

## FY08 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**NAME OF FEE PROJECT:** AZ07 LAKE HAVASU RECREATION SITES

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**DESCRIPTION (PLEASE PROVIDE AN OVERALL DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPES OF SITES AND SERVICES THAT ARE INCLUDED IN THIS FEE PROJECT – CAMPGROUNDS, CABINS, TOURS, VISITOR CENTERS, SPECIAL USES PERMITS, ETC.)**

A major component of this fee program is that BLM's Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO) manages 87 shoreline camps that lie along approximately 20-miles of Arizona shoreline of Lake Havasu. The Lake's world class, water-based recreation opportunities serve about a million visitors per summer. The vast majority of these visitors come from the highly urbanized cities of Southern California. Prior to 1996 LHFO managed no visitor services program in the Lake but began building a program at that time to replace the forfeiture of a state-managed R&PP lease that originally established the shoreline facilities. Each shoreline camp is now a dry-camp facility consisting of beach-front access and swimming area, picnic table and grill, site signage and self-serve fee tube (that also serves as a bollard for mooring boats), with bank retaining walls and railings where applicable. There is no road access to these sites. All access for the public and BLM employees is generally by boat, although cross-country hiking/biking/equestrian access and trails are available to some of them. Approximately 42 of the 80 sites either have or share new split-face block vault restrooms.

Another component of this fee program consists of several land-based amenity fee sites located below Parker Dam on the California side of the Colorado River. Empire Landing Campground was a very popular 18-acre facility about 8 miles south of the Dam, but this site has been closed since demolition for renovation started in 2003. No fee revenue program dollars were spent on this project in 2008. Another facility, Crossroads Campground, is a 10-acre facility about 9-miles south of the Dam. The site consists of 10 dry-camp RV sites, an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant vault toilet restroom, a site host RV structure with hook-ups, entrance road, and parking. Bullfrog Day Use Area is a 3-acre facility about 6 miles south of the Dam. The site consists of two ADA-compliant vault restrooms, a swimming beach, a site host facility with hook-ups, public picnic tables and grills, site irrigation, a parking lot, site signage, site fencing and a trash facility. Quail Hollow Day Use Area is a 5-acre facility about 4 miles south of the Dam that consists of one ADA-compliant vault restroom, an information kiosk with shade ramada, parking lots, site fencing, a site host facility with hook-ups, public picnic tables and grills, site irrigation, a septic leach field, site signage and a trash facility.

The last component of this fee program is the largest. The BLM Lake Havasu Field Office administers fourteen resort concession leases along the Lake Havasu and Colorado River shorelines, intermingled among the developed facilities described above. Concession resort services and facilities vary from one to another, but generally they host various combinations of RV and tent camping spaces, mobile vacation home lots, markets, restaurants, fuel docks, boat launch ramps, beaches, playground areas, showers, golf courses, and community or recreation centers. Concession lease payments are split among land rental fees, (administrative) cost recovery fees, and recreation amenity fees. These recreation revenues are utilized to support the adjacent fee and non-fee recreational facilities jointly used by both patrons of the

concessions and the public, such as the shoreline camps, fishing access docks, two boat launches, and local day use areas.

### **FEE SCHEDULE:**

At the beginning of 2008 LHFO implemented a fee schedule change after public review, comment, Arizona Resource Advisory Council review, and publications were completed, as required by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act. Day-use areas, where fees had been \$3.00 to \$10.00 per day, were all made a \$5.00 per day except for the shoreline camps, which remained at \$10.00. Overnight use sites, which had ranged from \$4.00 to \$10.00 per night, were all set consistently at \$10.00 per night. LHFO had also offered a popular annual, local amenity fee pass for \$50.00 per season that was raised to \$100.00 per season. The long-term concession lease terms were not involved with these changes, and it remains that, although the calculations can be slightly different under each concession's lease terms, approximately 1.5% of each resort concession's gross income becomes deposited as recreation fee revenues.

### **SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS YEAR (PLEASE PROVIDE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES THAT ADDRESSES THE ENTIRE FEE PROGRAM SUCH AS CAMPGROUND IMPROVEMENTS, VISITOR SERVICES, ETC.)**

Since 1996, BLM has invested almost \$3,500,000 in deferred maintenance and other appropriated funds, augmented with a smaller portion of the recreation revenues, to dramatically improve the 87 shoreline camp amenities and related shoreline resources, such as stabilizing soil banks from erosion and lessening vegetation from uprooting by providing appropriate mooring. These improvements, in concert with the nationally known Lake Havasu Fisheries Program, through which the native and sporting fisheries habitat and angler access have been vastly improved (resulting in increased angler success rates), visitor use has increased. The results have been large boosts to the local economy and notoriety to the area.

**Visitor Services, Interpretation:** During 2008 LHFO continued to field four seasonal "lake" park rangers to patrol seven days a week. The mission of the lake park rangers remained to contact all visitors at 87 camps each duty day. We estimate that each of the four park rangers contacted 13,000 visitors. Continuing the style of an ambassador or host, lake park rangers provided lake, weather, and visitor information, explained the fee collection program, and served as the eyes and ears of management and law enforcement rangers in the field. Each park ranger is supplied with a BLM uniform tailored to this environment which generates ambient temperatures in the 120-degree range. Collections remained consistent with FY 2006 because two park rangers were again pulled from patrol duty at mid-season to address higher priority workload in other locales and the fee schedule had remained unchanged.

Having a highly-visible park ranger patrol in marked vessels, made possible only by the recreation revenue collections, has improved compliance with the fee schedule and improved visitor stewardship of the sites, and brought about a change in visitor ethic to one which was more environmentally sound. Many visitors, despite having visited Lake Havasu for several generations, are now meeting a BLM employee for the first time. Lake visitors have begun to show a marked improvement in helping to care for the natural resources in this area, even while shoreline camp use is increasing. The following image shows a popular shoreline camp being utilized. Note the self-pay fee tube (which doubles as a resource-protective mooring bollard), camp amenities, and shoreline retention walls.



**Repair, Maintenance, and Facility Enhancement:** Accomplishments/improvements completed with recreation fee revenues included the following:

Crossroads Campground-

- contracts to trim site trees with low-hanging, broken limbs that pose safety hazards, for periodic vault pumping, and for trash collection by local vendor
- restroom cleaning supplies to mop, sweep floors
- host site maintenance repairs of water system

Bullfrog Day Use Area-

- restroom cleaning supplies for sweeping and mopping the floors
- contracts for periodic pumping of restroom and site host septic vaults, trash collection by local vendor, and for trimming low-hanging and broken tree limbs
- site signage
- picnic table and grill replacement
- site host potable water supply by local vendor delivered to site twice a month
- grounds maintenance (grass cutting, vegetation trimming, irrigation pump repairs)

### Quail Hollow Day Use Area-

- restroom cleaning supplies for sweeping and mopping the floors
- contracts for periodic pumping of restroom and site host septic vaults, site trash collection, and for trimming low-hanging and broken tree limbs
- site signage
- picnic table and grill replacement
- grounds maintenance (grass cutting, vegetation trimming, irrigation pump repairs)
- removal of old pump building and replaced irrigation pump (again)

### Shoreline camps and facilities-

- restroom cleaning supplies for sweeping and mopping the floors
- periodic pumping of restroom septic vaults by BLM crews from vessels
- 2 to 3 times weekly site trash collection by BLM crews during the summer and twice monthly by BLM crews during the winter, all from vessels
- site signage replaced at approximately 10 of the camps
- trimming low-hanging and broken tree limbs by BLM crews
- contract for trash disposal pick-up at BLM transfer site by local vendor
- picnic table, trash can and grill replacement/maintenance (approximately 8 replacements and 10 repainting and repairs of tables, grills and trash cans), all from vessels
- grounds maintenance (vegetation/tree trimming), repainting of approximately 500-feet of retaining wall railings a year from vessels
- fuel for, and maintenance of, 4 watercraft vessels and their engines
- painting of approximately 20 restrooms
- repairs to fishing access docks (the following image is of one of the free angler-access docks along the shoreline.)



**Law Enforcement – Public Use and Recreation:** LHFO park rangers continued to monitor for fee schedule compliance in marked PWC patrol vessels, which serve LHFO well to bring automatic rapport with visitors, in that with so many PWCs are in use by the public.

**Wildlife Habitat Restoration, Resource Protection:** Because of the vessel-based infrastructure largely funded by the fee revenue program to provide the recreation site maintenance needs on Lake Havasu, there is occasional incidental or minor support performed by staff to repair or maintain the shoreline stabilizing walls and mooring bollards, or the fishing habitat structures submerged in the Lake, while present on various sites.

**PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT YEAR (FY09):**

- Continue shoreline patrol of Lake Havasu with four BLM park rangers, using two powerboat and two PWC watercraft, all clearly marked as official BLM vessels.
- Improve visitor services/resource protection by augmenting regular park ranger patrols on summer holiday weekends, by positioning lake park rangers on foot during the day at known high visitation locations such as Steamboat Cove (one of BLM's highly concentrated visitor use areas).

- Experiment with a prototype, floating, visitor contact station on Lake Havasu to provide a more readily accessible point-of-contact for the public on holiday weekends. (This should attract many waterborne visitors for stewardship messages and also result in more passes being sold.)
- Improve coordination with US Coast Guard, Sector San Diego, to improve actions which are common to both BLM and USCG.
- Enter into an MOU with the City of Lake Havasu City, to provide professional dispatch communications on-lake via the City of Lake Havasu, Police and Fire dispatch center.
- Re-open Empire Landing Campground in January 2009. New amenities will include a water treatment plant, restrooms with showers, a sewage lift station, a RV dump station, a swimming beach, picnic ramadas, RV hook-ups, dry-camp tent sites, day-use parking, and ADA-compliant tent and RV sites. Recreation revenues will be used for maintenance of these site amenities.
- Continue to maintain other amenity fee sites.