



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
**News Release**

For Immediate Release: April 29, 2010  
Contact: David Christy (916) 941-3146

CA-CC-10-65

**BLM Plans Public Meetings on San Joaquin River Gorge Fee Proposal**

In order to accommodate growing public interest in the San Joaquin River Gorge, the Bureau of Land Management is considering charging fees for certain uses of the area.

BLM will hold public meetings to discuss the fee proposals on May 18 and 19. Meetings will be held in the Clovis Police Department conference room, 1233 Fifth St., Clovis, on May 18 and at the Sierra Unified School District office board room, 29143 Auberry Road, Prather, on May 19. Both meetings will run from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

“We are considering fees at the San Joaquin River Gorge consistent with Congressional direction to ‘provide fair value and fair return’ for recreation through amenity fees and commercial services,” said Tracy Rowland, park manager.

Fees are proposed for the use of specific facilities such as the group campground, as well as for any activity that requires the special attention of BLM staff. Suggested fees for use of a walk-in campsite at the campground are \$10 single, and \$15 for double and triple sites. Fees for the use of the group campground would be \$175, and \$25 for non-exclusive use of the horse camp. Interpretive and educational programs would cost \$15 per person for up to a half day (4 hours), and \$20 per person for a full day (6+ hours). The proposal would also charge a \$5 per vehicle fee for day use which includes access to the area and its trail system, restrooms, water, visitor center and interpretive exhibits. An annual pass would be available for between \$25 and \$50.

The fees would generate an estimated \$50,000 to \$80,000 annually, depending upon visitation, Rowland said. An estimated 54,000 to 84,000 people visit the gorge annually.

Fees provide a means of ensuring that services meet the public’s expectations. As use has increased, the cost of providing an appropriate level of services has also gone up. Fee revenues would be used for operations and maintenance, and to help expand the level of visitor services. Expanded services could include additional guided walks, talks and interpretive programs, new self-guided interpretive displays and experiences, and wayside exhibits that highlight natural features and the cultural history of the area.

Proposed improvements to facilities and trails include adding a shade structure for the group picnic area at the group camp, adding permanent restrooms in the horse camp and fishing access areas, creating new interpretive exhibits, and adding a self-guided interpretive trail.

For more information, contact Tracy Rowland at (559) 855-3492, or by email at [trowland@ca.blm.gov](mailto:trowland@ca.blm.gov).



David  
 Christy/CASO/CA/BLM/DOI  
 06/28/2010 07:59 AM

To Tracy Rowland/CASO/CA/BLM/DOI@BLM  
 cc  
 bcc

Subject gorge fee press release

release posted on web  
[http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/info/newsroom/2010/april/mtngs\\_sanjoaqqorge\\_fees.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/info/newsroom/2010/april/mtngs_sanjoaqqorge_fees.html)

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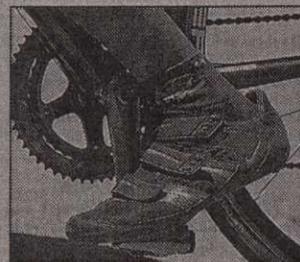
5152 Hillside Circle  
 El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

# OUT THERE

The Fresno Bee

3 WEEKS AFTER  
PUBLIC MEETINGS

Thursday, June 10, 2010 C6



## Climb time

Central California's best-known endurance event, the 34th annual Climb to Kaiser, returns June 26. Details: [www.climbtokaiser.com](http://www.climbtokaiser.com).

## RECREATION CALENDAR

Submit items to Sports Recreation Calendar, The Fresno Bee, 1626 E St., Fresno, CA 93786; fax to (559) 441-6070; or e-mail to [calendars@fresnobee.com](mailto:calendars@fresnobee.com) at least two weeks before publication. Notices will not be accepted by telephone. Only events open to the public will be accepted. The Bee's policy is to publish notices of an event at least once; more often if space permits. This service is free. All telephone numbers are in the 559 calling area unless noted.

### BASEBALL

#### Central Valley RBI League:

Tryout/clinic 12:15-2 p.m. Saturday. Sponsored by Major League Baseball and KPMG. 12U, 14U, 16U, 18U, at Fresno Christian High. \$25.

**13U and 14U summer Kick Off:** Saturday and Sunday. Memorial High. 312-5872.

#### Fresno Pacific University Camp:

Offensive skills Monday-Wednesday, defensive skills June 21-23, fundamental skills July 12-15. 9 a.m.-noon for ages 8-18, 8-13; 1-4 p.m. ages for 14-18. [fpuathletics.com](http://fpuathletics.com). \$130, \$200 fundamental camp.

#### Central Valley RBI Skills Camp:

9 a.m.-noon ages 8-12 and 1-5 p.m. ages 13-18 June 22-24. Fresno Christian High. (877) 704-0147, [teamavenue@gmail.com](mailto:teamavenue@gmail.com). \$195.

### BASKETBALL

**Summer Sizzle boys camp:** 1-4 p.m. Monday-Thursday. Grades 5-10. Hoover High. 451-4027.

**College of the Sequoias Summer Skills Camp:** Monday-Friday. Boys and girls ages 7-15. 737-6204. \$170; \$300 for both sessions.

**Bullard Boys camp:** 9-11 a.m. grades K-3 and 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. grades 4-8 Monday-Thursday. 213-2533. [www.bullardbasketball.com](http://www.bullardbasketball.com). \$70.

**College of the Sequoias High**

# Gorge may start charging visitors

Fee proposal will be heard at upcoming meetings.

By Marek Warszawski

The Fresno Bee

Hikers, mountain bikers, anglers, hunters and horseback riders who enjoy the San Joaquin River Management Area likely will have to cough up a few bucks starting next spring.

A proposal to start charging user fees for parking, camping and interpretive programs at the 6,700-acre

recreation area outside Auberry will be heard by the Pacific Southwest Recreation Resource Advisory Committee during its June 23-24 meeting in Mammoth Lakes.

Until now, the estimated 54,000-84,000 people who visit the gorge annually did so for free. But park manager Tracy Rowland said fees are necessary to offset the Bureau of Land Management's shrink-

ing budget and internal grants that are no longer available.

The park's annual operating costs are \$330,000, Rowland said.

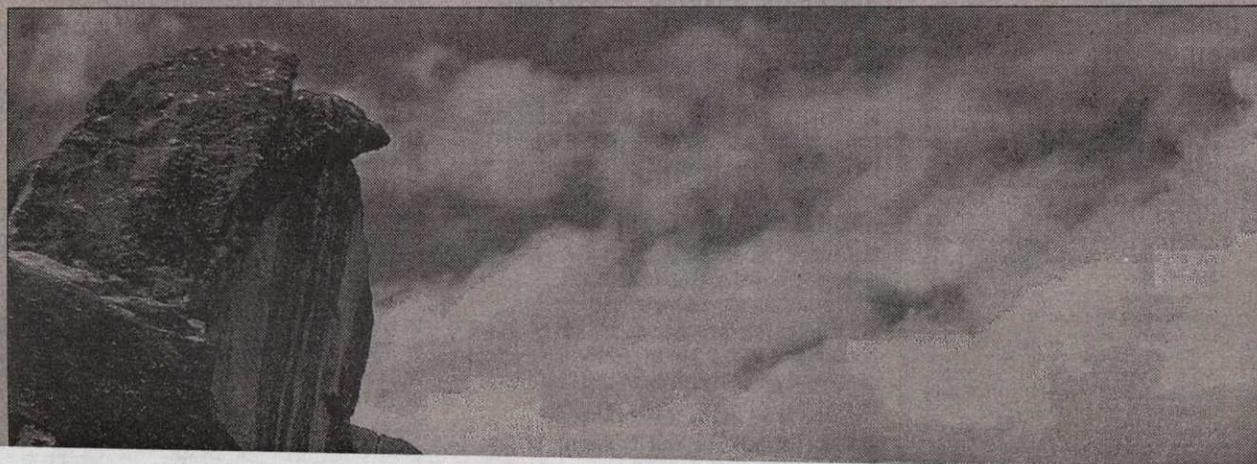
"Our funding is getting cut every year," Rowland said. "We need new sources of income so we can maintain what we have now as well as expand visitor services in the future."

Under the proposal, all fees collected will be spent on park maintenance and operations, Rowland said.

Visitors would be charged \$5 per vehicle to enter the park, \$10 per night for camping (\$15 for double and triple sites), \$25 per night for using the horse camp and up to \$20 for interpretive programs.

Fees would also be used to expand the park's trail system, adding permanent restrooms in certain areas and creating new interpretive exhibits, Rowland said.

► The reporter can be reached at [marekw@fresnobee.com](mailto:marekw@fresnobee.com) or (559) 441-6218.



## TRAIL MIX

### Events

**Fresno County Sportsmen's Club 94th Annual Family Picnic**

**When:** Saturday

**Where:** 10645 N. Lanes Road, Fresno

Join one of California's oldest conservation organizations for its yearly get-together on the bank of the San Joaquin River. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

# Forum PAGE

## BLM proposes fees for gorge use

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"We are considering fees at the San Joaquin River Gorge consistent with Congressional direction to 'provide fair value and fair return' for recreation through amenity fees and commercial services," said Tracy Rowland, park manager.

Fees are proposed for the use of specific facilities such as the group campground, as well as for any activity that

requires the special attention of BLM staff. Suggested fees for use of a walk-in campsite at the campground are \$10 single, \$15 for double and triple sites. Fees for the use of the group campground would be \$175, and \$25 for non-exclusive use of the horse camp. Interpretive and educational programs would cost \$15 per person for up to a half day (4 hours), and \$20 per person for a full day (6+ hours). The proposal would also charge a \$5 per vehicle fee for parking. An annual pass would be available for between \$25 and \$50.

The fees would generate an estimated \$50,000 to \$80,000 annually, depending on visitation, says Rowland. An estimated 54,000 to 84,000 people visit the gorge annually.

According to Rowland, the fees would provide a means of ensuring that services meet the public's expectations. As use has increased,

the cost of providing an appropriate level of services has also gone up. Fee revenues would be used for operations and maintenance, and to help expand the level of visitor services. Expanded services could include additional guided walks, talks and interpretive programs, new self-guided interpretive displays and experiences, and wayside exhibits that highlight natural features and the cultural history of the area.

Proposed improvements to facilities and trails include adding a shade structure for the group picnic area at the group camp, adding permanent restrooms in the horse camp and fishing access areas, creating new interpretive exhibits, and adding a self-guided interpretive trail.

For more information, contact Tracy Rowland at (559) 855-3492, or by email at [trowland@ca.blm.gov](mailto:trowland@ca.blm.gov).

## SUSD board makes public statement

The Sierra Unified School District Board of Trustees has issued the following statement:

"The Board would like to thank the community that

needed to ensure that the incident is not repeated and that it has been handled appropriately.

"We respect the right of anyone to bring these issues

to the attention of the district staff as well as students. The policy will be drafted for the first reading at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

"This decision was made by a unanimous vote of all

Letters to the Editor **MUST** have a handwritten signature and include a name, address and telephone number. **Anonymous letters will not be published.** Letters **MUST** be limited to approximately **500** words. Letters exceeding that count may be refused or returned for editing. The Mountain Press reserves the right to edit, publish or not publish any letter submitted. Opinions expressed in the Letters to the Editor are not necessarily those held by the owners of the Mountain Press.

Dear Editor,  
Let me see if I got this right.

If you cross the border illegally in the following countries: North Korea, you get 12 years hard labor. In Iran, you get detained indefinitely. Afghanistan, you get shot. Saudi Arabia, you get jailed. China, you will never be heard from again. Venezuela, you will be branded a spy and your fate will be sealed. Cuba, you will be thrown into political prison to rot. Mexico, you will be imprisoned.

If you cross the US border illegally you get: A job. A driver's license. A Social Security card. Welfare. Food stamps. A credit card. Subsidized rent or a loan to buy a house. Free education. Free health

to agree for years on how to change the formula, so they just delay.

But I have to say that I find it hypocritical when the same people who call for cutting spending for government programs, start screaming about cuts to government programs.

We are deep in debt and in coming years the government will have to do some big cutting to make up for all the years of foolish spending. Medicare and Social Security should have been "fixed" year ago, but politicians are cowards and only want to get re-elected.

Aaron Turner

Dear Editor,

**NOTICE: BLM  
is seeking public  
input on proposal  
to charge USE  
FEES at this site.  
Please read the  
summary and  
send comments  
to address listed.**

*May 20, 2010 - Posted on 3 bulletin boards @ SSRG by  
T. Rowland. Requested comments back by May 31, 2010.  
Provided comment form*

## Briefing Paper

### Fee Proposal for San Joaquin River Gorge Special Recreation Management Area

DATE: March 24, 2010

Prepared by: Tracy Rowland, Park Manager

BLM is proposing to institute fees at the San Joaquin River Gorge. This conforms with Congressional direction to "provide fair value and fair return" for recreation through user fees and commercial services. Fee revenues will be used for operations and maintenance. Fee revenues will create the potential to expand the level of visitor services beyond those currently offered. Expanded services could include additional guided walks, talks and interpretive programs, new self-guided interpretive displays and experiences, including wayside exhibits that highlight natural features and the cultural history of the area. In the past few years estimated visitation has ranged from 54,000 to 84,000 persons per year.

**FEE PROPOSAL:** Under the Federal Lands and Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) two types of fees will be charged: 1) Standard Amenity and 2) Expanded Amenity. **Standard Amenity fees** are charged when there has been substantial Federal investment in an area and these items are present: 1) developed parking areas, 2) permanent toilet facility, 3) permanent trash receptacles, 4) interpretive signs, exhibits or kiosks, 5) picnic tables and 6) security services. All of these items are present at the Gorge, and BLM proposes to charge a \$5.00 per vehicle standard amenity fee; an annual pass costing \$25 to \$50 would also be offered.

**Expanded Amenity Fees:** These fees will be charged for use of a specific facility such as the Group Campground or for any activity that requires special attention of BLM staff, such as guided interpretive or educational programs. Fees for camping are proposed as well. (see table).

Proposed Fee Item/Service	Proposed Fee Amount	Est. Revenue*
Campsite (walk-in)	\$10 single/ \$15 double & triple sites	\$810-\$1620
Group Camp	\$175	\$3,160-\$6,300
Horse Camp	\$25	\$825-\$1,650
Interp/Educational programs	\$15 per person/half-day (4hrs)	\$22,500
	\$20 per person/full-day (6hrs+)	\$600
Standard Amenity Fee	\$5.00 per <del>person</del> <sup>car</sup> /day	<u>\$24,375-\$48,750</u>
<b>Total estimated fee revenue:</b>		<b>\$52,270-\$81,420</b>

\*fee revenue depends upon visitation and level of compliance. For planning purposes we used conservative visitation numbers.

**Use of Fee Revenue:** Fees will be reinvested in operations & maintenance of these facilities, including the trail system, and facility improvements as funds allow. Proposed improvements would include adding a shade structure for group picnic area at group camp, adding permanent restrooms in horse camp and fishing access areas, creating new interpretive exhibits, and a self-guided interpretive trail.

**Timeline:** BLM plans to hold two public meetings this Spring to solicit feedback from public on proposed fees, concurrently publish Federal Register notice and get on RRAC schedule so that fees could be implemented in the spring of 2011. **Contact:** Tracy Rowland, Park Manager for more information 559-855-3492 trowland@ca.blm.gov



**COMMENT CARD**  
**Proposed Fees for San Joaquin River Gorge**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: Tracy Rowland  
Park Manager, SJRG  
P.O Box 248  
Auberry, CA. 93602  
559-855-3492  
trowland@ca.blm.gov

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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I would support an Annual Pass to the Gorge in the amount of:  
\$25 \_\_\_ \$30 \_\_\_ \$35 \_\_\_ \$40 \_\_\_ \$45 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ I would like to see the following projects be  
implemented with Fee revenues: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_