Recreation Fee Proposal to Recreation RAC Recommendations

General National Forest Process

Regions and Recreation RAC members will develop the details of their process and how they will work best together, but in general the process includes:

1. Forests develop proposals, which include:
   A. Fee Analysis Tool or Business Plan:
      1) Description of the recreation fee change and/or new recreation fee area,
      2) Description of visitor use/trends,
      3) Revenue and Expense information, and
      4) Description of services and amenities provided, current and planned expenditures, and
      5) Summary of public involvement efforts.

   B. Pricing Tool (where available):
      1) Analysis of comparable existing private and public facilities or services; local market.

   C. Public involvement (including at a minimum):
      1) Posting of fee proposal on site,
      2) New fee site notices in the Federal Register,
      3) Press release or public notice in applicable media, and
      4) Communicating with legislative representatives, local elected officials.

2. Forests present proposal(s) to Region 5 Recreation Fee Board, for consideration and approval.

3. Region determines if proposal goes to Recreation RAC for review and recommendation.

4. Recreation RAC makes recommendation to Regional Forester.

General BLM Process

1. Field Office develops proposals, which include:
   A. Business Plan:
1) Description of the recreation fee change and/or new recreation fee area,
2) Description of visitor use/trends,
3) Revenue and Expense information, and
4) Description of services and amenities provided, current and planned expenditures, and
5) Summary of public involvement efforts.
6) Analysis of comparable existing private and public facilities or services; local market.

B. Public involvement (including at a minimum):
1) Posting of fee proposal on site,
2) New fee site notices in the Federal Register,
3) Press release or public notice in applicable media, and
4) Communicating with legislative representatives, local elected officials.

2. Proposal is reviewed by the Recreation Program Lead at the State Office and by the Washington Office Fee Program Manager.

3. A proposal is then made by the Field Office to the appropriate BLM Resource Advisory Council.

4. If the BLM RAC recommends approval, presentation is to be made to the Recreation Resource Advisory Council.

5. The Recreation RAC makes recommendation to BLM State Director.

For Both Agencies

If the recommendation matches the proposal, the proposal can be implemented, per agency direction. (See graphic on page 3)

If the recommendation does not match the proposal, the Regional Forester or BLM State Director for their respective agencies has several choices (see graphic on page 3)
   A) Agree with the recommendation and move forward as is;
   B) Modify the proposal to address Recreation RAC concerns, and bring forward for another review if requested by the Recreation RAC; or
   C) Determine to reject the Recreation RAC recommendation. In this case, the ‘rejection’ must come from the Chief of the Forest Service for Forest Service proposals or the Secretary of Interior for the Bureau of Land Management. He must issue a notice that identifies the
reasons for rejecting the recommendation to both a House and Senate Committee at least 30 days prior to implementing the proposal.

Questions and Answers:

1. What is the difference between fee proposals, recommendations and suggestions?
   - **Proposals** have all the components, including fee analysis, as outlined above.
   - **Recommendations** require a majority vote of members in each category to be official. It is expected that they are made on proposals brought forward by the Forest Service.
   - **Suggestions** are non-official ideas or advice brought forward by a member of the public or the Recreation RAC. These do not have the analysis behind them, and the agency can determine how to best pursue the advice.

2. Can the Recreation RAC make ‘blanket recommendations’ such as approving all minor increases in campground fees due to inflation?
   Yes. The Recreation RAC could suggest that the agencies analyze this idea, and conduct the appropriate public involvement, which could result in a ‘standard’ for normal fee increases. The Recreation RAC would then make a recommendation on that proposal.
3. **Can the Recreation RAC make a recommendation that was not preceded by a proposal?**  
REA states that Recreation RACs must establish procedures for making recommendations, and that recommendations may be submitted only if a majority of members from each category approves it and general public support for the recommendation is documented. Once the Recreation RAC establishes its procedure, this protocol should be followed.

4. **Will Recreation RACs review fees that are already in existence?**  
No. REA does not indicate that all existing fees must be reviewed or require recommendations.