



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

# Three Rivers Petroglyph Site Business Plan and Fee Adjustment Proposal

**U.S. Department of the Interior**

**Bureau of Land Management  
New Mexico**

**Las Cruces District Office  
FY2024**



**WBS #LVRDNM100000: Three Rivers Petroglyph Site**

## RECOMMENDATIONS, REVIEWS, and APPROVALS

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This business plan was prepared by the Bureau of Land Management's Las Cruces District Office pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004 ([16 U.S.C. 6801-6814](#)) and BLM recreation fee program policies. It establishes future management goals and priorities for Las Cruces District Office fee sites.

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# 1 Executive Summary

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Dear reader,

This business plan was prepared pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) of 2004 (P.L. 108-447, as amended) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recreation fee program policy and manual direction. FLREA allows the BLM current jurisdiction to establish, modify, charge, and collect recreation fees on federal recreational lands and waters.

The Three Rivers Petroglyph Site (Three Rivers) is managed by the Las Cruces District Office (LCDO) BLM administered public lands located in Otero County of New Mexico's 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District. The recreation site was established to provide protection for and public access to one of the largest and most concentrated petroglyph sites in the Southwest. The site has been developed for day and overnight use, with amenities including a visitor center, restroom facilities, two interpretive trails, camp and picnic sites, RV hookups, site hosts, and more. A more in-depth description of the available amenities is included in the body of the document.

Fee collection at Three Rivers began in 1996 and was increased in 2012 to address a shortfall in revenue. Fee revenue is generated by Standard, Expanded, and Additional Expanded Amenity fees. **Table 1** below outlines existing and proposed recreation fees at Three Rivers. Detailed discussion on this proposal occurs in the body of this business plan.

Cost recovery, visitation growth, economic inflation, and a comparative review of fees charged by nearby facilities that provide similar services were analyzed through this business plan process. LCDO proposes to increase all fees for Three Rivers based on the results of these analyses.

The proposed fee increases are as follows: day use from \$5 to \$7; campsites from \$7 to \$10; tour bus fees from \$15 to \$20; RV hookup campsites from \$18 to \$25; and group site fee from \$50 to \$60 per day. These changes are proposed to be implemented in late summer of 2024.

Visitors can submit feedback during the comment period from April 9 to May 8, 2024 (see p. 39).

**Table 1: Three Rivers Fee Increase Proposal**

Service	Current Fee	Proposed Fee & Changes
Day Use (per vehicle per day)	\$5	\$7
Day Use (per tour bus (per day)	\$15	\$20
Camping (per site per day)	\$7	\$10
RV Hookup Campsite (per site per day)	\$18	\$25
Group Site (per day)	\$50	\$60

# INTRODUCTION

## Authorities

This business plan was prepared pursuant to the **Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA)** of December 2004 (P.L. 108-447, as amended) as well as 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 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, three fee categories were established:

- ***Standard Amenity Fee:*** covers areas that provide significant opportunities for outdoor recreation, have substantial federal investments, have fee collection mechanisms, and have the following amenities: designated developed parking, a permanent toilet facility, a permanent trash, interpretive signs, exhibits, or kiosks, picnic tables, and security services (Sec. 803 (f)(4)(D) of REA).
- ***Expanded Amenity Fee:*** covers specialized outdoor recreation sites and services including but not limited to developed campgrounds with most of the following amenities: tent or trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, fee collection by an employee or agent of the BLM, reasonable visitor protection, refuse containers, toilet facilities, and simple devices for containing a campfire (Sec. 803 (g)(2)(A) of REA).
- ***Additional Expanded Amenity Fee:*** covers recreation facilities or services including rental of cabins, group day-use or overnight sites, binoculars or other equipment, use of hookups for electricity, cable, or sewer, use of sanitary dump stations, and use of reservation services (Sec.803 (g)(2)(C-G) of REA).

Section 804 of FLREA addresses the minimum public outreach requirements that an agency must consider when developing or changing recreation fees. This outreach process includes the involvement of a Resource Advisory Council (RAC). RACs provide recommendations to agency officials on matters including, but not limited to:

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

In addition to FLREA, the authorities and regulations for this business plan, including fee collection at federal recreation lands, are:

- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579), which contains the BLM's general land use management authority over public lands.
- [43 Code of Federal Regulations 2931.2](#), which establishes a permit and fee system for use of fee areas such as campgrounds and day use areas.
- [43 Code of Federal Regulations 2932](#), which establishes a permit and fee system for special recreation permits.



- [43 Code of Federal Regulations 2933](#), which further outlines Recreation Use Permits guidance.

This business plan also follows applicable BLM recreation fee program policies and guidance, including:

- [BLM Manual 2930, Recreation Permits and Fees](#)
- [BLM Handbook 2930-1, Recreation Permit and Fee Administration](#)
- [BLM Information Bulletin No. 2019-056, Recreation Fee Revenue Spending Plans and Accomplishment Report](#)
- [BLM Manual 1105 – Donations, Solicitation, and Fundraising](#)

In addition to specific authorities and regulations, this business plan assists in fulfilling the following strategies:

- [Connecting with Communities: BLM Recreation Strategy](#), by making the benefits of recreation more accessible to communities while supporting local social, economic, and environmental goals.
- [Environmental Justice Strategic Plan](#), by increasing access to environmental benefits that help make the LCDO communities safe, vibrant, and healthy for all those who live, work, and engage in recreation there.
- [Mimbres Resource Management Plan](#), by aligning with LCDO's comprehensive framework for managing public land and for allocating resources using principles of multiple use and sustained yield.

## Purpose of Document

The BLM Handbook H-2930-1, Recreation Permits and Fee Administration (Rel. 2-300, Dated November 17, 2014), requires that each recreation fee program have an approved business plan which thoroughly discusses fees and explains how fees are consistent with the criteria set forth in FLREA. Business plans are to assist management in determining the appropriateness and level of fees, the cost of administering a fee program, the expected benefits to be derived for the public and to provide a structured communication and marketing plan. The primary purpose of the plan is to serve as public notification of the objectives for use of recreation fee revenues. The final business plan guides the expenditure of collected FLREA funds and insures public accountability.

FLREA provides agencies with recreation fee authority. This allows agencies to improve the efficiency of the program, provide better facilities and services to visitors, employ greater use of technology, and enter into more fee management agreements to provide additional services to visitors. The last fee increase for Three Rivers was during 2012 and fees have remained at their current levels for 11 years. Revenues from current fees are not sufficient to offset the long-term costs of managing the recreation sites.

The business plan will specifically cover a description of the fee sites, proposed changes in fees to these sites, associated operating costs, planned expenditures of fee revenue, a financial analysis utilizing a regional comparative market study, and the impacts of proposed fee changes. The data used to analyze and prepare this business plan was obtained through internal BLM tracking and accounting mechanisms such as the Federal Business Management System (FBMS), Recreation Management Information System (RMIS), Collections and Billing Systems (CBS), and other

locally generated recreation and visitor use tracking, including Recreation Use Permits (RUPs), Special Recreation Permits (SRPs), and TRAFx vehicle counters. For detailed information, contact the BLM Las Cruces District Office.

## Background

The BLM LCDO manages 5.4 million acres of public land and over 10 million acres of Federal mineral estate from the western side of the Guadalupe Mountains to the Arizona border, and from Sierra County and the southern edge of the Gila National Forest to the Mexican border.

LCDO began receiving recreation fee revenues in 1996 from day use recreationists, campers, group site users, and via the LCDO Annual Pass, and increased fees in 2012. In this new 2023 business plan, changes to fees for day use, tour buses, overnight camping, RV sites, and the group site are proposed.

Revenues from the Recreation Fee Account are used to maintain recreation facilities at their site of collection. Specifically, the account covers restroom maintenance, septic pumping services, vandalism cleanup and repairs, visitor center cleaning and repairs, sign replacement, trail maintenance, grounds keeping, drinking water system testing and maintenance/repairs, roadway repairs, roadway mowing, roadway sweeping, and monsoon cleanup.

# 2 LCDO Recreation Program

## ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT & OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

The LCDO lies within New Mexico's Congressional District 2. The LCDO planning area encompasses 5.4 million acres across Doña Ana, Hidalgo, Grant, Luna, Otero, and Sierra counties. Three Rivers Petroglyph Site falls within the LCDO, as well as popular fee-free recreation opportunities including Lake Valley Historic Site, Tortugas Mountain, Aden Hills OHV Area, and the Gila Lower Box Canyon. LCDO also manages the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument (OMDPNM) and Prehistoric Trackways National Monument (PTNM). Both fall under Monument management, with their own budgets and staff, and are distinct from Three Rivers Petroglyph Site and other LCDO sites.

National Conservation Lands, established in 2000, protect 31 million acres of the most ecologically rich and culturally significant lands managed by the BLM and include National Monuments and National Conservation Areas, Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Scenic and Historic Trails.



*Figure 1: The Gila River at the Lower Gila Box Canyon, an Area of Critical Environmental Concern in the District*

LCDO manages 5.4 million surface acres and over 10 million subsurface acres of public lands across 6 counties in southwest New Mexico, shown in Figure 2, including:

- The Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument (496,330 acres)
- Prehistoric Trackways National Monument (5,255 acres)
- 10 Designated Wilderness areas (241,554 acres)
- 16 Wilderness Study Areas (247,084 acres)
- 28 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), totaling 205,496 acres
- The El Camino Real National Historic Trail and Butterfield Overland National Historic Trail
- The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail
- Lake Valley Historic Townsite and Backcountry Byway
- Three Rivers Petroglyph Site (1,500 acres)
- Four National Recreation Trails
- Diverse wildlife and plant species, including 147 special status and 22 Threatened & Endangered species
- Significant cultural (historic & prehistoric) resources dating back 8,000 years
- Internationally significant paleontological resources, some dating back 260 million years

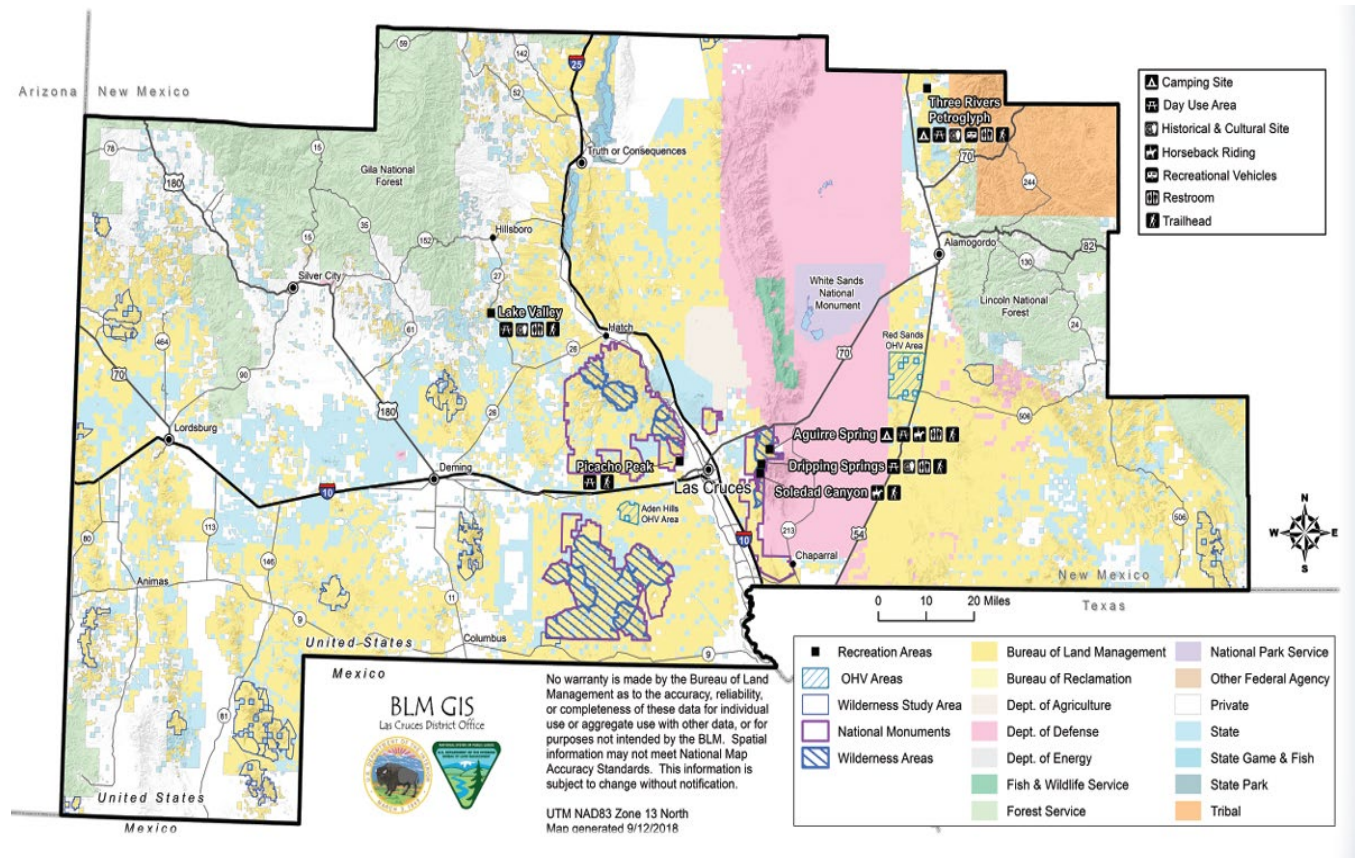



Figure 2: Map of the Las Cruces District.



Table 2:

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Three Rivers Petroglyph Site at a Glance</h2> 	
<b>Location:</b>	17 miles north of Tularosa, NM and 28 miles south of Carrizozo, NM, on U.S. Highway 54. Heading north from Tularosa, turn right (east) at the trading post onto the paved Three Rivers Road / Country Road B30. Continue for five miles and turn left into the parking lot.
<b>Acreage:</b>	Approximately 1,500 acres
<b>Amenities Offered:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 developed camping/picnicking sites with shelters, picnic tables, grills, and permanent trash receptacles</li> <li>• 6 tent-camping sites with sandy tent pads</li> <li>• 2 RV hookup sites with water and electricity</li> <li>• 1 ADA-accessible camping/picnicking site</li> <li>• 1 large group site with pavilion, picnic tables, and grills</li> <li>• 1 permanent toilet facility (flushable) with potable water</li> <li>• 2 hiking trails</li> <li>• A visitor center with interpretive exhibits</li> <li>• Kiosk with fee-collection services (Iron Ranger)</li> <li>• Site hosts</li> </ul>
<b>Daily Fees:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5 per day use per vehicle</li> <li>• \$7 per night per site</li> <li>• \$18 per night per site (RV hookup)</li> <li>• \$15 per bus</li> <li>• \$50 per group site reservation</li> </ul>
<b>Visitation (since 2012):</b>	<p>Average: 48,375 annual visitors</p> <p>Highest Visitation Year: 61,419 (2021)</p>
<b>Season of Use:</b>	Open year round; busiest September-March
<b>Where Most Visitors Originate:</b>	New Mexico, Texas, Colorado, California, Arizona
<b>Popular Activities:</b>	Hiking, sightseeing, camping, picnicking, travel
<b>Average Group Size:</b>	2 people

Three Rivers Petroglyph Site offers significant opportunities for outdoor recreation, in part because of the financial investment the BLM has dedicated to it. Amenities such as a developed parking lot, permanent trash receptacles and permanent restroom facilities, interpretive exhibits, picnic tables and a simple fee-collection service all meet FLREA standard and expanded amenity fee requirements.

## THREE RIVERS PETROGLYPH SITE

Three Rivers is one of the few locations in the Southwest set aside solely because of the rock art found there. It is also one of the few sites giving visitors such direct access to petroglyphs. The number and concentration of petroglyphs here make it one of the largest and most interesting petroglyphs sites in the Southwest. The basaltic ridge rising above the Three Rivers Valley contains more than 21,000 petroglyphs of birds, humans, animals, fish, insects, and plants, as well as masks, sunbursts, and numerous geometric and abstract designs that are scattered over 50 acres of New Mexico's northern Chihuahuan Desert. **Figure 8** shows the map that is included in the Three Rivers brochure, which is available at the visitor center and kiosk of Three Rivers, and at the LCDO office in Las Cruces, and illustrates the trails and most prominent petroglyph features.



*Figure 3: A petroglyph resembling a bighorn sheep at Three Rivers.*

The petroglyphs at Three Rivers, dating back to between about 200 and 1400 AD, were created by Jornada Mogollon people who used stone tools to remove the dark patina on the exterior of the rock. The likely creators of the petroglyphs inhabited a nearby village close to Three Rivers Creek on and off for roughly 1200 years. Today, the foundations of three prehistoric dwellings remain within the village site. A rugged 1-mile out-and-back trail, simply referred to as the “Petroglyph Trail” begins at the visitor shelter and links many of the most defined petroglyphs. Another short trail, “The Village Trail”, begins on the east side of the picnic area and leads to the partially excavated prehistoric village. From all trails, visitors can see Sierra Blanca Mountain towering to the east.



*Figure 5: Trailhead of the Village Trail.*



*Figure 4: Petroglyphs with a view of Sierra Blanca.*

The Three Rivers Petroglyph Site is located approximately 17 miles north of Tularosa and 28 miles south of Carrizozo on U.S. Highway 54 in northern Otero County. Nearby developed recreation opportunities are available at the Lincoln and Cibola National Forests (USFS), the Fort Stanton-Snowy River Cave National Conservation Area (BLM), the Valley of Fires Recreation Area (BLM), and White Sands National Park (NPS).

Three Rivers has been developed for day and overnight use. These developments include:

- 5 tent-camping pads
- 5 shelters for picnicking or dry RV/trailer camping
- 2 RV sites with hookups for water and electricity
- 1 group site with large picnic tables, grill, and trash receptacles
- 1 handicap-accessible site with a shelter and tent pad
- Restroom facility with flush toilets
- Potable water
- Visitor Center
- Site host compound with hookups and storage shed with laundry and refrigerator amenities.



*Figure 6: An overview of the Three Rivers campground*



*Figure 7: A view from the trail at Three Rivers*

### Season/Hours

- Open year-round
- **April to October**, the entrance gate is open from 8:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.
- **October to April**, the entrance gate is open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
- Non-campers must be out by 10:00 p.m. year-round.

The Las Cruces District Office takes a proactive approach in managing Three Rivers to meet the following, primary objectives:

1. Minimize conflicts with adjacent private landowners.
2. Minimize conflicts between recreation user groups.
3. Minimize conflicts with other resources and uses.
4. Provide for visitor safety and interpretive needs.
5. Provide for quality developed recreation experience compatible with other uses.
6. Provide for quality primitive and semi-primitive recreation experience in a manner compatible with other uses.



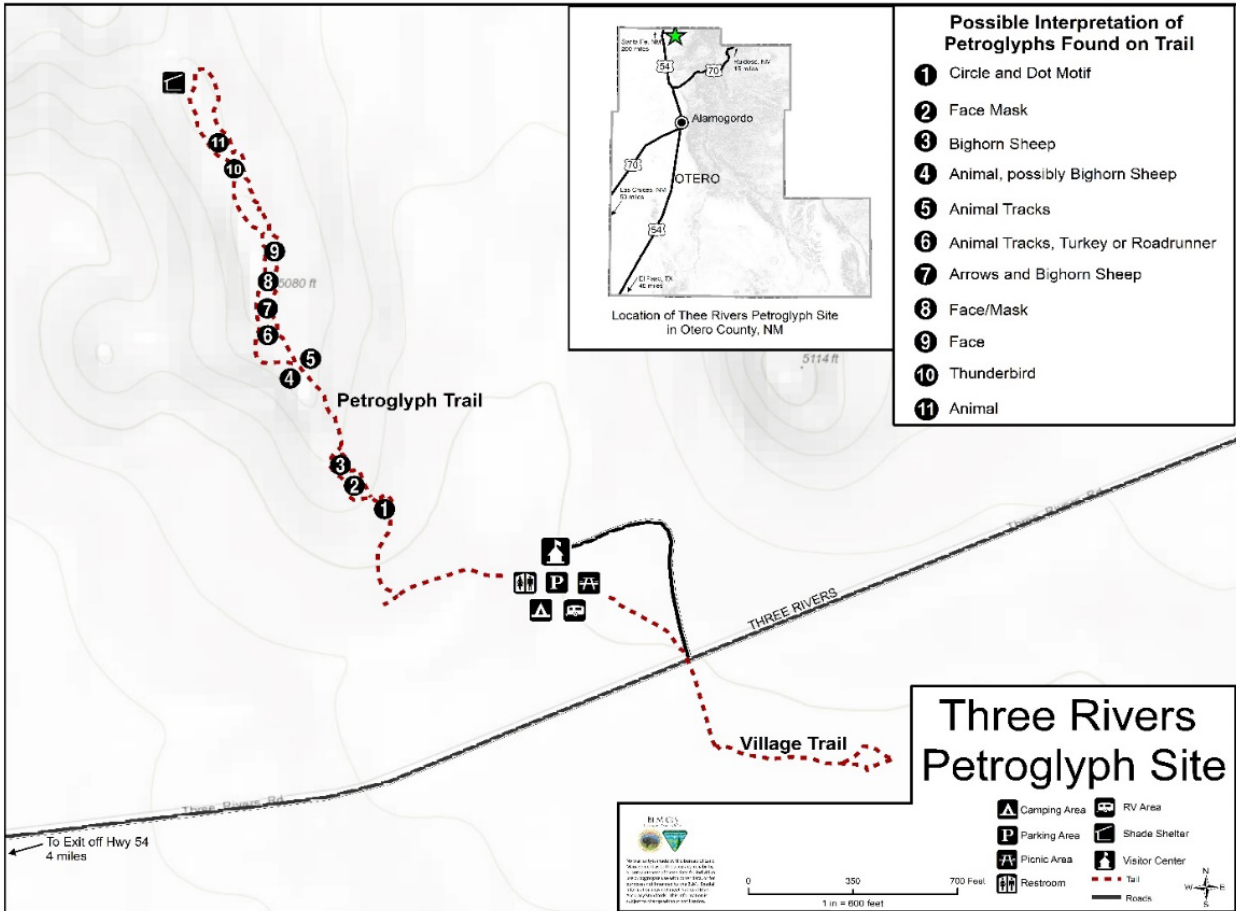


Figure 8: A trail map of Three Rivers

## Fees

Fees at Three Rivers were first implemented in 1996, updated in 2012 under the Appropriations Act and Recreational Fee Demonstration Program and have remained unchanged for the past 12 years while visitation has simultaneously grown 26%. The fee program is managed through Recreation Use Permits (RUPs) and associated fees, issued for short term recreation use of specialized facilities and services that meet FLREA guidelines. The fee is an expanded amenity fee covering specialized outdoor recreation sites and services that provide direct benefits to individuals and groups.

With amenities including access roads, tent, trailer, and RV areas, fee collection and security presence by site hosts and BLM staff, permanent trash receptacles, a flush toilet facility, and picnic tables and shelters, Three Rivers meets or exceeds all FLREA fee requirements and conditions for an expanded amenity fee, as shown below.



**Table 3: Three Rivers Amenities and Fees**

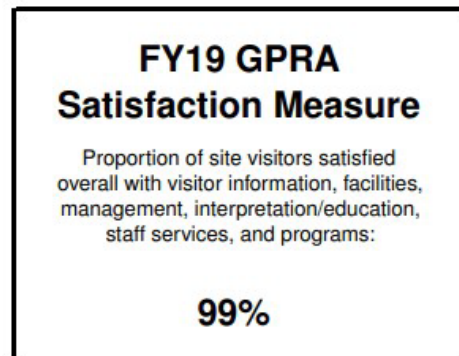
Number of Sites	Type/Use	Fee
10	Developed Sites: 5 Tent Pads and 5 Car-camping spots	\$7 per site per night
2	Developed Sites: RV with Hookups	\$18 per site per night
1	Group Site	\$50 reservation fee
General Admission	Day Use	\$5 per vehicle \$15 per bus
<p><b>Amenities include:</b> 11 developed campsites with picnic tables, fire rings, grills, trash receptacles and shade shelters (one is handicap accessible), 2 RV sites with water and electric hookups and grills, shade structures and trash cans; 1 group site with 3 picnic tables under a shelter and 2 grills and trash receptacles; a permanent restroom facility with flushable toilets; developed hiking trails; and site host living area and a visitor center.</p>		

### Visitor Satisfaction

In compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA, 1993), and to better understand and meet the needs of the recreating public, Visitor Surveys have been periodically conducted at BLM recreation fee sites. These surveys are developed to measure visitor satisfaction and BLM performance related to the Bureau’s goals of providing quality recreation experiences and ensuring the public receives fair value for their recreation activity.

The most recent Visitor Survey for Three Rivers was conducted in 2019. The results of the survey indicate that 94% of the visitors surveyed (n = 109) rated the overall quality of their visit as “Very Good”, and 5% as “Good”, leading to an overall satisfaction level of 99%.

Regarding fees, about one third (31%) of respondents thought that the fees charged were too low. The remainder (69%) thought the fees were just right. No respondents thought the fees are too high. Although the proportion of visitors who think the fees are too low dropped compared to a survey conducted before the last fee increase (see **Table 3**), it is still a significant proportion.



*Figure 9: Overall visitor satisfaction with Three Rivers from 2019 Visitor Survey.*

**Table 4: Three Rivers Visitor Survey: Fees**

Survey Year	% Saying fees were too low	% Saying fees were just right	% Saying fees were too high
2010 <i>[pre-fee increase]</i>	65%	35%	0%
2014	20%	80%	0%
2019	31%	69%	0%

*This table summarizes the results of the question, “How appropriate was the fee charged for this site/area?” over time. Note that the 2010 survey was conducted before the last fee increase.*

### Visitation and Visitor Use

The primary recreation activities at Three Rivers include viewing rock art, hiking, picnicking, and camping. The average group size is 2-3 people with an average stay of two days. Three Rivers is primarily used by out-of-state visitors as opposed to local or repeat visitors. Many of those who stop in have intentionally planned their visit. The site is also frequented by tour groups and nearby schools. From fall through spring, Three Rivers also sees a large volume of people traveling through with RV trailers to other locations and the site provides a convenient stopping point for travelers to stay overnight. Most visitation comes from outside of Otero County and New Mexico.

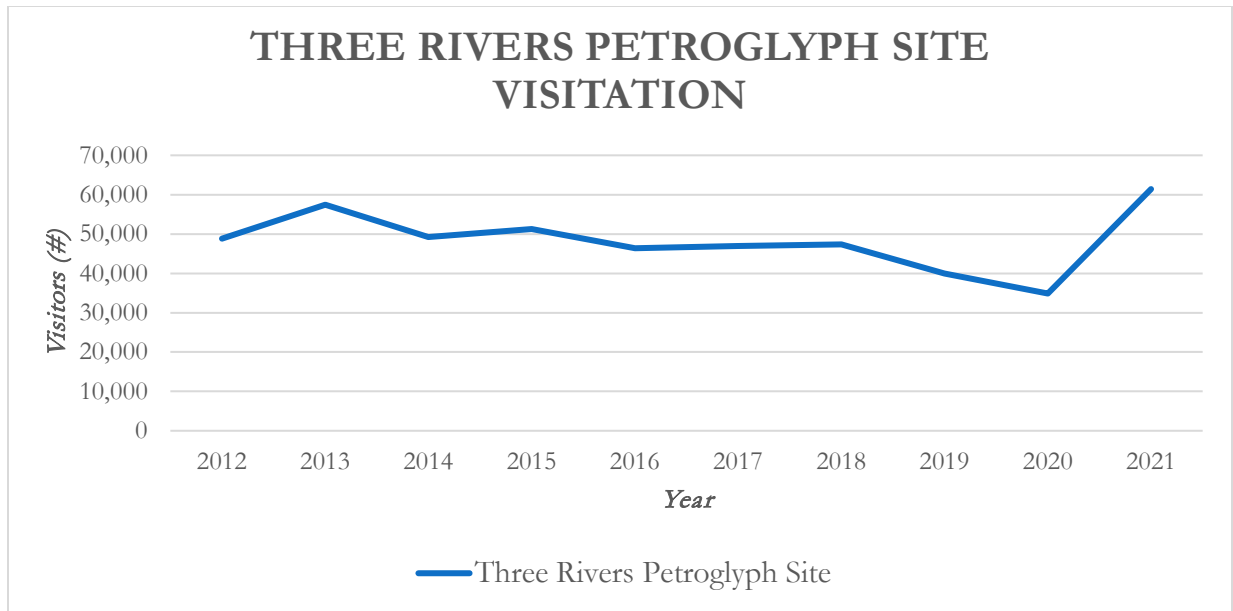
**Table 5: Three Rivers Petroglyph Site Visitation**

Fiscal Year	Visitation Figures
2012	48,801
2013	57,488
2014	49,249
2015	51,283
2016	46,377
2017	46,932
2018	47,402
2019	39,927
2020	34,876
2021	59,262
2022	59,444
2023	38,780
<b>Total:</b>	<b>579,821</b>
<b>Average:</b>	<b>48,319</b>
<b>Percent change from 2012 to 2021:</b>	<b>+26%</b>

*SOURCE: USDI, BLM Recreation Management Information Systems (RMIS) and Collection and Billing System Reports.*

*Please note in Table 4 that the drop in visitation in 2020 was due to closures of the site during the spring and early summer in accordance with the State of New Mexico Public Health orders during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The site was reopened in July of 2020 for day-use only.*

**Table 6:**



### Demographics at Three Rivers

The most recent Visitor Survey conducted by Washington State University in 2019<sup>1</sup> offers a demographic sample of Three Rivers visitors. The survey found:

- The division of sex of visitors was about 42% male and 58% female.
- The most common age of respondents was just between 61-70 years old. The most common age group was adults, though visitors from all ages were represented.
- The most common number of adult visitors was 1-2 per group with no children.
- Visitors came from 24 states across the country:
  - The most common location of respondents was Texas, followed by New Mexico.
  - There are more out-of-state than in-state visitors.
  - Out-of-state visitors most commonly came from Virginia, Arizona, Florida, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania.
  - New Mexico visitors came from 8 counties, with Otero being the most common.
- 9% of visitors surveyed identified as having a disability.

Demographics like race, ethnicity, gender identity, education, or income bracket were not surveyed.

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<sup>1</sup> [blm-THRI19.pdf \(wsu.edu\)](#)



Figure 10: Overview of demographics from Visitor Survey (2019).

## Indigenous, Native, and Tribal Access Rights

The lands under LCDO management in the Three Rivers area continue to be the traditional homeland for many Indigenous peoples. In prehistoric times, these lands were home to what archaeologists refer to as the Jornada Mogollon. Today, Indigenous people including Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, Isleta Pueblo, Mescalero Apache, White Mountain Apache, Kiowa, and the Comanche Indian Tribe and others continue to maintain strong cultural ties to Three Rivers.

Two pieces of federal regulations influence LCDO's action regarding Indigenous, Native, and tribal access rights. The **American Indian Religious Freedom Act** (1978) established the policy



of the Federal government “to protect and preserve for American Indians their inherent right of freedom to believe, express, and exercise the traditional religions of the American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, and Native Hawaiians, including, but not limited to, access to sites, use and possession of sacred objects, and the freedom to worship through ceremonials and traditional rites.” To this effect, **Executive Order 13007 for Indian Sacred Sites** directs federal agencies to accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Native American sacred sites by Native American religious practitioners and to avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites. According to Executive Order 13007, Indigenous nations have special rights of access to public lands granted to them via treaty, regulation, executive order, or legal statute.

Within the context of this business plan, LCDO currently upholds no special provisions outlined in treaties with federally recognized tribes that grant certain rights or privileges regarding access. However, there are still occasional instances wherein Indigenous groups may notify LCDO of their intent to carry out religious ceremonies on public lands or access certain sacred sites. While the public usually has unfettered access to anywhere on public lands, an Indigenous group may request that the public be restricted from said area to ensure the group's privacy. For example, a group may request that public visitors are restricted from Three Rivers for a day or evening to not disturb the practitioners. It should also be noted that Indigenous groups may be performing ceremonies on

BLM land without LCDO’s knowledge, as they are not required to notify the BLM, as is their right. Moreover, Indigenous groups have the right to collect plants and certain other natural materials on public lands without a BLM permit as the collection is typically for casual or religious use (compared to commercial use that would require a permit).



*Figure 12: A large geometric petroglyph at Three Rivers.*



*Figure 11: Volunteer site hosts stand by entrance to Three Rivers Petroglyph Site*

## Stakeholders and Partnerships

As part of its [Connecting with Communities Recreation Strategy](#), BLM seeks engagement and partnerships with local stakeholders to accomplish mutual objectives for public access and recreation. The BLM strongly believes that community partners must be engaged to have a successful recreation program. The BLM not only gains great volunteers, but also gains essential community attachment to a place. A community that is attached to a campground or trail system

is more likely to promote these places and take pride in their stewardship. The community benefits from tourism dollars associated with these sites, the skills that the BLM staff teaches area youth, and the extra finances directly tied to the assistance agreements, all of which are empowering for rural communities.

LCDO manages a site host program at Three Rivers. The cooperative agreement consists of, on average, \$9,750 per year for 2 site host couples to manage a diverse set of tasks that include visitor engagement and education, trash cleanup and site maintenance, fee collection, and rule enforcement.



*Figure 13: Conservation Legacy "Seeds of Success" interns help conserve native plants and seeds*

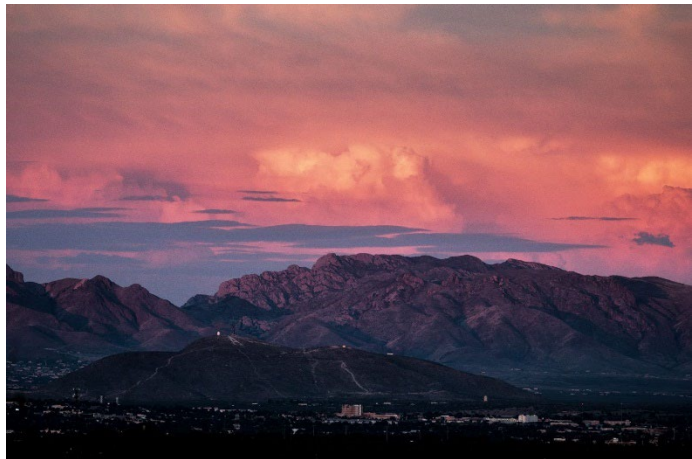
LCDO partners with [Conservation Legacy](#), a branch of AmeriCorps. The cooperative agreement consists of corps-style crews and individual placement interns who work on diverse tasks, including wilderness monitoring, AIM field work, GIS mapping, recreation planning, and interpretive education over the course of three months to one year. This program assists LCDO with staffing while offering young people valuable experience in a

federal land management agency. This program does not cost the LCDO but does offer numerous mutual benefits to the BLM and interns.

## FEE-FREE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Outside of the Three Rivers site, there is an abundance of free dispersed recreation opportunities for visitors to hike, mountain bike, hunt, camp, observe wildlife and drive off-highway vehicles.

On the outskirts of Las Cruces, the small, hump-backed **Tortugas Mountain** rises above the East Mesa to an elevation of 4,928 feet above sea level. Tortugas Mountain, or "Tortoise" Mountain, is named for its resemblance to a turtle (or several turtles) making their way across the desert when viewed from the south, though it is often called "A" Mountain for the New Mexico State University (NMSU) Aggies gigantic "A" etched on the west side of the mountain. Tortugas Mountain has long been used for mining, ranching, recreation, tribal ceremonies, and scientific studies. The structures visible on top are communication sites and astronomical observatories managed by NMSU. The eastern side of the Mountain (Monte Vista Parking Area)



*Figure 14: Tortugas "A" Mountain at sunset.*



is managed by the BLM and the western side (Sunset Parking Area) is managed by NMSU. Both entities recognize the many impacts being caused by increasing public use and have joined together to conserve and provide better public use facilities. The bike trails are used regularly by nearby residents for short but high-quality biking opportunities. The lower trails are a great place for beginners to the sport. As skills are developed, there are more technical routes available as well. Maps are posted at both parking lots.



*Figure 15: Hikers on the Continental Divide Trail in New Mexico.*

The **Continental Divide National Scenic Trail** provides for high quality, scenic, primitive hiking, camping, and horseback-riding, while conserving natural, historic, and cultural resources along the Continental Divide. Extending 3100 miles between Mexico and Canada, the trail snakes across landscapes primarily on public lands within 50 miles of the geographic feature. This National Scenic Trail was established in 1978 through the authority of the National Trails System Act (P.L. 90-543) and is one of the outstanding resources of the National Landscape Conservation System. Where the Trail crosses BLM lands in New Mexico the route does not ordinarily have a tread. Except where it follows ranch roads, the Trail is identified with line-of-sight signs or rock cairns. Equestrian facilities are intermittent and in various stages of development.

The **Gila Lower Box Canyon** is a true oasis in the desert, 20 miles north of Lordsburg, New Mexico. Since livestock were removed from the river canyon in 1990, a lush native community of cottonwood, willows, and other riparian and aquatic vegetation has re-established and flourished. The

area provides some of the best birding in New Mexico. Home to approximately 200 species, it has one of the highest bird diversities in the state. The area provides habitat to many rare and unusual birds including Bell's vireo, peregrine, bald eagle (in winter), golden eagle, black hawk, zone-tail hawk, gray hawk, yellow-billed cuckoo, Gila woodpecker, and Abert's towhee. The river provides opportunities for canoeing or rafting during spring runoff, hunting, and year-round fishing and camping. The river contains smallmouth bass and several species of catfish.



*Figure 16: The Gila River and a cottonwood grove below the Lower Box Canyon.*

The **Aden Hills Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area** encompasses approximately 8,700 acres of Chihuahuan Desert scrub environment characterized by low mesquite or creosote-stabilized coppice dunes, and a variety of dropseed grasses, yucca, and cacti. The Area was designated in 1993 as a place where off-road/cross-country travel would be allowed. The Area is used up to 2 times per year for an organized motorcycle race, which the BLM approves and monitors through Special Recreation Permits. The area is also a venue for periodic ATV/UTV training provided by the BLM, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, and the United States Geological Survey.

**Lake Valley Historic Townsite**, located west of Caballo Lake, offers a unique interpretive, historical, and cultural opportunity for visitors to visit a piece of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The mining town of Lake Valley was founded in 1878 after silver was discovered. Almost overnight, the once small frontier town blossomed into a major settlement with a population of 4,000 people. Today, silver mining has played out and all that remains is a ghost town. BLM has restored the schoolhouse and chapel. The restored schoolhouse provides a glimpse of what schooling in a rural area was like in



*Figure 18: A view of the buildings at Lake Valley.*



*Figure 17: The restored schoolhouse at Lake Valley.*

the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Other buildings in the town site have been stabilized to slow further deterioration. There also is a self-guided, interpretive walking tour.

Just beyond Lake Valley Historic Townsite, a meandering 48-mile drive on paved roads takes visitors through ranching and mining country and past the ruins of the 1880s mining town of Lake Valley. The **Lake Valley Back Country Byway** is nestled between the Mimbres and Caballo Mountains and the Cooke's Range in southwestern New Mexico and offers spectacular scenic views. Rich in history and scenery, the Byway offers an outstanding trip for travelers with an hour to spare.

History buffs can also visit the remains of **Fort Cummings**. Constructed in 1863 during President Lincoln's administration, the fort was built to battle against Mangas Coloradas' and Cochise's Chiricahua Apache warriors during the Apache Wars. Soldiers were stationed there until 1873.



### **The El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail**

preserves the "Royal Road of the Interior," the earliest Euro-American trade route in the United States. Linking Spain's colonial capital at Mexico City to its northern frontier in distant New Mexico, the route spans three centuries, two countries, and over 1,600 miles. Starting in Mexico City, the frontier wagon road brought settlers north into today's New Mexico. Once travelers crossed the arid lands above Ciudad Chihuahua, they followed the wide Rio Grande Valley north into New Mexico. Many of the historic parajes (campsites) and early settlements created by the Spanish colonists became today's modern cities in the Rio Grande Valley.



*Figure 19: El Camino Real Trail was part of Spain's Camino Real Intercontinental – a global network of roads and maritime routes*

In the United States, the trail stretched from the El Paso area in Texas, through Las Cruces, Socorro, Belen, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe to the San Juan Pueblo (Ohkay Owingeh), the first Spanish capital in New Mexico. In Mexico, the historic road runs through Chihuahua, Durango, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosí, Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, and Querétaro to Mexico City. Today, the trail corridor nurtures a lively exchange of ideas, customs, and language between Mexico and the American Southwest.

Today, visitors and recreationists can learn about the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro at numerous access points, including Yost Draw, Point of Rocks, and the Jornada del Muerto, where they can also hike, bike, ride horseback, watch wildlife, and enjoy the scenery of the far northern Chihuahuan Desert.

The **Butterfield Overland Trail National Historic Trail** commemorates the routes pioneered by John Butterfield and the Butterfield Overland Stage Company as they traveled over the "ox-box route" between the eastern termini of St. Louis, Missouri and Memphis, Tennessee and the western terminus of San Francisco, California. Stages traveled over this route between 1858 and 1861 and reduced the travel time of mail from 6 months to 6 weeks.

**Prehistoric Trackways National Monument** is located within the Robledo Mountains and features a major deposit of Paleozoic Era fossilized footprint mega trackways within approximately 5,300 acres. The trackways contain footprints of numerous amphibians, reptiles, and insects (including previously unknown species), plants, and petrified wood dating back 280 million years, which collectively provide new opportunities to understand animal behaviors and environments from a time predating the dinosaurs. The site contains one of the most scientifically significant Early Permian track sites in the world.

# 3 Financial and Fee Revenue Analyses

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This plan deploys two types of analyses: the Cost Recovery Method (discussed in **Section 3**) identifies funds collected at and allocated to the recreation areas compared with expenditures; and the Fair Market assessment (discussed in **Section 4**) that compares fees at Three Rivers with fees charged at similar public and private campgrounds in and around southwest New Mexico.

## REVENUES FROM THE RECREATION PROGRAM

Management of recreation sites is funded through two revenue streams: **appropriated funding** and **fee collections**. Fees collected at Three Rivers supplement appropriated funding and are used to maintain and enhance recreation facility services and operations. They are intended to help provide a desirable setting that will meet quality standards to enhance the visitor's experience and protect natural and cultural resources.

Amenities and upkeep at Three Rivers are maintained with Fee Account revenue from recreation fees paid by visitors. **Table 8: Three Rivers Petroglyph Site Cost Recovery** on page 27 displays fee revenues since 2016.

### Fee Collection, Enforcement, and Compliance

Fee collection at Three Rivers is managed through the **Recreation Use Permit (RUP) program**. All vehicles entering the recreation site are required to obtain an RUP for day-use. The RUP covers both Standard and Expanded Amenity Fees and differ according to the visitor's use of the recreation sites. Visitors using an annual pass are exempt from paying certain fees but still fill out a RUP, which allows LCDO to track visitation. Visitors purchase RUPs at self-service stations located near the entrance. All passes must either be displayed on the campsite post or be visible in a vehicle's front window.

User fees are collected regularly by staff from the "iron rangers" where visitors submit RUP envelopes. Iron rangers use an inner lockbox system, so cash is not handled in the field. These inner lockboxes are transported to a secure location where they are sorted, opened, and revenues are counted, then deposited, in the presence of more than one staff person in accordance with BLM fee collection policies as described in Washington Office Instruction Memorandum 2006-211 (I).

Payment of Standard and Expanded Amenity Fees via the RUP program is enforced through the presence of volunteer campground hosts and by a rotation of BLM employees that patrol the sites. If problems arise, local, state, or BLM law enforcement are contacted.

Fee compliance is positively affected by several factors, including amenities perceived to offer value and BLM presence on site by Park Rangers, volunteers, or site hosts. However, fee compliance is imperfect at BLM sites, as some visitors can fail to comply with fee requirements. Failure to comply with fee requirements can result in a warning ticket from BLM employees or volunteers. Fee compliance estimates are currently unknown.

## Fee Discounts

LCDO upholds various opportunities for discounted or fee-free recreation at fee sites through the America the Beautiful Pass; the Las Cruces District Office pass; and fee-free holidays and events. These opportunities are discussed below.

### *America the Beautiful Interagency Pass*

FLREA established an interagency National pass known as the **America the Beautiful – The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass**. The America the Beautiful (ATB) Pass took the place of the popular Golden Eagle, Age, and Access Passports in 2007, although existing Golden Passports will continue to be honored until expired, lost, or stolen.

Any of the seven types of ATB Passes provide the bearer full coverage of standard day use fees at fee sites on public lands, which apply at the LCDO to Three Rivers, Aguirre Spring, and Dripping Springs.

**Table 7: America the Beautiful Pass: Types and Benefits**

Type	Who Can Use	Cost and Timeframe	Benefits
<b>Annual</b>	Anyone can purchase	\$80, annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Waives day use fees for public lands</li> <li>✓ May be jointly owned by 2 people</li> <li>✓ Covers fees for passholder(s) at per person fee sites and for 1 car at per car fee sites</li> <li>✓ NPS and some FWS sites offer upgrades from entrance receipts and park-specific annual passes to ATB.</li> <li>✗ Does not waive expanded amenity fees such as camping or group sites</li> <li>✗ Cannot be used by people other than passholder(s)</li> </ul>
<b>Military Lifetime</b>	Military veterans and Gold Star Families	Free, lifetime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Waives day use fees for public lands</li> <li>✓ Waives fees for passholder at per-person fee sites and for 1 car at per-car fee sites</li> <li>✗ Does not waive expanded amenity fees such as camping or group sites</li> <li>✗ Cannot be used by people other than passholder</li> </ul>
<b>Military</b>	Current U.S. Military personnel and their dependents with specific documentation	Free, annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Waives day use fees for public lands</li> <li>✓ Waives fees for passholder at per-person fee sites and for 1 car at per-car fee sites</li> <li>✗ Does not waive expanded amenity fees such as camping or group sites</li> <li>✗ Cannot be used by people other than passholder</li> </ul>

<b>4<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	U.S. 4 <sup>th</sup> graders for duration of 4 <sup>th</sup> grade year	Free with <u>voucher</u> , annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Waives day use fees for public lands</li> <li>✓ Waives fees for passholder at per-person fee sites and for 1 car at per-car fee sites</li> <li>✗ Does not waive expanded amenity fees such as camping or group sites</li> <li>✗ Cannot be used by people other than passholder</li> </ul>
<b>Senior</b>	Any U.S. citizen or permanent resident 62 and older	\$20, annual \$80, lifetime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Waives day use fees for public lands</li> <li>✓ Waives fee for passholder and up to 3 additional adults (w/ passholder present)</li> <li>✓ Some discounts for overnight camping on individual sites, guided tours, and non-optional transportation (valid only for passholder) – <i>contact specific sites to verify discounts</i></li> <li>✓ Annual passes may be exchanged for a lifetime pass; seniors may present up to 4 annual passes and/or pay the difference between annual and lifetime pass</li> <li>✗ Cannot be purchased by non-permanent U.S. residents (i.e., “snowbirds”)</li> </ul>
<b>Access</b>	U.S. citizens or permanent residents with documentation of permanent disability	Free, lifetime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Waives day use fees for public lands</li> <li>✓ Waives fee for passholder and up to 3 additional adults (w/ passholder present)</li> <li>✓ Some discounts for overnight camping on individual sites, guided tours, and non-optional transportation (valid only for passholder) – <i>contact specific sites to verify discounts</i></li> </ul>
<b>Volunteer</b>	Anyone with 250+ hours of volunteer service on public lands	Free, annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Waives day use fees for public lands</li> <li>✓ Waives fees for passholder at per-person fee sites and for 1 car at per-car fee sites</li> <li>✗ Does not waive expanded amenity fees such as camping or group sites</li> <li>✗ Cannot be used by people other than passholder</li> </ul>

**Key components to remember about the ATB Pass:**

- The ATB pass waives standard amenity day use fees at sites managed by six federal agencies: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service (USDA-FS), and National Park Service (NPS).
- The ATB Pass does not cover expanded amenity fees charged for parking, camping, tours, boat launches, or group sites (excepting Senior and Access Passes; see **Table 7** for specifics).
- Not all federal recreation agencies participate in the program; for example, much of the Bureau of Reclamation lands are managed by nonfederal partners. **Contact sites directly to ensure the America the Beautiful Pass is accepted there.**



- Visitors must present the actual pass for use, not a copy or electronic version or any other documentation such as confirmation emails, versions saved to apps like Google or Apple wallets, purchase receipts, or hangtags.

It is important to note that with LCDO's proximity to Fort Bliss and White Sands Missile Range, many active-duty military members frequent the recreation fee sites. With the ATB Pass that waives standard amenity fees for military personnel, Three Rivers experiences high rates of fee-free entrance, thus losing those revenues.

### *Las Cruces District Pass*

To accommodate frequent visitors and assist those on limited incomes, the LCDO offers a **Las Cruces District Pass** that is honored at Three Rivers, Aguirre Spring Recreation Area, and Dripping Springs Natural Area. This annual pass is currently sold for \$30 and waives fees for one car at the site. This pass is a great value for local community members who regularly visit these sites. LCDO also maintains free developed recreation opportunities that provide miles of hiking, biking, OHV, and equestrian trail use, dispersed camping, and rock climbing.

### *Fee-Free Holidays and Events*

Fee-free days are where standard amenity fees are waived. These days are usually in conjunction with federal holidays or anniversaries related to public lands and can include Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President's Day, Juneteenth, Great American Outdoors Day, National Public Lands Day, and Veterans Day.<sup>2</sup>

LCDO also waives group site fees on a case-by-case basis for school and youth groups, crews, organizational groups conducting business, and BLM educational events to encourage environmental education on public lands.

## **COST RECOVERY FOR THE RECREATION PROGRAM**

### **Costs for the Recreation Program**

Management of LCDO sites is funded through **appropriated funding** and **fee collections**.

**Fee collections** at Three Rivers contribute to fee accounts for the Recreation Fee Account (L1232) and brought in \$21,632 in the 2022 fiscal year. These revenues are used primarily to cover operating costs of the site and pay for basic maintenance and repairs of site infrastructure, septic pumping and water system testing, vandalism cleanup and repairs, volunteer stipends and reimbursements, grounds keeping, roadway repairs, monsoon cleanup, and the purchasing of supplies to accomplish these tasks. The BLM's National Operations Center (NOC) covers the costs of utilities at Three Rivers, which are electricity and propane.

Fee collections can be carried over from year to year, thereby providing needed funds to address emergency circumstances and to fund improvement projects that require additional revenues. Fees collected at recreation sites supplement appropriated funding and are used to maintain and enhance recreation facility services and operations. They are intended to help provide a desirable setting

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<sup>2</sup> [Bureau of Land Management Fee-Free Days for 2021 | Bureau of Land Management \(blm.gov\)](#)

that will meet quality standards to enhance the visitor's experience and protect natural and cultural resources.

Fee collection revenue does not cover the labor costs associated with the staff that manages the site. These costs are borne by **appropriated funds**. These include the proportional salaries of a GS-11 Outdoor Recreation Planner, a GS-9 Park Ranger, a GS-9 Volunteer Coordinator, a GS-11 Archaeologist, a GS-11 Facilities Manager, and a GS-11 Law Enforcement Officer and the intermittent salaries of the force account crew and other BLM staff. Appropriated funds also cover the costs associated with administering the fee collection program and provide some financial assistance for executing significant capital improvement projects. These funds are not included in this business plan, as they do not relate to direct revenues or expenditures for recreation fee sites.

## Cost Recovery

From 2016 through 2023, a combination of inflation and increased visitation has contributed to a commensurate increase in operating costs for Three Rivers. This includes daily maintenance, septic services, supplies, security, volunteer stipends, etc., the increased costs associated with the replacement of aging/defunct infrastructure such as buildings, roads, shelters, fencing, parking areas, camp-host site/facilities, etc., and cleanups from severe weather, monsoons and vandalism. Furthermore, the LCDO has recently filled three Outdoor Recreation Planner positions that were vacant for most of the 2021 fiscal year, this affected how much work was completed and costs at the Three Rivers site.

Visitor use at the site continues to increase steadily, thus requiring a commensurate outlay for maintenance, improvements, security, and visitor information. It should be noted from 2020 to 2021 that the boom in outdoor recreation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased visitation and the resulting maintenance at Three Rivers. Overall fee site visitation has grown 26% from 2016 to present.

Concurrently, the cost of the described maintenance, labor and goods required at the site has risen 14% since 2012, when the fees were first introduced, and are predicted to grow another 26% by 2030, eroding the purchasing power of a static recreation fee.

Ideally, fees collected at the site should be enough to sustain the day-to-day operation and upkeep of the site, plus a surplus that can be saved up to supplement significant capital improvement projects. Currently, maintenance costs and expenditures compete with LCDO's ability to provide management for many of fee-free recreation sites across the district.

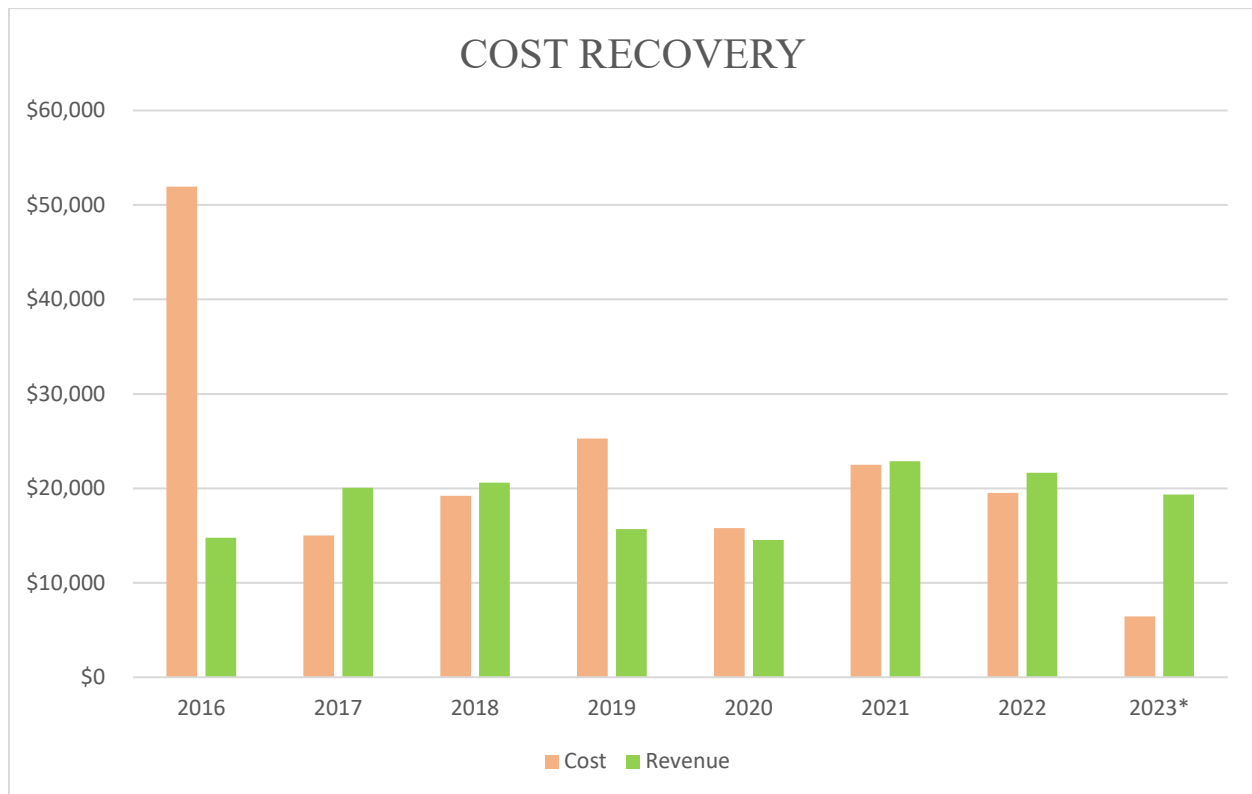
As shown in **Table 8**, regular annual costs at Three Rivers are outstripping revenue, requiring the difference to be covered by appropriated funds shared across the entire recreation program. An increase in fees, and commensurate increase in revenue, is necessary to bring the management of Three Rivers back to a self-sustaining level.

**Table 8: Three Rivers Petroglyph Site Cost Recovery**

Fiscal Year	Costs	Revenue	Difference
2016	\$51,941	\$14,778	-\$37,163
2017	\$14,997	\$20,047	\$5,050
2018	\$19,197	\$20,599	\$1,402
2019	\$25,265	\$15,703	-\$9,562
2020	\$15,805	\$14,537	-\$1,268
2021	\$22,495	\$22,859	-\$364
2022	\$19,526	\$21,633	\$2,107
2023*	\$6,438	\$19,343	\$12,905
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$175,664</b>	<b>\$149,499</b>	<b>-\$26,165</b>
<b>Average:</b>	<b>\$21,958</b>	<b>\$18,687</b>	<b>-\$3,271</b>

*Comparison between annual costs and revenues collected at Three Rivers. Note that “costs” include the cost of regular maintenance plus site host reimbursements. Revenues are RUP fees collected at Three Rivers. Note: Expenditures could only be tallied comprehensively dating back to 2016.*

**Table 9:**



As **Table 8** and **9** show, Three Rivers’ expenditures are outstripping revenue for regular maintenance costs and expenditures. It should be noted that some years revenue outstrips costs, but since it was made a fee site, it has run a deficit of \$26,165. This leaves no financial cushion for larger expenditures such as upgrades to facilities and recreation sites nor for unexpected expenses like cleanup for weather, vandalism, and inclement events.

# 4 Market Values

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## ASSESSING FAIR MARKET VALUE OF THREE RIVERS PETROGLYPH SITE

This business plan uses a Fair Market Value Assessment to analyze recreation fee sites across the region with a level of development comparable to that of the Three Rivers Petroglyph Site (i.e., developed sites with amenities such as picnic tables and tent pads, and not including sites with amenities and services that Three Rivers does not offer, such as lodging, showers, or Wi-Fi) administered by federal and state land management agencies as well as private sites.

The analysis demonstrates that Three Rivers offers excellent recreation opportunities at a very reasonable cost.

*Note:* Several similar sites in the region that were featured in the 2012 business plan's Fair Market Value Assessment have not since updated their fees but have plans to do so soon. As the fees at these sites are anachronistically low, they are not included in the assessment.

### Comparable Fee Site Analysis

**Table 10** below compares fees at other recreation fee sites proximate to the Las Cruces District (public and private), as well as BLM-wide, with levels of development comparable to Three Rivers. The table compares Standard and Expanded Amenity Fees; Additional Expanded Amenity Fees are compared in **Table 11** on page 29.

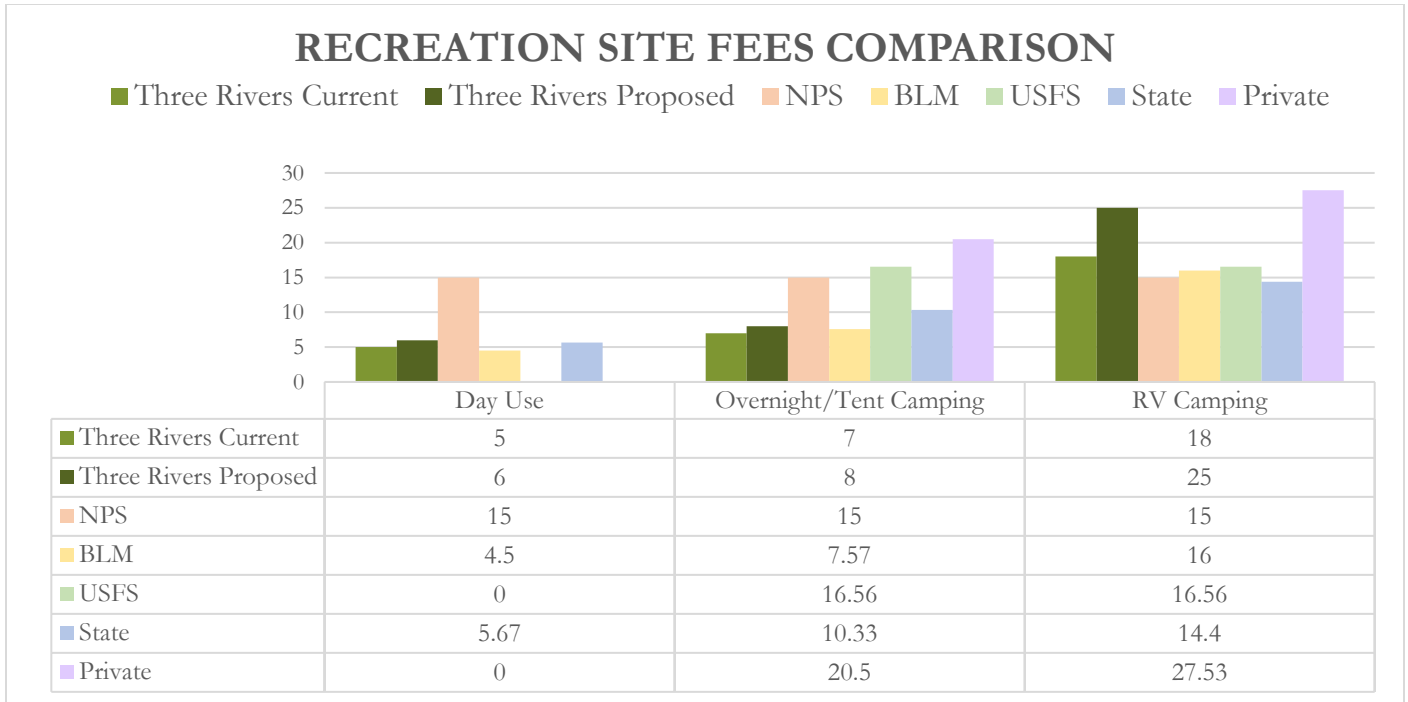
As the tables show, private sites are significantly more expensive than public sites but often offer more services and amenities. Day use fees are not included for public areas, as day use fees are often not distinct from camping fees. RV sites are included for their site fee with hookups.

Proposed fee figures still offer an excellent recreation value, particularly compared with NPS and USFS sites. While proposed fee figures for RVs are high compared to market values, Three Rivers offers excellent amenities including picnic tables, pavilions, grills and fire pits, pit toilets, parking, and hookups for water and electric which make Three Rivers' RV sites an excellent recreation value at \$25 per night, especially compared with private sites' average of \$27.5 per night.

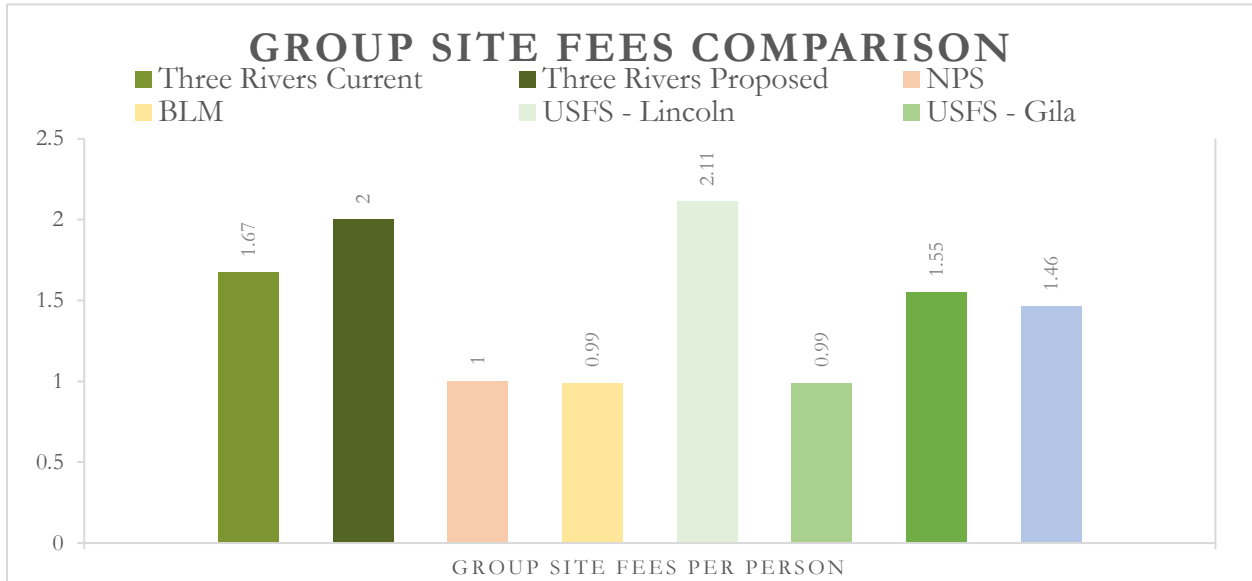
The appendix on page 41 offers an expansion of the sites used in comparison to Three Rivers Petroglyph Site.



**Table 10:**



**Table 11:**



The figure below compares group site fees at other public recreation fee sites in the Las Cruces District, as well as BLM-wide, comparing Additional Expanded Amenity Fees. These figures are calculated at cost per person for maximum capacity at the group site. Private sites are not included, as private campgrounds do not offer group site recreation comparable to public sites; for example, KOA campgrounds set maximums at 8 people, compared to Three Rivers’ 30 people.

As displayed in **Table 10**, Three Rivers’ proposed fees offer a higher though still cost-effective group site recreation opportunity per person. The amenities present at Three Rivers’ group site, including picnic tables, pavilions, grills and fire pits, pit toilets, and parking, as well as tent pads, still make Three Rivers’ group site an excellent recreational value at \$2 per person.

Furthermore, Three Rivers offers group recreation at a very reasonable cost, as group site fees are a one-time reservation fee; additional daily fees are Standard Amenity Fees of \$5 for day use and/or Expanded Amenity Fee of \$7 for overnight camping. In comparison, USFS group sites charge group fees (which range up to \$125 for 70 recreationists) per night.

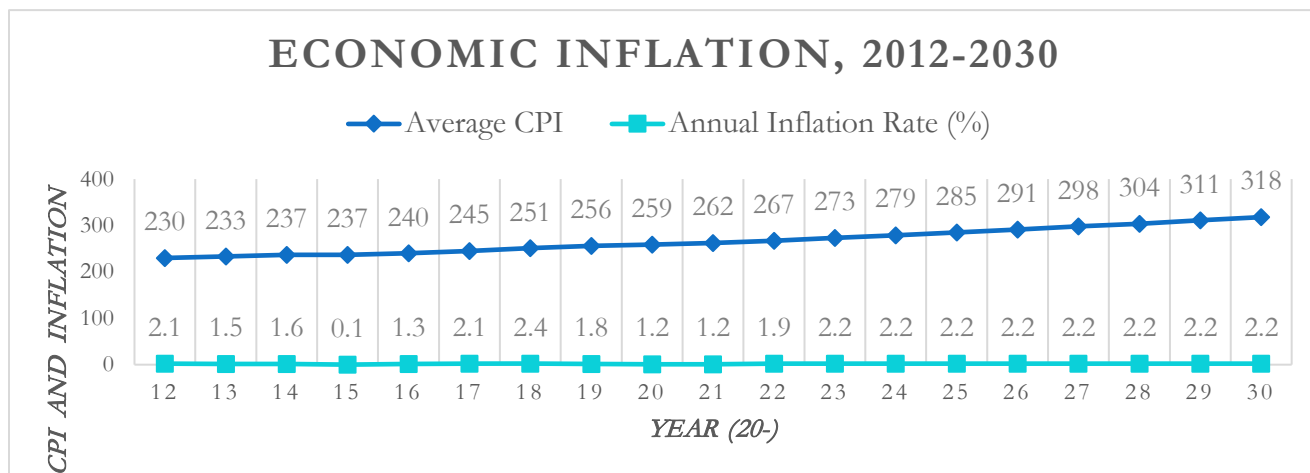
**Three Rivers’ group site will operate according to an official 30-person capacity.** This number is based on the available facilities at group sites.

### Inflation and Consumer Price Index

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics measures change in the price level of a market bracket of consumer goods and services over time. Since Three Rivers’ most recent fee increase in 2012, the CPI has increased 14%. Moreover, it is projected to rise an additional 21% by 2030, amounting to an overall 35% increase since the last fee increase and through the upcoming fee authority period.

FLREA provides agencies with continually updated recreation fee authority, meaning a proposed fee increase should account for continual inflation and decreasing purchasing power of fees established during the prior authority period. The chart below displays CPI increase according to the rate of inflation since 2012 (sourced from BLS) and projected into 2030 (sourced from CBO). By projecting CPI and inflation rates into 2030, this business plan accounts for future economic changes and prepares Three Rivers to be insulated for those changes within the 10-year FLREA fee authority period.

**Table 12:**



SOURCES: CPI Inflation Calculator / BLS<sup>3</sup>; An Update to the Economic Outlook / CBO<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation\\_calculator.htm](https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/56465>

According to the BLS and the CBO, inflation will rise by 35% from 2012 to 2030. Already, inflation has risen 14% since the most recent fee increase in 2012. LCDO is proposing an overall fee increase of approximately 35%, accounting for this change in purchasing power of a static recreation fee.

The table below shows what Three Rivers fees would be by 2021 and 2030 if they rose with inflation, as well as the proposed fee increase. Proposed fee increases track with both the comparable market values at similar sites and with current and projected rates of inflation. These changes are proposed to begin in late summer or early fall of 2024.

**Table 13: Current and Proposed Fees, Adjusted for Inflation.**

Service	2012 Fee	Fees Adjusted for Inflation (2012 – 2021)	Fees Adjusted for Inflation (2012 – 2030)	Fees Proposed (2024 – Future)
Day Use	\$5.00	\$6.13	\$6.92	\$7.00
Tour Bus	\$15.00	\$18.39	\$20.75	\$20.00
Camping	\$7.00	\$8.58	\$9.68	\$10.00
RV Camping	\$18.00	\$22.07	\$24.90	\$25.00
Group Site	\$50.00	\$61.31	\$69.18	\$60.00

## 5 Expanding Recreation Fees

According to an analysis of Fair Market Value, Consumer Price Index inflation, and visitation growth, this business plan proposes a fee raise of approximately 35% to account for greater cost recovery.

As discussed, fees at Three Rivers have not been raised since 2012 and the current rate is not sufficient to keep up with the costs associated with managing and operating the recreation site. Moreover, Three Rivers experiences high rates of fee-free entrance due to a high population of military personnel, resulting in a loss of potential visitation revenue.

The costs of goods, labor, and services have increased 13% since 2012 and are predicted to grow another 21% by 2030, thus eroding the purchasing power of a static recreation fee. Visitation has swelled 26% at Three Rivers, requiring higher levels of investment via maintenance, staffing and security, etc.

Fee increases of approximately 35% prepares Three Rivers to be insulated for continued visitation growth, continual inflation, and rising costs of management and maintenance within the upcoming 10-year FLREA fee authority period.

## ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

### *Managing for Positive Recreation Program Results*

The goal of LCDO's recreation program is to meet increasing demand for outdoor recreation services, including camping, hiking, biking, and visiting natural and cultural heritage sites. To meet the demand, LCDO aims to increase recreation revenues by managing for positive results for the following three groups: BLM recreationists (individual and group), the local community, and the BLM. Recreation at BLM sites provide a business base for many local entrepreneurs, as the sites bring customers directly to the local community.

The recreationists benefit by having:

- 1) Low-cost recreation sites accessible and available for their use
- 2) improved public lands facilities (i.e., clean toilets, paved roads) and amenities (i.e., footrails, interpretive education, and signage)
- 3) outstanding and reliable nature-based recreation opportunities, providing on-site experiences (i.e., exercise, solitude, adventure, and developing skills) and personal benefits (i.e., fitness, personal health, and self-confidence)
- 4) a focused opportunity to build relationships with family, groups, and fellow recreationists as well as foster interest and stewardship for their shared public lands and the area's rich natural, cultural, and historical characteristics.



*Figure 19: A recreationist reads the trail sign at Three Rivers.*

The local community benefits by developing:

- 1) improved services and quality of life through facility development and resource protection
- 2) business opportunities in the outdoor recreation sector (i.e., guide services, gear stores), the hospitality sector (i.e., restaurants, hotels), and the retail sector (i.e., outfitter stores, souvenir merchandise)
- 3) jobs for its citizens and tax revenues for local government
- 4) a heightened sense of community pride in their shared natural and cultural landmarks



The BLM benefits by:

- 1) meeting land management goals, including protection of natural and cultural resources.
- 2) partnering with recreationists as stewards of the public lands
- 3) providing for a more stable (and hence knowledgeable) BLM work force
- 4) lowering costs by developing improved business management systems
- 5) obtaining revenues to provide for program management and facilities enhancement.
- 6) reducing negative impacts to the environment by containing impacts to developed areas and thus managing impacts properly (i.e., waste, fire, garbage)

## Anticipated Results of Expanding Recreation Fees

**Overall, impacts from changing fees include:**

- Generation of revenue to be used for labor and operational needs.
- Ensure adequate staff to halt resource damage and provide the level of service the public has come to expect.
- Improve recreational opportunities and the quality of the experience and public satisfaction for visitors.
- Ability to continue operations despite potential increase of costs of goods, labor, and/or services.
- Greater fee equality with comparable private recreation sites.
- Greater self-sufficiency for management of the recreation site.

Return visitors may find it off-putting that they are now required to pay a higher fee with the change to per person.

- Potential socio-economic impacts to low-income or minority populations.
  - Low-income populations do not make up a significant portion of OMPDNM visitors.
  - Las Cruces District Pass can help offset potential impacts of recreation fees.

### *Impacts to Recreational Users*

Recreational users may be initially disappointed with the decision to expand recreation fees, as this would force them to spend more to recreate at Three Rivers.

Still, with increased demand for public land recreation, the BLM will need to improve sites to meet demand and to maintain health and human safety. Should fees be raised, services could continue to be offered in the recreation program. In addition, revenues could be used to gradually improve infrastructure as part of routine upgrades and long-term projects, such as expanding the Three Rivers interpretive program at the Visitor Center and adding RV amenities like dumping stations.

### *Impacts to the Local Economy*

Otero County depends on tourism. Its location presents a crossroads between diverse recreation opportunities across the BLM, NPS, and USFS. Three Rivers' 26% increase in visitation brings increased expenditures from tourism to the Otero County economy. Local businesses benefit from increased area visitation as visitors are likely to make purchases at those local business.

BLM sites offer important low-cost recreation. Many tourists prefer to camp at public campgrounds, but with many local Forest Service campgrounds being closed between October and May, regional capacity can be low. Thus, campers rely on BLM campgrounds. Many tourists would be unable to come to Three Rivers if not for the availability of BLM campgrounds and dispersed camping opportunities. This is also true for group site campers, as many low-income and youth groups cannot afford to stay in motels. Recreation is important to the local economy to keep site infrastructure in good condition, and to service and clean facilities at a high standard.



*Figure 20: Proper management allows BLM to preserve Three Rivers' cultural and environmental resources.*

### *Impacts to the Environment*

Amenity fees enable LCDO to operate the recreation program. Developed sites reduce negative impacts to resources associated with higher levels of visitation. By providing developed recreation sites for visitors, the BLM can better contain impacts to these smaller areas. Associated recreation impacts, including waste, fire, and garbage, are more limited to developed recreation areas and allow impacts to be managed more efficiently.

### *Socioeconomic Impacts, including Low-Income Populations*

In line with the Department of Interior's [Environmental Justice Strategic Plan](#), LCDO seeks to meet the needs of underserved communities (minorities and low-income populations) by reducing disparate environmental burdens, removing barriers to participation in decision-making, and increasing access to environmental benefits that help make BLM lands and communities safe, vibrant, and healthy for all those who live, work, and recreate there.

Fees and fee increases can pose a hardship to those with lower incomes as well as decrease visitor use and reduce compliance in paying fees. Increasing fees may force those who chose not to pay or cannot pay to pursue recreation opportunities on other public lands where fees are not required.

To reduce the impact of fees at several BLM sites, LCDO offers an Annual Pass for \$30 that is honored at Three Rivers Petroglyph Site, Aguirre Spring Recreation Area, and Dripping Springs Natural Area. With a handful of visits to fee sites, the Annual Pass pays for itself.



*Figure 21: A Three Rivers petroglyph in the evening.*

BLM campgrounds also offer a very low-cost alternative to staying in a hotel in nearby Alamogordo or Cloudcroft where prices can range from \$40 to \$250 per room per night. This low-cost alternative is particularly important at the group sites, where groups can enjoy the amenities and recreation opportunities of the Las Cruces District at a low lump sum.

Fees aside, there remains an extensive matrix of fee-free public lands throughout the region that provide for a wide variety of undeveloped, dispersed, and exciting

outdoor recreation opportunities. Overall, a modest fee increase is not predicted to significantly impact lower-income communities.

## Anticipated Results of Not Expanding Recreation Fees

Overall, impacts from not changing fees include:

- Loss of potential revenue in L1232 funds to augment funds for labor and operational costs.
- Potential environmental degradation of resources.
- Potential degradation of recreation experience and public satisfaction for current and new visitors with less funding available for aging facilities and not enough personnel to work the area.
- Costs of goods, labor, and services increase at a faster rate than fee revenue projections making it more difficult for BLM to purchase resources it needs to maintain Three Rivers.
- Favorable socio-economic impacts to low-income or minority populations.

### *Impacts to Recreational Users*

Recreational users may benefit in the short-term from not increasing recreation fees, as they would not pay higher sums to recreate at Three Rivers.

With this business plan, the BLM seeks to service recreationists, the local economy, and the BLM in the long-term. Replace costs for the infrastructure at Three Rivers will continue to increase, given current trends. The requested fee increase would be partially used to cover replacement costs of existing infrastructure. A failure to raise the recreation fee would mean that aging infrastructure would not be replaced in a timely manner to maintain site quality. In addition, a failure to raise recreation fees would mean improvements to recreation sites, such as expansions to the visitor center, adding RV site amenities, upgrading signage, repairing trails, and expanding developed recreation opportunities would not be added to the existing infrastructure.

### *Impacts to Local Economy*

Not raising recreation fees could erode services like cleaning and site host presence at sites. This would eventually impact the recreation sector of the Otero County economy, resulting in decreased visitation to BLM sites. Visitation dollars are entirely discretionary; people can spend their vacation dollars at other locations if they find their experience on BLM to be underwhelming or



unsatisfactory. Should people be less likely to recreate at BLM sites because of poor or unmaintained facilities, the Otero County economy would suffer.

### *Impacts to the Environment*

LCDO developed recreation sites mitigate the negative impacts to the environment resulting from unrestrained dispersed use. Dispersed use can result in harmful impacts to wildlife, riparian resources, wilderness areas, cultural resources, and enjoyment by other recreation visitors. Failure to maintain the recreation program would result in negative impacts to the environment. For example, should the BLM be unable to regularly service toilets (all routine cleaning costs are paid by the LCDO Fee Account), people would be less likely to



*Figure 22: The Lower Gila Box Canyon with a spring poppy bloom above the Gila River – an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and Critical Habitat for numerous animal species.*

utilize developed toilet facilities and potentially damage natural or cultural resources by leaving human waste and trash on the land. Additionally, recreation maintenance staff (funded almost entirely by fees) conduct site cleanup and weed control. Not increasing fees would mean such work would be reduced, resulting in negative impacts to the environment. Three Rivers is unique for its cultural resources, which are fragile and irreplaceable. Should recreation facilities erode, Three Rivers' petroglyphs and prehistoric resources may suffer.

### *Socioeconomic Impacts, including Low-Income Populations*

Overall, not expanding recreation would likely benefit low-income populations, as they would not have to pay higher fees for Three Rivers.

However, the presence of lower fees may mean recreationists are less likely to purchase a Las Cruces District Pass. In only a handful of visits to Three Rivers, Aguirre Spring Recreation Area, and Dripping Springs Natural Area, day use fees could outweigh the one-time cost of the Las Cruces District Pass, resulting in recreationists potentially paying more for recreation in the long run.

Furthermore, some group site reservations are held by groups looking for an inexpensive vacation. Should fee accounts erode such that group sites could not be maintained or serviced, the BLM might be forced to curtail group site opportunities. Failure to offer these low-cost group sites to youth groups, scout groups, family groups, and other such assemblages could have negative impacts on lower-income populations.



# PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE EXPENDITURES AND PLANS

## Development Plans for Three Rivers

LCDO is proposing to broadly enhance recreational amenities at Three Rivers using L1232 dollars. LCDO plans to initiate these development plans as funds become available.

Desired developments include adding additional RV sites with utility hookups and shade structures, updating the water system, and updating all interpretive exhibits inside the Visitor Center. Development would be paid for through L1232 fee funds and appropriated L1220 funds and would likely take several years to complete.

Currently, our RV campsites with hookups are the most used and in demand amenities at Three Rivers. Additional RV sites have been the most requested items from public interactions between visitors and our site hosts. Additionally, the water system at Three Rivers needs updating. The water in the area is ‘hard’ with large mineral material, which causes excessive wear and tear and additional maintenance costs to keep it running. By updating the system and including a water-softener, maintenance costs will drop and the water available to visitors will be of higher quality.

To improve the visitor experience and provide additional opportunities to students and educational groups, we hope to significantly upgrade the interpretive materials found in the visitor center at Three Rivers in addition to the signage and kiosks around the site. These additions would better explain the history and significance of the site and allow for a more developed educational experience for student groups that frequent the site.

These development plans present significant expenditures to LCDO, and therefore further reinforce the need to raise fees. The installation of new infrastructure and enhancement of the recreation program would benefit recreationists, the local economy, and the environment. An increase in fees would allow the BLM more capacity to provide labor and materials for these proposed enhancements. These plans adhere to the Mimbres Resource Management Plan (1993) ([DOI-BLM-NM-L000-1993-001-RMP-EIS](#)) objective to “enhance opportunities for developed recreation on public land. The recreation program identifies areas with recreational values and enhances the public’s knowledge and uses of those areas for recreational values and enhances the public’s knowledge and uses of those areas for recreational purposes” (pg.2-47).

**Table 14: Future Project Estimated Costs**

Projects	Cost
RV sites ( <i>3 sites at \$28,097 each</i> )	\$ 84,291.00
Camp sites with shade structure ( <i>3 sites at \$14,153 each</i> )	\$ 42,459.00
Updated Water System	\$ 24,000.00
New Interpretive Exhibit ( <i>500 sq feet</i> )	\$ 178,192.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 328,942.00</b>

## Transition to Recreation.gov

To better manage visitation to recreation fee sites, LCDO is transitioning fee sites to Recreation.gov, the federal government’s public lands reservation system.

Recreation.gov opens BLM lands to more visitors to enjoy the vast natural, cultural, recreational, geological, wildlife, and historical opportunities and resources of America's shared public lands. The website offers venue details, site descriptions and recreation reservations for agencies including the BLM, NPS, and USFS. With the span of 21+ million users across multiple agencies, recreation.gov offers LCDO an excellent marketing opportunity to make opportunities known to visitors who may not otherwise hear of Three Rivers.

Currently, Three Rivers' group sites are reserved through LCDO's administrative team. This manual system is not as efficient as an online reservation system and can lead to scheduling conflicts. By transitioning to Recreation.gov, LCDO offers visitors a more accessible reservation system, keeps group site information more centralized, and streamlines the communications and process of reserving the site.

Group site reservation fees will remain at 2012 levels (\$50 reservation fee) until new fees proposed in this business plan are potentially implemented in summer 2024. All other fees, such as day use and overnight camping, will be incurred by visitors.

In the future, LCDO will also expand its recreation.gov presence to allow visitors the option to pay for individual campsites via recreation.gov. This transition will make payment more efficient for modern visitors, who are increasingly unlikely or otherwise unable to carry cash to pay recreation fees. All sites will remain first-come first-served.

### Transition to Electronic Fee Collection

As directed through the BLM Instruction Memorandum 2022-010, the Las Cruces District Office will be transitioning site reservations to recreation.gov and will move away from solely cash RUPs to provided electronic fee-collection options.

Currently, LCDO recreation fee sites do not offer electronic fee collection. The BLM in the past year has begun researching and planning the transition to e-commerce-based fee collection wherever possible. The recreation staff at LCDO is working to set up the solar-powered 'Remote Off-Grid Kiosk' or 'ROK' system that will allow for credit card payments based on the type of activity, with a corresponding, printable ticket. The benefit of the ROK system is that there are no additional transaction fees borne by the visitor, unlike other e-commerce solutions like the QR-based Scan-and-Pay system.

Electronic fee payment is also expected to increase fee compliance. Currently, many visitors cannot pay recreation fees due to their lacking cash. This results in visitors either skipping fee payment or mailing in fees. Three Rivers offers a mail-in option for visitors to pay the fees once they return home and acquire cash. However, this method can be confusing to visitors. Furthermore, it does not guarantee payment. Electronic fee payment would provide visitors a streamlined, on-site method to pay fees regardless of cash on hand.

Electronic fee payment plans are in accordance with the Mimbres Resource Management Plan (1993) ([DOI-BLM-NM-L000-1993-001-RMP-EIS](#)) objective "to ensure the continued availability of quality outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences [*sic*]" (pg. 2-48). As the economy moves increasingly away from hard currency and towards electronic forms of payment, LCDO's transition to electronic fee collection ensures continued provision of recreation opportunities in accordance with current visitor trends and desires.

# 6 Feedback and Public Participation

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## PUBLIC OUTREACH

Section 804 of FLREA addresses the minimum public outreach requirements that an agency must consider when developing or changing recreation fees. This outreach process involves sharing and getting feedback on the proposed Business Plan by a Resource Advisory Council (RAC). RACs provide recommendations to agency officials on matters including, but not limited to:

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

LCDO will initiate public notification and outreach for the fee proposal per PL 108-447 Sec. 804 (d)(4) and the BLM Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook (H-2930- 1). This includes:

- Soliciting public comments for at least 30 days on the draft business plan by:
  - Posting it on the [BLM Recreation Site Business Plans website](#).
  - Issuing news releases, posting information on social media platforms (including [LCDO's Facebook page](#)), and/or purchasing ads in local media outlets, and post notices at our recreation fee sites.
  - Sending letters to interested parties and stakeholders
- Reviewing and considering public comments, revising the draft business plan as warranted, and finalizing the business plan for Resource Advisory Council recommendation.
  - Including the number and content of public comments in an additional section of this business plan.

Maintaining LCDO's fee program can only come with widespread public support when fees have a direct connection to a perceived and/or tangible benefit. To ensure ongoing public support of any/all proposed fee adjustments, LCDO will publish and vet proposals in newspapers with regional circulation, and on the BLM websites and recreation site bulletin boards. In addition, site hosts will inform visitors regarding details of fee proposals and provide a venue to comment if they choose.

## Visitor Feedback Mechanisms

The following mechanisms provide visitors, stakeholders, and the public mechanisms to provide direct feedback to LCDO on proposed changes:

- **Visitor Contacts:** BLM recreation staff and the law enforcement patrol the campground and surrounding recreation area regularly. This provides opportunities for direct visitor feedback.
- **Recreation Use Permits/Fee Envelopes:** Visitors often provide constructive comments on the permit or fee envelopes, and these comments are noted by recreation staff.
- **Volunteer Hosts:** The LCDO coordinates regularly with Three Rivers site hosts who provide valuable feedback and suggestions regarding visitor satisfaction and facility needs.

- **Visitor Use and Satisfaction Surveys:** BLM conducts these surveys on a rotating basis for all fee sites and related facilities. Three Rivers was surveyed for visitor satisfaction in 2010, 2014, and 2019, and will resurvey in approximately 5 years.
- **Resource Advisory Council:** All fee proposals must first undergo review by BLM's New Mexico Resource Advisory Council (RAC), which will provide feedback on LCDO's proposal.
- **Facebook:** Visitors can provide feedback by privately messaging the [Bureau of Land Management Las Cruces District Office Facebook page](#).
- **Direct Contact:** Visitors can provide direct feedback about the fee proposal by contacting the BLM Las Cruces District Office by phone at (575) 525-4300 or by mail at 1800 Marquess St., Las Cruces, NM 88005.



# Appendix

Expansion of *Table 10 and Table 11* on page 29.

Tent Camping				
Agency	Site	Overnight	Day Use	Conglomerate
<b>PUBLIC &amp; FEDERAL</b>				
NPS	White Sands National Park	\$ -	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
NPS	Guadalupe Mountains National Park	\$ 15.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 25.00
<b>NPS</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 15.00</b>	<b>\$ 15.00</b>	<b>\$ 25.00</b>
<b>BLM</b>	<b>Three Rivers Petroglyph Site^</b>	<b>\$ 7.00</b>	<b>\$ 5.00</b>	<b>\$ 12.00</b>
BLM	OMDPNM ^	\$ 7.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 12.00
BLM	Valley of Fires Recreation Area	\$ 7.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 12.00
BLM	Orilla Verde Recreation Area*^	\$ 7.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 10.00
BLM	Santa Cruz Lake*^	\$ 8.00	\$ 6.00	\$ 14.00
BLM	Wild Rivers Recreation Area*^	\$ 7.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 10.00
<b>BLM</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 7.17</b>	<b>\$ 4.40</b>	<b>\$ 11.67</b>
USFS	Lincoln NF - Apache CG"	\$ 27.50	\$ -	\$ 27.50
USFS	Lincoln NF - Deerhead CG"	\$ 27.50	\$ -	\$ 27.50
USFS	Lincoln NF - Oak Grove CG	\$ 6.00	\$ -	\$ 6.00
USFS	Lincoln NF - Pines CG**	\$ 28.67	\$ -	\$ 28.67
USFS	Lincoln NF - Saddle CG"	\$ 27.50	\$ -	\$ 27.50
USFS	Lincoln NF - Silver CG"	\$ 32.50	\$ -	\$ 32.50
USFS	Lincoln NF - Silver Overflow CG"	\$ 23.50	\$ -	\$ 23.50
USFS	Lincoln NF - Sleepy Grass CG**	\$ 29.43	\$ -	\$ 29.43
USFS	Lincoln NF - South Fork CG^	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 10.00
USFS	Lincoln NF - Three Rivers CG^	\$ 6.00	\$ -	\$ 6.00
<b>USFS</b>	<b>Lincoln AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 21.86</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 21.86</b>
USFS	Gila NF - Juniper CG	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 10.00
USFS	Gila NF - Pinon CG	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 10.00
USFS	Gila NF - Mesa CG	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 10.00
USFS	Gila NF - Upper End CG	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 10.00
<b>USFS</b>	<b>Gila AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 10.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 10.00</b>
<b>USFS</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 15.93</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 15.93</b>
NM State Parks	Oliver Lee Memorial State Park	\$ 10.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 15.00
NM State Parks	Leasburg Dam State Park	\$ 10.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 15.00
NM State Parks	Pancho Villa State Park	\$ 10.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 15.00
NM State Parks	Percha Dam State Park	\$ 10.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 15.00
NM State Parks	Rockhound State Park	\$ 10.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 15.00
TX State Parks	Franklin Mountains State Park	\$ 10.00	\$ 7.00	\$ 17.00
TX State Parks	Hueco Tanks State Park	\$ 12.00	\$ 7.00	\$ 19.00
<b>STATE</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 10.33</b>	<b>\$ 5.67</b>	<b>\$ 16.00</b>
<b>PRIVATE &amp; NON-FEDERAL</b>				
Private	Tulie Pines RV Park	\$ 8.00	\$ -	\$ 8.00
Private	KOA Campgrounds	\$ 34.00	\$ -	\$ 34.00
Private	Siesta RV Park	\$ 28.00	\$ -	\$ 28.00
Private	Western Skys RV Park	\$ 12.00	\$ -	\$ 12.00
<b>PRIVATE</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 20.50</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 20.50</b>

RV Camping				
Agency	Site	Overnight	Day Use	Conglomerate
	<b>PUBLIC &amp; FEDERAL</b>			
NPS	Guadalupe Mountains National Park	\$ 15.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 25.00
<b>NPS</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 15.00</b>	<b>\$ 15.00</b>	<b>\$ 25.00</b>
BLM	Three Rivers Petroglyph Site^	\$ 18.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 23.00
BLM	Rob Jagers Campground	\$ 15.00	\$ -	\$ 15.00
BLM	Valley of Fires Recreation Area	\$ 18.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 23.00
BLM	Orilla Verde Recreation Area^	\$ 15.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 18.00
<b>BLM</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 16.00</b>	<b>\$ 4.33</b>	<b>\$ 18.67</b>
USFS	Lincoln NF - Apache CG"	\$ 27.50	\$ -	\$ 27.50
USFS	Lincoln NF - Deerhead CG"	\$ 27.50	\$ -	\$ 27.50
USFS	Lincoln NF - Oak Grove CG	\$ 6.00	\$ -	\$ 6.00
USFS	Lincoln NF - Pines CG*"	\$ 28.67	\$ -	\$ 28.67
USFS	Lincoln NF - Saddle CG"	\$ 27.50	\$ -	\$ 27.50
USFS	Lincoln NF - Silver CG"	\$ 32.50	\$ -	\$ 32.50
USFS	Lincoln NF - Silver Overflow CG"	\$ 23.50	\$ -	\$ 23.50
USFS	Lincoln NF - Sleepy Grass CG"	\$ 29.43	\$ -	\$ 29.43
USFS	Lincoln NF - South Fork CG^*	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 10.00
USFS	Lincoln NF - Three Rivers CG^	\$ 6.00	\$ -	\$ 6.00
<b>USFS</b>	<b>Lincoln AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 21.86</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 21.86</b>
USFS	Gila NF - Juniper CG	\$ 15.00	\$ -	\$ 15.00
USFS	Gila NF - Pinon CG	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 10.00
USFS	Gila NF - Mesa CG	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 10.00
USFS	Gila NF - Upper End CG	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 10.00
<b>USFS</b>	<b>Gila AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 11.25</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 11.25</b>
<b>USFS</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 16.56</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 16.56</b>
NM State Parks	Oliver Lee Memorial State Park	\$ 14.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 19.00
NM State Parks	Leasburg Dam State Park	\$ 14.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 19.00
NM State Parks	Pancho Villa State Park	\$ 14.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 19.00
NM State Parks	Percha Dam State Park	\$ 14.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 19.00
NM State Parks	Rockhound State Park	\$ 14.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 19.00
TX State Parks	Hueco Tanks State Park	\$ 16.00	\$ 7.00	\$ 23.00
City Park	Coronado Campground	\$ 30.00	\$ -	\$ 30.00
City Park	Lake Van Recreation Area	\$ 15.00	\$ -	\$ 15.00
County Park	White Rock Visitor Center RV Park	\$ 20.00	\$ -	\$ 20.00
County Park	Escondida Lake & RV Park	\$ 18.00	\$ -	\$ 18.00
<b>STATE</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 14.40</b>	<b>\$ 5.40</b>	<b>\$ 19.80</b>
	<b>PRIVATE &amp; NON-FEDERAL</b>			
Private	Tulie Pines RV Park	\$ 20.00	\$ -	\$ 20.00
Private	KOA Campgrounds	\$ 35.00	\$ -	\$ 35.00
Private	Siesta RV Park	\$ 34.00	\$ -	\$ 34.00
Private	Western Skys RV Park	\$ 12.00	\$ -	\$ 12.00
Private	Elks Lodge	\$ 25.00	\$ -	\$ 25.00
Private	St. John's Mobile Home Park	\$ 15.00	\$ -	\$ 15.00

Private	Coachlight RV Park	\$ 25.00	\$ -	\$ 25.00
Private	Sunny Acres RV Park	\$ 40.00	\$ -	\$ 40.00
Private	Volunteer Park Travel Campsite	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 10.00
Private	Mountain Meadows RV Park	\$ 35.00	\$ -	\$ 35.00
Private	Edgington RV Park	\$ 36.00	\$ -	\$ 36.00
Private	Washington Ranch	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
USACE	Cochiti Recreation Area Campground	\$ 20.00	\$ -	\$ 20.00
USACE	Riana Campground	\$ 16.00	\$ -	\$ 16.00
Tribal	Nambé Falls & Lake Rec. Area	\$ 40.00	\$ -	\$ 40.00
<b>PRIVATE</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 27.53</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 27.53</b>

Average, Public	\$ 17.71	\$ 5.50	\$ 19.61
Average, Private	\$ 27.53	\$ -	\$ 27.53
Three Rivers Current	\$ 18.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 23.00
<b>Three Rivers Proposed</b>	<b>\$ 10.00</b>	<b>\$ 7.00</b>	<b>\$ 17.00</b>

*Note : RV sites are included for site cost including additional fees for amenities. To ensure an accurate comparison, some RVcampgrounds were not included in comparative analysis due to their fees including amenities which LCDO sites do not offer, such as WiFi.*

*Note : Averages are calculated from sites that active fees and do not include zeros. This is to calculate an average for active fees across recreation sites.*

*^ Sites currently processing fee increases and proposals.*

*\* Fee is based on weighted average. Fees are different based on site size.*

*" Sites that include \$2.50 trash fee*

Group Sites						
Agency	Site	Base Fee	Group #	Max Fee	Group #	Fee/Person
NPS	Guadalupe Mountains National Park	\$ 30.00	30	\$ -	-	\$ 1.00
<b>NPS</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 30.00</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ 1.00</b>
<b>BLM</b>	<b>Three Rivers Petroglyph Site^</b>	<b>\$ 30.00</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ 1.00</b>
BLM	OMPDMN^	\$ 50.00	30	\$ -	-	\$ 1.67
BLM	Rob Jaggers Campground	\$ 35.00	60	\$ -	-	\$ 0.58
BLM	Valley of Fires Recreation Area	\$ 25.00	30	\$ -	-	\$ 0.83
BLM	Orilla Verde Recreation Area^	\$ 30.00	40	\$ 40.00	40	\$ 0.88
<b>BLM</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 34.00</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>\$ 40.00</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>\$ 0.99</b>
USFS	Lincoln NF - Aspen Group Area	\$ 100.00	30	\$ 125.00	70	\$ 2.56
USFS	Lincoln NF - Black Bear Group Area	\$ 100.00	30	\$ 125.00	70	\$ 3.33
USFS	Lincoln NF - Black Bear Group Area	\$ 25.00	30	\$ -	-	\$ 0.83
USFS	Lincoln NF - Lower Fir Group Area	\$ 100.00	30	\$ 125.00	70	\$ 2.56
USFS	Lincoln NF - Sam Tobias Memorial Group Area	\$ 60.00	60	\$ 100.00	100	\$ 1.00
USFS	Lincoln NF - Slide Group Area	\$ 100.00	40	\$ 125.00	90	\$ 1.94
USFS	Lincoln NF - Upper Fir Group Area	\$ 100.00	30	\$ 125.00	70	\$ 2.56
<b>USFS - Lincoln</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 83.57</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>\$ 120.83</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>\$ 2.11</b>
USFS	Gila NF - Gomez Peak Large Group Area	\$ 100.00	100	\$ 200.00	200	\$ 1.00
USFS	Gila NF - Little Walnut Group Area East	\$ 75.00	75	\$ -	-	\$ 1.00
USFS	Gila NF - Little Walnut Group Area West	\$ 50.00	50	\$ -	-	\$ 1.00
USFS	Gila NF - Pinon CG (Quemado Lake) Group Site	\$ 35.00	30	\$ 55.00	75	\$ 0.95
<b>USFS - Gila</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 65.00</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>\$ 127.50</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>\$ 0.99</b>
<b>USFS</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 74.29</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>\$ 120.83</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>\$ 1.55</b>
NM State Parks	Oliver Lee Memorial State Park	\$ 90.00	75	\$ -	-	\$ 1.20
TX State Parks	Franklin Mountains State Park	\$ 20.00	16	\$ 30.00	24	\$ 1.25
TX State Parks	Hueco Tanks Amphitheatre	\$ 40.00	40	\$ -	-	\$ 1.00
Village of Ruidoso	Village Parks & Rec Dept Pavillions	\$ 75.00	26	\$ 150.00	80	\$ 2.38
<b>STATE PARKS</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$ 56.25</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>\$ 90.00</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>\$ 1.46</b>
	Average	\$ 60.48	42	\$ 109.09	81	\$ 1.45
	Median	\$ 50.00	30	\$ 125.00	70	\$ 1.00
	<b>Three Rivers Current</b>	<b>\$ 50.00</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ 1.67</b>
	<b>Three Rivers Proposed</b>	<b>\$ 70.00</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ 1.40</b>

*Note : Group site analysis includes only public sites, as the majority of private campgrounds do not have group sites and thus do not present sufficient information to create a thorough comparison.*

*^ Sites currently processing fee increases and proposals.*



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