

Minutes

Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) Work Group Meeting

September 5, 2007

1. A meeting of the REA Work Group was convened at 1:15 p.m. on September 5, 2007 at the BLM National Training Center. The agenda items are shown at enclosure 1.
2. Attendees:
 - a. REA Work Group members: Glen Collins, Frances Werner, Jay Adkins, Norman Perry, and Steve Saway.
 - b. Other RAC members: Linda Kennedy, Tina Clark, Jan Holder, and Jason Williams.
 - c. Forest Service personnel: Jeff Saari, Southwestern Region; Delvin Lopez and Dave Killebrew, Tonto National Forest.
 - d. BLM representatives: Michael Taylor, Deputy Director for Resources; Bonnie Winslow, Acting District Manager, Gila District; Don Applegate, Arizona Recreation Program Lead, BLM Arizona State Office.
3. Action on agenda items:
 - a. The Chair asked all attendees to introduce themselves and then discussed the purpose and agenda for the meeting. This work group meeting was primarily intended to review the updated Forest Service fee proposal for the Salt River Canyon Private River Permit System, preview the associated PowerPoint presentation to be given at the September 6th RRAC meeting, and to discuss tentative REA Work Group recommendations on the fee proposal.
 - b. Draft minutes of the June 7th REA Work Group meeting. Motion made by Norman Perry, seconded by Glen Collins, to approve the minutes as stated. Motion was approved.
 - c. Draft minutes of the August 22nd REA Work Group meeting. Motion made by Jay Adkins, seconded by Frances Werner, to approve the minutes as stated. Motion was approved.
 - d. Salt River Canyon Wilderness Private River Permit System Fee Proposal. Dave Killebrew gave an updated PowerPoint presentation to the group on the fee proposal details including public outreach. He stated that public notice of the fee change was emailed to prior permit holders, was placed on the Tonto National Forest web site, and was distributed to various newspapers in the Globe, Mesa, Phoenix, and Tucson areas. Public comments were mixed. One concern expressed was that permit fees were not refundable when the river is too low to run. Another concern was that the permit fee was the same for any group size up to 15. A single kayaker pays the same fee as a 15 person group. Dave also discussed a national comparison of river permit fees and responded to various questions from the group.

e. Tentative REA Work Group Recommendations. The REA Work Group and other RAC members discussed the public comments and struggled a bit to assess whether there was general public support. Considering the large number of people who were notified of the fee change through various media, one could say that a low number of comments and concerns indicates public acceptance. However, some members felt the fee proposal did not necessarily garner good public support and that public outreach should have been done earlier in the process. Completing the public comment period a few days prior to the RRAC meeting did not allow much time to assess public support. Following the discussion, a motion was made by Glen Collins, seconded by Linda Kennedy, to recommend support of the fee proposal. Of the RAC members present, there were six ays, two nays, and one abstention.

f. Projected Fiscal Year 2008 Fee Proposals. Jeff Saari reported that the Forest Service expects to have five fee proposals as follows:

1st Quarter Meeting (Dec 2007 --, AZ)

Kentucky Camp HQ Bldg	New Fee (Expanded)	Coronado National Forest
Tonto Pass Modifications	Adjust Existing Fees	Tonto National Forest

2nd Quarter Meeting (March 2008 --, AZ)

AZ Rental Cabins	New Fee (Expanded)	Arizona National Forests
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3rd Quarter Meeting (June 2008 --, AZ)

Tonto OHV Pass	New Fee/Permit (SRP)	Tonto National Forest
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4th Quarter Meeting (September 2008 -- , AZ)

Forest-wide Fees CG/PA	Fee Increase (EAF/SAF)	Prescott National Forest
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Don Applegate reported that the Kingman Field Office plans to have a fee proposal ready for presentation during the 2nd quarter of the fiscal year. No other BLM fee proposals are expected. The fiscal year 2008 schedule will be firmed up at the next REA Work Group meeting and presented to the RRAC in December, 2007.

g. Other REA Work Group business. None required.

4. Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:15 p.m.
5. Minutes submitted by: Steve Saway, REA Work Group Chair
6. Date approved: December 5, 2007