Yes	Proposed	Yes	Yes
Turtle Rock	22*/\$0	N/A	Improved	Yes	No	Improved	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	Yes
Shavano**	80/\$0	N/A	Proposed	No	No	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	No	Proposed	Proposed
Burmac**	15/\$0	N/A	Proposed	No	No	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	No	Proposed	Proposed
CR 304**	10/\$0	N/A	Proposed	No	No	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	No	Proposed	Proposed
Browns **Grotto	15/\$0	N/A	Proposed	No	No	Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	No	Proposed	Proposed
Overflow**	\$0	N/A	Proposed	No	No	Proposed	Yes	Proposed	No	Proposed	Proposed

Table 2-FLREA Campground Amenities and Fees

*Expansion Proposed, #of sites are approximate.

**Proposed for primitive recreation facilities and fees if monitoring warrants

Current Operating Costs



Operations and maintenance of a 15 site basic level developed campground in the RGFO with one double vault restroom costs approximately \$35,193 annually (Table 3). This includes staff salaries, camp hosts, vehicles, law enforcement, and operations costs such as toilet pumping and cleaning, cleaning of fire rings, ongoing road and site maintenance and 10% deferred maintenance reserves. Increased visitation has required more frequent cleaning, more supplies such as toilet paper, and maintenance as well as the need for an onsite presence in the form of a campground host.

A primitive campground would offer similar amenities as a basic level campground but lower levels of service. This would include less frequent staffing and law enforcement patrols, less frequent cleaning, non-improved or gravel sites, and potentially portable toilets instead of vault toilets. As a result this cost is lower but visitors would anticipate to receive a lower standard of care. Table 4 outlines that anticipated expenses of managing a primitive campground is \$19,521 annually.

The RGFO anticipates that costs will continue to rise as the costs of goods, services, and labor increase. The administrative costs related to collecting camping fees is estimated based on the use of an online electronic payment system. The RGFO plans to host camp area volunteers in the future to help with visitor orientation, cleaning, and general campground maintenance, and will compensate hosts with a stipend.

Cost Type	Estimated
(Averages, including benefits)	Cost/15 site
	Campground
Park Ranger Salary (maintenance, camp host support)	\$9,093
8 hours per week for 34 weeks @ \$33.43/hour (cost to government)	
Vehicle - 1 days/week for 34 weeks @ \$100/day	\$3,400
Supplies (cleaning supplies, toilet paper, sign repair, etc)	\$1,500
Services (toilet pumping = 3 pumps/year/ double vault @ \$600/pump)	\$1,800
Road/Site Maintenance	\$3,000
Campground Host Reimbursement \$400/month for 8 months	\$3,200
Law Enforcement	\$10,000
2 trips/month/site, 8 months @ \$5,000/month	
Total Cost	\$31,993.00
10% Reserve for Deferred Maintenance	\$3,200
Total Cost Plus 10% Reserve	\$35,193

Table 3-Basic Campground Management Expenses

Cost Type	Estimated
(Averages, including benefits)	Cost/15 site
	Campground
Park Ranger Salary (maintenance, camp host support)	\$4,546
8 hours every other week for 34 weeks @ \$33.43/hour (cost to	
government)	
Vehicle – 1 day every other week for 34 weeks @ \$100/day	\$1,700
Supplies (cleaning supplies, toilet paper, sign repair, etc)	\$1,500
Services (portable toilet rental \$60/week)	\$2,040
Road/Site Maintenance	N/A
Campground Host Per Diem; \$400/month for 8 months	\$3,200
Law Enforcement	\$5,000
1 trips/month/site, 8 months @ \$5,000/month	
Total Cost	\$17,986
10% Reserve for Deferred Maintenance	\$1,798
Total Cost Plus 10% Reserve	\$19,785

Table 4-Primitive Campground Management Expenses

Fee Proposal and Rationale

This section provides a rationale for a change in the campground fee structure; either a new fee or an amendment to a fee. This rationale is based on changes in operational costs (realized and/or anticipated), a detailed comparison of the amenities provided and fees charged at a range of public and private campgrounds in the area, and financial models showing projected fee revenue generation.

The BLM's rationale for an Expanded Amenity Fees at existing and potential future campgrounds are outlined below.

1. Need

Recreational use within the RGFO, including camping, has increased considerably over the past 10+ years, as explained in the Recreation Site Visitation section above. As visitation has increased, pressure on the campground sites, toilets, nearby trails and natural resources has also increased. The BLM has increased frequency of pumping toilets, cleaning and patrols as a result of increased use of facilities. Campgrounds are often full during peak use seasons and visitors often overflow onto adjacent public lands. Monitoring has indicated an increase



Sand Gulch and The Bank Campground are located along the Gold Belt Scenic Byway

in vegetation loss and human waste associated with this level of camping demand. This use has increased the need for expansion of facilities as well as increased maintenance levels and visitor contacts. Additional camping regulations on adjacent lands have been put in place or are being considered to address the impacts to resources from this trend. This increased camping demand is impacting a larger portion of the field office's recreation budget allocated to camping facility management and maintenance. This in turn detracts from the agency's ability to provide maintenance of other non-fee recreation sites such as trails and dispersed camping. Introducing camping fees under the FLREA authority in these high camping demand areas will generate revenue to directly pay for cleaning, operations, and maintenance of camping facilities allowing the agency to continue to provide services at all of its recreation sites.

Observations have been documented by Friends of Fourmile for Memorial Day weekends over a 14-year time span. Their data indicates an annual 7% increase in visitation in Fourmile, which includes the Turtle Rock campground. This trend is likely indicative of greater trends in the region. Feedback in 2022 from BLM's Turtle Rock Campground Host indicated that the campground was full 100% of the nights starting Memorial Day Weekend and many evenings people camped illegally in day-use parking or creating new sites. The demand regularly exceeds the facilities currently provided.

2. Comparison with Nearby Public and Private Campgrounds

In accordance with the BLM Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook (H-2930-1), the proposed fee increases are based on a comparative cost review of fees at existing private and public facilities (Table 5). This analysis reviews and compares campgrounds within the same service area each site that provide similar services, including US Forest Service and private campgrounds. The comparative analysis shows that current rates within the field office is inconsistent with local campgrounds with similar amenities.

Campground Amenities Fire Trash Public/ # of Camping Picnic Colle Potable Grate Elector Ring Toilet Campground Name Private Sites Fee Table ction Water ricity Notes Turtle Rock BLM 22 n/a Х Х Х Tent and RV sized sites. Reservable, Tent and RV The Bank Campground BLM 30 \$7 Х Х Х sized sites, two group sites. Reservable, Tent and RV Sand Gulch Campground BLM 16 \$7 Х Х Х sized sites, one group site \$11, Reservable. 2 group sites. BLM Penitente Canyon 15 Group \$20 Х Х Х Х Tent and RV sized sites \$11, Reservable. 1 group site, Tent BLM Group \$20 Х Х Х Zapata Falls 23 Х and RV sized sites 18 Road, North Fruita \$20, Reservable. 1 group site, Tent BLM 111 Group \$28 and RV sized sites Desert X X X х Х CPW Х Railroad Bridge 14 \$28 Reservation only Х Х CPW 23 Х Reservation only Hecla Junction \$28 CPW \$28 Х Х Х Ruby Mountain 22 Reservation only USFS (Rocky Mountain Rec Dexter Campground \$20 Х Х Х Х \$7 day use fee if not camping Company) USFS (Rocky Mount Princeton Mountain Rec Campground Company) 17 \$22 х Х Χ Х \$7 day use fee if not camping USFS (Rocky **Collegiate Peaks** Mountain Rec \$6 day use fee if not camping, Х Campground Company) 56 \$22 Х Х Х 2-night min stay on weekends Wifi, dump station, firewood Arkansas River Rim Private 38 \$40 Х Х х х Х Х for sale \$42 (tent) Store, PLayground, Wifi, Chalk Creek Campground Private \$67 (RV) Х Х Х х Х х DVD rentals Х х х х Х х Wifi, cabins Buena Vista KOA Private 93 \$68+ **Average Fee** (Public) \$21

Table 5-Rates and Service Comparison of Regional Campgrounds

3. Projected Revenue Scenarios

The collection of the proposed Expanded Amenity fee for a standard developed campground will generate revenue commensurate with visitation. Based on Colorado and national recreation trends, the RGFO anticipates visitation will continue to be high. Table 8 displays projections of revenue from the proposed camping fee, calculated for various scenarios of fee charged, occupancy rate, season length, and number of campsites. Per the estimates found in Table 6 and 7, the current operating cost of a standard campground in the Royal Gorge Field Office is approximately \$35,193 annually and a primitive campground is \$19,785. This cost is anticipated to rise in future years in association with inflation and increased visitation.

Site Fee Scenario	Occupancy/ Compliance Rate	# Nights	Estimated Campground Revenue @ 15 sites/one restroom	Estimated Management Cost (Table 4)	Profit/Loss Estimate
\$7	87%	167	\$15,255	\$35,193	-\$19,938
\$10	87%	167	\$21,793	\$35,193	-\$13,400
\$15	87%	167	\$32,690	\$35,193	-\$2,503
\$20	87%	167	\$43,587	\$35,193	\$8,394
\$25	87%	167	\$54,485	\$35,193	\$19,292

Table 6-Projected Fee Revenue Scenarios

of nights is based on a six month visitation season. Occupancy/compliance rate is based on average occupancy rates from 2018-2022 at The Bank and Sand Gulch Campgrounds during peak use seasons.

Campground	Current	# of	Visitation	# of	%	Avg.	Actual 2022	Estimated	Profit/Loss
	Site	sites		permits	Occupancy*	Length	Campground	Management	Estimate
	Fee					of stay**	Revenue	Cost (Table	
								4)	
The Bank	\$7	33	29,995	1,841	87%	2.45	\$31,644	\$42,152***	-\$10,508
Sand Gulch	\$7	16	22,998	1,230	87%	2.09	\$18,031	\$35,193	-\$17,162
Turtle Rock	\$0	22	unknown	n/a	98%****	unknown	\$0	\$35,193	-\$35,193

Table 7-Actual Campground Fee Revenue 2022

*Based on actual fee revenue the occupancy/compliance rate for these campgrounds are closer to 87% for a concentrated 167 day season.

**Calculated by dividing revenue by number of permits.

***Management cost for the Bank Campground was calculated at the same cost for personnel, vehicle, host and law enforcement but tripled costs for cleaning supplies and vault toilet pumping of figures found in table 4. The Bank has 33 individual sites, two group sites and 5 vault restrooms.

****Based on observations by campground host in summer 2022

Based on the various revenue fee scenarios (Table 6) and compared against actual fee revenue (Table 7) a rate of \$10 per night is likely to result in a loss in all market conditions and demand levels. At \$15 per night it is estimated that a campground would be close to breaking even at an estimated \$2,503 annual loss. A \$20/night rate would provide an estimated \$8,394 annual revenue allowing for additional maintenance, staff support and reserves for market changes and cost inflation. When comparing actual FY 2022 revenue (Table 7) versus estimated expenses (Table 3) RGFO spent approximately \$27,670 allocated dollars to supplement the management of The Bank and Sand Gulch Campground and \$35,193 at the Turtle Rock Campground.

4. Proposal to Change the RGFO Expanded Amenity Fee

This review of the need, the comparison with other campgrounds in the area, and the models showing projected fee revenue and potential profit/loss inform the proposal to introduce a standardized Expanded Amenity camping fee for all campgrounds managed by the Royal Gorge Field Office based on the level of services provided. From the analysis, a fee of \$20 per night for individual sites in a basic level campground and a \$40 group site fee would cover all estimated maintenance costs plus additional revenue to hedge against unanticipated events or changing market conditions. This fee would apply to the Turtle Rock Campground and an adjustment to the fee at the Bank and Sand Gulch Campgrounds. The table also shows anticipated revenue once Sand Gulch Campground is expanded to double the number of campsites.

A fee of \$10 per night is also proposed for developed campgrounds that provide primitive level of services. The analysis found that a campground that has lower levels of development and less frequent staffing still costs approximately \$20,000 per year to manage. A campground would fall into the primitive campground category if monitoring indicates toilets are necessary but only a portable toilet is provided, roads and tent pads remain unimproved and only minimal staffing is needed to minimally keep sites clean and sanitary. These would transition to a standard site if a vault toilet, increased staffing and improved sites and roads become necessary. This includes; Shavano, Burmac, CR304, and Browns Grotto.

The field office also proposes a \$10/night overflow rate for facilities that offer this type of amenity. Visitors would be allowed to stay overnight in a designated overflow area only if the adjacent campground is full. Charging a reduced fee would contribute to maintenance of the facilities provided at the site, provide an option for overflow use and reduce resource impacts that would otherwise occur from dispersed camping. It is anticipated that overflow use would only occur during peak times such as holiday weekends or permitted events. Because of this limited and sporadic use, estimating revenue is not feasible and not included in the analysis.

Campground	Proposed Site Fee	# of sites	% Occupancy/ Compliance	# of nights	Anticipated Revenue	Estimated Management	Profit/Loss Estimate
			Estimate	C		Cost (Table 4)	
The Bank	\$20	33	87%	167	\$95,891	\$42,152	\$53,739
Sand Gulch	\$20	16	87%	167	\$46,493	\$35,193	\$11,300
Sand Gulch Expanded	\$20	32	87%	167	\$92,986	\$42,152	\$50,834
Turtle Rock	\$20	22	87%	167	\$63,928	\$35,193	\$28,735
Shavano	\$10	80	87%	167	\$116,232	\$105,520	\$10,712
CR 304	\$10	8	87%	167	\$11,623	\$19,785	-\$8,162
Burmac	\$10	15	87%	167	\$21,794	\$19,785	\$2,009
Browns Grotto	\$10	15	87%	167	\$21,794	\$19,785	\$2,009
Overflow	\$10	N/A	Unknown	N/A	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Table 8-Estimated Campground Fee Revenue

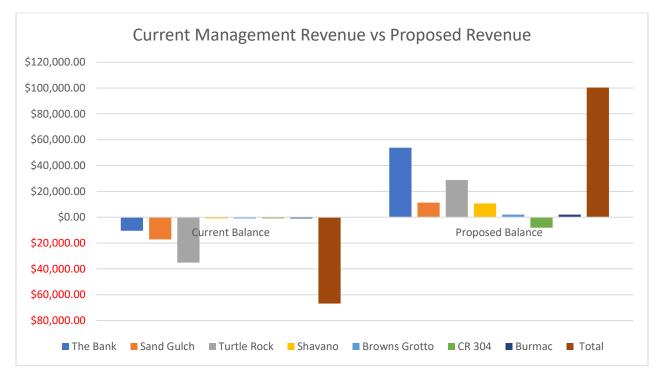


Chart 3-Comparison of Current Revenue and Proposed Revenue

RGFO will use various e-commerce technologies, as directed in BLM Instruction Memorandum 2022-010, to provide recreation visitors opportunities to find, reserve, and pay for campsites and day use within the field office. Most of these options are provided through the interagency reservation service Recreation.gov. If the RGFO decides to make reservation services or other types of e-commerce options available in the future, an expanded amenity fee for reservation services would be charged in addition to any other standard or expanded amenity fees in accordance with 16 U.S.C. 6802(g)(2)(G).

Reservation services fees could range from \$0.50 to \$10.00 depending on the type of service provided. The reservation service fee is subject to contracting requirements and will be adjusted with contract changes or with future updates to the business plan. For visitors who wish not to pay the expanded amenity fee of reservation services the field office will attempt to continue to provide a blend of reservation and first-come first served options at each of the campgrounds. Other payment options may also be considered in the future as technology and software develops including onsite credit card payment systems or scan and pay as examples.

5. How Fees are Commensurate with Visitor Benefits

Visitor use, including camping, has increased dramatically over the last 10 years in the Royal Gorge Field Office, as seen in the document above. In general, costs of goods, services, and labor have also steadily increased over the last 10 years. Based on the amenities provided and comparisons with other campgrounds in and around the region offering similar amenities, the proposed camping fee would be commensurate with the benefits that visitors receive. In exchange for the fee, visitors receive a site that is free of human waste and litter where they can

expect to have reasonable visitor protection in a natural environment with direct access to outstanding recreation opportunities.

The BLM installs facilities to support camping based on monitoring and in response to increased visitation that results in human waste, fire scars and fire restriction violations. The field office has also found a need for an increased staff presence to provide reasonable visitor protections in response to visitor complaints. This section reviews the amenities at each campground and the justification to collect the proposed expanded amenity fee.

			Campsite Amenities FLREA Checklist (must provide majority of items listed)										
Campgroun d Name	Existing or Proposed	Tent or Trailer Space	Picnic Table	Drinking Water	Access Roads	Fee Collection	Reasonable Visitor Protection	Refuse Containers	Toilet Facilities	Fire Ring			
Turtle Rock (Basic)	Existing	X	X		X	X	X		X	X			
The Bank Campgroun d (Basic)	Existing	X	X		X	X	X		X	X			
Sand Gulch Campgroun d (Basic)	Existing	X	X		X	X	X		X	X			
Shavano (Primitive)	Proposed	X			Primitive	X	X		Primitive	X			
Burmac (Primitive)	Proposed	X			Primitive	X	X		Primitive	X			
CR 304 (Primitive)	Proposed	X			Primitive	X	X		Primitive	X			
Browns Grotto (Primitive)	Proposed	X			Primitive	X	X		Primitive	X			
Overflow	Proposed	X			X	X	Х		X				

Table 9-Campsite Amenities FLREA Checklist

As shown in Table 9 above, existing campgrounds within the Royal Gorge Field Office provide 7 of the 9 amenities outlined in FLREA for an Expanded Amenity Site. Several sites are proposed for development in the Chaffee County Camping and Travel Management Plan based upon monitoring and indicators that could result in the need to add additional facilities. These facilities would be installed to address human health and safety as well as resource impacts combined with a need for additional agency presence to provide reasonable levels of visitor protection. If facilities are installed, sites would be evaluated against the FLREA guidelines and the field office expanded amenity fee could be charged. These would start as primitive level sites and increase to basic level if monitoring indicates additional management is needed.

All campgrounds would also provide significant opportunities for outdoor recreation, which is listed under the amenities for a standard amenity fee, but merits acknowledgement here.

FLREA requires the camping fee be commensurate with amenities provided and comparable to campgrounds in the area. At present, the free camping at Turtle Rock and \$7 rate at The Bank and Sand Gulch Campgrounds is inconsistent with other campgrounds in the region with similar amenities. Comparable USFS campgrounds in the area, Collegiate Peaks Campground and

Mount Princeton Campground, each charge \$22 per night, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife campgrounds charge \$28 per night. Other BLM-managed campgrounds in the region, Penitente Canyon and Zapata Falls, each charge \$11 per night. 18 Road Campground, outside of Fruita, Colorado and a major mountain bike destination with similar amenities, had a recent fee increase to \$20/night.

6. Preliminary Proposed Projects Using Recreation Fee Revenue

The following is an initial list of how the proposed recreation fee revenue would be used to continue to maintain and improve the field office's expanded amenity fee sites:

Proposed Improvements	Basic Sites	Primitive Sites
Providing trash services	X	
Based on monitoring and identifying the need, the BLM could consider adding extra campsites and day-use parking if demand warrants.	Х	X
Develop campground host sites and recruit volunteers to assist with site management, including adjacent public lands. Provide per diem for hosts	Х	X
Increase maintenance on access roads and area trails.	X	
Increase agency presence and visitor education and ethics at campgrounds and adjacent destination sites such as trails and climbing areas.	X	
Increase management and maintenance of adjacent dispersed campsites.	X	X
Increase response times to maintenance needs caused by flooding or other major weather events.	X	
Service contracts for septic pumping or portable toilet servicing.	X	X
Supplies including but not limited to cleaning supplies, toilet paper, hand soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, fuel for motorized equipment, paint, lumber, upkeep of mechanical equipment, etc.	Х	
Maintain, improve, and replace recreation site infrastructure such as trails, information and interpretive signage, fire rings, picnic tables, restroom buildings, etc	X	
Provide maps, brochure development and reprints, and interpretive materials	X	

Table 10-Proposed Project and Improvements for Basic and Primitive Sites

Impacts of Implementing or Not Implementing Fee Changes

This section analyzes the potential impacts or conditions that could result from either introducing camping fee or taking no action (not introducing a camping fee) at campgrounds with visitor health and safety amenities and meet FLREA requirements. Natural resource, visitor experience, and socioeconomic impacts are analyzed.

1. Positive Impacts of Implementing a Fee

If proposed camping fees are adopted the BLM will be able to continue to provide the current level of services at existing campgrounds. This would also allow for the installation of additional camping facilities where necessary to provide camping that is free of human waste and litter with reasonable access and visitor protections. These fees would also allow the agency to dedicate more staff to non-fee sites and activities such as trails, visitor education, and general maintenance of non-fee public lands. This includes more frequent visitor contacts, maintenance of regulatory signs and more frequent litter and dumping removal.

Charging a recreation fee can serve as an effective visitor use management strategy to move a site toward desired natural resource and visitor experience condition. Appropriate recreation fees can align recreational visitors and land managers as revenue is generated by the people actually using the site (Watkins 2020). The revenue the BLM would generate by charging the proposed camping fee could provide for additional maintenance and cleaning as well as increased agency presence and a campground host. Research has shown that when visitors who arrive at a recreation site that is clean, they are more likely to keep the site clean (Watkins 2020). Therefore, the fee dollars used to keep the campgrounds clean would have an outsized impact on the natural resource conditions of the site. The improved campground cleanliness and natural resource conditions would likely positively impact visitor experience.

2. Impacts of Not Implementing a Fee

Outdoor recreation is booming. Colorado's population is growing. Social media expedites the way visitors find places to camp and recreate. All of these factors are leading to increasing visitation, which leads to more negative natural resource impacts, such as more litter, human



Increased impacts to soils and vegetation and high volumes of use in areas with no camping facilities

waste, and vegetation damage. Fewer trash pickups and pumping of toilets could occur if operating costs exceed BLM funding and staffing capacity, 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. Without increasing camping fees, opportunities for future planned developments such as additional trails would be constrained and likely dropped from implementation. If proposed fees are not adopted, campgrounds could see a loss of functionality as operation and maintenance efforts may not be able to keep pace with the increased use. 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.

3. Effects to Low-Income and Environmental Justice Communities and Visitor Displacement Impacts of Implementing a Fee

A recent study concluded that user fees did play an important role in how low-income individuals chose outdoor recreation settings. The study found that low-income outdoor recreationists tended to visit non-fee settings when they were available and provided similar opportunities and would often drive further to select non-fee sites. Within the 660,000 acre Royal Gorge Field Office the sites in this plan are the only fee-based camping opportunities and there are multiple free dispersed or designated sites only opportunities in close proximity to all of the camping areas identified in this plan. Further, the field office only charges day-use fees at one 80- acre site.

The BLM typically does not have fees for use of dispersed recreation opportunities, which remain free to all users. Dispersed camping is free and permitted anywhere on BLM administered lands unless otherwise posted for up to 14 days in any 28-day period. Fees are only charged at sites where they are needed to help manage use, maintain visitor safety, and conserve the recreation setting.

Consistent with Department of Interior and BLM priorities, the BLM RGFO seeks to achieve environmental justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility and make a difference in communities through expanding recreational access and opportunities and providing for natural resource interpretation.

This includes to: encourage, facilitate, and improve partnership with and access for youth, tribes, and underserved communities to public lands through recreation partnerships and collaborations; improve public health and safety at developed recreation sites and areas by updating and modernizing infrastructure including meeting accessibility standards for people with disabilities; invite education, interpretation, and recreational access for all Americans, especially for diverse populations and those near urban areas to encourage enjoyment of BLM-managed public lands and waters; collaborate with community members, government organizations, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, and other stakeholders to address environmental and health-related challenges for recreation management; enhance understanding of environmental and health-related issues at the community level; improve methods for identifying, addressing, tracking, and measuring progress toward achieving environmental justice; and develop and support youth education and outreach programs.

In 2020, a survey of campers at Turtle Rock conducted by Western Colorado University, found 37% of respondents reported a camping fee would make them less likely to camp at Turtle Rock campground. Some campers reported that they did not need or want amenities like a picnic table or a fire ring, yet many respondents reported they appreciated the vault toilets at Turtle Rock. When asked where they would camp instead of paying a fee at Turtle Rock, many respondents said nearby USFS lands or BLM areas where they could camp for free. This type of response is likely indicative of other sites as well. Public comments received on BLM's Chaffee County Camping and Travel Management Plan also indicate that people are also frustrated with the impact of increased demand of dispersed camping is having on public lands including concerns regarding human waste, trash and fire danger. Fees would help to address this problem.

Public Involvement

As part of this proposal to introduce new camping fees, the BLM Royal Gorge Field Office will conduct the following outreach efforts to notify the public of its opportunity to review and provide comments:

- Post the Draft Business Plan on the BLM National Recreation Site Business Plan website and solicit feedback. https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/permits-and-fees/business-plans
- Issue a Press Release notifying the public about the opportunity to comment and notify management partners. Request management partners to spread awareness through their networks and social media presence.
- The Field Office will present the campground fee increase proposal to the BLM Rocky Mountain District Resource Advisory Council (RAC). The FLREA mandates that the appropriate Recreation RAC reviews all BLM recreation fee proposals prior to approval. Comments from both the public at large and the BLM RAC will be considered prior to approval of the Royal Gorge Field Office Campground Business Plan.

The BLM will post how collected recreation fees are spent on the BLM's fee website.

Prior to modifying camping fees in the future, the BLM will follow the process outlined in FLREA or any other applicable law or regulation regarding fees on public lands.

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