

# Draft Business Plan for BLM Monticello Field Office Campgrounds



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management, Utah  
Canyon Country District**



**Monticello Field Office  
July 2015**



# Draft Business Plan for BLM Monticello Field Office Campgrounds

## RECOMMENDATIONS, REVIEWS, and APPROVALS

Prepared by:

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Outdoor Recreation Planner

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Date

Reviewed by:

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Supervisory Outdoor Recreation Planner

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Date

Approved By:

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Field Office Manager

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Date

This business plan was prepared pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (Public Law 108-447) and BLM recreation fee program policy. It establishes future management goals and priorities for the recreation fee program for campgrounds in the Monticello Field Office.

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## United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Monticello Field Office  
365 North Main Street  
Monticello, UT 84535



In Reply Refer to:  
2932 (LLUTY02000)

Dear Reader,

I would like to present for your review and comment the *Draft Business Plan for BLM Monticello Field Office Campgrounds*. Under the authority of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Monticello Field Office manages four campgrounds and three reservation group sites in San Juan County, Utah. The draft business plan covers management issues such as user facilities, operating costs, fee rate changes, annual revenues, and future expenditures.

The Monticello Field Office proposes to increase camping fees for the public's use of its campgrounds and reservation group sites. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 authorizes the BLM to regulate the use of public lands, and the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) authorizes the BLM to collect recreational fees when sites and areas meet specific criteria. Currently, overnight use fees are \$6 per site at Hamburger Rock, \$10 per site at Sand Island, and \$25 plus \$2 per person per night at Sand Island Group Site. Use is currently free at Creek Pasture, Creek Pasture Group Site, Superbowl, and Indian Creek Falls Group Site. Fee rates have remained the same at Sand Island since 2003 and Hamburger Rock since 2005. To help offset increased operating costs, the BLM proposes to raise overnight use fees as follows: \$10 per site at Hamburger Rock and \$15 per site at Sand Island. New overnight use fees at Creek Pasture and Superbowl would be set at \$10 per site. New group site fees at Indian Creek Falls would be set at \$25, plus \$2 per person per night. New group site fees at Creek Pasture would be set at \$25, plus \$3 per person per night. The group site fee at Sand Island would be raised to \$25, plus \$4 per person per night.

The objective of the *Draft Business Plan for BLM Monticello Field Office Campgrounds* is to provide you with information on how these public campgrounds are being managed and give you the opportunity to submit comments on the proposed fee structure at Hamburger Rock, Sand Island, Creek Pasture, and Superbowl campgrounds, as well as the Sand Island, Creek Pasture, and Indian Creek Falls group sites. Comments may be mailed to our office at: Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Campground Business Plan, P.O. Box 7, Monticello, UT 84535 or emailed to [BLM\\_UT\\_MT\\_Comments@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_UT_MT_Comments@blm.gov). Please list "Campground Business Plan" in the subject line and provide any comments by September 3, 2015.

Thank you for your interest and input in managing your public lands.

Sincerely,

Donald K. Hoffheins  
Field Manager  
Monticello Field Office

# Draft Business Plan for BLM

## Monticello Field Office Campgrounds

### Introduction

This business plan has been prepared to meet the criteria defined in the “Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, 2004” (REA). The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) originally began collecting recreational fees for the use of public lands under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (1976) – known as the “organic act”. The REA provides the BLM with its current authority to establish, modify, charge, and collect recreation fees at Federal recreational lands and waters. The act authorizes the BLM to locally retain collected recreation fees and outlines how revenues may be used, for such things 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. At the Monticello Field Office (FO), the recreational use of campgrounds within the field office is managed through the Recreation Use Permit Program.

BLM Manual 2930, *Recreation Permits and Fees* (Rel. 2-296 dated October 22, 2007), requires that each recreation fee program have a business plan which thoroughly discusses fees and explains how fees are consistent with the criteria set forth in REA. Business plans are to assist management in determining the appropriateness and level of fees, cost of administering fee programs, and provide a structured communication and marketing plan. The primary purpose of the plan is to serve as public notification of the objectives for use of recreation fee revenues and to provide the public an opportunity to comment on these objectives.

In the Monticello FO, campground revenues are deposited in the Monticello FO recreation fee account (WBS# LVRD UT140000). This business plan covers recreational fee revenues from both individual campsites and group sites.

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 Billings System (CBS), Federal Business Management System (FBMS), and other locally-generated recreation and visitor use tracking spreadsheets. For more detailed information, contact the BLM-Monticello Field Office. Some data may be subject to Privacy Act requirements.

### Background and Authorities

The authorities and regulations for this business plan are:

- **The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), 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 directs the Secretary of the Interior to regulate through permits or other instruments the use of the public lands. Section 303 of FLPMA contains the BLM’s authority to enforce the regulations and impose penalties.

- **The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA), 2004** [Public Law 108-447], repealed applicable portions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and replaced the BLM's authority to collect recreational fees. This law authorizes the BLM to collect recreation fees at sites that meet certain requirements, allows the BLM to keep the fee revenues at the local offices where they are collected, and directs how the BLM will manage and utilize these revenues. The REA also established the America the Beautiful – The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass program.

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*, Rel. 2-300 dated November 17, 2014
- BLM Recreation Fee Proposals Step-by-Step Review & Approval Process, March 22, 2007
- BLM Instruction Memorandum 2007-028: *Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act – Final Public Participation Policy for Certain Recreation Fee Adjustments and Proposed New Fee Sites/Areas*
- BLM Utah Instruction Memorandum UT 2013-037: *Utah Recreation Fee Program Toolbox*

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

- 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.

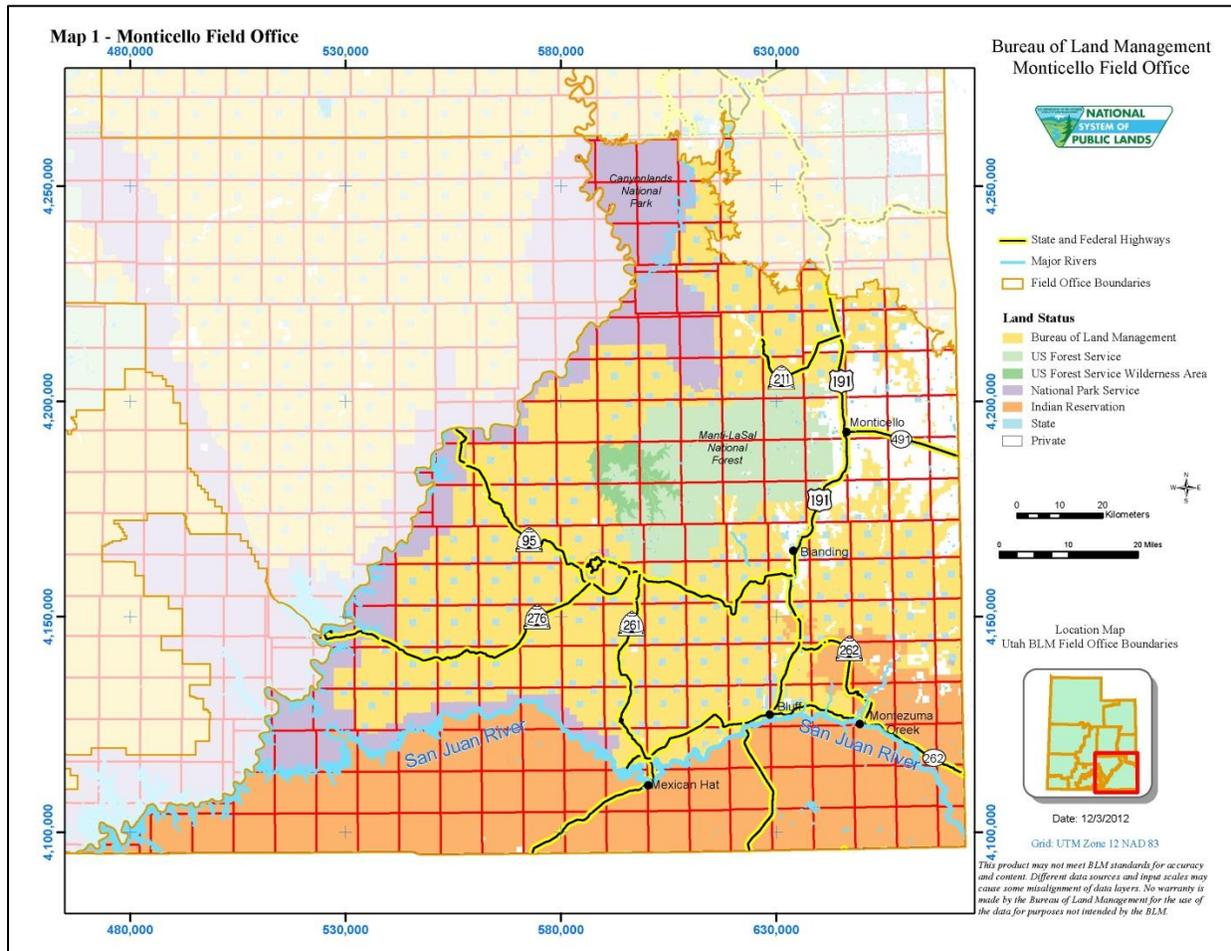
This business plan will assist the Monticello FO in meeting these recreation and visitor service goals. This plan covers four campgrounds and three reservation group sites managed by the BLM in San Juan County, Utah.

## **Monticello Field Office Recreation Fee Program**

### Administrative Unit

The BLM-Monticello FO falls under the Utah Canyon Country District and encompasses 1.8 million surface acres of public lands. These public lands lie primarily within San Juan County, Utah, although a small portion extends into Grand County to the north. Public lands in San Juan County fall under Utah Congressional District 2 (Rep. Jason Chaffetz).

## Map 1 – Monticello Field Office.



### Monticello FO Recreation Program and Visitation

The Monticello FO administers an area that has gained international recognition for its extraordinary natural beauty and numerous recreational opportunities. Spectacular landscapes along with rich archeological resources provide visitors with an abundance of recreational opportunities. These opportunities include: hiking, biking, boating, cultural resource viewing, camping, off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, rock climbing, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife viewing, sightseeing and scenic photography. Features such as the San Juan River, Grand Gulch, Cedar Mesa, Indian Creek, Newspaper Rock, Dark Canyon, Valley of the Gods, Comb Ridge, Hole in the Rock Trail, and the White Canyon area attract visitors from around the world, who recreate both privately and by hiring commercial outfitters.

The public lands managed by the Monticello FO are also near several popular destinations managed by other federal and state land management agencies. These areas include Glen Canyon

National Recreation Area, Monument Valley, Canyonlands National Park, Goosenecks State Park, Hovenweep National Monument and Natural Bridges National Monument.

As the popularity of the entire region has increased, seasonal visitation and demand for a variety of recreation opportunities in the Monticello FO has increased as well. Visitation in the Monticello FO occurs throughout the year, while the busy seasons occur in the spring and fall. Estimated annual recreation visitation to the Monticello FO is based on traffic counter data, permits, visitor logs, and field monitoring. According to these records, visitation to the Monticello FO has increased significantly over the last five years. In 2014, there were 15% more visits recorded than in 2010. This long-term growth trend is expected to continue and increasing recreation visits are anticipated.

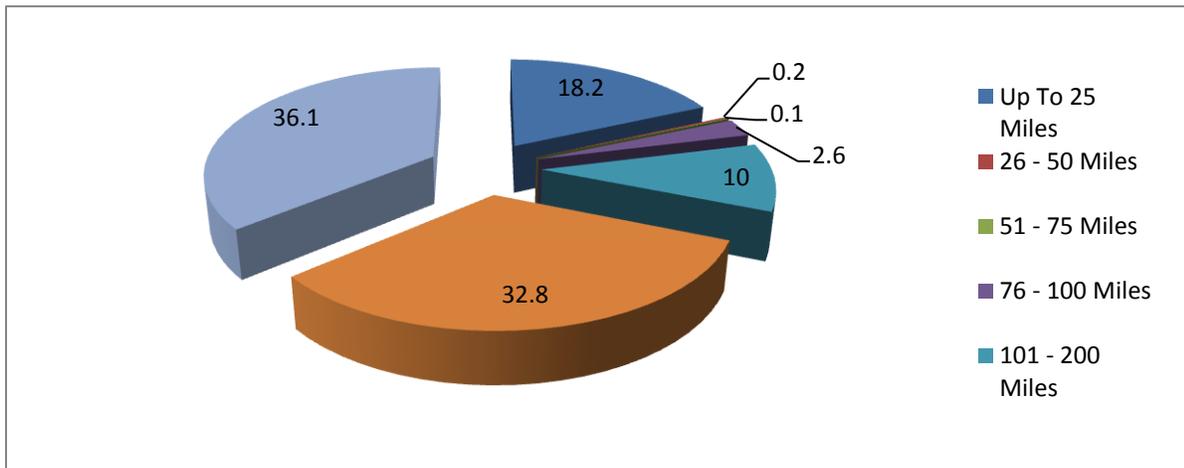
**Table 1 – Recreation Visits to the Monticello Field Office**

Year	Recorded Visits
2010	221,982
2011	202,943
2012	226,308
2013	245,094
2014	255,807

Source: BLM RMIS Database

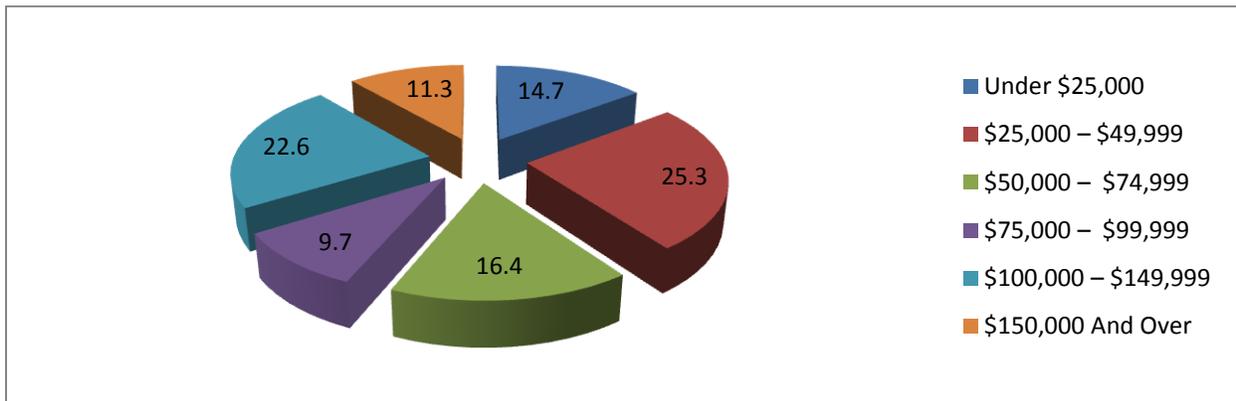
Visitor demographics, such as where visitors originate, were collected in a National Visitation Use Monitoring (NVUM) study prepared by the U.S. Forest Service (U.S. National Forest Service, 2007) for the BLM-Moab Field Office. Moab is approximately one hour from the Monticello FO so the visitor data shown in Figure 2 is assumed applicable. Results from this survey indicate that the great majority of recreation visitors to BLM-Moab travel large distances to come to the area.

**Figure 1 – Percent of BLM Visits by Distance Travelled (NVUM, 2007)**



Recreation visitors to the BLM-Moab vicinity have a higher than average income profile than the population at large. This is illustrated in the following chart (Figure 2), derived from the 2007 NVUM study:

**Figure 2 – Annual Household Income of Visitors (NVUM, 2007)**



### Applicable Land Use Plans

Management in the Monticello FO is guided by the Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP), signed on November 17, 2008. Specific decisions were made concerning the campground program. These are:

**REC-1 (pg. 88):** Continue existing reservations issued to the BLM for all existing developed recreation sites and facilities; issue similar protective reservations for all new recreation facilities.

**REC-2 (pg. 88):** Manage recreation to meet Utah's Rangeland Health Standards guided by the Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Recreation Management. The guidelines describe the procedures that should be applied to achieve standards for rangeland health within the recreation program.

- Limit or control activities where long-term damage by recreational uses is observed or anticipated through specialized management tools such as designated campsites, permits, area closures, and limitations on number of users and duration of use. Revise recreation area management plans (RAMP) as necessary to maintain public land health.
- Consider and, where appropriate, implement management methods to protect the resource, as well as maintain the quality of experience of the various user groups. These methods could include limitation of numbers, types, timing, and duration of use.
- Encourage the location of public land recreational activities near population centers and highway corridors by placement of appropriate visitor-use infrastructure. Provide restrooms and other facilities that will be adequate for anticipated uses at designated

campgrounds, trailheads, and other areas where there is a concentration of recreational users.

- Consider and, where appropriate, implement management methods to protect natural and cultural resources and while giving consideration to community and economic impacts, implement management methods to maintain or enhance recreation opportunities. Management methods may include limitation of visitor numbers, camping and travel controls, implementation of fees, and alteration of when use takes place and other similar actions as they are approved through normal BLM procedures.

**REC-5 (pg. 89):** Existing developed recreation sites will be maintained. New sites/facilities/trails will be developed in response to user demand, amenity value, and critical resource protection needs.

**REC-15 (pg. 90):** Develop or improve development of recreation sites as prioritized below:

- Kane Gulch Ranger Station (40 acres)
- Sand Island Campground (21 acres)
- Mexican Hat Launch site (20 acres)
- Hamburger Rock Campground (20 acres)
- Comb Wash Campground (10 acres)
- Butler Wash Ruin (60 acres)
- Mule Canyon Ruin (10 acres)
- Three Kiva Pueblo (10 acres)
- Shay Mountain Vista Campground (20 acres)
- Indian Creek Recreational and Camping Facilities as outlined in the Indian Creek Recreation Corridor Plan (BLM 2005).

**REC-128 (pg. 107):** Indian Creek Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) boundary matches the boundary for the Indian Creek Corridor Plan (EA UT-090-00-47, BLM 2005). Management of the Indian Creek Corridor will be in conformance with the decisions outlined in the Indian Creek Corridor Plan, which includes the following guidelines:

- A new campground called Shay Mountain Vista Campground will be constructed.
- Camping fees will be charged if deemed necessary to provide needed facilities/services.
- Parking areas will be developed.
- Additional camping stipulations and regulations could be implemented if monitoring data shows this is necessary.

**REC-129 (pg. 108):** Dispersed camping is allowed in the Indian Creek Corridor, except within the established designated camping zones: Bridger Jack Mesa, Indian Creek Falls, and Creek Pasture. Camping within these zones is limited to designated sites.

## Description of Each Existing or Proposed Fee Site

The Monticello FO manages four campgrounds and three reservation group sites in San Juan County, Utah. A description of each site is provided in the following section and summarized in Table 2 below.

### Hamburger Rock Campground



The Hamburger Rock Campground is located north off the Needles Highway (accessed from Highway 211), approximately three miles southeast of Canyonlands National Park and 17 miles northwest of Newspaper Rock. The campground provides 10 campsites, mostly situated at the base of the Hamburger Rock geologic feature. This is the closest site to Canyonlands National Park, and is often used as an overflow when the Park is full. Hamburger Rock is a large, red sandstone monolith, with expansive views of Lockhart Basin and Canyonlands National Park to the north and northwest. A few of the sites are shaded by small juniper trees, but most are shaded only by the Rock itself. Campsites are available on a first come, first serve basis, and each site features a tent/trailer space, a picnic table, a fire ring, and vault toilets. Overnight use fees are currently \$6 per site.

### Sand Island Campground



The Sand Island Campground is located on the north bank of the San Juan River about 3 miles west of Bluff, Utah, on the south side of Highway 191. The campground provides 24 large campsites that are suitable for any size recreational vehicle (RV). Campsites are available on a first come, first serve basis, and each site features a tent/trailer space, a picnic table, drinking water, trash, a fire ring, and vault toilets. Overnight use fees are currently \$10 per site.

### Sand Island Group Site

The Sand Island Group Site (site 24) is located near the boat ramp and features tent/trailer space, picnic tables, drinking water, trash, a fire ring, a vault toilet, and a shade structure. The site may be reserved in advance for groups of 15 to 20 people for a maximum of three days. It may not be reserved on any holiday weekend during the river floating season (March through October). Currently, the fee to reserve the group site per night is \$25 plus \$2 per person. Group site fees must be paid for at the time the reservation is made with the Monticello FO.

### Creek Pasture Campground



The Creek Pasture Campground is located north off the Needles Highway (accessed from Highway 211), approximately 5 miles southeast of Canyonlands National Park and 15 miles northwest of Newspaper Rock. The large one-loop campground provides 32 campsites that each feature a tent/trailer space, a picnic table, a fire ring, and vault toilets. Each campsite can hold 10 people and 2 vehicles. Use is currently free at this site.

### Creek Pasture Group Site

The Creek Pasture Group Site is located along the eastern edge of the Creek Pasture Campground, and features tent/trailer space, picnic tables, a fire ring, a vault toilet, and a shade structure. The site may be reserved in advance for groups of 12 to 50 people for a maximum of 14 days. The site can only hold 20 vehicles, with a vehicle and trailer counting as 2 vehicles. Currently, there is no fee to reserve the site; however, reservations must be made in advance by calling the Monticello FO.



### Indian Creek Falls Group Site

The Indian Creek Falls Group Site is located north off the Needles Highway (accessed from Highway 211), approximately three miles southeast of the entrance to



Canyonlands National Park and 17 miles northwest of Newspaper Rock. The site is situated in a small bowl just above the terrace of Indian Creek, and features tent/trailer space, picnic tables, a fire ring, and a vault toilet (located on the other side of the main road from the driveway). To access the site, turn north and drive for two miles on Lockhart Basin Road (CR 122). This site may be reserved in advance for groups of 10 to 30 people for a maximum of 14 days. The site can only hold 10 vehicles, with a vehicle and trailer counting as 2 vehicles. Currently, there is no fee to reserve the site; however, reservations must be made in advance by calling the Monticello FO. Use is currently free at this site.

Superbowl Campground

Superbowl Campground is located north off the Needles Highway (accessed from Highway 211), approximately 6.5 miles southeast of Canyonlands National Park and 13.5 miles northwest of Newspaper Rock. This multi-loop campground provides 17 campsites above Indian Creek, with each site featuring a tent/trailer space, a picnic table, a fire ring, and vault toilets. The sites are well-spaced, and accommodate one or two tents.

**Table 2 –Monticello Field Office Campgrounds**

Campground	Sites	Current Fees			Amenities									
		Site Fee	Reservation Fee	Per Person Fee	Tent /Trailer Space	Picnic Tables	Drinking Water	Access Roads	Fee Collection	Visitor Protection	Trash	Fire Pits or Grill	Vault Toilet	Shade Shelter
Hamburger Rock	10	\$6	-	-	■	■		■	■	■		■	■	
Sand Island	24	\$10	-	-	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Sand Island GS	2	-	\$25	\$2	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Creek Pasture	32	\$0	-	-	■	■		■	□	■		■	■	
Creek Pasture GS	1	-	\$0	\$0	■	■		■	■	■		■	■	■
Indian Creek Falls GS	1	-	\$0	\$0	■	■		■	■	■		■	■	
Superbowl	17	\$0	-	-	■	■		■	□	■		■	■	

- Facility or service is provided
- Pending approval of the proposed recreation fees, self-service pay stations would be installed

Future Campground Development Scenario

Based on current use and impact, ease of access, development costs and anticipated visitor demand, the Monticello FO could consider developing additional campgrounds within the Monticello FO area. Additional group sites could be added to existing campgrounds and would become fee sites available by reservation. Anticipated group sites could be located at Hamburger Rock and Superbowl campgrounds.

The Indian Creek Corridor Plan identifies the development of Shay Mountain Vista Campground. As funding becomes available and if there is a public need, this campground would be constructed to accommodate approximately 40 campsites. This area would provide camping facilities for both tents and RV campers.

Also noted in the Indian Creek Corridor Plan are the dispersed sites located in the vicinity of the Indian Creek Falls Group Site. These sites could be developed in the future if amenities were added and the need arises to satisfy recreation demands; minimize user conflicts; and protect and enhance public lands.

Development of any of the above campgrounds would be considered consistent with this Business Plan; however, the implementation of recreation fees would only be made after consultation with the Utah Recreation Resource Advisory Council (RAC) and general public support for the proposed fees had been documented in conformance with section 6803(c) of the REA.

### Visitation

Campground visitation data is collected in several ways. In a fee site, visitors fill out a Recreation Use Permit (RUP) envelope. The number of people camping at each site is recorded allowing the BLM to determine the number of visitors to an area. Hamburger Rock and Sand Island are two campgrounds currently collecting RUP data through this method.

Hamburger Rock’s average annual visitation (Table 3) for FY10 – FY14 is approximately 1,500 campers. Hamburger Rock is a fee site located in the Indian Creek Corridor. Most visitors are coming to Indian Creek for rock climbing, visiting Canyonlands National Park, off-highway vehicle use, hiking and photographing the landscape. Visitation peaks in the spring and fall months when the weather conditions are mild. This area currently does not have a group site.

**Table 3 – Hamburger Rock Campground Visitation**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Campsite Permits</b>	<b>Number of Total Campers</b>
2010	571	1,376
2011	609	1,480
2012	596	1,428
2013	621	1,509
2014	626	1,577

Source: Locally-generated recreation and visitor use tracking spreadsheets

Sand Island Campground is located along the San Juan River and attracts visitors interested in floating the river or travelling through the area. Use peaks between April and October, the high-use river season. This campground is a fee site and offers both individual sites and group sites.

During the past five years, average annual visitation to the Sand Island Campground and Group Site has been approximately 6,100 and 760 campers, respectively (Table 4).

**Table 4 – Sand Island Campground Visitation**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Campsite Permits</b>	<b>Number of Individual Campers</b>	<b>Number of Group Site Campers</b>	<b>Number of Total Campers</b>
2010	1,605	4,914	425	5,339
2011	2,478	7,389	1,003	8,392
2012	1,976	5,813	769	6,582
2013	2,300	6,240	877	7,117
2014	2,087	6,052	751	6,803

Source: Locally-generated recreation and visitor use tracking spreadsheets

Indian Creek Falls is a large group site located near Hamburger Rock. Its visitor numbers are estimated from the reservation calendar records and receive approximately 800 visits per year.

Another method of determining visitation numbers is by using traffic counters. Superbowl Campground visitation is estimated at approximately 3,000 people per year. This is estimated from traffic counter data collected in 2009 from a counter located on the access road to the campground. It should be noted that this number assumes that there are an average of two and a half people in each campsite. It should also be noted that the majority of these visitors stay more than one night.

When data is not available, the BLM may rely on staff or volunteer observations to estimate visitor use. Because of its proximity to Superbowl, it is assumed that Creek Pasture Campground has similar visitation numbers as Superbowl, at approximately 3,000 visitors per year. Visitor use numbers at Creek Pasture Group Site are estimated from the reservation calendar records and receive approximately 1,000 visits per year.

From the data and observations above, it is estimated that the Monticello FO campgrounds accommodated an average of 16,000 campers per year from FY10 – FY14.

Partnerships and Volunteer Programs

The Monticello FO works with several volunteer groups to maintain some of its campgrounds. Friends of Indian Creek, Rocky Mountain Field Institute, American Alpine Club, and Access Fund have volunteered campground maintenance and improvement projects in the Indian Creek.

**Proposed Modifications to Recreation Fee Rates**

The BLM-Monticello FO proposes to increase camping fees at seven developed recreation sites located in San Juan County, including Hamburger Rock Campground, Sand Island Campground,

Sand Island Group Site, Creek Pasture Campground, Creek Pasture Group Site, Indian Creek Falls Group Site, and Superbowl Campground. Pursuant to REA and the implementing regulations at 43 CFR 2933, fees may be charged for overnight camping and group use reservations where specific amenities and services are provided. Under Section 6802(g)(2) of the REA, the camping areas listed above qualify as sites where visitors can be charged an “Expanded Amenity Recreation Fee”.

Currently, overnight use fees are \$6 per site at Hamburger Rock, \$10 per site at Sand Island, and \$25 plus \$2 per person per night for the Sand Island Group Site. Use is currently free at Creek Pasture, Creek Pasture Group Site, Superbowl, and Indian Creek Falls Group Site. Fee rates have remained the same at Sand Island since 2003 and Hamburger Rock since 2005. To help offset increased operating costs, the BLM proposes to raise overnight use fees as follows: \$10 per site at Hamburger Rock and \$15 per site at Sand Island. New overnight use fees at Creek Pasture and Superbowl would be set at \$10 per site. New group site fees at Indian Creek Falls would be set at \$25, plus \$2 per person per night. New group site fees at Creek Pasture would be set at \$25, plus \$3 per person per night. The group site fee at Sand Island would be raised to \$25, plus \$4 per person per night.

In recent years, annual operating budgets in the BLM have continued a steady downward trend. The Monticello FO has been operating its campground facilities under a deficit for many years. Annual revenues generated at each site cover only a fraction of the overall operating costs. The remainder of annual operating costs has been covered by funds generated through Special Recreation Permits.

Site fees were last increased at Sand Island in 2003 and Hamburger Rock in 2005 when the average consumer price index was 184.0 and 195.3, respectively. The average consumer price index for 2014 was 236.7, representing an increase of 28.6% since 2003 and 21.2% since 2005. While the proposed fee increases will only partially cover annual operating costs at each site, generating revenue with daily fees commensurate with other similar expanded-amenity sites in Utah will offset price inflation since 2003 and 2005; allow the Monticello FO to maintain visitor services at a more sustainable level; and provide better opportunities to upgrade existing facilities within the campgrounds.

**Table 5 – Existing and Proposed Recreation Fee Rates**

<b>Campground</b>	<b>Current Fee</b>	<b>Proposed Fee</b>
Hamburger Rock	\$6	\$10
Sand Island	\$10	\$15
Sand Island Group Site	\$25 + \$2 per person	\$25 + \$4 per person
Creek Pasture	\$0	\$10
Creek Pasture Group Site	\$0	\$25 + \$3 per person
Indian Creek Falls Group Site	\$0	\$25 + \$2 per person
Superbowl	\$0	\$10

## **Operating Costs**

The Monticello FO maintains infrastructure that supports its campground operation. The largest maintenance expense is the weekly (at a maximum) cleaning of the seven campgrounds and their twelve toilets. Toilets are cleaned using a high pressure, hot water system. In addition, approximately 111 metal campfire rings are cleaned as needed. The campgrounds have over 100 picnic tables; these are washed, painted, and repaired as needed. One dedicated BLM recreation employee ensures the cleanliness and safety of the facilities. This person is responsible for cleaning the campgrounds, maintaining the infrastructure in the campgrounds (such as painting toilet buildings), and for construction of campground amenities such as fencing, shade shelters, etc. Landscaping work is undertaken by the maintenance person, including weed removal. Toilet effluent is pumped as needed; currently the National Park Service pumps the toilet vaults through an interagency agreement with the BLM. Maintenance of the drinking water systems is provided at Sand Island Campground. The cost of cleaning and maintaining the campgrounds includes buying toilet paper, garbage bags and cleaning supplies, as well as paying for sewage contracts.

The program also supports the cost for government vehicles and equipment used to support patrols, maintenance work, resource and visitor use monitoring, and law enforcement. Vehicles routinely used include pick-up trucks, patrol vehicles, and specialized cleaning trucks equipped with hot water, high pressure washing machines. A large water truck is used to charge vault toilets with water to ensure cleanliness and safety. Campground maintenance and construction often requires the rental of a skid-steer loader or other specialized equipment. Large projects involving campground design, construction, and road maintenance on access roads are supported by the engineering office from the BLM Canyon Country District. Roads are graded and maintained annually with heavy equipment. The engineering support also includes installation of shade structures, toilet facilities, and parking areas.

Annual operating costs for the campground program include expenditures for group site reservation administration, monitoring of visitor use, fee collection, law enforcement services, maintenance and cleaning, vault toilet pumping and trash disposal. Up to fifteen permanent and seasonal employees are involved with supporting the campground program: seven share duties to maintain the Sand Island campground program while eight focus on campgrounds in the Cedar Mesa and Indian Creek areas. Additional costs to the government for administering the campground program include managerial support, work by recreation planners and office overhead, including providing information services to the public.

Operating costs of the campgrounds are funded through the Monticello FO's campground fee account (L1232), with revenue collected from recreation fees. Administrative costs are generally borne by congressionally appropriated funds, including those from the Monticello FO's recreation resources management (L1220) and annual maintenance and operational costs (L1660) accounts. Table 6 identifies the annual expenditures associated with the Monticello FO campground fee account (L1232), and also includes revenues, net gain/loss and fund balance for the last three fiscal years.

**Table 6 – Actual Expenditure of Campground Fees by Year**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Staff Labor</b>	<b>Operations Costs</b>	<b>Total Annual Expenditures</b>	<b>Revenues</b>	<b>Net Gain/Loss</b>
2012	\$6,500	\$79,380	\$85,880	\$24,789	- \$61,091
2013	\$9,389	\$66,024*	\$75,413	\$26,050	- \$49,363
2014	\$10,768	\$62,119	\$72,887	\$25,888	- \$46,999
<b>3-Year Average</b>	<b>\$8,886</b>	<b>\$69,174</b>	<b>\$78,060</b>	<b>\$25,576</b>	- \$52,484

**Note:** Does not include \$28,500 for infrastructure improvements or \$50,000 spent on Superbowl roadwork, from the Canyon Country District.

The operations costs in Table 6 exhibit a drop in 2013. Also noted is an increase in staff labor cost. This shift occurred when a contracted toilet cleaning service was moved to the duties of a newly hired maintenance employee.

Considering there are two fee sites currently funding the seven-site recreation fee program, it is not surprising that the average net loss is more than double the revenue. Appropriated funds from the Monticello FO's annual maintenance and operational costs account cover contracts for trash service, toilet pumping, and other maintenance expenses. The exact amount of appropriated funds was not tracked per campground but it can be assumed that it covers the additional amount of expenditure. The proposed fee increase in Sand Island Campground and Hamburger Rock will facilitate revenues to cover part of this difference.

Occasionally, one time funding from the BLM-Canyon Country District is used to cover campground costs. This occurred in 2013, when \$28,500 was used for infrastructure development at Creek Pasture Campground and \$50,000 for road improvements at Superbowl Campground. The intention was to add amenities required for the area to become a fee site. Creek Pasture has added all amenities required for a fee site. The group site was completed with the addition of a shade shelter, toilet, picnic tables, and fire rings. Thirty-four individual sites are complete, including two additional toilets, picnic tables, fire rings and an information kiosk. For the proposed new fee sites, additional facility development is necessary to provide the amenities expected for a fee site (e.g., self-service pay station). The remaining recreation sites, Indian Creek Falls Group Site and Superbowl Campground, are in varying levels of development. All have the minimum requirements to charge a fee including at least one toilet, an access road, reasonable visitor protection, fire rings, tent or trailer spaces, and picnic tables. Since these areas provide basic amenities, the proposed fee for these areas is \$10 per individual site per night. Sand Island campground has more costs associated with supporting more amenities such as water and trash service. Additional improvements are defined in Appendix A and will be completed as funding is available.

#### Positive Fund Balance Maintenance

The Monticello FO will strive to maintain a positive fund balance of no less than the average of the expenditures for the prior two years in the Monticello FO campground fee account. The

reason for this goal is to have the flexibility to obtain matching funds in applying for grants, effect emergency repairs, provide long-term stability for staff services, provide capability to meet unanticipated costs, take advantage of unforeseen opportunities, improve services, or use revenues to provide future recreation infrastructure to support visitor use. The fund balance will be managed as a working capital fund, with the goal of investing in facilities and services that will promote program growth consistent with visitor demand through a generation of increased revenue.

### Continuity of Operations

The campground program in the Monticello FO benefits the San Juan County economy; campers utilizing BLM campgrounds support many local businesses and the program provides employment opportunities. As such, the continuity of its operations is vital not only to individual businesses, but to the entire community. The campground program must continue to operate, even in light of an unexpected or sudden loss of appropriated funds or a decline in fee revenue. The fund balance will be maintained as explained above, and, in addition, the following steps will be taken should appropriated monies (or fees) decline:

1. Site construction and improvements would be deferred and maintenance would continue;
2. Spending would be focused on key frontline recreation staff;
3. Spending on non-revenue producing agreements would be eliminated, reduced or deferred;
4. Fee adjustments would be proposed and implemented (if approved) through the development of a publicly-reviewed draft business plan to maintain services and program capability;
5. The length of the season during which services would be offered would be reduced;
6. Low use, non-profitable sites would be closed if necessary to maintain economic health;
7. Other allowable actions would be taken as necessary to maintain a positive fund balance to ensure the continuity of services in the campground program.

Should appropriated funds be greatly reduced or eliminated, the Monticello FO will take action by managing campground revenues and expenditures to maintain continuity of operations for the program.

### **Fee Revenue Analysis**

Campground fees are paid by those receiving services in the BLM-Monticello FO campgrounds. Individual campsites are non-reservable; fees are paid at the self-service pay station located at the camping areas. Group sites are available by reservation and must be paid in advance through the Group Site Reservations Office at the BLM-Monticello Field Office. People holding the “America the Beautiful – The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Senior Pass” or “Access Pass” would be entitled to a 50 percent discount on expanded amenity fees, except those associated with group reservations. Fees charged for use of the group sites would include a non-refundable site reservation fee.

Campground fees are deposited into a recreation fee account (UT14) indicating which recreation site they were collected at. Table 7 displays revenues collected in this account for the past five years at each of the Monticello FO campgrounds. No fees have ever been charged at the Creek Pasture Campground, Creek Pasture Group Site, Superbowl Campground, or Indian Creek Falls Group Site up to this point. Table 8 shows projected new annual recreation fee revenues at each site based on the proposed fee increases.

Past Revenue

The data in Table 7 was pulled from the BLM Collections and Billings System (CBS). Average annual revenue generated by the Monticello FO campgrounds in FY10 – FY14 has been \$24,471. This amount represents only 31% of the Monticello FO’s average annual operating costs for the campgrounds during the same period.

**Table 7 – Annual Campground Revenue**

<b>Campground</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Hamburger Rock	\$3,122	\$3,783	\$4,776	\$5,589	\$5,284
Sand Island CG & Group Site	\$18,137	\$20,587	\$20,013	\$20,461	\$20,604
Creek Pasture	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Creek Pasture Group Site	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Superbowl	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Indian Creek Falls Group Site	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$21,259</b>	<b>\$24,370</b>	<b>\$24,789</b>	<b>\$26,050</b>	<b>\$25,888</b>

**Note:** Historically, revenues for the Sand Island Campground and Group Site have been deposited into the same account. Future revenues for these sites will be deposited separately, indicating which recreation site they were collected at.

Anticipated New Revenue from Fee Increase

By increasing individual and group campsite rates, the Monticello FO recreation program has the goal of improving the overall sustainability of visitor services delivery by generating a higher percentage of overall operating costs for all campgrounds under its jurisdiction. Anticipated average annual revenue from the fee increases proposed in this plan would be \$76,844 over the next three years. This revenue would represent 100% of the Monticello FO’s average annual operating costs, a 69% increase over the current budget situation.

**Table 8 – Projected Annual Revenue**

<b>Campground</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>3-year Average</b>
Hamburger Rock	\$6,520	\$6,650	\$6,780	\$6,650
Sand Island	\$32,580	\$33,225	\$33,885	\$33,230
Sand Island Group Site	\$4,200	\$4,250	\$4,305	\$4,252
Creek Pasture	\$12,485	\$12,734	\$12,989	\$12,736

Campground	2016	2017	2018	3-year Average
Creek Pasture Group Site	\$4,420	\$4,505	\$4,590	\$4,505
Superbowl	\$12,485	\$12,734	\$12,989	\$12,736
Indian Creek Falls Group Site	\$2,730	\$2,760	\$2,795	\$2,762
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,420</b>	<b>\$76,858</b>	<b>\$78,333</b>	<b>\$76,870</b>

**Note:** Figures were derived from the projected annual number of permits, multiplied by the proposed fee rate per campground. Projected annual growth was assumed to change 2% per year. Table 8 also assumes approval and implementation of the proposed fee rates at the start of FY16; however, initial implementation would not occur at Creek Pasture, Creek Pasture Group Site, Superbowl, or Indian Creek Falls Group Site until the spring of 2016.

### Priorities for Future Expenditures

Priorities for future expenditures for the Monticello FO Campground program are as follows:

- The continuation of on-going program services
- Program improvements that benefit visitors and improve BLM operations
- Maintaining the program fund account balance
- Reducing program dependence on annual appropriated funding

Table 9 shows the projected annual operating costs and revenues for the Monticello FO campgrounds for FY16 – FY18.

**Table 9 – Projected Annual Operating Cost versus Revenue**

Fiscal Year	Revenues (without increase)	Revenues (with increase)	Staff Labor	Operations Costs	Total Annual Expenditures	Net Gain/Loss (with increase)
2016	\$24,560	\$75,420	\$11,735	\$63,461	\$75,196	\$224
2017	\$25,550	\$76,858	\$12,087	\$64,096	\$76,183	\$675
2018	\$26,060	\$78,333	\$12,450	\$64,737	\$77,187	\$1,146

**Note:** Does *not* include expenditure of appropriated funds

### Future Expenditures for On-going Program Services

Priority expenditures for the campground program include all aspects of maintaining current levels of service to campers in both individual and group campsites. Campgrounds are maintained to a standard of cleanliness that promotes visitor health and safety. This level of service includes taking group site reservations, on-site patrol and fee collection, government vehicle costs, and regular maintenance of campground facilities, including toilets, fire rings, shade shelters and campground roads. The operating costs illustrated in Table 9 include only these essential program services and some routine minor improvements or repairs to facilities such as refurbishing toilet buildings and repairing damaged access roads. Table 9 does not include expenditure of appropriated funds, nor does it include capital improvement costs.

Consequently, the additional revenues from the proposed increase in campground fees would be used primarily for the maintenance of existing program services to campers. This includes the continual replacement or major repair of aging campground facilities, such as fire rings, picnic tables, site posts and toilet buildings that deteriorate through heavy use or extreme weather. With increased facilities, cleaning would probably increase to twice weekly. This would require an additional seasonal maintenance employee as the workload increases.

To the degree available, and consistent with maintaining an adequate fund balance, some fee revenues would be directed toward improving campground facilities and providing additional visitor opportunities. This is dependent upon continuing appropriation of recreation funds to the Monticello FO for project development.

#### Future Expenditures for Program Infrastructure

Major expenditures on projects in support of the campground program include the addition of specialized camping facilities for persons with disabilities, the improvement of campsites including adding tent pads, updating fire rings and improving roads, installation of new toilets, the addition of large shade shelters at all group sites, the addition of individual shade shelters at selected individual sites, adding amenities such as horse rails and high-lines and improved interpretive and informational signing. These improvements are estimated to cost \$532,000 (see Appendix A for a list of infrastructure improvements). In addition, there is a need to construct the campgrounds planned for in the 2008 Monticello Resource Management Plan, including The Cedars and Shay Mountain Vista campgrounds. With time, most new facilities would be partially self-supporting; however, the initial construction would require an expenditure of funds in the range of \$150,000 – \$175,000 per campground.

#### Revenues Necessary to Maintain Program Services

Projected expenditures included in Table 9 include only those necessary for continued program operations and minor improvements. Independently, the proposed camping fee increase would not result in the near term accomplishment of the larger program infrastructure improvements described in the above paragraph. The Monticello FO would continue its long term efforts to gradually improve physical facilities at campgrounds through a combination of regular appropriated funds, internal one-time program grants, and expenditure of user fees.

#### Maintenance of Fund Account Balance

It is critical to maintain a positive fund balance in the recreation fee accounts, including that derived from campgrounds, so that the BLM can provide required services, quickly address threats to public health and safety, and allocate some revenue for future investments in campground infrastructure. With a negative yearly fund account balance and average annual costs totaling \$78,000, the Monticello FO campground program is heavily dependent on annual appropriated funding to sustain the program at its current level of service.

In normal budget years, regular non-fee program appropriated funds are not available for seasonal employee labor, on-going purchasing, or project work until more than half of the fiscal year has elapsed. A positive fund balance, or working capital fund, is necessary for the recreation program to provide program services to campers throughout the year. The fund balance should also be available to cover labor costs of those employees involved in the Monticello FO campground program should appropriated monies be reduced. At current expenditure levels, the Monticello FO has determined that a minimum annual balance of approximately \$80,000 should be maintained in the campground fee account to ensure program continuity. The approximately \$50,000 fund balance at the end of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 was short of this balance.

The proposed fee increase along with adding fees to four campgrounds would restore the Monticello FO campground program's carry-over fund balance to a level that would ensure program stability and continuity over the long term, while reducing its dependence on annual appropriated funds to cover program expenses. With uncertain economic and political realities, the current level of appropriated funding can't be relied upon year after year to support the program. With a negative fund balance, if appropriated funds were significantly cut, the Monticello FO campground program would be unable to operate at its current level of service.

The annual appropriated funds that are saved, as a result of fee revenues covering more of the costs, could be used to support other recreation program needs, including maintenance backlogs.

In summary, the proposed fee rate would provide the Monticello FO campground program with long-term sustainability and continuity of operations. The program would have the ability to fund improvements when necessary, as well as afford costly and unplanned emergency expenses. In addition, the fund balance would decrease the amount of annual appropriated funding necessary to support the program.

### **Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates**

BLM policy authorizes the use of either a cost-recovery or fair market calculation method to analyze proposed fee rates. The Monticello FO is using a fair market comparison to support the need to increase fees at its campgrounds.

Tables 10 and 11 (below) compare fees charged at public campgrounds locally and regionally for individual and group camping. The Monticello FO developed recreation sites discussed in this plan are most similar to facilities on nearby BLM, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service and Utah State Parks campgrounds. Fees charged by several privately operated campgrounds are also included for comparison.

### **Fair Market Value Fee Calculation**

For ease of comparison, Tables 10 and 11 (below) were split between campgrounds representing individual campsites and group sites. The fee rates proposed in this business plan were offered as a comparison against comparable fees charged elsewhere, including by other public agencies and by nearby private sector operators.

**Table 10 – Comparison of Campground Fees in the Monticello Area**

Campground	Ownership	Fees				Amenities													
		Site Fee	Entrance Fee	Extra Person Fee	Extra Vehicle Fee	Tent /Trailer Space	Picnic Tables	Drinking Water	Access Roads	Fee Collection	Visitor Protection	Trash	Fire Pits or Grill	Vault Toilet	Flush Toilet	Shade Shelter	Showers	Electricity	Pool
Hamburger Rock	BLM	\$10				■	■		■	■	■		■	■					
Sand Island	BLM	\$15				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
Creek Pasture	BLM	\$10				■	■		■	□	■		■	■					
Superbowl	BLM	\$10				■	■		■	□	■		■	■					
Windwhistle	BLM	\$15				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
Ken’s Lake	BLM	\$15				■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■					
Willow Flat (Canyonlands)	NPS	\$10	\$10			■	■		■	■	■		■	■					
Squaw Flat (Canyonlands)	NPS	\$15	\$10			■	■	■	■	■	■		■		■				
Buckboard	USFS	\$10				■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Dalton Springs	USFS	\$10				■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Devils Canyon	USFS	\$10				■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Mason Draw	USFS	\$5				■	■		■	■	■		■	■					
Nizhoni	USFS	\$10				■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Oowah	USFS	\$5				■	■		■	■	■		■	■					
Warner Lake	USFS	\$10				■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Kayenta CG (Dead Horse Pt.)	Utah State Parks	\$28				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■		■	
Mountain View RV Park & CG	Private	\$18				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■		■	■	
Roughlock RV Park & CG	Private	\$20		\$3		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■		■	■	
Canyonlands RV Park	Private	\$30		\$5		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■

■ Facility or service is provided; □ Pending approval of the proposed recreation fees, self-service pay stations would be installed

**Table 11 – Comparison of Group Site Fees in the Monticello Area**

Group Site	Ownership	Fees				Amenities													
		Reservation Fee	Entrance Fee	Per Person Fee	Extra Vehicle Fee	Tent /Trailer Space	Picnic Tables	Drinking Water	Access Roads	Fee Collection	Visitor Protection	Trash	Fire Pits or Grill	Vault Toilet	Flush Toilet	Shade Shelter	Showers	Electricity	Pool
Sand Island	BLM	\$25		\$4		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■			
Creek Pasture	BLM	\$25		\$3		■	■		■	■	■		■	■		■			
Indian Creek Falls	BLM	\$25		\$2		■	■		■	■	■		■	■					
Windwhistle	BLM	\$20		\$3.50		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
Ken’s Lake (Site A)	BLM	\$20		\$4		■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■		■			
Ken’s Lake (Site B)	BLM	\$20		\$3.50		■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■					
The Ledge	BLM	\$20		\$3.50		■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■					
Squaw Flat	NPS		\$10	\$3		■	■	■	■	■	■		■		■				
Wooden Shoe (Canyonlands)	NPS		\$10	\$3		■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Split Top (Canyonlands)	NPS		\$10	\$3		■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Warner Lake	USFS	\$50				■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Buckboard	USFS	\$30				■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Dalton Springs	USFS	\$30				■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Nizhoni	USFS	\$30				■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■					
Yurt CG (Dead Horse Pt.)	Utah State Parks	\$80			\$13	■	■		■	■	■	■		■	■			■	

■ Facility or service is provided

The review of other campground areas with similar amenities shows that the proposed fee rates for the Monticello FO campgrounds are comparable to the lower daily rate charged for the use of other campground areas. The addition of fee sites at the four existing campgrounds along with an increase in fees at Sand Island and Hamburger Rock campgrounds would generate 100% of the revenues needed to cover the campground program's full operating costs without the use of any appropriated funding.

If the Monticello BLM were to raise its campground fee in the two existing fee sites and also implement fees in four other sites, campers would benefit from the continuity of on-going services, facility maintenance and some limited improvements to facilities. In addition, Monticello FO campgrounds would still offer the public an inexpensive camping experience.

### **Impacts from Changing or Not-Changing Recreation Fee Rates**

The following is an analysis of potential impacts or conditions that could develop from both changing fees and not changing fees at the Monticello FO campgrounds:

#### Changing Fees

##### *Benefits to Recreational Users*

If the fees were raised and additional fee sites added, services would continue to be offered in the campground program and ongoing maintenance costs would be covered. As facilities age the replacement of some of the infrastructure is necessary to maintain health and human safety. In addition, some revenues could be used to gradually improve campground infrastructure as part of routine upgrades. Lesser developed sites are particularly targeted for improvement. For example, additional picnic tables, fire rings, toilets could be added to sites that are lacking facilities. Substandard fire rings could be replaced and amenities added such as tent pads or shade structures.

There is increased demand for camping experiences on BLM lands, and the addition of fee sites will allow these campgrounds to be self-sustaining. The Monticello FO would also pursue other funding options to address larger infrastructure needs as described in Appendix A.

##### *Benefits to the Local Economy*

The Monticello FO campground program provides a high-quality camping experience that draws approximately 20,000 recreational users to San Juan County annually. These visitors purchase food, gas, and lodging in the communities of Bluff, Blanding, and Monticello. It is important to the local economy for the Monticello FO campground program to have the financial ability to maintain and improve, as necessary, the current services and facilities associated with camping on BLM public land, as well as protect the quality of the outdoor recreation experience. Many tourists prefer to camp in public campgrounds; capacity at Canyonlands National Park campgrounds is exceeded for the majority of the year. These campers rely on BLM campgrounds to support the overflow of visitors in San Juan County. Also, it serves as an inexpensive option for group site campers, as many youth groups could not afford to stay at area motels.

### *Benefits to the Environment*

The campground fee enables the Monticello FO to operate the camping program. This serves to reduce negative impacts to sites and to resources associated with higher levels of visitation in small areas. By providing campgrounds for visitors, the BLM is able to contain impacts to these small areas. Human waste generated by campers is contained and processed properly at approved facilities. Garbage is collected and disposed of at a proper facility. Campfires are contained in metal rings, enhancing fire safety; ash is disposed of properly. The camping fee charged for these facilities makes their construction and maintenance possible, thus benefiting the environment.

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

The socioeconomic data on BLM campers is unknown; however, those who vacation away from home are more likely to be above-average in income (based on the 2007 study NVUM done for the Moab BLM area referenced on page 9). Furthermore, BLM campgrounds offer a very low-cost alternative to staying in a motel in Monticello (where prices range from \$120 to \$200 per room per night during the same high use season as when the campgrounds have the greatest occupation). This low cost alternative is particularly important at the group sites, where groups can enjoy the amenities of the Monticello area at a very low cost.

Impacts to low-income populations are also not expected to be high, as low-income populations are not heavily represented in the BLM camper population and there is ample opportunity for free dispersed camping within the Monticello resource area.

### Not Changing Fees

#### *Negative Impacts to Recreational Users*

The BLM campgrounds will eventually reach an age where replacement costs of infrastructure will be increasing. For instance, most of the fire rings at campsites in Hamburger Rock are beginning to crumble. This is due to a larger problem of the location of the sites on erosive soils. The current fee structure covers only operational costs and does not include necessary replacement of facilities as they deteriorate. The requested fee increase would be partially used to cover replacement costs of existing campground infrastructure. A failure to raise the campground fee would mean that aging infrastructure would not be replaced in a timely manner to maintain site quality.

In addition, a failure to raise the campground fee would mean that improvements to the campgrounds, such as additional toilets, tent pads, and shade shelters would not be added to the existing campground infrastructure. Furthermore, needed improvements to campground facilities could not be done unless the campground fee were to increase.

#### *Negative Impacts to Local Economy*

Not raising the campground fee could lead to the erosion of services, such as cleaning, at campgrounds. This would eventually impact the recreation sector of the San Juan County economy, making people less likely to camp on Monticello FO lands. Vacation dollars are entirely discretionary; people can spend their vacation dollars in many different locales. Should

people be less likely to recreate in Monticello because of poor or unmaintained facilities, the San Juan County economy would suffer.

#### *Negative Impacts to the Environment*

In 2008, the Monticello Approved Resource Management Plan identified campgrounds as an issue for negative impacts to the environment resulting from unrestrained dispersed camping. Dispersed sites were common and still exist with potential impacts to wildlife, riparian resources, water quality, floodplains, cultural resources and the enjoyment of other recreation visitors. Establishing campsites and improvements to facilities helps limit resource damage and negative impacts to the environment. For example, should the BLM be unable to regularly service toilets in the campgrounds (all routine cleaning costs are paid by the Monticello Campground Fee Account), people would be less likely to utilize toilets. Additionally, recreation maintenance staff (funded almost entirely by fees) conduct site cleanup and weed control; a fee decrease would mean that such work would be reduced. This would lead to negative impacts to the environment.

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

While low-income populations do not generally choose to vacation in Monticello, some group site reservations are held by groups looking for an inexpensive vacation. As the operational costs increase beyond fee collection funds, the opportunity for groups to vacation on public lands may dwindle. Failure to offer these low-cost group sites to youth groups, scout groups and other such assemblages could have negative impacts on lower-income populations.

#### Managing for Positive Campground Program Results

The goal of the campground program in the Monticello FO is to meet increasing demand for campground services. In order to meet the demand, the field office will seek to increase campground revenues by managing for positive results for the following three groups: BLM campers (individual and group), the local community and the BLM. Campers at BLM campgrounds provide a business base for many local entrepreneurs, as the campgrounds bring customers directly to the local community.

The campers benefit by:

- (1) having a low-cost campsite or group campsite available for their use
- (2) improved public lands facilities (i.e. clean toilets)
- (3) being provided outstanding camping-based recreation opportunities
- (4) having a focused opportunity to enhance outdoor skills, build group and family relationships, and introduce youth to the world of nature
- (5) having their camping venues at locations to directly enjoy their public lands

The local community benefits by:

- 1) the development of business opportunities in the outdoor recreation sector
- 2) the development of business opportunities in the general retail sector (i.e. grocery stores, gear stores)
- 3) the development of business opportunities in the hospitality sector (i.e. restaurants)

- 4) the provision of jobs for its citizens and tax revenues for local government
- 5) improved services and quality of life through facility development and resource protection

The BLM benefits by:

- 1) meeting its land management goals, including protection of cultural and natural resources
- 2) partnering with campers as stewards of the public lands
- 3) providing for a more stable (and hence knowledgeable) BLM work force
- 4) lowering costs by developing improved business management systems
- 5) obtaining revenue for program management and facilities enhancement
- 6) sustaining the health diversity and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations

The positive results listed above allow campers to vacation on BLM lands in a responsible manner. As users of public lands, campers have a vested interest in the sustainability of BLM land. The local community gains in its most important economic sector, and finally participants and the public benefit from the increased opportunities to enjoy public lands.

The achievement of positive campground program results requires adequate funding to provide necessary services. Presently, in addition to funds provided through the BLM budget process, the Monticello FO collects fees from individual and group site campers to maintain and enhance visitor services. Continuing actions include field patrols, maintenance and campground host services, the use of a tailor-made database to professionalize contacts with group site reservation holders and to accurately determine payments due.

To protect campers, the public, and the public lands, continual efforts are undertaken to ensure that campground fees are paid by all. Campground hosts, recreation personnel and law enforcement personnel check campground fee permits of all users to ensure compliance with the payment requirements.

### **Public Outreach**

Draft business plans must be made available for public review and comment for a minimum of 30 days. Public outreach on the *Draft Business Plan for BLM Monticello Field Office Campgrounds* will be solicited for 30 days from August 3 to September 3, 2015. A copy of the draft business plan will be available at the Monticello FO and posted online at: <http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/monticello.html>.

Prior to increasing fees and implementing new fees, the Monticello FO will be conducting the following outreach efforts to notify the public of its opportunity to review and comment on the draft business plan:

- Posting an announcement on all campground kiosks

- Issuing a press release to statewide print and broadcast media (e.g., *Monticello Times Independent* , *Moab Sun-News*, *San Juan Record*)
- Posting the Draft Business Plan on the Monticello FO website
- Publishing a Notice of Intent to Collect Recreation Fees in the *Federal Register* six months before establishing any new recreation fees (if approved) at the Creek Pasture Campground, Creek Pasture Group Site, Superbowl Campground, and Indian Creek Falls Group Site

In addition, the Monticello FO will be presenting the campground fee proposals to the BLM Utah Recreation RAC for its formal review. The Utah RAC is a 15-member advisory panel which provides advice and recommendations to the BLM on resource and land management issues for 22.9 million acres of public lands in Utah. The REA mandates that the appropriate Recreation RAC review all BLM recreation fee proposals prior to approval. Comments from both the public at large and the BLM Utah RAC will be considered prior to approval of the increase in the Monticello FO campground fees.

## **Appendix A**

### **Specific Site Related Future Expenditures (Total = \$565,000)**

#### **Sites Utilized by Campers that Require Improvements in the Monticello FO (Capital improvement only; no maintenance costs are included)**

1. Limit camping to designated sites:
  - Block dispersed camping along campground access routes using native materials. (Estimated cost is \$10,000)
2. Improved infrastructure at Comb Wash Campground:
  - Canyon Country Engineering will develop a new campground design based on needs and sustainability. Installation of approximately 20 new individual campsites with picnic tables, fire rings, and road surface improvements with aggregate materials. (Estimated cost is \$125,000)
3. Improvements to Indian Creek Falls Group Site:
  - Change area design to accommodate two group sites by installing two shade structures, level ground surface, installing four picnic tables, four fire rings and minor site improvements. (Estimated cost is \$50,000)
4. Improvements to Superbowl Campground:
  - Canyon Country Engineering will develop a new campground design based on needs and sustainability. Installation of approximately 30 new individual campsites with picnic tables, fire rings and road surface improvements with aggregate materials. (Estimated cost is \$150,000-\$175,000)
5. Re-design of Hamburger Rock Campground to resolve erosion issues:
  - Re-locate and design of campground by Canyon Country District Engineering on nearby flatter ground in the vicinity of the current toilet. Installation of approximately 30 new individual campsites with picnic tables, fire rings and road surface improvements with aggregate materials. (Estimated cost \$150,000-\$175,000)
6. Installation of a group site at Hamburger Rock Campground:
  - Add amenities with installation of one shade structure, level ground surface, installing two picnic tables, two fire rings and minor site improvements. (Estimated cost is \$30,000)

It is to be noted that all the above sites will require maintenance services on at least a weekly basis during peak use.

## References

U.S. Department of the Interior, *Contributions of the BLM Canyon Country District to the San Juan County Economy*, February 2014

Headwaters Economics, *Economic Value of Public Lands in Grand County, Utah, 2011*, October, 2011

U.S. National Forest Service, *National Visitor Use Monitoring Report for BLM Moab Field Office*, 2007

## Acronyms

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CBS	Collection & Billing System
CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
CG	Campground
FBMS	Federal Business Management System
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
FO	Field Office
GS	Group Site
NVUM	National Visitation Use Monitoring
NPS	National Park Service
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
RAC	Resource Advisory Council
RAMP	Recreation Area Management Plan
REA	Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act
RMIS	Recreation Management Information System
RMP	Resource Management Plan
RUP	Recreation Use Permit
RV	Recreational Vehicle
SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
USFS	United States Forest Service

**End of Document**