Sonora, Calif., (March 30, 2010)...The Forest Service today announced that the Stanislaus National Forest (NF) is planning to increase fees at 12 of its existing developed campgrounds, and initiate a new fee at one existing campground for the first time. The proposal was announced one year ago, but was not implemented. As authorized by the Federal Recreation Lands Enhancement Act (Title VII, P.L. 108-447), the fees can be used locally to help the Forest Service offset the costs of operating and maintaining the sites. ....

Currently, the Forest has 45 fee campgrounds. The addition of a new fee at Pacific Valley Campground would bring the total to 46 overnight fee campgrounds. Pending review by a region-wide Recreation Resource Advisory Committee, the new fees are planned for implementation at thirteen of the Forest’s existing developed campgrounds implemented during the summer, 2010.

Increased fees are planned for the following existing campgrounds: Sand Bar Flat ($12), Hull Creek ($12), Cascade Creek ($8), Mill Creek ($8), Niagara Creek ($8), Niagara OHV ($8), Fence Creek ($8), Highland Lakes ($12), Bloomfield ($12), Mosquito Lakes ($8), Stanislaus River ($12), and WaKalu Hep Yoo ($20). Sites with the $8 fee do not have potable water. Sites with the $10 or $12 fee have potable water. The site with a $20 fee has potable water, hot showers, garbage collection, and other amenities.

A new fee of $10 is proposed at Pacific Valley Campground Improvements have been made at many of these campgrounds, or are planned, including installation of new fire rings, picnic tables, accessible trails, and new toilets. The improvements are planned to address sanitation and safety concerns, and improve deteriorating resource conditions and recreation experiences.

During the past ten years, fees at the 12 existing campgrounds have not been increased. Campground fees are assessed based on the level of amenities and services provided, cost of operation and maintenance, market assessment, and public comment.

Currently, 33 of the Forest’s 45 developed fee campgrounds are managed by concessionaire. The concessionaire campgrounds have similar or higher fees than those proposed for these additional non-concession Forest Service managed campgrounds. The Forest’s 2007 Recreation Facilities Analysis (RFA), and a market analysis, indicated that the proposed fees are reasonable and typical of similar sites in the Sierra Nevada area.

The Forest received public comments during the past several years and is maintaining a file of public comment on the proposed fee increases and new campground fees as information for future planning efforts. For more information on these fee increases and new fees contact Brian Kermeen at (209) 532-3671 extension 316.