



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

Upper Snake Field Office

Snake River Designated Camping Individual Special Recreation Permit Business Plan

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Prepared by the BLM
Upper Snake Field Office



Mission statement

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

Cover Photo

(South Fork of the Snake River, BLM Photograph)

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This business plan was prepared by the Bureau of Land Management's Upper Snake 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 Snake River Planning Area designated camping areas and campsites within the Upper Snake Field Office.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	5
Background and Authorities	7
Special Area Permits and Fees	8
Introduction to the BLM Upper Snake Field Office Recreation Program.....	9
Site Descriptions and New Recreation Fee Rates	16
Fee Area Site Description	16
Introduction of New Fees	19
Impact of New Fee.....	21
E-Commerce and Reservation Services Implementation	22
Operating Costs.....	22
Projected Operating Costs	22
Cost Analysis and Fee Justification.....	25
Recreation Fee Revenues.....	26
Fee Collection Process	26
Revenue Allocation	26
Revenue Summary	26
Priorities for Future Expenditures.....	28
Overview of Priorities.....	28
Planned Expenditures and Long-Term Investment Strategy	29
Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates.....	29
Comparative Analysis of ISRP Fees.....	30
Public Outreach	31
Field Office/District Office Recommendation	32

Executive Summary

The BLM Idaho Falls District Upper Snake Field Office (USFO) Business Plan outlines the proposal to establish an Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) fee for existing and future designated camping areas and designated campsites in the Snake River Planning Area covering approximately 119 miles of river and includes the South Fork of the Snake River (South Fork) from Palisades Dam to the confluence with the Henrys Fork of the Snake River (Henrys Fork), the Henrys Fork from the confluence to St. Anthony, and the main stem of the Snake River (Main Snake) from the confluence south to Market Lake Canal below Lewisville Knolls. Currently all the designated campsites are in the South Fork Canyon (Conant Boat Access to Black Canyon and along the river corridor between Black Canyon and Byington Boat Access, 26 river miles), but as sites are designated in the future this business plan would apply to newly added camping areas and campsites. The requirement of an ISRP and associated fee would affect the visitors utilizing the designated campsites along the river corridor during the fee season (approximately May 24th through Sept. 30th each year; dates may be adjusted as needed). The USFO manages the recreation program in the Snake River Planning Area in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (USDA FS). This plan has been developed to ensure that the USFO and USDA FS continue to provide high-quality recreational experiences while managing increased visitor demand, maintaining infrastructure, and protecting natural resources.

This business plan was prepared to meet the criteria defined in the BLM 2930-1 Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook (H-2930-1 Recreation and Permit Fee Administration Handbook) and the "Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, 2004" (FLREA). FLREA authorizes the BLM and USDA FS to establish and locally retain collected recreation fees associated with an ISRP for use of Special Areas.

FLREA guidelines require that each fee program have a business plan which thoroughly discusses fees and explains how fees are consistent with the criteria set forth in FLREA and other agency directives. The primary purpose of this business plan is to serve as public notification of the objectives for use of recreation fee revenues from the establishment of the ISRP fee and to provide the public an opportunity to comment on these objectives. The plan ultimately reflects the BLM and USDA FS's commitment to providing sustainable recreation opportunities and to balance affordability with the need to maintain and improve the quality of the visitor experience.

Key Changes

Introduction of New Fees:

- **ISRP fee for designated camping within the Snake River Planning Area at existing and future designated camping areas and campsites:** A group size for public, non-commercial visitors, commercial (including guides/employees), competitive, and organized groups is no more than 25 people. The fee applies to adults (18 years and older); children under age 18 are not counted. To encourage more youth participation in outdoor recreation, kids camp for free. For example, a group of six adults (18 years and older) and 19 kids (17 years or younger, accompanied by an adult permit holder) would pay \$20 per campsite per night.
 - **Small group size (1-6): \$20** per night (one ISRP covers up to 6 people), for designated camping in the river corridor during the established fee season.
 - **Medium group size (7-14): \$50** per night (one ISRP covers up to 14 people), for designated camping in the river corridor during the established fee season.
 - **Large group size (15-25): \$100** per night (one ISRP covers up to 25 people), for designated camping in the river corridor during the established fee season.

Improvements:

- **Anticipated Improvements**

As there has never been a fee for designated camping, there is currently no revenue. The ISRP fees are necessary to cover the rising cost of administering, monitoring, and maintaining camping opportunities along the river corridor, such as costs associated with staffing and labor, fuel, supplies, and campsite maintenance, among other needs. The fee is designed to balance affordability with the need to maintain and improve the quality of the visitor's experience on the river corridor, as well as remain comparable in cost to rivers in the region with similar river management programs for camping.

The BLM and USDA FS anticipate a limited positive fund balance from the implementation of the ISRP fee, such revenue would be used to:

- Continue essential program services (e.g., administrative costs, staffing, and visitor information).
- Maintain designated campsites (e.g., litter, campfire ash, and human waste removal; signage installation; invasive species) management.
- Fund program enhancements for visitor benefit and operational efficiency (e.g., increased field presence, resource protection measures, and safety infrastructure).

These expenditures are consistent with §6807 of FLREA, which authorizes the use of fee revenue for repair, maintenance, visitor services, signage, law enforcement related to recreation, and other direct program costs. The fee is designed to balance affordability with the need to maintain and improve the quality of the visitor's experience, as well as remain comparable in cost to ISRP fees at other locations managed regionally by other federal agencies.

Background and Authorities

This business plan has been prepared to meet the criteria defined in the FLREA (Public Law 108-447; Title VIII, Section 801; 16 U.S.C. 6801–6814).

- **The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976** (Public Law 94-579; 43 U.S.C. 1701–1787), 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 directs the Secretary of the Interior to regulate through permits or other instruments the use of the public lands. Section 303 of FLPMA contains BLM's authority to enforce the regulations and impose penalties.
- **The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) of 2004 (Public Law 108-447)**, repealed applicable portions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and replaced BLM's authority to collect recreation fees. This current law authorizes BLM to collect recreation fees at sites that meet certain requirements, allows BLM to keep the fee revenues at the local offices where they were collected, and directs how BLM will manage and utilize these revenues.
- **Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 2930 (43 CFR 2930) Permits for Recreation on Public Lands** contains the regulations governing BLM's recreation permitting programs.

This business plan has also been prepared pursuant to all applicable BLM recreation fee program policies and guidance, including:

- BLM Manual 2930, *Recreation Permits and Fees*, Rel. 2-296 dated October 22, 2007
- BLM Handbook 2930-1, *Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook*, Rel. 2-300 dated November 17, 2014

The BLM strives to manage recreation and visitor services to serve the diverse visitor outdoor recreation demands while helping to maintain sustainable setting conditions

needed to conserve the public lands, so the visitors' desired recreation choices remain available. The BLM's goals for delivering recreation benefits from BLM-administered lands and waters 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, and
- Provide for and receive fair value in recreation.

Special Area Permits and Fees

The BLM USFO is undertaking an environmental review, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and all other applicable statutes, that would evaluate establishing the Snake River Planning Area as a "special area" with a fee-based permit system. BLM regulations and policy define a "special area" as: any area where the authorized officer determines that resources need to be protected by special management and control measures and that a permit system for individual use (i.e., public and outfitted/commercial) would achieve management objectives (43 CFR §2932.5; BLM H-2930-1, Chapt.1, I.D.). If the decision is made to designate the Snake River Planning Area as a special area and that a permit system for individual use of the special area would achieve management objectives, implementation of the permit system would be published in the Federal Register (43 CFR §2932.13).

The FLREA authorizes the BLM to collect special recreation permit fees for specialized recreation uses of federal recreational lands. Under 43 CFR §2931.2, BLM may establish a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) and fee system for the use of special areas. SRPs for individual recreation use in a special area are referred to as "Individual Special Recreation Permits" (ISRPs) (BLM H-2930-1, Chapt.1, I.D.). ISRP fee rates are set by the BLM State Director based on several considerations to ensure a fair return for the use of public lands. These considerations include management costs related to the special area, costs of operating the permit system, and comparison with fees charged in similar areas.

In accordance with FLREA, the fee-setting process also includes opportunities for public participation and input, including public review of the business plan and coordination with the BLM Resource Advisory Council prior to final approval and implementation of new or modified fees.

Fees charged in a special area apply to all users of the area, including public, non-commercial visitors; clients, guests and guides/employees of commercial permittees; and participants and spectators in a competitive event (BLM H-2930-1, Chapt.1, III.G.2.e.).

Introduction to the BLM Upper Snake Field Office Recreation Program

The BLM USFO is a component of the BLM Idaho Falls District and is the administrative unit primarily responsible for the recreation program including that which takes place in the Snake River Planning Area. The USFO is the largest field office in the Idaho Falls District, managing about 1,854,000 acres of BLM-administered lands in eastern Idaho. The boundaries of the field office include Craters of the Moon to the west, Wyoming to the East, Montana to the north, and the Snake River and Bonneville County Line to the south. The major programs managed by the field office include grazing, recreation, and realty.

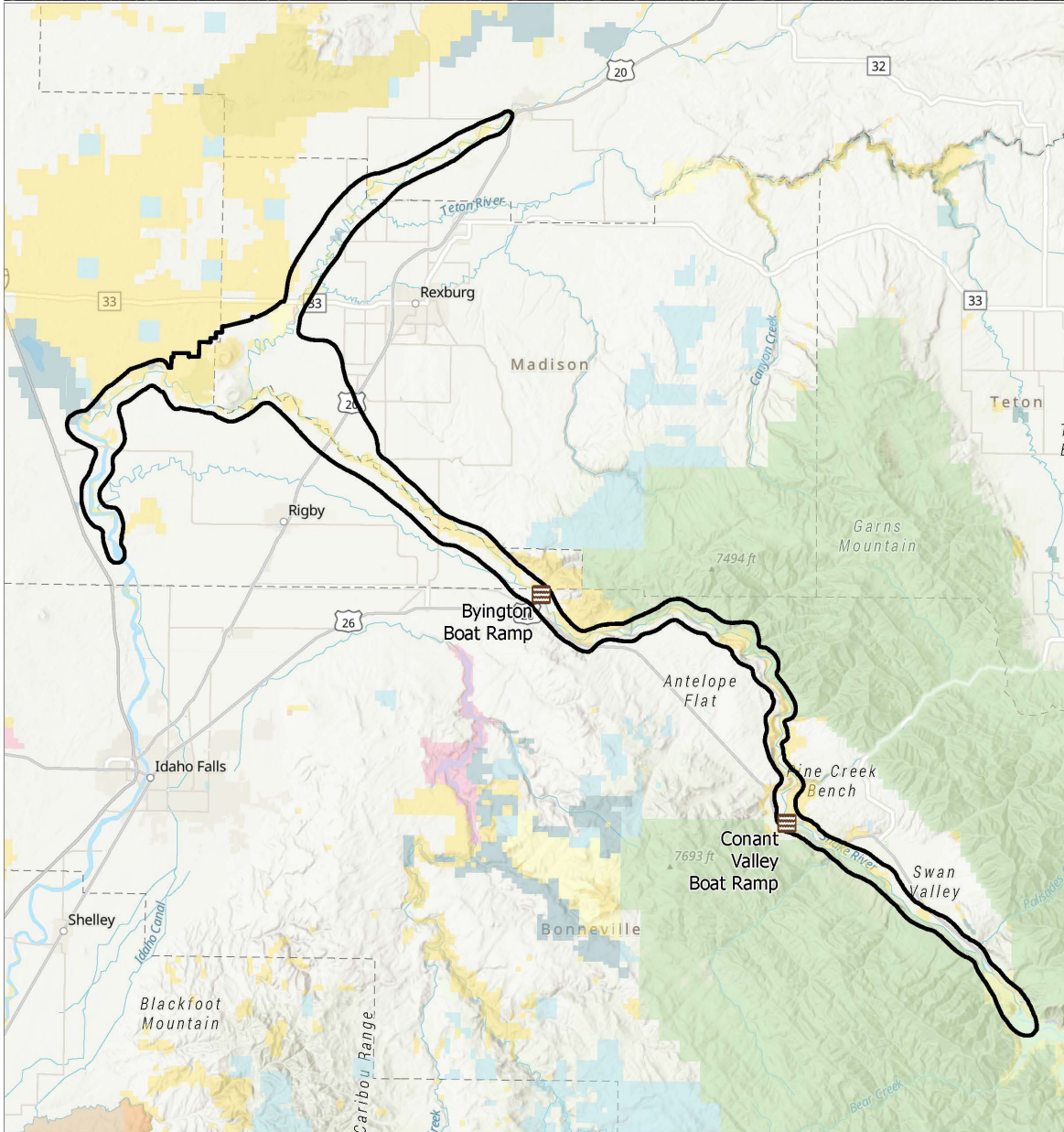
The USFO offers one of the most dynamic and complex recreation programs in the BLM. Whether fishing or floating the internationally renowned South Fork, taking an exhilarating buggy ride on the St. Anthony Sand Dunes, or a quiet stroll on the Cress Creek Nature Trail, there is an impressive variety of recreational activities for enthusiasts of all ability levels. With over 250,000 visitors a summer, the South Fork and Henry's Fork are some of the most sought-after fishing destinations. Likewise, the St. Anthony Sand Dunes offers over 10,000 acres of continuous sand dunes for those interested in recreating on public land. The Dunes also see approximately 250,000 visitors a year.

Migrating and resident wildlife also provide plentiful opportunities for hunting, photography, and wildlife observation within the USFO. The recreation program plays a crucial role in improving access to appropriate recreation opportunities, ensuring quality recreational experiences and enjoyment of natural and cultural resources, and providing for fair value in recreation. The USFO is committed to providing exceptional recreational experiences while effectively managing the impact of increasing visitation.

Overview of the USFO Snake River Planning Area Recreation Fee Area:

The Snake River Planning Area is designated as a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) and is one of the key areas within the USFO recreation program. This area is a popular destination for boating, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing, and camping. The Snake River Planning Area is characterized by three sections; the upper section of the South Fork near Palisades Dam (a mountain valley); the middle section includes the South Fork Canyon (a rugged canyon); and the lower section including the Main Snake and Henry's Fork of the Snake River (a wide river with a broad, open flood plain). Unique geologic features, wildlife, rare plants, and a cottonwood gallery forest make the Snake River corridor ecologically important. These unique features support designation by the

BLM as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and SRMA. The South Fork from Palisades Dam to the confluence with the Henrys Fork is also eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. These designations require the BLM and USDA FS to manage the area to protect outstandingly remarkable values while allowing for public use and enjoyment. Figure 1 shows a map of the Snake River Planning Area Recreation Fee Area.



Snake River Planning Area Boundary	Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)	Other Federal	State Dept. Fish and Game, Parks and Rec. / Other
Water Based Site	US Forest Service (USFS)	Indian Reservation (IR)	Private / Other
Surface Management Agency Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	Military Reservation / Corps of Engineers	State	

Basemap: Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, County of Jefferson, ID, Madison-Rexburg GIS, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, USFWS

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Figure 1: Map of the Snake River Planning Area Recreation Fee Area

The middle section of the river, the South Fork Canyon, holds 56 designated campsites (see figures 2 and 3, nine managed by USDA FS and 47 managed by USFO) for the public to use along the river between Conant and Byington Boat Accesses. The South Fork Canyon is primarily used by the angling community and campers utilizing motorized and non-motorized watercraft to access the canyon. This area is an important economic and cultural draw to the region for visitors desiring the scenic value, recreation opportunities, and its designation as a blue-ribbon trout stream. The river corridor hosts the largest cottonwood gallery forest in the western United States providing habitat for dozens of bird, fish, and big game species.

As outlined in the 1991 Snake River Activity/Operations Plan and 2008 Snake River Activity/Operations Plan Revision, designated camping areas and designated campsites were identified to manage the recreation use and resources along the river corridor. These areas were established to prevent impact to bald eagle nesting areas, occurrences of Ute Ladies'-tresses orchid (listed as threatened under the Threatened and Endangered Species Act), and sensitive riparian habitat. A 1992 published rule required camping in designated camping areas. Since 1995, a free self-issue permit has been required to camp in these designated areas along with removal of human waste with a carry out system. In 2011, a supplementary rule was finalized limiting camping to five (5) days, camping only in designated campsites, and the requirement of a fire pan and ash removal for fires. The 2018 Interagency Management of SRPs/Special Use Permits (SUPs) and Designated Camping within the Snake River Planning Area and Teton River Canyon decision identified the implementation of a permit system and associated fee for camping during the peak summer season and group size limitation to 25 people.

Due to a significant rise in visitor numbers over recent years, the Snake River Planning Area has become a focal point of higher visitor demand for designated camping opportunities, especially in the South Fork Canyon. This demand has created a need for additional maintenance and monitoring of designated camping areas to provide for visitor safety and enjoyment. The campsites are first come, first served; and during busy periods of the summer campers are unsure if a campsite will be available, which may cause a sense of insecurity not knowing if a campsite is available and/or create conflict or competition with other recreationists to secure a campsite. If a campsite is not available, this may compel campers to encroach into sensitive or threatened plant species habitat, intact riparian areas, and/or bald eagle nesting closures.

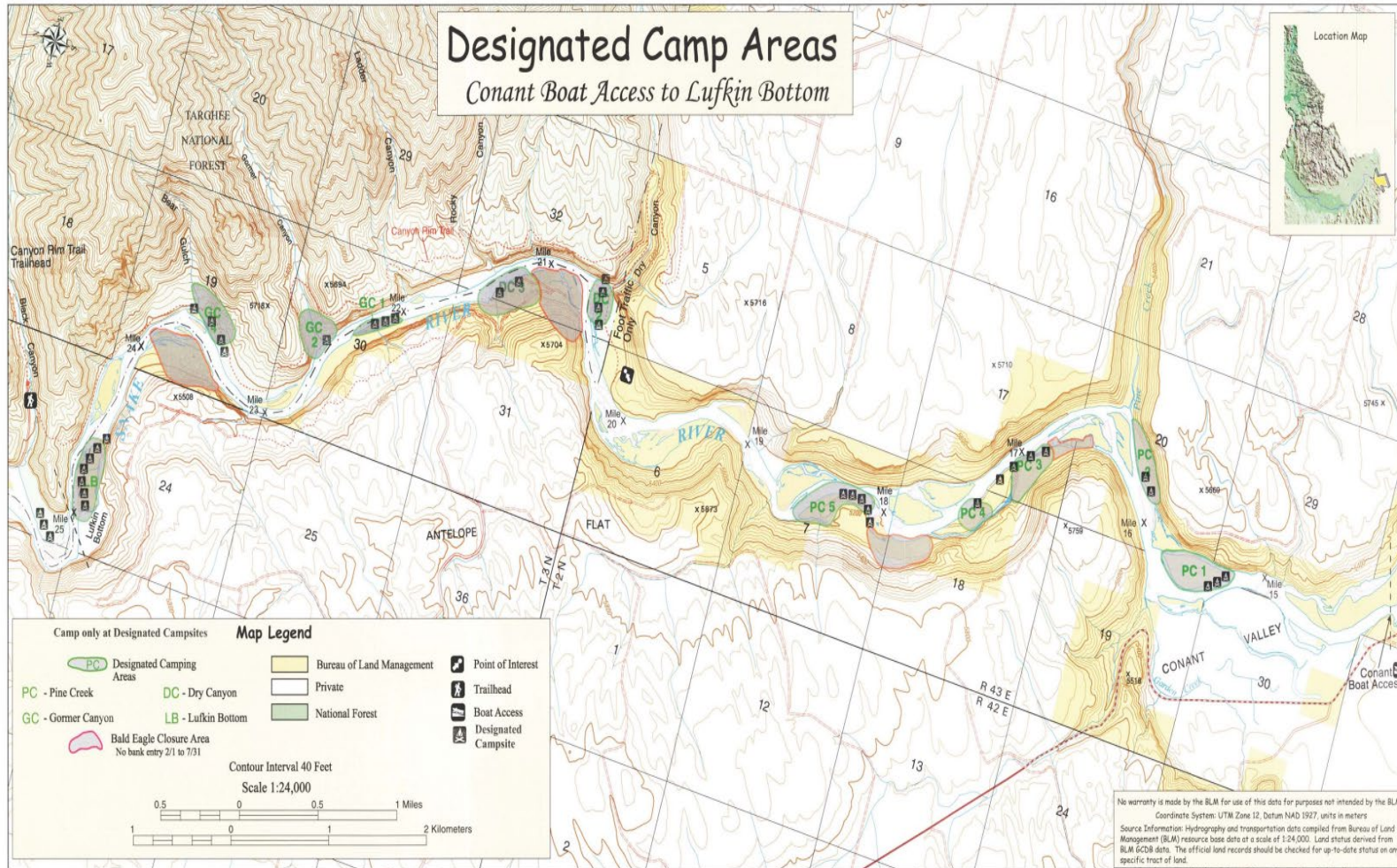


Figure 2: Map showing location of designated camping areas and campsites between Conant Boat Access and Lufkin Bottom

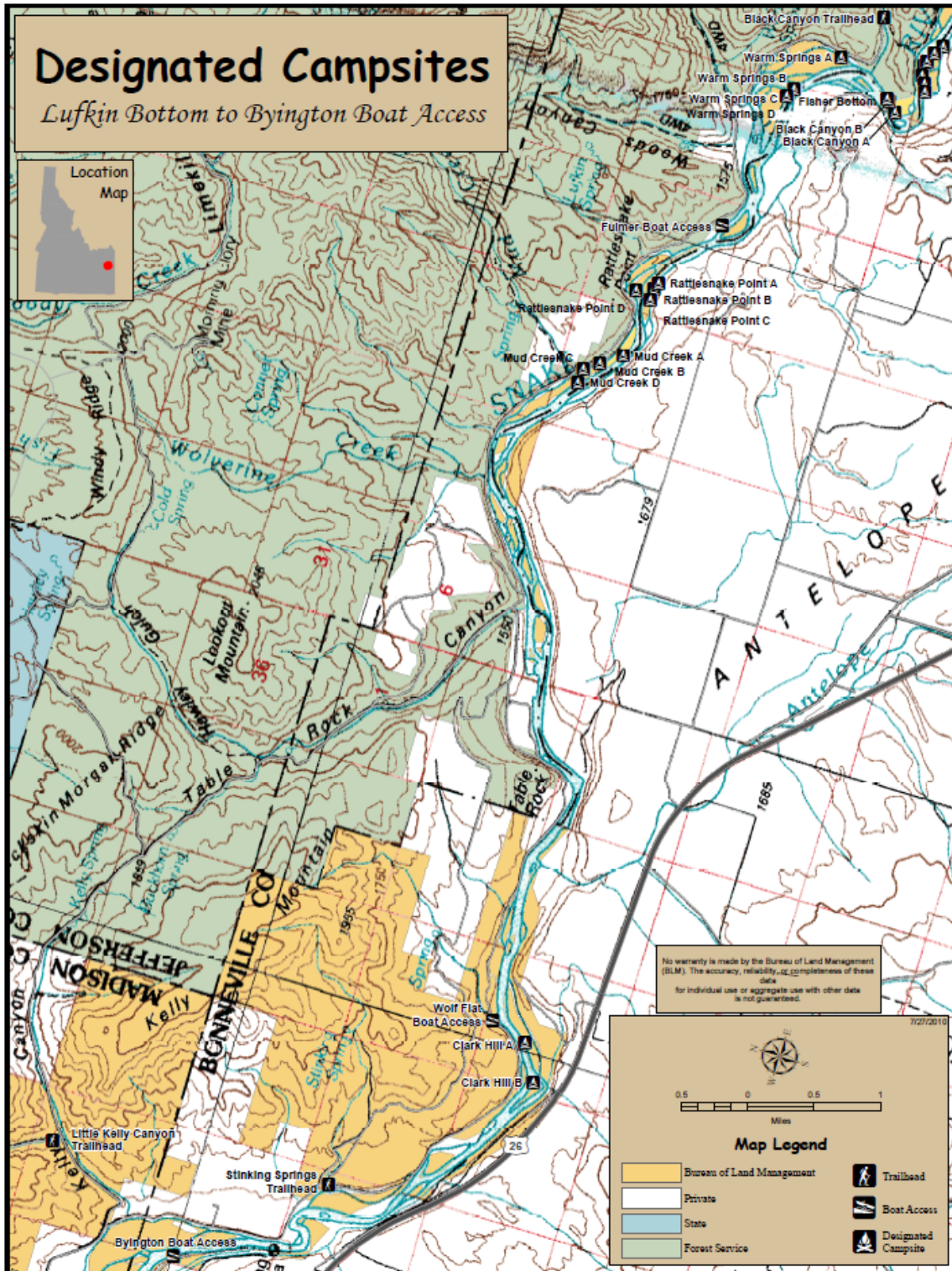


Figure 3: Map showing location of designated campsites below Lufkin Bottom to Byington Boat Access

Visitor Data Table:

To provide context for the fee changes, the following table illustrates the number of recorded visitors to the Snake River Planning Area Recreation Fee Area for the last five years:

Table 1: Estimated number of visitors to the Snake River Planning Area, Fiscal Years 2020-2024

Year	Palisades Dam	Palisades Creek	Spring Creek	Conant	Fullmer	Byington	Twin Bridges	Lorenzo	Menan	Mike Walker	Totals
2020*	16,074	42,793	36,110	20,681	7,593	25,764	2,355	16,347	5,952	6,174	171,671
2021	14,914	15,197	35,791	22,845	8,777	34,269	3,693	20,808	4,065	4,662	153,117
2022	14,683	14,023	35,445	22,674	8,601	22,092	2,094	19,077	3,780	5,108	147,577
2023	14,683	12,849	35,098	22,502	8,425	18,774	5,481	19,077	13,676	5,553	156,118
2024	14,451	11,179	33,072	24,252	7,987	15,456	8,868	17,325	6,831	6,198	145,619

**Higher visitation due to COVID 19 pandemic*

Purpose of the Fee Program:

The requirement to obtain an ISRP and pay an associated fee for designated camping in the Snake River Planning Area Recreation Fee Area is crucial for addressing the challenges posed by increased visitor use and resource concerns. There is additional pressure on facilities, staffing, and monitoring caused by rising visitation. For example, facilities need additional maintenance (daily cleaning versus every other day) and/or repairs, additional staffing is needed to maintain the facilities and accomplish monitoring of visitation and resources. The fee collected will be directly reinvested into the area to maintain and improve staffing and river patrols for resource protection and public safety, administration of the fee program, restoration and resource enhancement projects on the river corridor, law enforcement assistance, and maintenance or enhancement of boat access locations. This reinvestment ensures that the area can accommodate the growing number of visitors while maintaining high standards of safety, cleanliness, and overall quality.

Context for Fee:

To effectively manage the demands placed on the river corridor, BLM and USDA FS are proposing to implement a requirement to obtain an ISRP and pay the associated fee for all designated camping. These adjustments are essential for covering the escalating costs associated with increased site maintenance needs, visitor suggestions for additional staff presence, rising annual visitation, and other recreation program needs. The ISRP will help sustain the ability to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for all visitors, addressing the pressures of growing use and ensuring long-term site viability.

Vision for the Future:

Our vision for designated camping along the river corridor includes continued enhancements to meet the evolving needs of our visitors. With the ISRP fee, agencies plan to continue to provide services to visitors by maintaining designated campsites and associated signage, continue support of staff for maintenance and river patrols, and other necessary program improvements which benefit visitors. These improvements will support our commitment to delivering exceptional recreational experiences while managing the impacts of increasing visitation effectively.

Site Descriptions and New Recreation Fee Rates

This section outlines the introduction of new fees within the Snake River Planning Area. The business plan outlines the fee structure along with the rationale for the new fee. The new fee associated with an ISRP is designed to meet the needs of the increasing number of visitors, address user conflict, provide assurance of locating/securing a campsite, enhance the visitor experience, and ensure the continued protection and maintenance of the resources and facilities along the river corridor.

Fee Area Site Description

Individual Special Recreation Permit

Description:

- **Geographic Location:** Existing designated campsites within the South Fork Canyon, Conant Boat Access to Black Canyon and along the river corridor between Black Canyon and Byington Boat Access (26 river miles), and future designated campsites within the Snake River Planning Area.
- **Activities:** Camping, angling, boating (motorized and nonmotorized), wildlife viewing, day-use activities, scenic landscapes

- **Current designated campsites:** Sixteen designated camping areas which encompass 56 designated campsites (nine managed by USDA FS and 47 managed by USFO). Each campsite setting is considered relatively primitive, with only basic regulatory signage to indicate the campsite number and permitted/prohibited activities (See *Figures 4-6 for photos of select designated campsites*).



Figure 4: Wolf Flats designated campsite (BLM Photo)



Figure 5: Mud Creek designated campsite (BLM Photo)



Figure 6: Rattlesnake Point designated campsite (BLM Photo)

Introduction of New Fees

Existing Fee Structure:

- **Fee Type:** Self-issue permit
- **Current Fee:** Free

New Fee:

- **Fee Type:** Fee associated with an Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP)
- **ISRP fee for designated camping within the Snake River Planning Area at existing and future designated camping areas and campsites:** A group size for public, non-commercial visitors, commercial (including guides/employees), competitive, and organized groups is no more than 25 people. The fee applies to adults (18 years and older); children under age 18 are not counted. To encourage more youth participation in outdoor recreation, kids camp for free. For example, a

group of six adults (18 years and older) and 19 kids (17 years or younger, accompanied by an adult permit holder) would pay \$20 per campsite per night.

- **Small group size (1-6): \$20** per night (one ISRP covers up to 6 people), for designated camping in the river corridor during the established fee season.
- **Medium group size (7-14): \$50** per night (one ISRP covers up to 14 people), for designated camping in the river corridor during the established fee season.
- **Large group size (15-25): \$100** per night (one ISRP covers up to 25 people), for designated camping in the river corridor during the established fee season.
- **Fee season:** Approximately May 24 through Sept. 30 each year; dates may be adjusted as needed.
- **Implementation Timeline:** Implementation will begin in the 2026 season. In addition, prior to implementation of the fee a Notice of Intent to obtain an ISRP and collect associated fees will be published in the Federal Register following the final authorization to implement from the state director. The Federal Register notice will be posted at sites along the river corridor, businesses, and other recreation sites near the affected area. The new fees will be implemented 180 days after the publication of the Federal Register notice.

The ISRP program will be managed through e-commerce technologies (e.g., Recreation.gov, scan and pay, Remote Off-Grid Kiosk (ROK), mobile point of sale). On a limited basis, and based on availability, day-of ISRPs may be issued at Conant Visitor Center through onsite field sales utilizing e-commerce options. These day-of ISRPs will be handled by on-site staff.

Purpose and Justification of New Fee Associated with ISRP:

Based on self-issue permits, annual visitor counts related to camping indicate a general upward trend since the implementation of the self-issue permit in 1995 (variations exist from high water years and compliance with self-issue permit obtainment). Table 2 displays the trends over the last five fiscal years. With increases in visitation and recreation demands, it is vitally important for the USFO to continue to provide and improve recreational offerings for the public. This demand also includes a need for implementation of an ISRP and associated fee to provide adequate recreational camping opportunities for river users, and to protect resources from continued impacts from increased use (e.g., threatened plant species habitat, soil compaction, pedestrian trails through vegetation, vegetation removal, and camping within bald eagle nesting closures observed during monitoring).

Table 2: Self-issue Permits 2020-2024

Year	# of Permits	# of People	Average Group Size
2020	479	1733	3.62
2021	459	1579	3.44
2022	435	1624	3.73
2023	837*	2326	2.78
2024	578	1772	3.06

**High number due to abnormally warm season, higher visitation was documented on the river corridor and at the boat accesses.*

The new fee could also provide benefits to the local economy. Providing high-quality recreational opportunities helps ensure continued visitation, reduces vandalism, and decreases maintenance costs. Keeping the designated camping areas in good condition, clean, and serviced to high standards is imperative to the local economy. Maintaining those high standards and creating new opportunities improves the overall recreational experience for current and future visitors and continues to make USFO lands a place where people want to return. Based on observed use patterns and available visitation data for the Snake River Planning Area, the area is used by residents, regional and national visitors. We recognize that a fee associated with an ISRP may impact these users. However, the revenue generated will support the management of the river corridor and designated camping areas and campsites, will maintain safe and accessible opportunities along the river corridor, and enhance the overall visitor experience for all users.

Impact of New Fee

Expected Benefits:

Implementation of the ISRP will allow for expanded opportunities for public users of the river corridor to reserve and utilize designated campsites through the obtainment of the ISRP, including the ability to reserve campsites in advance through e-commerce technologies (e.g., *Recreation.gov*). The online system will provide visitors with greater assurance that a campsite will be available during their preferred visitation date(s) and/or not searching for a campsite late in the evening if campsites are full, reduce potential conflict with other recreationists interested in utilizing campsites, and reduce instances of visitors camping in undesignated areas (e.g., bald eagle nesting areas, sensitive and threatened plant habitats, or intact riparian areas) of the river corridor. The online obtainment of an ISRP will also provide greater opportunity for recreationists to obtain necessary safety information from both the online system, as well as from BLM staff/hosts who would review river corridor regulations and verify that campers have

the required equipment and understanding of recreation and camping regulations prior to embarking on the overnight trip. The ISRP and related fee both support the perpetuation of long-term benefits to recreationists relating to improved natural environments (e.g., reduced wildlife disturbance, reduced instances of encroachments).

E-Commerce and Reservation Services Implementation

The USFO will use various e-commerce technologies as directed in BLM Instruction Memorandum 2025-010, to provide recreation visitors opportunities to obtain an ISRP for designated camping within the field office. Most of these options are provided through the interagency online platform Recreation.gov. If the USFO decides to add additional types of e-commerce options available in the future, an expanded amenity fee for reservation services would be charged in addition to any ISRP fees in accordance with 16 U.S.C. 6802(g)(2)(G).

The current reservation service range is \$0.50 to \$10.00 depending on the type of service provided. The reservation service is classified as an Expanded Amenity Fee under FLREA. The reservation service is subject to contracting requirements and may increase with contractual changes without future updates to the business plan. For visitors who wish not to pay the expanded amenity fee of reservation services, the field office will attempt to continue to provide a blend of reservation and first come-first served options until or unless the office moves the fee site/area entirely to e-commerce. Other payment options may also be considered in the future as technology and software develops, such as onsite credit card payment systems or scan and pay.

Operating Costs

This section outlines projected operating costs associated with managing and maintaining the river corridor designated camping opportunities. Understanding these costs is essential for determining the appropriate fee structure and ensuring that the sites can continue to provide high-quality services to visitors.

Projected Operating Costs

To accommodate increasing visitor numbers and planned improvements, the USFO anticipates the following operating costs associated with implementing and managing the ISRP for designated camping.

Table 3 outlines the projected costs based on one-time expenditures that are directly dedicated to support the implementation of the ISRP program. Costs include staff time to develop e-commerce, on-site strategies for issuance of ISRPs, and development of signage, kiosks, and other informational needs. These are initial one-time costs to

establish the ISRP program on the river corridor.

Table 3: Projected Costs to Implement the ISRP Program

Implementation Cost Category	Cost
BLM Staff Implementation Activities (Indirect)	
Rec.gov Development	\$ 15,437
Conant Check-In Process Development	\$ 1,077
Staff Training	\$ 2,747
Changes to Media and BLM Website	\$ 15,398
Public Outreach	\$ 2,711
Subtotal	\$ 37,370
BLM Staff Implementation Activities (Direct)	
Signage	\$ 806
Kiosk Modifications	\$ 161
BLM IT	\$ 461
Subtotal	\$ 1,428
Conant Visitor Center Upgrades (Materials and Services)	
Install Internet and Phone Service	\$ 500
Information Systems Hardware	\$ 2,000
Signage (Camper Check-In, Hours, etc.)	\$ 640
Subtotal	\$ 3,140
Grand Total	\$ 41,938

Table 4 includes the projected reoccurring costs for the management of the ISRP program. Costs include staff time to manage the program on a yearly basis and management of the Conant Visitor Center to accommodate the public for checking in campers and day-of camping reservations for those recreationists who are unable, or do not wish to, reserve campsite(s) online. These day-of reservations will be handled by on-site staff. The annual estimated projected reoccurring costs will be \$19,451.

Table 4: Projected reoccurring costs for the ISRP program

Description	Monthly Costs	Permit Period Cost
Oversight / Indirect		

Description		Monthly Costs	Permit Period Cost
Managing Field Activities (Sr. Outdoor Recreation Planner)	Sr. Outdoor Recreation Planner's time managing field activities.	\$ 905	\$ 3,622
Directing and Coordinating Field Activities (Outdoor Recreation Planner - GS-9)	Coordinating field activities, provisioning, and directing subordinate employees.	\$ 1,021	\$ 4,083
Data Collection (Recreation Technician - GS-05)	Time spent entering data from camping permits onto permit data forms or collecting data from a BLM database.	\$ 22	\$ 87
Annual Recruiting Costs (Sr. Outdoor Recreation Planner)	Resume reviews and interviewing candidates for system options requiring additional staffing.	NA	\$ 668
Annual Recruiting Costs (Outdoor Recreation Planner - GS-9)	Resume reviews and interviewing candidates for system options requiring additional staffing.	NA	\$ 1,844
	Total	\$ 1,948	\$ 10,304
Field Administration / Direct			
Camper Check-In at Conant Launch Facility (Recreation Technician - GS-05)	BLM staff checking in campers at the Conant Launch Facility (BLM Arrival Options Only).	\$ 1,869	\$ 7,475
Fuel	Estimated fuel cost @ \$3.50 per gallon. Two trips per week during period to collect permits. (Staff is conducting other duties at facility besides assisting with ISRP administration. This cost is prorated for fuel rates related to ISRP administration).	\$ 27	\$ 108
	Total	\$ 1,896	\$ 7,583
Conant Boat Access			
Conant Host	Monthly stipend for Conant Facility Host. (Host is conducting other duties at facility besides assisting with ISRP administration. This cost is prorated for tasks related to ISRP administration).	\$ 61	\$ 245

Description		Monthly Costs	Permit Period Cost
Facilities Maintenance (Recreation Maintenance - WG-08)	Time maintaining the Conant Visitor's Center.	\$ 94	\$ 374
IT Support (IT Specialist - GS-09)	IT support for system options utilizing a fully staffed Conant Visitor's Center.	\$ 184	\$ 738
Energy	Power costs for the Conant Launch Facility (currently open 20 hrs/week). (Prorated for time related to ISRP administration).	\$ 7	\$ 27
Tools	Annual cost of tool replacement/repair in support of the Conant Visitor's Center.	NA	\$ 45
Materials & Consumables	Material costs in support of maintaining the Conant Visitor's Center (e.g., paint, hardware, replacement parts, etc.).	NA	\$ 135
	Total	\$ 346	\$ 1,564
	Monthly Grand Total	\$ 4,190	
	May 24 – Sept. 30 Grand Total	\$ 19,451	

Cost Analysis and Fee Justification

The projected implementation and reoccurring operating costs presented above highlight the financial needs required to manage the ISRP program for river corridor designated camping effectively. The new fee is justified by the need to:

- Cover rising operational costs, including 1) continuation of ongoing program services (e.g., administrative costs and information services), 2) maintaining designated campsites (e.g., litter removal, sign installation, human waste and ash removal, invasive species removal), and 3) program improvements that benefit visitors and improve operations (e.g., on-site operations that provide resource protection and visitor safety). Ensure the sustainability of high-quality visitor services and facilities.
- Fund necessary improvements and upgrades to accommodate growing visitor demand.
- Maintain the environmental and cultural resources within the river corridor.

Recreation Fee Revenues

This section outlines the collection and management of recreation fee revenues. The fees collected from ISRPs would be used to maintain and enhance opportunities along the river corridor. The following details describe the fee collection process and the revenue distribution for the river corridor.

Fee Collection Process

Visitors planning to camp within the Snake River Planning Area will be required to obtain an ISRP. Below are the options for obtaining an ISRP and collection of associated fees.

- **E-commerce Options:** Visitors will utilize e-commerce features (e.g., Recreation.gov) to obtain an ISRP and pay associated fee for designated camping.
- **Onsite Field Sales:** On a limited basis, day-of ISRPs may be issued at Conant Visitor Center through onsite field sales utilizing e-commerce options.

Revenue Allocation

The recreational fee revenues collected from ISRPs would be deposited into a new Recreation Program ISRP Fee account. Fees will be spent primarily in the fee area to support the goals and objective of the river corridor. Expenditure of fees is described in the section titled “Priorities for Expenditures” (page 28).

Revenue Summary

Table 5 helps inform how estimated revenue is calculated. Data from Table 5 is used in Table 6 to calculate the overall estimated revenue. The historical data/growth rate is determined by the average number of permits issued 1995-2023. This growth rate is 6.9% which translates to an estimated annual growth rate of 0.35%. The fee assessment is determined by the average length of stay (nights per permit) over the same time period (1995-2023). The average fee assessment (\$20, \$50, \$100) for the different group sizes is \$57. Calculating the average rate (\$57) times the average number of ISRPs (418 in 2023) determines the estimated revenue (See Table 6).

Table 5: Determination of Growth Rate and Fee Assessment

Totals	
Historical Data / Growth Rate	
Average # of Permits (1995-2023)	418

Totals	
Delta % (1995-2023)	6.9%
Annual Growth Rate	0.35%
Fee Assessment	
Average Length of Stay (Nights per Permit)	1.5
Average SRP Fee (Blended Group Size Rates)	\$57
Total Permit Cost (Revenue Calculation)	\$86
Permit Fees Per Night by Group Size	
Group Size	Per Night Fee
Small - 1-6	\$20
Medium - 7-14	\$50
Large - 15+	\$100

Table 6 displays how the estimated permit revenue is calculated. Column 2 is the forecasted ISRPs based on the annual growth rate identified in Table 5 above. Column 3 is the estimated projected revenue based on the forecasted ISRPs and the average rate (\$57). The reoccurring costs are deducted each year to determine the revenue balance for each year.

Table 6: Projected Yearly Revenue Summary

Year	Forecasted ISRPs (based on annual growth rate identified in Table 5)	Revenue	Reoccurring costs (may vary in the future)	Revenue Balance
2026	422	\$ 24,235	\$19,452	\$ 4,783
2027	424	\$ 24,320	\$19,452	\$ 4,868
2028	425	\$ 24,405	\$19,452	\$ 4,953
2029	427	\$ 24,491	\$19,452	\$ 5,038

Year	Forecasted ISRPs (based on annual growth rate identified in Table 5)	Revenue	Reoccurring costs (may vary in the future)	Revenue Balance
2030	428	\$ 24,577	\$19,452	\$ 5,124
2031	430	\$ 24,663	\$19,452	\$ 5,210
2032	431	\$ 24,749	\$19,452	\$ 5,296
2033	433	\$ 24,835	\$19,452	\$ 5,383
2034	434	\$ 24,922	\$19,452	\$ 5,470
2035	436	\$ 25,010	\$19,452	\$ 5,557
2036	437	\$ 25,097	\$19,452	\$ 5,645
2037	439	\$ 25,185	\$19,452	\$ 5,733
2038	440	\$ 25,273	\$19,452	\$ 5,821
2039	442	\$ 25,362	\$19,452	\$ 5,909
2040	444	\$ 25,450	\$19,452	\$ 5,998

Priorities for Future Expenditures

This section outlines the USFO’s priorities for the use of recreation fee revenues and planned future expenditures. These priorities align with the goals of enhancing visitor experiences, maintaining and improving site infrastructure, and ensuring the sustainability of natural and cultural resources at the river corridor.

Overview of Priorities

The USFO has identified the following priorities for the allocation of recreation fee revenues along the river corridor:

- Maintain and improve staffing for river patrols to address resource protection and public safety. During these river patrols staff will maintain the designated campsites (e.g., litter removal, sign installation, human waste and ash removal, invasive species removal); provide information to the public regarding location of designated campsites, rules and regulations, and resource concerns; monitor permitted outfitters and their associated camps; and provide a presence on the river corridor to address public safety and/or emergency concerns.

- Administration of the fee program.
- Restoration and resource enhancement projects on the river corridor (e.g., removal of Russian olive trees, removal of invasive species, signage of bald eagle nesting zones).
- Law enforcement assistance.
- Maintenance or enhancement of boat access locations. This reinvestment ensures that the area can accommodate the growing number of visitors while maintaining high standards of safety, cleanliness, and overall quality.

These priorities are essential to meeting the needs of the increasing number of visitors and to preserving the quality of the visitor experience along the river corridor.

Planned Expenditures and Long-Term Investment Strategy

The USFO plans to allocate recreation fee revenues toward the following future expenditures in the Snake River Planning Area:

- Administration of fee program: The majority of the fee revenues, \$19,451, will be allocated to the annual reoccurring costs identified for managing and operating the ISRP program along the river corridor.
- River Patrols: The remainder of the revenue would support the river patrol program to ensure the maintenance of designated campsites by providing litter removal, sign installation, human waste and ash removal, invasive species removal.
- Resource enhancement: When revenue is available, fund projects that would be beneficial to the resources (e.g., educational/interpretive and informational signage development, boaters guide revision, invasive species removal).

These expenditures are designed to address the most pressing needs identified in the USFO's recreation plan and to ensure the long-term sustainability and enjoyment of the river corridor by visitors. By adhering to this strategy, the USFO aims to maintain a high standard of visitor experience while preserving the natural and cultural resources entrusted to its care.

Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates

This section provides an analysis of the recreation fee for an ISRP for the Snake River Planning Area compared to similar ISRP programs in Colorado and Utah. The analysis in this section includes the location and comparison of fees.

Comparative Analysis of ISRP Fees

The fair market value calculation method was used in the fee calculation process with comparisons to other river programs with camping in adjacent states, Utah and Colorado.

Table 7 outlines current ISRP fees and/or fees associated with overnight camping along river corridors in the region. The permit, agency, location, and associated fee are identified in the table to help inform the Comparability Analysis for the ISRP fee for the Snake River Planning Area.

Table 7: Comparative Analysis

Permit	Agency/Operator	Location	Fee
Ruby Horsethief	BLM	Colorado River, CO	\$20 per night (1-5) \$50 per night (6-14) \$100 per night (15-25)
Gunnison River SRMA	BLM	Gunnison River, CO	\$20 per night (1-5) \$50 per night (6-14) \$100 per night (15-25)
Upper Colorado SRMA	BLM	Colorado River, CO	\$5 per person, per night
Gunnison Gorge Wilderness	BLM	Gunnison River, CO	\$10 per person, for 1 night \$15 per person for 2 nights. Trip leader may purchase a Pass that includes the whole group (for example, if 4 people are staying 2 nights: 4 x \$15 = \$60).
Westwater Canyon River Permits	BLM	Colorado River, UT	\$10 per person, per trip
Canyonlands NPS Overnight River Permit	NPS	Green or Colorado Rivers, UT	\$36 reservation fee \$25 per person, per trip

Rationale for Fees

The fee for the ISRP is intended to align with the value of the opportunities provided (e.g., continuation of ongoing river patrols, program services such as administrative costs and information services), management of visitor use and sensitive resources along the river corridor (e.g., maintaining designated campsites by providing litter removal, sign installation, human waste and ash removal, invasive species removal), competitive with similar rivers in the region with similar river management programs for camping, and cover and maintain operating costs of managing the program (e.g., program improvements that benefit visitors and improve operations such as on-site operations that provide resource protection and visitor safety). The new fee is necessary to cover increasing operational costs and to support the continued operation of the river program. By implementing the ISRP program and associated moderate new fee, the BLM and USDA FS aim to ensure that camping along the river corridors remain affordable and accessible to visitors while maintaining high standards for recreational experiences.

Public Outreach

As part of the proposal to implement the new ISRP fee along the river corridor, the USFO conducted the following outreach efforts to notify the public of the opportunity to review and provide comments.

- Extensive public outreach during the development of the 2018, Interagency Management of SRPs/SUPs and Designated Camping within the Snake River Planning Area and Teton River Canyon planning effort. The decision to implement a permit system and associated fee for camping during the peak summer season and group size limitation to 25 people was identified during this planning effort.
- **Posted the Draft Business Plan:** The draft business plan was made available on the BLM website at [Recreation Site Business Plans | Bureau of Land Management \(blm.gov\)](#) on **7/18/2025** for a 30-day comment period.
- **Issued a News Release:** A news release was sent to local news outlets on 7/18/2025. This ensured that the draft business plan was distributed to the greater public through various avenues.
- BLM staff met with local stakeholders to discuss the draft business plan and provide an opportunity to address concerns and comments directly.
- Flyers with instructions on how and when to comment on the draft business plan was posted at each recreation site pertaining to this business plan.
- BLM staff and recreation planners created awareness of the availability of the plan through face-to-face interactions with the public when visiting recreation sites.

- **Posted Notices:** The fee change proposal was posted at all the boat access sites on the Snake River Planning Area Recreation Fee Area.

Prior to implementing the new ISRP for designated camping, the following additional outreach will occur:

- **Publishing a Notice of Intent:** A Notice of Intent regarding the requirement to obtain an ISRP and to collect associated fees will be published in the Federal Register following the final authorization to implement from the State Director.
- **Posting Notices:** The Federal Register notice will be at facilities along the river corridor (e.g., boat accesses, campgrounds, Conant Visitor Center), businesses, and other recreations sites near the affected area.
- **Implementation:** The new fee will be implemented 180 days after the publication of the Federal Register notice.

The USFO considered all comments received and presented the final proposal and public comments to the Idaho Resource Advisory Council (RAC) and the State Director before implementing any changes. A Notice of Intent will be published in the Federal Register after receiving final authorization from the State Director.

- The public will be kept informed of the collections and expenditures of recreation fee revenues as required by FLREA by providing annual recreation fee spending and accomplishment reports on the BLM website: [FLREA Revenue and Spending Plans | Bureau of Land Management](#)

Field Office/District Office Recommendation

After careful consideration of the new ISRP fee, the USFO/Idaho Falls District recommends the following changes:

- **ISRP fee for designated camping within the Snake River Planning Area at existing and future designated camping areas and campsites:** A group size for public, non-commercial visitors, commercial (including guides/employees), competitive, and organized groups is no more than 25 people. Fee applies to adults (18 years and older); children under 18 are not counted. To encourage more youth participation in outdoor recreation, kids camp for free. For example, a group of six adults (18 years and older) and 19 kids (17 years or younger, accompanied by an adult permit holder) would pay \$20 per campsite per night.
 - **Small group size (1-6):** \$20 per night (one ISRP covers up to 6 people), for designated camping along the river corridor during the established fee season.

- **Medium group size (7-14): \$50** per night (one ISRP covers up to 14 people), for designated camping along the river corridor during the established fee season.
- **Large group size (15-25): \$100** per night (one ISRP covers up to 25 people), for designated camping along the river corridor during the established fee season.

The USFO presented the Snake River Designated Camping ISRP proposal to the BLM Idaho Resource Advisory Council (RAC) for advice, feedback and, recommendations on August 19, 2025. FLREA mandates that the appropriate RAC be consulted and given the opportunity to provide recommendations to BLM for all recreation fee proposals prior to implementation. The RAC approved the USFO business plan and recommended approval to the BLM Idaho State Director. The BLM received six written comments not supporting the requirement to obtain a permit and associated fee, one written comment expressing concerns with absent or no-show permits holders and other unassociated concerns about conflicts with different types of user groups, and one written comment expressing support. Based on daily face-to-face communication with BLM staff and hosts at recreation sites, the public was supportive of the requirement to obtain a permit and associated fee. There was general public support for modest recreation fees that support enhancing and maintaining the designated camping sites.