

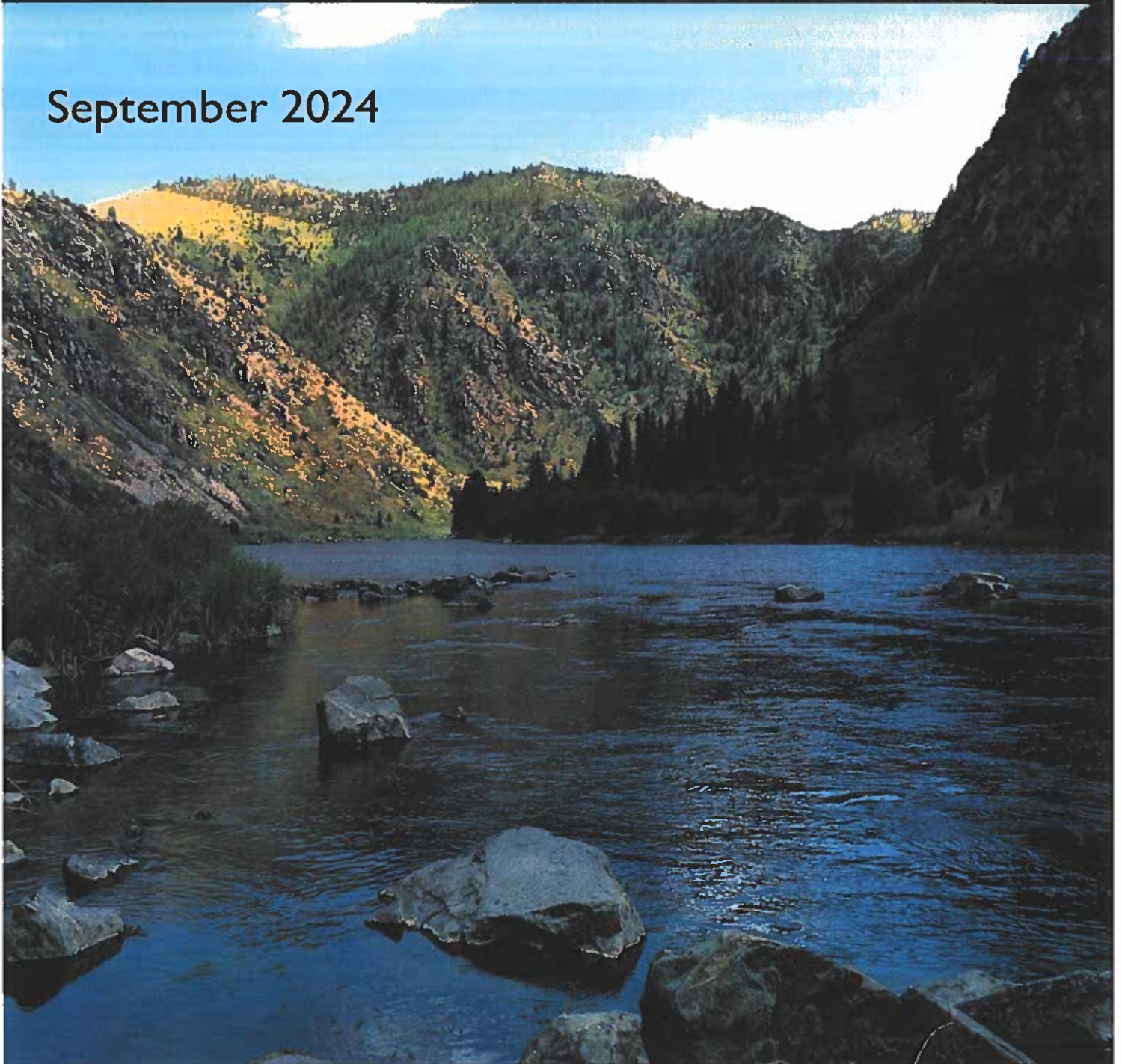


U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

BLM Dillon Field Office

Madison River Recreation Area Business Plan

September 2024



BLM Dillon Field Office

Madison River Recreation Area Business Plan

MTB050000

Recommendations, Reviews, and Approvals

Recommended by:

AMANDA JAMES Digitally signed by AMANDA JAMES
Date: 2025.02.11 15:36:30 -07'00'

Amanda James, Field Manager, Dillon Field Office

Date

Reviewed by:

KATHRYN STEVENS Digitally signed by KATHRYN STEVENS
Date: 2025.02.20 05:04:03 -07'00'

Katie Stevens, District Manager, Western Montana District

Date

Approved by:

SONYA GERMANN Digitally signed by SONYA
GERMANN
Date: 2025.03.17 18:22:21 -06'00'

Sonya Germann, Montana/Dakotas State Director

Date

This business plan was prepared by the Bureau of Land Management's Dillon Field 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 the Madison River Recreation Area within the Dillon Field Office.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Executive Summary – pg. 1**
- II. Background on Dillon Field Office Recreation Program – pg. 2**
- III. Authorities – pg. 2**
- IV. Amenities Background – pg. 4**
- V. Management Plans – pg. 10**
- VI. Madison River Recreation Program – pg. 11**
- VII. Tour of Existing Dillon Field Office Day Use Fee Sites – pg. 14**
- VIII. Tour of Proposed New DFO Day Use Fee Sites – pg. 19**
- IX. Operations – pg. 26**
- X. Revenues and Expenditures – pg. 27**
- XI. Impacts from Charging - Not Charging Fee Rates – pg. 31**
- XII. Public Outreach – pg. 35**

I. Executive Summary

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) originally began collecting recreational fees for the use of public lands under the authority of the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) provides the BLM with the authority to collect Standard and Expanded Amenity Fees for sites and services that provide direct benefits to individuals and groups. Both types of fees can be charged on BLM recreational lands, the difference being that Standard Amenity fees cover sites with only moderate development, while Expanded Amenity fees are charged for specific or specialized facilities, equipment or services. FLREA authorizes the BLM to locally retain collected Standard and Expanded Amenity fees and outlines how revenue may be used for things such as facility repair, facility maintenance, facility enhancement, interpretation, visitor information, visitor services, visitor needs assessments, signs, habitat restoration, law enforcement related to public use and recreation, and operating or capital costs directly associated with the Recreation and Visitor Services Program.

BLM Manual 2930 requires each fee program have a business plan which thoroughly discusses fees and explains how rates are consistent with the criteria set forth in FLREA and other agency directives. Business plans assist management in determining appropriate fee rates, outline the cost of administering fee programs, and identify priorities for future fee program expenditures. The primary purpose of the plan is to serve as public notification of the objectives for use of recreation fee revenues and to provide the public an opportunity to comment on these objectives.

The Madison River Recreation Fee Program 2024 Business Plan was developed by the Dillon Field Office while identifying that additional services may be needed to support a quality recreation experience, or that previous recreation fees were not adequate given use demands and need for services at some remote developed recreation sites. Costs for general maintenance and daily operations of these sites is increasing annually. In addition, there has been a sharp increase in recreation use of these sites over the past five years. Increasing operational costs and visitor pressure has highlighted the need for year-round maintenance of these sites, as well as required supplemental staff presence to be able to provide adequate visitor services and amenities.

The data used to analyze and prepare this business plan was obtained through internal BLM tracking and accounting mechanisms such as the Recreation Management Information System (RMIS), Collections and Billing Systems (CBS), Federal Business Management System (FBMS), and other locally generated recreation and visitor use tracking systems. For more detailed information, please contact the BLM DFO. Some of the additional data may be subject to Privacy Act requirements.

II. Background on Dillon Field Office Recreation Program

The BLM DFO is in southwest Montana bordered on the south by Idaho and the Continental Divide. The area is rural in nature with small communities throughout Madison and Beaverhead counties. Neighboring Gallatin County has the largest population center in southwest Montana and has been one of the fastest growing counties in the country for the past twenty years. Gallatin County has doubled in population from 2000 to 2020 and has around 119,000 residents (2020 Census). Many of the visitors to the BLM administered public lands in the DFO come from Gallatin County. Many of the more popular recreation sites are located along the Madison River within the Lower Madison Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) and the Upper Madison SRMA. In the Lower Madison SRMA, where the weather is relatively mild and warmer than the surrounding areas, hiking, fishing, and boating are possible nearly year-round, and camping is busier than neighboring areas during the shoulder seasons. From June through August the Lower Madison SRMA is a very popular area for “tubing”, or recreational floating. The Upper Madison SRMA is a blue-ribbon trout stream and one of the most popular locations for fly-fishing in the state of Montana. Throughout the Field Office there are ample opportunities for river recreation, hunting, hiking, horseback riding, and fishing as well as winter recreation opportunities such as snowmobiling, skiing, snowshoeing, and others.

III. Authorities

The laws, regulations, and policies guiding this business plan include:

- **The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976** (Public Law 94-579) contains BLM’s general land use management authority over the public lands and establishes outdoor recreation as one of the principal uses of those lands. Section 302 (b) of FLPMA authorizes the BLM to manage the use of the public lands through permits.
- **Section 315 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 1996**, established the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program (Public Law 104-134) as a 3-year pilot program, which authorized the BLM to keep recreation fees collected and expend them within the guidelines of the law. Public Law 106-291 extended the authorization for the program through September 30, 2004, until enactment of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA).
- **The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004** (Public Law 108-447) repealed applicable portions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and replaced BLM’s authority to collect recreational fees. This law authorizes BLM to collect recreation fees at sites that meet certain requirements, allows BLM to keep the fee revenues at the local offices where they are collected, and directs how BLM manages and utilizes these revenues.

Part 6802, Subparts (f), (g), and (h), distinguish between Standard and Expanded fees being charged for amenities, facilities, and services, while Special Recreation Permit fees are charged for “specialized recreation uses of Federal recreational lands and waters.”

- **Code of Federal Regulations, Title 43, Part 2930 (43 CFR 2930)**, contains the regulations governing BLM's recreation permitting programs. 43 CFR, Subpart 2933.11 contains BLM's authority to issue recreation use permits. It states that, "You must obtain a Recreation Use Permit for individual or group use of fee areas. These are sites where BLM provides or administers specialized facilities, equipment, or services related to outdoor recreation. These sites may have specific uses and time periods. BLM will post these uses and limits at the entrance to the area or site and provide this information in the local BLM office with jurisdiction over the area or site. The public may contact a BLM office for permit information when planning visits.

- **BLM Recreation Permit Administration Handbook (H-2930-1)** explains how the BLM implements its recreation permit and fee program. Chapter 2, page 70, states: "Recreation use permits (RUPs) are issued for short-term recreation use of specialized sites, facilities, equipment, or services furnished at federal expense. Most often, the BLM uses RUPs to authorize individual and group use of recreation facilities, also known as fee sites. RUPs are the fee envelopes (BLM Form 1370-036) used at campgrounds to collect day-use fees. RUPs may also be used at such facilities as group shelters or boat launch areas to collect any day-use fees charged. RUPs may be issued without an associated fee, as a way of allocating use of an area."

Chapter 1, page 10, states: "Special recreation permits (SRPs) are authorizations that allow specified recreation use of the public lands and related waters."

- **BLM Manual 2930 – Recreation Permits and Fees**
- **BLM Manual 2930-1 – Recreation Permit and Fee Administration** – describes how the BLM implements the recreation fee program.
- **BLM Information Bulletin No. 2019-056 – Recreation Fee Revenue Spending Plans and Accomplishment Report**
- **BLM Manual 1105 – Donations, Solicitations, and Fundraising**

The BLM strives to manage recreation and visitor services to serve diverse outdoor recreation demands while helping to maintain sustainable setting conditions needed to conserve public lands, so the visitor's desired recreation choices remain available. The BLM's goals for delivering recreation benefits from BLM-administered lands to the American people and their communities are to:

- Improve access to appropriate recreation opportunities.
- Ensure a quality experience and enjoyment of natural and cultural resources.
- Provide for and receive fair value in recreation.

This business plan will assist the DFO in meeting these recreation and visitor service goals.

IV. Amenities Background

The DFO uses a combination of Standard and Expanded amenity criteria to justify the collection of fees at newly established and existing fee sites. Standard fee sites may be upgraded to Expanded fee sites should increasing visitation reveal the need for improved visitor amenities. These proposed fees support improved visitor safety and experiences.

Standard Amenities

Except as limited by subsection (d-Limitations of Recreation Fees-16 U.S. Code § 6802 - *Recreation fee authority*), the Secretary of the Interior may charge a standard amenity recreation fee for Federal recreational lands and waters under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, but only at the following:

- A. A National Conservation Area.
- B. National Volcanic Monument.
- C. A destination visitor or interpretive center that provides a broad range of interpretive services, programs, and media.
- D. An area—
 - a. that provides significant opportunities for outdoor recreation.
 - b. that has substantial Federal investments.
 - c. where fees can be efficiently collected; and
 - d. that contains all of the following amenities:
 - (i) Designated developed parking.
 - (ii) A permanent toilet facility.
 - (iii) A permanent trash receptacle.
 - (iv) Interpretive sign, exhibit, or kiosk.
 - (v) Picnic tables.
 - (vi) Security services.

Expanded Amenities

Except as limited by subsection (d-Limitations of Recreation Fees-16 U.S. Code § 6802 - *Recreation fee authority*), the Secretary of the Interior may charge an expanded amenity recreation fee, either in addition to a standard amenity fee or by itself, at Federal recreational lands and waters under the jurisdiction the Bureau of Land Management, but only for the following facilities or services:

- A. Use of developed campgrounds that provide at least a majority of the following:
 - a. Tent or trailer spaces.
 - b. Picnic tables.
 - c. Drinking water.
 - d. Access roads.
 - e. The collection of the fee by an employee or agent of the Federal land management

- agency.
 - f. Reasonable visitor protection.
 - g. Refuse containers.
 - h. Toilet facilities.
 - i. Simple devices for containing a campfire.
- B. Use of highly developed boat launches with specialized facilities or services such as mechanical or hydraulic boat lifts or facilities, multi-lane paved ramps, paved parking, restrooms, and other improvements such as boarding floats, loading ramps, or fish cleaning stations.
- C. Rental of cabins, boats, stock animals, lookouts, historic structures, group day-use or overnight sites, audio tour devices, portable sanitation devices, binoculars, or other equipment.
- D. Use of hookups for electricity, cable, or sewer.
- E. Use of sanitary dump stations.
- F. Participation in an enhanced interpretive program or special tour.
- G. Use of reservation services.
- H. Use of transportation services.
- I. Use of areas where emergency medical or first-aid services are administered from facilities staffed by public employees or employees under a contract or reciprocal agreement with the Federal Government.
- J. Use of developed swimming sites that provide at least a majority of the following:
- a. Bathhouse with showers and flush toilets.
 - b. Refuse containers.
 - c. Picnic areas.
 - d. Paved parking.
 - e. Attendants, including lifeguards.
 - f. Floats encompassing the swimming area.
 - g. Swimming deck.

The tables below provide information on current fees, proposed fees, and amenity type for all sites along the Madison River corridor that currently charge a fee or will in the future. Day use fees are proposed to be charged *per person*, although per vehicle is still a consideration. In an effort to require equally that all visitors (under 16 are free) pay day use fees, the RAC and DFO have chosen not to charge per vehicle at this time. For example, charging a 4-person vehicle and a 30-person shuttle vehicle the same fee is not equitable. Should the decision be made to charge per vehicle, the fee will be higher to meet operational costs.

The purchase of a \$5 Day Use Fee will provide the individual pass holder use of amenities at all BLM DFO Madison River Day Use fee sites for the date of purchase.

Visitors who are camping at one of the BLM DFO Madison River fee campgrounds will not have to pay an additional \$5 day use for use of amenities during the dates of their paid stay. A printed reservation confirmation or confirmation of an issued reservation tag by a BLM representative will serve as a BLM DFO Day Use pass for the duration of their stay.

The DFO would offer the option of an Annual Pass, specific to the BLM day use fee sites within the Madison River corridor. The BLM DFO Annual Pass would function much like the America the Beautiful Interagency Pass which covers amenity fees for a driver and all passengers in a personal vehicle. Unlike the America the Beautiful Interagency Pass, which would only be accepted at Standard Amenity sites per FLREA, the BLM DFO Annual Pass would cover day use fees at both Standard and Expanded Amenity BLM DFO sites along the Madison River Corridor.

Recreation Site Name	Fee Structure – Current/Proposed/Adaptive	Amenity Type	Features
BLM Dillon Field Office Campgrounds			
Red Mountain Campground	Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle	Expanded	Camp host, tent/trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities
Trapper Springs Campground	Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle	Expanded	Group use pavilion with stone hearth BBQ, picnic area, group use, tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities
Bear Trap Road North Campground	Current: \$8 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$15 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$25 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle	Expanded	Tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities
Bear Trap Road South Campground	Current: \$8 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$15 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$25 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle	Expanded	Tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities
Ruby Creek Campground	Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle	Expanded	Camp host, tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee, reasonable visitor protection, vault

			latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities
Palisades Campground	Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle	Expanded	Tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee or agent, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities

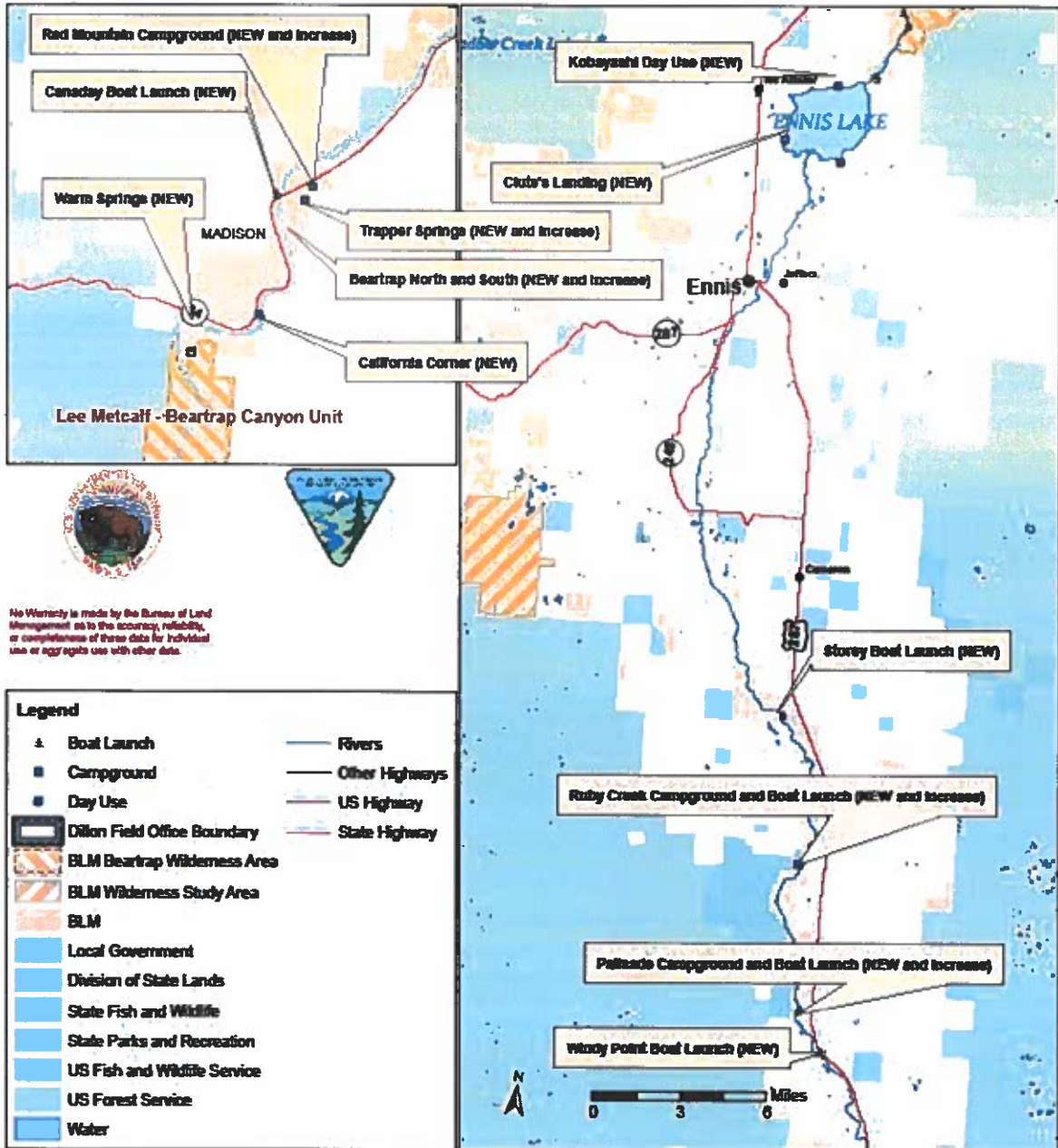
Table 1: Dillon Field Office Existing Fee Sites with Proposed Fees and Adaptive Management Fees Listed

Recreation Site Name	Fee Structure – Current/Proposed/Adaptive	Amenity Type	Features
BLM Dillon Field Office Day Use Sites			
Warm Springs	\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass	Expanded	Multiple lane paved boat launch, several developed hand launch spots, paved designated developed parking, vault latrines, kiosk, picnic tables, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff
California Corner	\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass	Standard	Multiple lane paved boat launch, designated developed parking, vault latrines, kiosk, picnic tables, security service via BLM staff, and accessible facilities
Canaday	\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass	Expanded	Raised boat launch, designated developed parking, vault latrines, picnic tables, kiosk and interpretive panels, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff
Bear Trap Road North & Bear Trap Road South	\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass	Standard	River access sites, designated developed parking, kiosk, vault latrines, picnic tables, drinking water, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff

Palisades & Ruby Creek	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	Expanded	River access sites, boat launch designated developed parking, kiosk, vault latrines, picnic tables, drinking water, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff
Red Mountain & Trapper Springs	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	Expanded	River access sites, designated developed parking, kiosk, vault latrines, picnic tables, drinking water, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff
Storey Ditch	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	Standard	River access site, vault latrine, gravel boat launch, parking, picnic tables, and security services via BLM staff
Kobayashi Beach	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	Expanded	Paved boat launch, docks, paved designated developed parking, vault latrines, kiosk, picnic tables, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff
Clute's Landing	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	Standard	Concrete boat launch, designated developed parking, vault latrine, kiosk, picnic tables, free camping, and security services via BLM staff
Windy Point	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	Expanded	River access site, vault latrine, multi lane boat launch, parking, picnic tables

Table 2: Dillon Field Office Proposed Fee Sites with Proposed Fees and Adaptive Management Fees Listed

2024 Dillon Field Office Recreation Fee Program



Map 1: BLM DFO Recreation Fee Sites (existing and proposed) Along Madison River Corridor

V. Management Plans

Recreational fees are critical to meeting national and regional recreation program goals. The following two goals were developed because of public comment received during the preparation of the Record of Decision and Approved Dillon Resource Management Plan, 2006. They help guide the direction of the recreation program and determine priorities for fee collection and spending.

Goal 1

Provide a diverse array of quality, resource-based recreation opportunities while protecting and interpreting the resource values, providing educational opportunities, minimizing user conflicts, and promoting public safety.

Goal 2

Develop and maintain appropriate recreational facilities, balancing public demand, protection of Public Land resources, and fiscal responsibility.

The Lower Madison Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) EA #MT-050-01-012, signed February 2003, addressed, and analyzed recreation impacts in the Lower Madison Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA), while providing the DFO with management guidance. The Lower Madison RAMP discussed recreation fees in several sections throughout the EA. On page 14, section 2.2.7. User Fees and Permits, it states,

- If operations and maintenance costs continue to exceed revenue, BLM will begin collecting fees for day use at Warm Springs Boat Launch and/or any day use areas within the Madison River corridor.

It goes on to state; "Warm Springs is the planning area's most heavily used site, and it requires more maintenance and management effort than any other site. The BLM will not collect day use fees at this site unless they are sure that they would not drive that use to other undeveloped non-fee sites." The BLM has improved, hardened, and developed these areas since that time. BLM will be implementing day use fees throughout the 7-mile corridor as well as the 4 sites along the upper Madison and the 7 sites in the vicinity of Ennis Lake/Lower Madison River.

At present there is no RAMP drafted or approved for the Upper Madison SRMA, but one may be needed for future operations as visitation increases and impacts become more widespread.

Some visitors may be displaced by a day use fee, but the Upper/Lower Madison SRMA simply cannot continue to operate without implementing fees. Visitor pressure has grown substantially over the last 20 years. Operations and maintenance costs continue to climb with inflation and age of facilities at recreation sites. The Lower and Upper Madison are in dire need of additional staffing and maintenance to keep up with the continued increase in visitation.

VI. Madison River Recreation Program

Recreation Permit Program

The DFO manages a diverse and ever-changing recreation program throughout Beaverhead and Madison Counties. Revenue for the program is acquired through Recreation Fee Permits (RUPs) at fee sites and Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) throughout the field office.

Madison River Recreation Sites

The Madison River Recreation sites are located south of Hebgen Lake on the BLM lands along the Madison River down to Red Mountain Campground along the lower section. The Lower Madison River sites are in close proximity to Bozeman and afford many day use opportunities, including camping. The Upper Madison River sites are excellent locations for fishing day floats and are in close proximity to other opportunities for camping, fishing, and visits to Yellowstone National Park. Gallatin County, especially Bozeman, has seen unparalleled growth in the last 20 years and the Madison River has become a popular area for recreationists. The BLM DFO recreation sites provide direct public access to the Madison River and other water bodies, as well as picnic areas and shelter, overnight camping, the Bear Trap Unit of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness, and designated trails, developed restrooms and drinking water systems, a floating dock on Ennis Lake, and myriad scenic views.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| • Red Mountain Campground | Use/Boat Launch | Launch |
| • Red Mountain Day Use | • Palisades Campground | • Canaday Day Use/Boat Launch |
| • Trapper Springs Campground | • Palisades Day Use/Boat Launch | • Storey Ditch Day Use/Boat Launch |
| • Trapper Springs Group Pavilion/Day Use | • Bear Trap Road North and South Camping/Day Use | • Kobayashi Beach Day Use/Boat Launch/Swim Beach |
| • Ruby Creek Campground | • Warm Springs Day Use/Boat Launch | • Clute's Landing Day Use/Boat Launch |
| • Ruby Creek Day | • California Corner Day Use/Boat | • Windy Point Day Use/Boat Launch |

Description of Visitation and Fee Program at Existing and Proposed Fee Sites

NorthWestern Energy fulfills its Project 2188 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license responsibilities for operating its nine hydropower developments (eight hydroelectric-generating facilities and one storage reservoir) on the Missouri and Madison Rivers in Montana. Through a unique collaborative program, NorthWestern Energy and its agency and private partners created the River Fund and are cost sharing to provide recreation opportunities and services in this river corridor well beyond the requirements of the Project 2188 License. More specifically than the increase in visitation over the past 20 years, DFO recreation sites along the Madison River have experienced an acute surge in visitor pressure these last five years. This increasing visitation adds significant pressure on recreation amenities, requiring increased labor

and services which is not at all covered by the nominal appropriated recreation funding received annually. Under the FLREA, the DFO is authorized to return 100% of recreation fees charged to the maintenance and improvements of the sites where collected. Table 3 summarizes Total Vehicle Visits Per Site reported by the DFO in the NorthWestern Energy Missouri-Madison 2022 Recreation Visitor Use Counts. Almost every location is seeing higher visitor day numbers, with a total increase in days of nearly 30% since 2017.

Madison River Recreation sites are patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and park rangers, and when necessary, staff coordinates with Madison County Sheriff's Department to enhance public safety support and enforcement through their visitor contacts.

Recreation Site	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022
Windy Point Boat Launch	3,110	2,982	n/a	4,252	4,818	4,047
Palisades Recreation Area	4,310	8	7,90676	11,120	10,643	8,258
Ruby Creek Campground	2,947	2,797	n/a	5,800	3,809	3,923
Ruby Creek Boat Launch	4,107	3,885	n/a	5,734	5,565	5,732
Storey Ditch Boat Launch	4,242	4,199	n/a	6,984	7,286	7,505
Kobayashi Beach	15,078	16,435	15,642	18,596	15,812	15,604
Clute's Landing	6,091	6,853	6,734	5,589	4,738	4,264
Warm Springs Creek Access	34,145	37,082	37,617	67,440	61,014	58,347
California Corner	6,829	7,416	7,523	25,163	21,597	21,590
Canaday Boat Launch	7,853	8,529	8,652	10,711	7,630	8,169
Red Mountain Campground	7,762	6,910	8,027	17,050	9,611	8,500
Bear Trap Road	4,439	4,821	4,890	3,458	2,535	2,917
Trapper Springs	3,073	3,337	3,386	5,767	4,413	4,668
TOTALS	110,565	116,177	100,377	191,435	163,744	157,113

Table 3: Dillon Field Office Specific Site Vehicle Data Per Site annually on Madison River. Numbers are reported as total traffic (number of vehicles) volume. N/A notations indicate that data is not available those years.

Recreation Site	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022
Windy Point Boat Launch	3,110	2,982	n/a	4,252	4,818	4,047
Palisades Recreation Area	4,310	4,551	4,190	5,894	5,641	4,377
Ruby Creek Campground	1,562	1,482	n/a	3,074	2,019	2,079
Ruby Creek Boat Launch	2,177	2,059	n/a	3,039	2,949	3,038
Storey Ditch Boat Launch	2,248	2,225	n/a	3,702	3,862	3,978
Kobayashi Beach	15,078	16,435	15,642	18,596	15,812	15,604
Clute's Landing	6,091	6,853	6,734	5,589	4,738	4,264
Warm Springs Creek Access	18,097	19,653	19,937	35,743	32,337	30,924
California Corner	3,619	3,930	3,987	13,336	11,446	11,443
Canaday Boat Launch	4,162	4,520	4,586	5,677	4,044	4,330
Red Mountain Campground	4,114	3,662	4,254	9,037	5,094	4,505
Bear Trap Road	2,353	2,555	2,591	1,833	1,344	1,546

Trapper Springs	1,629	1,769	1,795	3,057	2,339	2,474
TOTALS	68,550	72,676	63,716	112,829	96,443	92,609

Table 4: Vehicle count numbers with use of NorthWestern Energy/Pinnacle Research formula (0.53) for adjusting for vehicle shuttles which can lead to double counts. Numbers are reported as adjusted traffic (number of vehicles) volume. N/A notations indicate that data is not available those years.

Recreation Site	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022
Windy Point Boat Launch	7,775	7,455	n/a	10,630	12,045	10,118
Palisades Recreation Area	10,775	11,378	10,475	14,735	14,103	10,943
Ruby Creek Campground	3,905	3,705	n/a	7,685	5,048	5,198
Ruby Creek Boat Launch	5,443	5,148	n/a	7,598	7,373	7,595
Storey Ditch Boat Launch	5,620	5,563	n/a	9,255	9,655	9,945
Kobayashi Beach	37,695	41,088	39,105	46,490	39,530	39,010
Clute's Landing	15,228	17,133	16,835	13,973	11,845	10,663
Warm Springs Creek Access	45,243	49,133	49,843	89,358	80,843	77,310
California Corner	9,048	9,825	9,968	33,340	28,615	28,608
Canaday Boat Launch	10,405	11,300	11,465	14,193	10,110	10,825
Red Mountain Campground	10,285	9,155	10,635	22,593	12,735	11,263
Bear Trap Road	5,883	6,388	6,478	4,583	3,360	3,865
Trapper Springs	4,073	4,423	4,488	7,643	5,848	6,185
TOTALS	171,378	181,694	159,292	282,076	241,110	231,528

Table 5: Vehicle occupancy rule of thumb formula (2.5 ppl per veh.) used to generate visitor use numbers – total est. people. N/A notations indicate that data is not available those years.

Current Fee Season

Fees are currently charged at the BLM DFO recreation sites from May 1 to September 30 each year. No fees are yet charged from October 1 to April 30, but all sites remain open for visitor use. Fee collection time periods remain flexible and may be adjusted should future needs become evident. For example, the collection period may be extended on either end based on factors such as weather conditions, increasing demand, operational requirements, or staffing availability. This flexibility provides the DFO discretion to charge recreation fees earlier or later in the year based upon “on-the-ground” conditions and management considerations. The goal is to balance standardizing fee seasons across sites for simplicity while also retaining the ability to adjust operations as required. Off-season use has increased, particularly during the shoulder seasons (spring and fall) and the ability to provide visitor services during these times is difficult without the presence of staff and volunteers, both of which are funding dependent. Any modifications to fee collection seasons will be posted publicly at recreation site entrances and online.

Reservation System and Options

The DFO will use various e-commerce technologies, as directed in BLM Instruction Memorandum 2022-010, to provide recreation visitors opportunities to find, reserve, and pay for campsites and day use within the field office. Most options are provided through the interagency reservation service Recreation.gov and may include a blend of Remote Offsite Kiosks and Scan-and-Pay. If the DFO decides to add additional reservation services or other types of e-commerce options available in the future, a required reservation service fee will be charged in addition to

any other standard or expanded amenity fees in accordance with 16 U.S.C. 6802(g)(2)(G).

Reservation services fees vary depending on the type of service provided. The reservation service fee is subject to contracting requirements and will be adjusted with contract changes or with future updates to the business plan. For visitors who wish not to pay the reservation service fee, the field office will attempt to continue to provide a blend of reservation and first-come first-serve at all fee campgrounds



Photograph 1: Palisades Recreation Area

VII. Tour of Existing DFO Fee Sites

Palisades Recreation Area
Palisades Recreation Area is located along the Upper Madison River about 25 miles south of Ennis Montana. Fees are collected for expanded amenities at Palisades Recreation Area from May 1 through September 30.

Palisades is popular for overnight camping, fishing, and river access. Use spiked in 2020 and has since

returned to pre-Covid numbers.

Visitor use is usually highest in July and slowly decreases from there. Palisades offers 12 designated camp sites that are currently available on a first come-first-serve basis. Day-use expanded amenities include an informational kiosk, fee station, vault latrines, garbage collection, picnic tables, drinking water, and fire rings. The area is patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and operation and maintenance of the sites is supported by BLM seasonal and permanent staff.

Palisades Campground (Existing Fee)	<p>Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle</p>	Expanded Amenity	Tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee or agent, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities
----------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 1: Palisades Fee Breakdown

Ruby Creek Campground



Photograph 2: Ruby Creek Campground

Ruby Creek Campground is located along the Upper Madison River about 23 miles south of Ennis Montana. Fees are collected for expanded amenities at Ruby Creek Campground from May 1 through September 30.

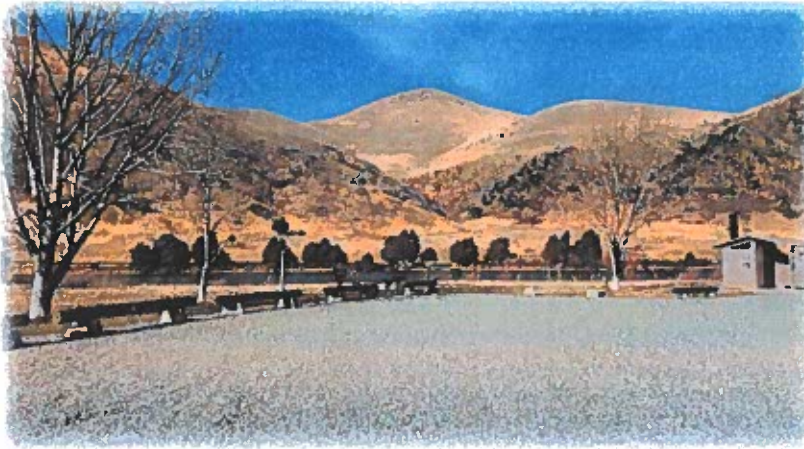
Ruby Creek Campground has a camp host site and is popular for overnight camping, fishing, and river

access. Ruby Creek offers 20 designated camp sites that are currently available on a first come-first-serve basis. Day-use expanded amenities include an informational kiosk, fee station, vault latrines, garbage collection, picnic tables, drinking water, and fire rings. The area is patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the sites is supported by BLM seasonal and permanent staff.

<p>Ruby Creek Campground (Existing Fee)</p>	<p>Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle</p>	<p>Expanded Amenity</p>	<p>Camp host, tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities</p>
-------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 2: Ruby Creek Fee Breakdown

Red Mountain Campground



Photograph 3: Red Mountain Campground

Red Mountain Campground is located along the Lower Madison River about 23 miles north of Ennis Montana and east of Norris Montana. Fees are collected for expanded amenities at Red Mountain Campground from May 1 through September 30.

Red Mountain Campground has a camp host site and is popular for overnight camping, fishing, and river access. Red

Mountain offers 17 designated camp sites that are a mix of first come-first serve and reservation system (Recreation.gov). The site has day use parking, an informational kiosk, fee station, vault latrines, garbage collection, picnic tables, drinking water, and fire rings. The area is patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the sites is supported by BLM seasonal and permanent staff.

<p>Red Mountain Campground (Existing Fee)</p>	<p>Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle</p>	<p>Expanded Amenity</p>	<p>Camp host, tent/trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities</p>
---------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 3: Red Mountain Fee Breakdown

Trapper Springs



Photograph 4: Trapper Springs

Trapper Springs is located along the Lower Madison River about 23 miles north east of Ennis Montana and east of Norris Montana, across from Red Mountain. Fees are collected for expanded amenities at Trapper Springs from May 1 through September 30.

Trapper Springs has a group pavilion and is popular for its overnight camping, fishing, and river access. Use spiked in 2020 and has since returned to pre-Covid numbers. Visitor use is usually highest in July and slowly decreases from there. Trapper Springs offers 15 designated campsites that are available on a first come-first serve basis and on a reservation basis for the pavilion (Recreation.gov). The site has day-use expanded amenities including an informational kiosk, fee station, vault latrines, garbage collection, picnic tables, drinking water, and fire rings. The area is patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the sites is supported by BLM seasonal and permanent staff.

Trapper Springs has a group pavilion and is popular for its

<p>Trapper Springs Campground/Pavilion (Existing Fee)</p>	<p>Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle</p>	<p>Expanded Amenity</p>	<p>Group use pavilion with stone hearth BBQ, picnic area, group use, tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities</p>
---------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 4: Trapper Springs Fee Breakdown

Bear Trap North and South



Photograph 5: Bear Trap North and South

Bear Trap North and South are located along the Lower Madison River about 23 miles north of Ennis Montana and east of Norris Montana. Bear Trap South runs along the Bear Trap Road and river south of Trapper Springs and Bear Trap North runs along the river North and west of the river. Fees are collected for expanded amenities at Bear Trap North and South from May 1 through September 30.

Bear Trap North and South are popular for overnight camping, fishing, and river access. Bear Trap North and South offer 12 designated camp sites on a first come-first serve basis. The site has day-

use standard amenities, an informational kiosk, fee station, vault latrines, garbage collection, picnic tables, drinking water, and fire rings. The area is patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the sites is supported by BLM seasonal and permanent staff.

<p>Bear Trap Road North & South Campgrounds <i>(Existing Fees)</i></p>	<p>Current: \$8 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle Proposed: \$15 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle 5 years after initial implementation: \$25 per night, \$5 per additional vehicle</p>	<p>Expanded Amenity</p>	<p>Tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 5: Bear Trap Road Fee Breakdown

VIII. Tour of Proposed New DFO Day Use Fee Sites

Warm Springs



Warm Springs Creek Access is located along the Lower Madison River approximately five miles east of Norris, Montana. It has become a very popular location for recreationists floating the river by innertube, hiking, picnicking, scenic

Photograph 6: Warm Springs Creek Access

viewing, float fishing the lower Madison, and whitewater rafting the Bear Trap Wilderness. Visitor use increases once the area and water warm (around July 4th) and on the weekends. There is a vault toilet, picnic tables, boat ramp, reusable bags for trash, and garbage disposal on site. Warm Springs is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of expanded fees, construction of a safer pedestrian corridor between sites will be prioritized. An electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov will be installed for future fee collection and the need for a permit system will be assessed. New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include a renovated boat ramp and installation of garbage receptacles.

<p>Warm Springs Day Use (New Fee)</p>	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	<p>Expanded Amenity</p>	<p>Multiple lane paved boat launch, several developed hand launch spots, paved designated developed parking, vault latrines, kiosk, picnic tables, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff</p>
-----------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 6: Warm Springs Fee Breakdown

California Corner



Photograph 7: California Corner

California Corner is located along the Lower Madison River approximately five miles east of Norris, Montana. It has become a very popular location serving as an overflow site from Warm

Springs Creek Access and for recreationalists floating the river by innertube, hiking, picnicking, scenic viewing, float fishing the lower Madison, and whitewater rafters floating the Bear Trap Wilderness. Visitor use increases once the area and water warm (around July 4th) and on the weekends. There is a vault toilet, boat ramp, and garbage disposal on site. California Corner is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of expanded fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov will be installed for future fee collection and the need for a permit system will be assessed.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and the installation of the vault toilet.

<p>California Corner Day Use (New Fee)</p>	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	<p>Standard Amenity</p>	<p>Multiple lane paved boat launch, designated developed parking, vault latrines, kiosk, picnic tables, security service via BLM staff, and accessible facilities</p>
----------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 7: California Corner Fee Breakdown

Canaday Boat Launch



Photograph 8: Canaday Boat Launch

Canaday Boat Launch is located along the Lower Madison River approximately six miles east of Norris, Montana. It has become a very popular location for recreational activities including floating the river by innertube, hiking, picnicking, scenic viewing, angling, and whitewater rafters enjoying the Bear Trap Wilderness.

Visitor use increases once the area and water warm (around July 4th) and on the weekends. There are two vault toilets, a boat ramp, reusable bags for trash, and garbage disposal on site. Canaday Boat Launch is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of expanded fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov will be installed for future fee collection.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of the parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and installation of second vault toilet.

<p>Canaday Day Use <i>(New Fee)</i></p>	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/ Annual Pass</p>	<p>Expanded Amenity</p>	<p>Raised boat launch, designated developed parking, vault latrines, picnic tables, kiosk and interpretive panels, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff</p>
---------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 8: Canaday Fee Breakdown

Kobayashi Beach



Photograph 9: Kobayashi Beach

Kobayashi Beach is located along the Ennis Lake approximately three miles east of McAllister, Montana. It has become a very popular location for recreational activities such as floating the lake, picnicking, scenic viewing, lake fishing, swimming, and the use of the beach area.

Visitor use increases once the area and water

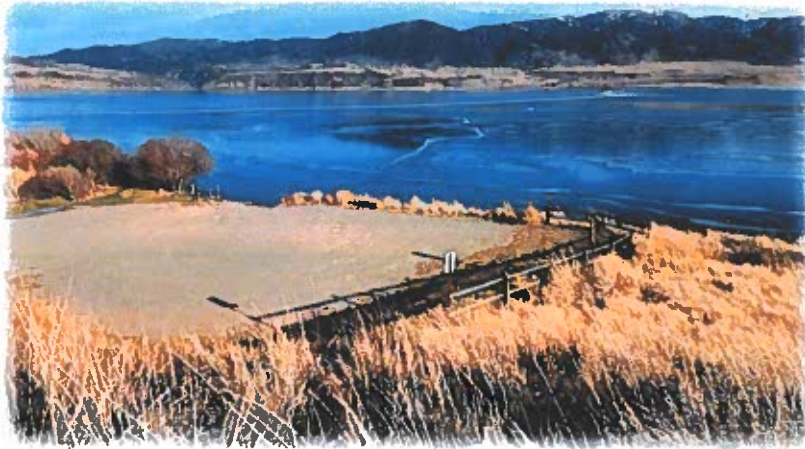
warm (around July 4th) and on the weekends. There are two vault toilets, a boat ramp, boat docks, and garbage disposal on site. Kobayashi is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of expanded amenity fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov will be installed for future fee collection.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and installation of a new dock system.

<p>Kobayashi Beach Day Use (New Fee)</p>	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	<p>Expanded Amenity</p>	<p>Paved boat launch, docks, paved designated developed parking, vault latrines, kiosk, picnic tables, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff</p>
--------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 9: Kobayashi Beach Fee Breakdown

Clute's Landing



Photograph 10: Clute's Landing

Clute's Landing is located along the Ennis Lake approximately two miles southeast of McAllister, Montana. It has become a very popular location for recreational activities such as floating the lake, picnicking, scenic viewing, and lake fishing. Visitor use increases on the weekends. There is a vault toilet, a boat ramp, two free campsites above the lake, and garbage disposal on site. Clute's Landing is

patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of standard amenity fees, an electronic pay station or "Scan and Pay" through Recreation.gov will be installed for future fee collection.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and installation of a new dock system.

<p>Clute's Landing Day Use (New Fee)</p>	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	<p>Standard Amenity</p>	<p>Concrete boat launch, designated developed parking, vault latrine, kiosk, picnic tables, free camping, and security services via BLM staff</p>
--------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 10: Clute's Landing Fee Breakdown

Storey Ditch



Photograph 11: Storey Ditch

Storey Ditch is located along the Upper Madison River approximately 15 miles south of Ennis, Montana. It is a very popular location for river access for anglers and boaters. There is a vault toilet, a dirt boat ramp, gravel parking area, picnic tables, and garbage disposal on site. Storey Ditch is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent

staff. Upon approval of standard amenity fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov will be installed for future fee collection. New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of the parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and the installation of a vault toilet.

<p>Storey Ditch Day Use (New Fee)</p>	<p>\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass</p>	<p>Standard Amenity</p>	<p>River access site, vault latrine, gravel boat launch, parking, picnic tables, and security services via BLM staff</p>
-----------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 11: Storey Ditch Fee Breakdown

Windy Point Boat Launch



Photograph 12: Windy Point Boat Launch

Windy Point is also located along the Upper Madison River approximately 29 miles south of Ennis, Montana. It is a very popular location for river access for anglers and boaters. There is a vault toilet, multi-lane boat ramp, gravel parking area, picnic tables, and garbage disposal on site. Windy Point is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff.

Upon approval of expanded amenity fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov will be installed for future fee collection. New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and the installation of the vault toilet.

Windy Point Day Use (New Fee)	\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass	Expanded	River access site, vault latrine, multi lane boat launch, parking, picnic tables
----------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Figure 10: Windy Point Fee Breakdown

Red Mountain, Trapper Springs, Bear Trap Road North, Bear Trap Road South Day Use
Red Mountain, Trapper Springs, (expanded amenities) and Bear Trap Road North and Bear Trap Road South (standard amenities) are camping and day-use sites along the Lower Madison River. It has become popular location for overflow from Warm Springs Creek Access, California Corner, and Red Mountain Campground. Recreational activities include floating the river by innertube, hiking, picnicking, scenic viewing, angling, and whitewater rafters enjoying the Bear Trap Wilderness. There are vault toilets, parking areas, and a garbage disposal at these locations. These sites are patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of day use fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov will be installed for future fee collection.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of parking areas, a new well at Trapper Springs, and installation of garbage receptacles.

Red Mountain, Trapper Springs, Bear Trap Road North & South	\$5/per person per day OR \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation:	Expanded	River access site, vault latrine, multi lane boat launch, parking, picnic tables
-------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Day Use (New Fee)	\$10/per person per day \$60/Annual Pass		
----------------------	---------------------------------------------	--	--

Figure 11: Red Mountain, Trapper Springs, Bear Trap Road North & South
Fee Breakdown

IX. Operations

Yearly operating expenses are estimated but unexpected expenses that are required throughout the year - drinking water systems, for example. As described below, extensive infrastructure and staffing is required to support these highly valued recreation opportunities that stretch across two southwestern Montana counties. Costs associated with operating and maintaining the infrastructure and visitor amenities associated with these sites include labor, vehicles, service contracts, supplies, and maintenance operations. Table 5 summarizes the approximate annual operations and maintenance budget. Values are approximate because actual spending can vary each year based upon maintenance needs, visitor use, ability to recruit and retain temporary staff, and equipment costs.

Staff	Work Month Cost	Work Months	Cost
2 Career Seasonal Park Rangers-GS 7	\$6,175	20	\$123,500
Career Seasonal River Ranger GS-7	\$6,175	10	\$61,750
4 Seasonal Park Rangers GS-7 (when fully staffed)	\$4,984	24	\$119,616
2 Seasonal Maintenance Workers WG-5 (when fully staffed)	\$3,774	12	\$45,288
Law Enforcement	\$9,500	6	\$57,000
Law Enforcement (Detailers for Madison) with Per Diem (when fully staffed)	\$13,500	1	\$13,500
Engineering/ Force Account	\$8,500	2	\$17,000
TOTAL			\$437,654
Operation and Maintenance Costs (estimated)			
Critical Expenses		Cost	
Vault Latrine Pumping Contract		\$50,000	
Garbage Collections/Solid Waste Fees		\$20,000	
Winterization of Water System		\$2,200	
Campground Host Reimbursement		\$9,000	
Road Maintenance		\$5,000	
Cleaning Supplies, Toilet Paper		\$10,000	
Vehicle Costs (fuel, repairs, etc.)		\$24,000	
TOTAL		\$120,200	
Average Cost to Manage BLM DFO Madison Corridor		\$380,000 - \$560,000 (staffing dependent) Average = \$470,000	

Costs Table 1: DFO Developed Recreation Program Annual Operating and Maintenance

X. Revenues and Expenditures

The Developed Recreation Program within the DFO is funded primarily through fees obtained from recreation users at the developed recreation sites (1232 funds), from SRPs for commercial uses of public lands within DFO, operation and maintenance support from NorthWestern Energy as part of their FERC license, and project specific funding from the River Fund Grant Program. Appropriated recreation program funding also provides for overall recreation staffing for the DFO which supports these sites, and additional appropriated funding provides for maintenance of facilities through the deferred and annual maintenance program. Currently, funds acquired through fees are used to maintain and operate the sites from which these funds are collected (i.e., Madison River recreation sites and rental cabins). Funds received from SRPs are used to oversee and administer the SRP program, and to manage commercial recreational use of the public lands and associated waters. Funds received from NorthWestern Energy for operation and maintenance are restricted to the operation and maintenance of the Madison Recreation Sites that are included under the FERC license.

Fee Program						
Year	Northwestern Energy O&M Contributions	River Fund Grants Received	BLM Fees Revenue	Revenue Totals	Average Ops & Maint. Cost	Revenue/Cost Differences
2018	\$22,350.00	\$145,000.00	\$76,250.57	\$243,600.57	\$470,000	\$226,400
2019	\$40,675.00	\$0	\$80,127.25	\$120,802.25	\$470,000	\$349,198
2020	\$40,675.00	\$0	\$100,759.75	\$141,343.75	\$470,000	\$328,657
2021	\$42,325.00	\$75,450.00	\$119,497.39	\$237,272.39	\$470,000	\$437,278
2022	\$44,680.00	\$0	\$91,149.25	\$135,829.25	\$470,000	\$334,171
2023	\$48,919.00	\$20,000.00	\$109,770.93	\$178,689.93	\$470,000	\$291,311

Costs Table 2: DFO Revenue/Costs Comparison for the Previous 5 Years

	Current <i>(based on FY23)</i>	With Proposed Day Use Fee <i>(Per Person)</i>
REVENUE (\$)		
Fee Site Revenue	\$109,771	\$607,029 <i>(calculated at 60% fee compliance and 20% visitors under 16)</i>
NorthWestern Energy O&M	\$48,919	\$48,919
Special Recreation Permits	\$13,727	\$13,727
Total Revenue	\$172,417	\$669,675
EXPENSES (\$)		
Labor <i>(from Costs Table 1)</i>	\$437,654	\$455,160 <i>(4% inflation factor)</i>
Critical O&M <i>(from Costs Table 1)</i>	\$120,200	\$125,008 <i>(4% inflation factor)</i>
Total Expenses	\$557,854	\$580,168
DIFFERENCE (\$)	\$385,437	\$89,507

Costs Table 3: DFO Revenue/Costs Comparison for the Proposed Fee Plan

Priorities for Future Expenditures

The DFO Developed Recreation Program strives to maintain an overall positive fee balance. In some years a positive fee balance will be generated, which along with other BLM funds, will be expended on-site to address large cost deferred maintenance projects. That is, a balance that provides for annual staffing and expenses, with a small positive balance to address large cost deferred maintenance projects, such as chip sealing parking lots, replace public water system infrastructure, and respond to the unexpected. These sites are not supported solely by recreation fees; as described above, some recreation and annual maintenance funding is also available to support the recreation use in these areas. These sites are highly developed; the use they experience is quality and consistent, and the number of amenities provided to ensure the public enjoys a superior recreation experience is exhaustive. The proposed fee increases will help to ensure that fee revenues support the expected level of visitor amenities and maintenance of all the facilities and water systems.

Priorities for the DFO Developed Recreation Fee Program will be to maintain and improve upon the current levels of visitor services currently provided and address on-going maintenance needs due to historic lack of staffing while covering the rising cost of operations. Visitor services that will be maintained/improved will include the following:

- Implementation of on-site digital fee pay stations that will increase compliance and minimize additional workload for new fee sites; on-site users often do not have cash and frequently request a digital pay option
- Increased compliance checks for resource protection and visitor safety. Based upon regular monitoring, fee compliance is a necessary function at areas like these. Without some level of compliance attention, it is estimated that 30-40 percent of visitors (both day use and overnight) pay the required fees, and 60-70 percent do not
- Increased public outreach to improve visitor safety and experiences
- Regular maintenance of recreation facilities including pavilions, administration buildings, shade structures, drinking water systems, boat ramps, day-use areas, kiosks, signage, and parking areas

Specific staffing needs that will be supported with proposed fee increases include two GS-7 Career Seasonal Park Rangers, one Career Seasonal GS-7 River Ranger, two WG-5 Seasonal Maintenance Workers, and 2 Career Seasonal GS-7 Park Rangers, all at the Madison River Recreation Sites to address ongoing maintenance needs and to provide the visitor services and safety necessary at these highly developed recreation sites. (Table 5).

The DFO Developed Recreation Program also has projects proposed over the next five years to address ongoing maintenance needs, improve visitor experiences, and to respond to increases in recreation use. Table (7) identifies proposed projects over the next five years and their estimated cost. These projects will be funded by a combination of deferred maintenance funding, River Fund Grants, and Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) funding.

Planned/Proposed/Implemented Projects	Funding	Cost
Implemented-Trapper springs Well Replacement (2023-2024)	Split FO funding and River Fund Grand	\$40,000
Implemented -Ruby Creek Road Chip Seal Project (2023)	GAOA	\$300,000
Implemented-Warm Springs Boat Launch replacement and Chip Seal Project (2023)	Split River fund Grant and GAOA	\$346,000
Construct and Install Lower Madison Barracks for Recreational Staff (2027)	Planned Fee Expenditure	\$3,000,000
Kiosk/Fee Station Upgrades (2025)	Planned Fee Expenditure	\$200,000
California Corner Parking Area Surfacing (2026)	Deferred Maintenance	\$800,000
Bear Trap Road Re-Surfacing (2028)	Deferred Maintenance	\$400,000
Trapper Springs Campsite Renovation and Expansions (2028)	Deferred Maintenance	\$400,000
Lower Madison Riverbank Stabilization (2028)	Planned Fee Expenditure	\$300,000
Ruby Campground Water Renovation (2030)	Planned Fee Expenditure	\$175,000
Palisades Campground Road Surfacing (2028)	Deferred Maintenance	\$300,000

Costs Table 4: Planned and Proposed Projects for the DFO Developed Recreation Program

Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates

The BLM is authorized to use either the Cost Recovery Fee Calculation Method or the Fair Market Value Fee Calculation Method to determine appropriate fees at recreation sites. The Cost Recovery Method assumes that fee revenues should cover the recreation sites' operating costs. The Fair Market Value Fee Calculation Method compares fee rates to those charged by other area recreation sites that provide similar opportunities.

The DFO has chosen to use the Fair Market Value Fee Calculation Method to ensure reasonably affordable rates for the region while allowing fees to support labor, operations, and maintenance of these sites to the highest extent possible. Table 8 summarizes recreation fees within the region with amenities like those provide by the DFO Recreation Sites.

Recreation Sites	Fee Structure	Amenities
FWP Fishing Access Sites		
All MT FWP Fishing Access Sites/Campgrounds	\$12 per night or \$7 with valid MT fishing license	Boat launch at most, vault latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities
USFS RECREATION SITES		
Wade Lake Campground (USFS)	\$15 per night, Madison Ranger District currently	Boat launch, drinking water, vault latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, garbage
Hilltop Campground, Madison River Riverview Campground (CG)	\$15 per night	Vault latrines, drinking water, garbage, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities
Rainbow Point CG	\$20 per night plus \$8 surcharge for electrical hookups	Boat launch, drinking water, vault latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, garbage, electric hookups
Beavercreek Campground, Lonesome Hurst CG	\$20 per night	Drinking water, vault latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities
Spire Rock CG	\$16 per night Group use site \$30-45	Drinking water, latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, trash cans and group use facility.
Greek Creek CG, Langhor CG, Swan Creek CG, Moose Creek CG	\$20 per night first two vehicles are included in fee and a \$8.00/night fee for each additional vehicle	Drinking water, latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, trash cans.
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK CAMPGROUNDS		
Slough Creek and Pebble Creek Campgrounds	\$20 per night	vault latrines, drinking water, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, trash, and recycling
Mammoth Campground	\$25 per night	flush toilets, drinking water, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, trash, and recycling
BLM Butte Field Office Campgrounds		
Chain of Lakes sites (White Sandy, Devil's Elbow, Log Gulch, Holter Lake)	\$16/ night per sleeping unit (tent, RV, etc.) Group use site \$80-140	Boat launch, drinking water, latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities

USFS RENTAL CABINS		
Vigilante Cabin (USFS)	\$50 per night	Drinking water, vault latrine, electric lights
Bloody Dick Cabin (USFS), Horse Prairie Cabin (USFS)	\$20 per night	Drinking water, vault latrine, wood stove
Canyon Creek Cabin (USFS)	\$20 per night	vault latrine, wood stove
Day Use Fees		
Chain of Lakes sites (White Sandy, Devil's Elbow, Log Gulch, Holter Lake)	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass	Boat launch, parking, latrines, picnic tables, accessible facilities
Canyon Ferry Sites	\$5-\$10/day, or \$50-\$100/season	Boat launch, parking, latrines, picnic tables, accessible facilities
Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument	\$5/watercraft per day and \$4/person for overnight use	Boat launch, parking, latrines, picnic tables, accessible facilities
Montana State Parks	\$8/day Nonresident and residents who opted out vehicle registration fee	Boat launch, parking, latrines, picnic tables, accessible facilities

Costs Table 5: Fair Market Value for Recreation Sites within the vicinity of the DFO.

XI. Impacts from Charging - Not Charging Fee Rates

The primary purpose of the proposed fees is to maintain and preserve the investment that the public has made into the DFO recreation sites and to provide the visitor amenities that are expected at developed recreation sites.

The proposed fees and fee increases will help to defray the cost of staffing for maintenance and visitor services, commensurate with significant recent increases in visitation and associated needs and pressures, as well as help offset the rising costs of operating these sites.

Impacts from Modifying Fees to Recreation Users

Benefits to Recreational Users

If fees were raised, current services and facility maintenance standards at the Madison River Recreation Sites will continue uninterrupted for recreational users. The modified fees will offset the rising costs of operating the program and additional revenues will be used to increase staffing which will better support visitor services and public safety. Specifically, hardened parking along

the Lower Madison corridor will increase safety for drivers, pedestrians, and recreationists, and reduce user conflicts at boat launches.

Benefits to Local Economy

The Madison River has become a heavily used recreation destination in the last 10 years due to its blue-ribbon fishing and tepid waters perfect for tubing. These visitors purchase food, gas, lodging, and vehicle shuttle services in the small surrounding communities. Some visitors also utilize commercial outfitters to experience various recreational activities within the corridor.

Benefits to the Environment

Recreation experiences provide visitors the opportunities to connect to the Madison River ecosystem and develop a desire to become stewards of the resources. Additional revenue will be used to develop an interpretive program that will include educational signage, special programming, and volunteer opportunities, reducing negative impacts to resources associated with higher levels of visitation in the area.

Socioeconomic Impacts, including Low Income Populations and At-Risk Communities

The Upper Madison River draws visitors locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally and is located near some of the world's best-known recreation sites. Among anglers throughout the world, the Madison River is known as a premier blue-ribbon trout fishery. Implementing day use fees will have minimal impact on the ability of private boaters or commercial passengers to afford to recreate on the Upper Madison. \$5 is a nominal fee for the average visitor and will not greatly impact most low-income populations that recreate on the Upper Madison. This fee is a minor part of the total cost of a river trip. There are also numerous bank fishing access locations along this segment for those lower income visitors who cannot afford a guided experience, broadening the inclusivity of this stretch of river.

The Lower Madison draws recreationists looking to experience the calm waters flowing from Ennis Lake and enjoy the social component of floating with large groups. \$5 is a nominal fee for the average visitor and will not greatly impact most low-income populations that recreate on the Lower Madison. The fee is a small part of the total cost of a social float trip when other costs such as food, beverages, and fuel are considered. Some very low-income visitors may be forced to find alternative recreation sites though, those that are fee-free. The DFO does offer many fee-less areas, available on a year-round basis, which include less developed infrastructure and fewer services, but offer visitors to opportunity to enjoy their public lands for free.

The proposed day use fees are incremental and include a season pass option to reduce the burden for regular, local users. The DFO believes that this stepped fee increase will minimize the economic impacts to visitors while still allowing for increased staffing and maintenance activities.

Additionally, inclusivity honoring and acceptance of the following:

- Department of Interior Fee Free Days
- Every Kid Outdoors Pass (EKO)
- America the Beautiful Pass (covers Day Use fees at Standard Amenity sites only)
- Madison River Recreation Site Annual Pass (covers all BLM DFO Madison R. Day Use fee sites)

Impacts from Not Modifying Fees to Recreation Users

A failure to increase fees will lead to a continued heavy reliance on appropriated funding to support the public's river recreation opportunities. While the current funds can support the operations on the Madison River, not increasing fees will severely inhibit the ability to implement more improvements at sites. A disruption or decrease in the current level of services will have negative impacts on recreational users, the local economy, and the environment.

Negative Impacts to Recreational Users

Maintaining the current fee structure (e.g., no change in fees) at the DFO Madison River recreation sites support will result in a decrease in essential staffing, and deterioration in infrastructure and timely facility maintenance. Without additional staffing, some sites such as Warm Springs Creek Access, will become unsafe and could result in catastrophes with pedestrians and motor vehicles. Some necessary improvements at sites, such as Kobayashi Beach, have not been implemented and users are getting frustrated with the lack of work that is able to be performed at these sites. With appropriated funding, sometimes it takes years to complete necessary projects. Projects that have been necessary but difficult to complete due to lack of funding include comprehensive bank stabilization and replacement of the boat dock at Kobayashi Beach, and Red Mountain Campground landscaping and expansion.

Many of the improvements that are needed are very costly and will take years of scrimping funds to prepare for. If fee increases are not implemented, many of these projects will not be completed for years if funding even becomes available at all.

The list below provides examples of recent impacts to recreation users:

- Warm Springs and California Corner have seen record generating visitor numbers between 2020 and present, resulting in crowding, conflicts, and danger to pedestrians.
- Staff turnover has increased over the past few years, the ability to support volunteers has become more challenging, and management has more often had to deal reactively with daily emergencies such as cleanliness, watering, safety, and other trials based on higher visitation. Like many others in the area, the DFO Recreation Program has struggled with inadequate staffing levels and inability to hire short-term workers. That has limited the ability to perform routine and proactive maintenance and caused interruptions to services to be considered.
- Additionally, low staff numbers result in a lack of a consistent BLM presence at many of our developed recreation sites which encourages user conflicts and can lead to a rise in illicit activity.
- With the difficulties in hiring seasonals, the DFO has had to rely on contracts to clean toilets along the Madison River, resulting in decreased ability to adequately staff sites.

Without modifications to the existing fee structure, a continued lack of maintenance and decreased visitor services will occur and continue to worsen with the increase of operating costs over time. Deteriorating facilities due to lack of maintenance and reductions in visitor services will significantly reduce recreation experiences for the public. There may also be an increase in conflicts between user groups due to limited services, decline in public safety support, and a drain on funds because of the increased need for Law Enforcement partnerships.

Negative Impacts to Local Economy

Without increases to and implementation of fees, erosion of services, such as limited cleaning of sites, or limited development or improvements to facilities will occur. This could impact the recreation sector of the local economy in its entirety. Decreased quality of the recreational experience could result in visitors going elsewhere to spend money on services such as gas, food, lodging, etc.

Negative Impacts to the Environment

The BLM recreation sites along the Madison River started to improve with the establishment of developed recreation construction and the enhanced management of these sites, many of which needed general maintenance and improvements. Dispersed and unmanaged boat access and hazardous parking occurred along the river corridor, resulting in impacts to riparian resources, water quality, floodplains, cultural resources, and the safety and enjoyment of visitors. Human sanitation was also an issue at the undeveloped sites, as well as the limited maintenance at sites which exacerbated sanitation issues present due to high visitation.

Failure to maintain these BLM recreation sites will result in the reintroduction of the many negative impacts to the environment that have been previously solved. For example, should the Madison River recreation staff be unable to regularly service toilets along the river, visitors will be less likely to utilize toilets, resulting in sanitation issues in other areas of sites since human needs will not change. Additionally, limiting future development or improvement to sites will lead to negative impacts to the environment as increased use continues.

Socioeconomic Impacts, including Low Income Populations and At-Risk Communities

Keeping the same fee structure will most likely benefit low-income populations by maintaining low to no costs for recreation. However, first-rate visitor experiences will become difficult to provide which could prevent recreationists from continuing to use sites as quality decreases. Socioeconomic impacts can be mitigated by keeping some sites fee-free, which is the case along the Madison River corridor.

XII. Public Outreach

In accordance with the FLREA, the DFO will provide the public with an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed fee changes and the intended uses of the revenue from these fees. The DFO presented to the RAC in October 2023 a proposal to develop a Madison River Business Plan. The fee proposal and draft business plan was presented to the BLM Western Montana Resource Advisory Council (RAC) for its formal review in January 2024. At that time the RAC established a sub-committee of RAC members with a diverse representation of Madison River users and outfitters. The subcommittee presented their recommendations to the RAC and BLM on June 27, 2024. As a result, the RAC supported a per person day use fee and made this recommendation to the BLM. Listed below are outreach efforts that have occurred, are occurring, or will occur, to notify the public of their opportunity to provide comments on this Business Plan:

- Two Western Montana Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) presentations and discussions, with a recommendation taking place during the latter in support of increasing campground fees and implementing day use fees along BLM sites at the Madison River corridor. Meeting notes can be viewed here: <https://www.blm.gov/get-involved/resource-advisory-council/near-you/montana-dakotas/western-montana-rac>
- Four RAC Subcommittee meetings took place to broaden the discussion of charging fees and how with a larger and more diverse panel. Meeting notes can be viewed here: <https://www.blm.gov/get-involved/resource-advisory-council/near-you/montana-dakotas/western-montana-rac>
- Local outreach in Madison and Gallatin communities to meet with business owners, retailers, and organizations and discuss the proposal
- Public notices of proposed fees posted at DFO recreation sites with information on how the public can provide comment
- Posting of the Draft Business Plan on the BLM National Recreation Site Business Plan website which solicits feedback: <https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/permits-and-fees/business-plans>
- BLM online News Release notifying the public of the proposed fee changes and request to comment
- Public Notice in local newspapers notifying the public of the proposed fee changes and request to comment
- Direct mail/email to stakeholders and interest groups, giving presentations as requested
- Notification of affected County Commissions, as well as Congressional Representatives
- Upon approval, the DFO would publish a Notice of Intent to Collect Recreation Fees in the Federal Register six months prior to implementing the new fee structure.

