



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

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# Jump Creek Recreation Site Business Plan

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November 2023

*Prepared by  
BLM Owyhee Field Office*



## **Mission statement**

The Bureau of Land Management sustains the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

## **Cover Photo**

Jump Creek Falls (BLM)

## **For more Information**

To request a copy of this publication please contact:

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## REVIEWS, RECOMMENDATIONS and APPROVALS

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Tanya Thrift, Boise District Manager

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Date

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 Jump Creek recreation fee program in the Owyhee Field Office.



## United States Department of the Interior

### BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Owyhee Field Office

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In Reply Refer to:  
2932

Dear Reader:

I would like to present for your review and comment the *Jump Creek Recreation Site Business Plan* for the Jump Creek Recreation Site, which is managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Owyhee Field Office (BLM). This popular recreation site, known for its 60-ft waterfall, is located between Marsing and Homedale, Idaho, and receives more than 40,000 visitors per year. Recreation at the site includes picnicking, special-use permit camping, hiking, fishing, swimming, panning, and rock climbing. The site also serves as a staging area for activities such as off-highway vehicle riding, horseback riding, and hunting.

This business plan includes a fee site proposal to address facility maintenance and public safety needs due to increased use and costs of operation. The fees will also enable the BLM to improve services, add amenities desired by visitors, and help offset costs incurred by Owyhee County from increased law enforcement patrols and search and rescue efforts.

The BLM is proposing a day-use fee of \$5 per vehicle or a \$25 annual pass. These fees would begin in 2023, with prices fixed through 2032. Current national pass discounts, such as the America the Beautiful Pass, will be honored. These fees were determined through a comparative cost analysis of similar recreation sites throughout the region as outlined in the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act. These proposed fees were presented to, and supported by, the BLM Idaho Resource Advisory Council in August 2021.

A public comment period has been established to give you the opportunity to submit feedback on the proposed business plan and associated fee proposal. Comments will be accepted through the following means:

Email: [BLM\\_ID\\_OwyheeOffice@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_ID_OwyheeOffice@blm.gov)

Fax: 208-896-5940

U.S. Mail: BLM Owyhee Field Office, 101 S Bruneau Hwy., Marsing, ID 83639

Comments are due by December 7, 2023.

Thank you for your interest in your public lands.

Sincerely,

Ammon Wilhelm  
Owyhee Field Manager (A)

## **Executive Summary**

Jump Creek Recreation Site is an increasingly popular day-use area located on BLM-administered lands seven miles southwest of Marsing, Idaho. Known for its 60-ft waterfall, the site has received more than 40,000 visitors per year since 2020 who enjoy a variety of mostly non-motorized recreation activities, though it serves as a staging area for off-highway vehicles use. Overnight camping is available by special permit but is rarely utilized. The site was developed and maintained over the past 25 years using grants and deferred maintenance money and currently does not charge a fee.

Operational and maintenance costs have increased greatly as use has nearly doubled between FY2014 and FY2020. The region's population continues to grow, as does recreation on public lands. With current funding unreliable and BLM directing its recreation sites become more self-sufficient; a fee collection is needed to cover the increased costs.

The *Jump Creek Recreation Site Business Plan* includes a proposed \$5 per vehicle day-use fee, or \$25 annual pass, beginning in 2023 and remaining fixed for ten years. This fee was determined through a comparative cost review of similar public and private facilities in surrounding counties as required by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004 (FLREA). The only use change proposed is no longer authorizing camping as an exception to day-use only rule.

Fees collected will be used for operation and maintenance, with excess monies generated being carried over annually for improving infrastructure and adding amenities desired by visitors. Funds would also be used to help offset costs incurred by Owyhee County for law enforcement patrols and numerous search and rescue responses.

Public outreach for this proposed business plan and fees includes postings at Jump Creek Recreation Site, a news release to local and regional media, social media posts, posting on BLM website and a Notice published in the Federal Register. Comments from the public and the BLM Idaho Resource Advisory Council will be considered prior to the implementation of the proposed recreation fees.

## **Introduction**

### **Regulatory Framework**

This business plan was prepared pursuant to FLREA, the BLM recreation fee program policy manual, 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 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 FLREA, 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 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 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 RUP revenue is spent at or near the site of collection.

In accordance with FLREA, the following are definitions of Standard and Expanded amenities for the area covered under this business plan:

- **Standard Amenity Recreation Fees** cover outdoor recreation areas that provide significant opportunities for outdoor recreation; have substantial Federal investments; where fees can be effectively collected, and that have all of the following amenities: (1) designated developed parking, (2) a permanent toilet facility, (3) a permanent trash receptacle, (4) interpretive sign, exhibit, or kiosk, (5) picnic tables, (6) and security services (Sec. 803(f)(4)(D) of FLREA).
- **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 FLREA).
- **Additional Expanded Amenity** recreation facilities or services provided for in FLREA include rental of cabins, group day-use or overnight sites, binoculars or other equipment (Sec.803.(g)(2)(C)); use of hookups for electricity, cable, or sewer (Sec.803.(g)(2)(D)); use of sanitary dump stations (SEC.803(g)(2)(E)); and use of reservation services (Sec.803(g)(2)(G)).

### **Purpose of Document**

BLM Handbook H-2930-1, Recreation Permits and Fee Administration (Rel. 2-300, Dated November 17, 2014), requires 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 FLREA. Business plans are to assist management in determining the appropriateness and level of

fees, cost of administering a fee program, 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.

This business plan includes a description of the fee site, proposed fees, 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 (Table 3), impacts of proposed fee changes, and public outreach efforts. The data used to analyze and prepare this business plan was obtained through internal BLM tracking mechanisms, such as the Recreation Management Information System (RMIS) and other locally generated recreation and visitor use tracking spreadsheets. For additional detailed information contact the BLM Owyhee Field Office.

## **Background**

The Jump Creek Recreation Site is currently a day-use area, with overnight camping available by authorization only. If this business plan and fee site proposal are implemented as is, authorizing camping will be eliminated, making it strictly a day-use area. The day-use hours were established in the late 1990s through a supplementary rule (64 FR 23096) to eliminate late night partying, vandalism, theft, and gang activities from the area. Day-use hours are:

- April 1 through October 1 – 6:00AM – 9:00PM
- October 2 through March 31 – 8:00AM – 6:00PM

The site serves as a trailhead for three BLM-maintained trails. One lower trail through the canyon leads to Jump Creek Falls, another leads to an overlook of the falls, and the upper trail may be used to enter and leave the recreation site.

The site includes three parking areas: two upper lots, and one lower parking area that contains a restroom, trash receptacles, information kiosks, fire rings, picnic tables, camp sites (by permit only), and access to Jump Creek and canyon falls. Most visitors utilize the main/lower parking area. Recreational uses include picnicking, authorized camping, hiking, fishing, swimming, panning, and rock climbing. The site also serves as a staging area for activities such as off-highway vehicle riding, horseback riding, and hunting.

There are 4 tent-camp sites within the recreation area available only through recreation use permit issued by the Owyhee Field Office. Each site contains a picnic table, fire ring, and tent pad. Authorized camping would be eliminated if the business plan and fee proposal are implemented as proposed.

## **Season of Use**

The recreation site is open year-round. For public safety, access to the lower parking area is restricted during winter months, roughly November through March. During this time visitors are still able to park in the upper parking lots and hike to the lower parking area to access the restrooms and hike into the canyon. Fees will be required year-round.



## Recreation Use

Visitation at the Jump Creek 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 regardless of duration. 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.

Calculating or estimating visitor use is derived through several methods including tallying the information from recreation use permits, traffic counters, trail counters, and through simple observation. In most cases, the number of visits is a combination of these methods. Table 1 shows the estimated visits at Jump Creek Recreation Site.

**Table 1: Jump Creek Estimated Annual Visitation – 2014-2020**

FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
21,000	25,000	30,000	28,000	30,000	34,000	40,000

Most visits occur from May to September when school is out, and weather is most desirable. Year-round use is expected to continue to increase with the region’s population growth and as the site continues to gain attention through websites, news stations, social media, etc. As Table 1 shows, use has almost doubled from 2014 (21,000) to 2020 (40,000).

## Fee Collection and Enforcement

Jump Creek Recreation Site has one entrance where a self-service fee station will be available. All vehicles entering the site will be required to obtain a recreation use permit (RUP) for day-use activities. Day-use and annual passes will be offered at local BLM offices and online. All permits must be displayed in the vehicles’ front window or stored on a cell phone or tablet.

This business plan proposes to make RUPs available on Recreation.gov, the federal government’s one-stop shop for reservations and trip-planning information. The Owyhee Field Office will use various e-commerce technologies, as directed in BLM Instruction Memorandum 2022-019, to provide recreation visitors opportunities to find, reserve, and pay for day use within the field office. Most of these options are provided through the interagency reservation service Recreation.gov. When the field office decides to make online reservation services or other types of e-commerce options available, 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. Visitors wishing not to pay the reservation services fee can use the traditional iron ranger with RUP envelopes to pay the day use fee.

Fee payment would be enforced by BLM personnel, BLM Law Enforcement, and the Owyhee County Sheriff’s Office. Fees will be collected by park rangers or other personnel who are certified Fee Collection Officers. Two BLM staff members are required when handling,

depositing, and counting money. Single person collections are only allowed if a 2-lock system is used for the fee collection program.

### **Operations and Maintenance Costs**

The BLM currently spends roughly \$20,000 each year to operate and maintain the site, which includes cleaning, trash removal, vault pumping, graffiti removal, road work, and miscellaneous repair/maintenance. Most of this work is accomplished through an independent service contracted by the BLM. These contracts are awarded for a five-year period, with the first year being probationary. The previous two contracts awarded over the last 10 years were roughly \$13,000 and \$15,000 for the maintenance at Jump Creek. The current contract was awarded in 2021 for roughly 20k. This number does not include annual law enforcement or search and rescue costs which are estimated at an additional \$20,000.

### **Rationale for New Fees**

There is a growing need for the recreation program to become more self-sufficient. For the foreseeable future the recreation program plans to achieve greater self-sufficiency and resiliency through market-supported fee increases, repurposing low visitation recreation sites and designing purpose-built recreation sites that fill popular recreation needs. [The 2020 Bureau of Land Management's Recreation Strategy "Connecting with Communities,"](#) provides a vision to increase and improve collaboration with local community service providers to produce greater well-being and socioeconomic health and to deliver outstanding recreation experiences to visitors while sustaining the distinctive character of public land recreation settings.

The proposed fee system will improve public health and safety concerns by helping offset some costs to Owyhee County for additional law enforcement patrols and for search and rescue efforts at the site. Emergency response calls will always be an issue at the site for accidental injuries, lost hikers, etc., especially as visitation continues to grow along with the areas' population. An increased law enforcement presence will also improve fee compliance, reduce theft, vandalism and graffiti, trespass onto adjacent private lands, and after-hours partying at the site. Within the past five years Jump Creek has had an abduction attempt and numerous suicides. Implementing visitor fees may help curtail some of the issues stated above simply by deterring those "visitors" with ill intentions.

### **Objectives for Use of Fee Receipts**

The annual cost of maintaining Jump Creek Recreation Site is approximately \$20,000. Money collected from day-use fees would be applied directly towards the operation and maintenance of the recreation site and its facilities. Excess monies generated would be carried over annually and spent at the site itself on upgrades to facilities, seasonal employees, increased law enforcement, and search and rescue.

With continued flat or decreases in annual field office recreation budgets, the fee collection program is necessary to ensure continued maintenance, improvements, and development of new facilities as demand warrants.

### **Projected Costs for Future Developments and Maintenance Projects**

The Jump Creek Recreation Site is already considered a developed recreation site. Development costs for enhancing and upgrading the site and other plan implementation costs within the first 10 years of implementing the fee system are described below.

- Picnic tables (\$4,000)
- Annual road and trail maintenance (\$5,500)
- Shade structures at day-use sites (5) (\$25,000)
- Kiosk update and replacement (\$5,000)
- Security improvements and increased patrols.
- Self-service fee station (\$20,000) plus annual operating costs

The initial setup costs for a self-service fee station would be about\$20,000. The fee station allows visitors to pay day use fees using credit cards either at the onsite kiosk or through an online payment portal, providing convenient payment options.

## **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 providing similar services within the geographic area of the Jump Creek Recreation Site.

Table 2 outlines the proposed fee schedule for the next 20 years. This sliding scale gives BLM flexibility on fee increases for the next 20 years without having to go through a comprehensive process to make fee modifications. Increases in fees may or may not occur on these exact dates, or even at all, depending on area and market comparisons and facility maintenance needs. The field office will post notification of the fees when and if they are changed according to the business plan.

**Table 2: Proposed Fees for Jump Creek Recreation Site**

<b>Standard Amenity</b>	<b>Fee/Year 2023-2032</b>	<b>Fee/Year 2033-2043</b>
<b>Day-Use</b>	\$5 per vehicle	\$7 per vehicle
<b>Day-Use Season Pass</b>	\$25	\$35

### **Fee Discounts**

Section 5 of FLREA provided for the establishment of a single interagency national pass known as the America the Beautiful Pass—the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass. This pass provides the bearer full coverage of standard amenity fees which is applicable to the Jump Creek Recreation Site.

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

The BLM Owyhee Field Office recreation staff conducted an analysis in 2021 of comparable fees charged in the surrounding Idaho counties by similar state, federal, and local park facilities. The analysis resulted in the proposed fees, which are based on fees charged by other public sector agencies for similar sites, facilities, equipment, and services. Only one comparable site in the private sector (Black Sands Resort) was found. RV parks are available but do not provide the same amenities and were not included in the fee comparisons charts. Table 3 displays the

comparative analysis by the type of services and amenities each recreation site offers. The following information summarizes the comparative analysis by fee type.

**Day-Use:** In the public sector day-use fees range from \$2 to \$3 per vehicle for standard amenities, however several of these sites are currently in the process of restructuring those fees to \$5. The sole private sector day-use fee is \$10.

**Table 3: Comparable Sites**

Fee Site	Managed By	Day Use	Annual Pass
Cove	BLM	\$2	
Steck Park	BLM	\$2	
Banks on Payette River	BLM/FS	\$3	\$20
Celebration Park	Canyon County	\$2	\$15
Lud Drexler	BLM	\$5	
Milner	BLM	\$3	
Black Sands Resort	Private Entity	\$10	

**Projected Fee Revenue**

To calculate the day-use fee projection, total visits were divided by the average number of occupants per vehicle, then multiplied by an estimated compliance rate of 60 percent, and finally multiplied by the fee:  $40,000 \text{ (visits)} / 2.25 \text{ (occupants per vehicle)} \times .60 \times \$5 \text{ (fee)} = \$53,333$ .

It is unknown how many visitors would purchase an annual pass at this point. For this exercise we estimate 1 percent of visitors would purchase this pass, then multiplied by the fee:  $40,000 \text{ (visits)} \times .01 \times \$25 = \$10,000$ .

**Table 4: Estimated Fee Revenue by Type**

TYPE	AMOUNT
<b>DAY-USE</b>	\$53,333
<b>ANNUAL PASS</b>	\$10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$63,333</b>

Based on projected fees, and operation and maintenance costs, the site will become self-sufficient and allow for improved maintenance and enhanced visitor services. Increased law enforcement and a future volunteer host will likely lead to increased compliance and revenues.

**Proposed Use of Fee Revenue**

Labor will continue to be the highest operating cost for Jump Creek and fee revenue is needed to help support the operation, maintenance, and increased security of the site. The following is an initial list of how the proposed recreation fee revenue would be used:

- Service contracts for restroom cleaning, garbage collection, and septic pumping (20K)

- Increased law enforcement patrols for visitor safety, property protection and compliance (10K)
- Maintain, improve, and replace recreation site infrastructure such as trails, signage, picnic tables, fencing, restroom buildings, and kiosks (1.5K).
- Help offset search and rescue costs for Owyhee County (5K).
- Road maintenance and dust abatement (5K)
- Maintain and replace equipment such as mowers, trimmers, hand tools, and drills.
- Information material such as brochures and interpretive signage
- Modernizing fee collection equipment and upkeep
- Audits and evaluations
- Construction of recreation facilities, such as: restrooms (45k), host site, shade structures (17K per), and trails. Once a host site is developed, fees would be put toward host stipend payments.

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

*Positive Impacts* – Implementing the proposed fee system would ensure a self-sustaining recreation site for years to come. Currently the service contracts for facility maintenance are funded through engineering’s deferred maintenance funds. However, with continuously decreasing budgets it’s simply a matter of time before these funds and service contracts are eliminated. The proposed fee system would cover the annual maintenance costs, while still allowing for increased law enforcement patrols and minor upgrades.

More law enforcement patrols would improve security and safety for visitors. Theft, vandalism, graffiti, and after-hours partying continue to affect the quality of the recreation site. These issues are only expected to increase as the area’s population continues to grow and visitor numbers rise. Fee money would be used to help fund increased patrols year-round from Owyhee County Sheriff’s Office, especially after hours. Additionally, merely implementing visitor fees may help curtail some of these issues by deterring those “visitors” with ill intentions.

Not only will implementing the fee system ensure self-sustainability, over time fees will provide opportunities that currently do not exist at the site for future developments and upgrades. Fees can be used to add additional restrooms, picnic tables, BBQ grates, shade structures, improve roads and trails, interpretive signage, host site for additional compliance, information, and visitor safety.

Fee collections would also be used to offset some of the costs of search and rescue efforts for Owyhee County. The county’s search and rescue team responds to an average of 20 calls per year to the recreation site. These calls will vary from snake bites, to cuts and bruises, broken bones, lost hikers, accidental deaths, and suicide.

*Negative Impacts* – Current facilities maintenance and service contracts are funded for Jump Creek on a year-to-year basis. Decreasing budgets with no secure funding in place puts funding for the site at risk, despite the increasing needs. Implementing a fee to make the site self-sustaining is crucial as visitations continue to increase along with the regional population, one of the nation’s fastest growing.

If the proposed fee system is not implemented and current funding is reduced, existing facilities may deteriorate, and operations could become inefficient as maintenance efforts will not be able to keep pace with the increasing use. Long-term costs would increase as facilities age and deteriorate without proper annual maintenance. Maintenance and services, like trash pickup and toilet pumping, may be delayed or eliminated which can result in increased safety hazards related to human waste and trash.

The opportunities for future developments would be constrained and would only likely happen through outside funding sources. Current law enforcement patrols are not expected to be affected if fees are not implemented.

Implementing fees to an area that has historically had no fee can also be an adverse impact to all, and especially to those in a lower income bracket. To help counter this adverse impact and improve affordability as well as equity and inclusion, the BLM will hold periodic fee free days (there were five in 2023) throughout each year to make the site temporarily available and accessible to all. This information is available on the BLMs website prior to each season so visitors can make plans to visit on those days. In addition to the fee free days, the following free passes: Every Kid Outdoors Fourth Grade Pass, Access Pass for the disabled, Military Pass for active military, their dependents, veterans, and Gold Star families, and the discounted Lifetime Senior Pass allow many members of the public free entrance to the site.

## **Outreach**

### **Public Communication and Marketing Plan**

1. Public notice of the proposed fee system, including rate details and calling for public comments, will be posted at Jump Creek Recreation Site until implemented.
2. News release detailing the fee system and calling for public comments will be issued to all local and regional media.
3. The business plan will be published on the BLM website with links to submit comments.
4. A Notice of new Recreation Fee Collection, along with a call for public comments, will be published in the Federal Register.

The Owyhee Field Office has presented the Jump Creek Recreation Site fee proposals to the BLM Idaho Resource Advisory Council (RAC) and received its positive recommendation in August 2021. The RAC is a 15-member advisory panel which provides advice and recommendations to the BLM on resource and land management issues for approximately 12,000,000 acres of public lands in Idaho. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act mandates the appropriate RAC will be consulted and given opportunities to provide recommendations to the BLM on all recreation fee proposals prior to implementation. Comments from the public and BLM Idaho RAC will be considered prior to the implementation of the proposed recreation fees.

The BLM will continue to monitor visitor use to detect changes in site utilization and document written and oral communication from the public. Business plan review will occur on a biennial schedule from the date of the last signature. Future adjustments to the Jump Creek fee schedule will reflect public comments 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/about/data/public-land-statistics>. 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. BLM regularly meets with the Owyhee County commissioners during their public meetings and BLM will update them on annual fee expenditures and site improvements.

# Jump Creek Recreation Site Location Map

