



Dan Pavoni
Detroit Ranger District
Rec Fee Proposals
Box 320
Mill City, OR 97360

Friday, October 05, 2007

Dear Dan:

As I read an article about the proposed fee increases in the Willamette Forest, I felt somewhat annoyed for reasons probably different than others. A good example of the problem has to do with the Lost Lake Campground. I am very familiar with the fees in the local area since most of them were set by me in coordination with the McKenzie River District, but I am also very familiar with the fees throughout northern California to the Canadian Border. If this campground were being managed by Hoodoo the fees would be about \$14 plus \$7 for the EV. If it were in most other areas they would be \$16 to \$18 with the EV fee ranging from \$5 to \$9.

I realize that you don't have to pay room tax, nor income taxes, but quite honestly Hoodoo doesn't have to pay much in income tax either because we don't make much. Our cost for the sites at Lost Lake would be about \$15 per site. I am guessing that your costs are probably higher than that even without the room tax. The problem that I see is that campers don't understand the difference between tax subsidized fees and full concessionaire fees. They just assume that Hoodoo's fees are higher because we are greedy. This makes the campers unhappy with us and with you. My experience with fees that are held artificially low in camping fees or rents or other things as well is that usually they cause more contention overall than the higher fees would have.

I don't know why the USFS feels the need to hold the fees lower than the market would say is reasonable. I don't believe that you would have any more complaints at \$14 than you would at \$8. In fact you will probably have more this way because campers will complain about how high the Hoodoo fees are assuming that they should at your level. Please do not hold your fees artificially low, this actually hurts the concessionaire model which I know that the national USFS is anxious to have work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Shepard". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chuck Shepard, CEO of Hoodoo Recreation