



## Arizona Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Meeting Minutes

### Attendees

Individuals were in attendance both days, unless otherwise noted.

### Resource Advisory Council Members

Category 1: Commercial/Commodity Interests	Category 2: Environmental, Dispersed Recreation, Archaeological/Historic, Wild Horse & Burro Interests	Category 3: Elected Officials, Native American, Public-at- Large, Academia, State and Local Government Officials
Bill Brake	Sharma Torrens	Robert Broscheid (virtual first day)
Steve Trussell (virtual)	Michael Quigley	Julie Engle (absent first day/virtual second day)
Allison Ellingson (virtual)	Eileen Baden	Paul David
Paul Baumgardt	Jill Bunnell	Patrice Horstman
John JC Sanders	Aaron Divine	Larry Howery, Ph.D.

- **Designated Federal Official:** Raymond Suazo, BLM Arizona State Director
- **Governor's Representative:** Clay Crowder, Arizona Game and Fish Department
- **BLM Arizona's RAC Coordinator:** Dolores Garcia

### BLM Staff

Individuals were in attendance in person both days unless otherwise noted.

Raymond Suazo	Wayne Monger	Rem Hawes
Maile Adler	Leon Thomas	Michael Spilde
Amber Cargile	William Mack	
Mark Morberg	Scott Feldhausen	
Gerald T. Davis	Dolores Garcia	
Art Goldberg	Michelle Ailport	
Nancy Patterson	Rick Selbach	
Katie Miller	Steven Ala	

### Individuals were in attendance via Zoom.

Angie Meece	Anthony Johnson	Charles Patterson
Chris Gammage	Chris Wonderly	Colleen Dingman
Edward Mayes	Elena Fink	Greg Page
Jason VanBuskirk	Jon Jasper	Lorraine Christian

Luke Hutchinson	Matthew Driscoll	Matt King
Michael Dixon	Peggy O'Reily	Randy Beckstrand
Ray Castro	Rick Tankersley	Robert Bate
Robert Walter	Ryan Anthony	Timothy Pananos
William Webster	Brandon Boshell	

**Public/Other**

No public signed in-person on either day.

**Public/ Other - Attending via Zoom**

Daniel Schwiebert
Daniel Bray
John Sefton
Janelle Ghorso
Kelly Araiza
Lisa Ala

## Day 1 - Arizona Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Meeting Minutes:

October 29, 2024

**08:05**            **Welcome - Facility Logistics**

**08:10**            **Opening Remarks and Introductions**

Meeting Officially called to order by Chairman Bill Brake.

Bill Brake:

- Thanks the members for coming. The primary focus of this meeting of the RAC will be BLM recreation business plans. BLM has completed their public comment period in one of two groups of plans we will be reviewing and providing recommendations for now and again at the December meeting. We also have a public comment period both days. Bill starts with full RAC introductions.

Raymond Suazo (DFO):

- Ray thanks the RAC members for making it in person and coming to the State Office. Ray mentions appreciation for Gera in covering the last RAC. Ray mentions the BLM is operating on a Continuing Resolution through December 20. Ray outlines a list of several achievements and ongoing projects from the various Arizona districts including: The nomination period for the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument Advisory Committee has been extended to November 4. The Arizona Strip District Office will be moving to its new location targeted for spring of 2025. Mike Spilde has taken over as the new state fire management officer since the last RAC. Renewable energy has been a big priority during the administration, and we are continuing moving forward with projects. Resources and Planning Division held the first statewide Tribal summit in over 10 years.
- Ray appreciates the effort, time, and input that the RAC members put into every session. The RAC is vital.
- Recreation has increased exponentially on public lands the last few years. Business fee proposals will be the main focus of the discussion today and tomorrow.

**Q: Paul Baumgardt:** is there use for remote cameras and sensing to reduce the need for human staffing in certain law enforcement needs?

**A:** Probably yes, but this takes resources. Fire is currently using remote sensing, there is potential for use in other areas. Phoenix District Office (PDO) has discussed using drones for monitoring sites, but there are security concerns at this time. We are continuing to explore this.

- Bill Brake mentions Katie Miller will be taking over leading the RAC sessions for Dolores starting in December. Bill discusses the impact of losing Scott Feldhausen as the Gila District manager and the hole that it creates. Bill also mentions RVers dumping waste on public lands as just one example of a challenge, but potential opportunity the RAC will continue facing.

## **09:10          BLM Arizona Rec Fee Proposals Presentation - Nancy Patterson**

- See attached PowerPoint slides.
- General Overview session
- Five Recreation Business Plans for discussion today
- BLM Arizona is leading the way for shooting sites on public lands
- Emphasis on 100% fees being reinvested in that specific site
- Market analysis and public involvement are keys to developing proposals
- ArcGIS StoryMap
- RAC has role to assess proposals

**Q: Larry Howery:** Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), how does general public support and how do you quantify this before it comes to the RAC. Divide comments?

**A:** There is general language in FLREA, NOT a matter of just quantity, visitor input and comments, demographics, user number of rec sites, ensuring understanding of public comment period. Public outreach is the key piece to get this. BLM conducted broad outreach before, during, and after the public comment period to reach as many people as possible.

**Q: Paul David:** Does the CPI-U also include the cost and benefits of paid employees?

**A:** The Consumer Price Index-Urban (CPI-U) covers 90% of American people. The site fees are just one component of the funds. The hope is that the CPI-U would keep in line with general inflation trends.

**Q: Paul David:** Is there any kind of way to minimize the share of E-commerce fees?

**A:** Those E-commerce fees are set within rec.gov and are through contract. We are looking at other ways to address these E-commerce fees.

- Gerald Davis mentions that the Rec.gov contract is not run by the BLM. We do not have control over this but will pass the feedback along to the BLM's Recreation program. The fee is a component or prices but takes place outside of the BLM process.

- Raymond Suazo: We see E-commerce fees in a lot of things now. We understand that there are seemingly fees to everything. There is a balancing act we must make.

**Q: Eileen Baden:** How did you land on the number of 20% for the CPI-U? How many years do you anticipate it will take to get to this percentage number?

**A:** The fees set in these proposals are set at the maximum amount. The CPI-U allows us the opportunity for future increases to adjust with inflation. We have flexibility with CPI-U.

- Gerald Davis: We do not want to adjust prices every year, but we also want to ensure the prices are not randomized. The CPI-U is discretionary, not mandatory.

**Q: Jill Bunnell:** Right now, the BLM Arizona has 11 million acres for recreation use and 12 million acres managed overall. Last year we had eight million visitors. As renewable energy projects come online, what part do they have in losing recreation space/opportunities? As the visitors go up and square mileage goes down, is there any mechanism that takes money from renewable energy lease and moves it to recreation compensation? Is there a part of leasing agreement that goes to recreation loss mitigation?

**A:** The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) generally limits leases, and the leasing funds exclusively go back to the Treasury Department. The BLM retains little to none of those payments. So, we cannot defer cost of recreation loss with these leasing fees. There are many factors and new tools with the Public Lands Rule, and we are thinking of working with third parties and other groups mitigation purposes. We are looking at where these opportunities can benefit all users of public lands.

- Raymond Suazo: Our intent is to bring together an internal team with outside partners to come up with ideas to address mitigation opportunities. The reality is that we have many renewable applicants in the queue, but only a portion of those are likely to be approved. We do see areas on the landscape with cumulative impacts and need to continue giving thought to set up mitigation and restoration opportunities.

**15 Min break**

**10:45 BLM Arizona Rec Fee Proposals Presentation - Recreational Shooting Sites – Phoenix District - Leon Thomas, District Manager**

- Sharma Torrens: There is absolutely a need for these fee increases as so much time has passed and visitation has exponentially increased.
- JC Sanders expresses his appreciation for the business plans and the hours and labor cost put into the work developing them.

- Leon opens with a story on the importance of safe recreational shooting after incidents on public lands within the phoenix metro area.
- See attached PowerPoint slides and shooting sports site video
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqSeOpFqvoA>
- Raymond Suazo mentions that active management between multiple uses on the land reduces conflict in those areas. Resource impacts to landscape are reduced as these sites are contained and maintained. This is not just about having a recreation site, but also reducing impact on certain areas. This also saves costs.

**Q: Bill Brake:** Man in the public want places to go without having to make reservations for timeslots. Some others want a place to target shoot safely as well. I understand the fees, but I am under impression the fees collected do not go back to that site. We may vote in the affirmative on these things, but are we going to be back here using the index 10 years from now?

**A:** We have a 1232 (recreation fee budget) account that each district manages. The funds collected at sites will go back to that specific local recreation account.

- JC Sanders says he hopes he can get these sites in Western Arizona. He has a concern that fees may make recreational shooters go to other sites, but if they appreciate the sites, they will be glad to pay the fees.

**Q: Eileen Baden:** Joe Foss shooting range is undergoing work, and some other shooting sports sites have closed entirely. Have you considered assisting other ranges to improve their sites so they do not close?

**A:** Maricopa County Parks have approached us to discuss taking over some sites. We have a few options on how we could manage the sites, and they will be proposed to the State Director. We are looking at the feasibility of this.

**Q: Eileen Baden:** Is there training for staff at the sites?

**A:** Yes, all are trained and certified as range safety officers.

- Bob Broscheid commends the State Director on his leadership. When the BLM provides these sites, it gives greater flexibility to the public.

**Q: Paul David:** With a potential for dispersed campers in the area, is there a buffer zone around sites?

Is the fee per person or vehicle? What do you do with the money from lead?

**A:** Every shooting sports site has a boundary around the site that serves as a safety zone. Payment is per person.

For lead collection, we have bear boxes set up. We are looking at ways to reinvest those funds.

**Q: Aaron Divine:** In terms of sustainability beyond the proposed fees, as it is projected to bring in revenue of \$1 million a year, is the BLM prepared to add more sites?

**A:** We are at a good first step, the Foundation for America's Public Lands is currently focused on these sites. We are hoping through more partnerships that dollars will come in. We do not know yet, but things are in the works for potential expansions.

Mike Quigley comments: We know that on uncontrolled sites there can be a lot of trigger trash. Bad actors aren't going to these controlled ranges. I would like to see some data as to if these sites have caused a decrease in trigger trash in other areas around these locales. Otherwise, we provide amenities for people who weren't causing a problem. There is a potential contradiction in the message, and we could be sending people to 11 million unmanaged acres of land.

**Q: Paul Baumgardt:** What are the operating hours for these sites?

**A:** Dusk to dawn

- Paul David comment: I understand that these sites are not going to compete with sites elsewhere, such as indoor ranges. With that I mind, I would like to see a reduction in the daily fee alone to encourage participation.

**11:45          Lunch**

**13:00          BLM Arizona Rec Fee Proposals Presentations - Arizona Strip District - Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area and Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes/White Pocket - Wayne Monger, District Manager**

- See attached PowerPoint slides.
- Raymond Suazo mentions that he receives calls from the public about facilities not having adequate resources such as toilet paper, soap, paper towels. The visiting public expects these things.

- Bill Brake comments: I think it needs to be kept in mind that campsites could potentially be working or competing against taxpayer-run businesses in the area.
- Raymond Suazo responds that we are required to consider this. . These proposals are not to generate a profit, just to maintain sites and supplement them. A lot of times private campgrounds have much more amenities/services offered, which can justify them turning a profit.
- Gerald Davis comments: We did have the question come up in a public meeting at Lake Havasu, in regard to competing with local business. The answer as far as BLM not undercutting the private sector is that FLREA requires the BLM to not unfairly undercut private businesses and create less competition. We try to have sites on comparison with local private businesses and base our fees on these.

**Q: Patrice Horstman:** Are you getting rid of the large iron fee collection boxes and going to E-commerce/scan and pay?

**A:** We have this as an option currently.

- Patrice Horstman comment: I support the fee proposals, and it is unfortunate that this was not done earlier. There is no way to make it work or completely sustainable just through collecting fees. I think we need to look at something beyond what we are dealing with. Public lands provide for communities, there is a benefit across the entire country. Large, sustained funding from Congress would be worthwhile.
- JC Sanders comment: CPI-U implementation would eliminate this from happening in the future.

**Q: Paul David:** We as the RAC have the benefit of seeing where collected funds go to, but does public also see this when they go to pay the fee? It would be good marketing.

**A:** Yes, we must share this data at our sites yearly. Every fee site publishes a report at the site and online. It is a FLREA requirement. (They are available at <https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/permits-and-fees/flrea-revenue>)

**Q: Paul Baumgardt:** On your budget sheet there is \$58,000 for a recreation planner position. Is that a new position or a currently existing position?

**A:** Current, this recreation planner spends 90% of time at the site. Duties include managing trailheads, recreation permits, travel plans, visual resources, and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

**Q: Paul David:** Is there a fee for dogs in addition to humans at White Pocket?



A: Yes

**Q: JC Sanders:** Had you contacted Arizona State parks to see if off-highway vehicle (OHV) grant funds may be available?

A: We have reached to them but have not submitted an official request. There is not a lot of OHV use in the area.

**Q: Mike Quigley:** Is any thought given to not letting dogs on trails to reduce resource impacts?

A: We had previous litigation involving dogs and it reflects the current policy.

**Q:** Can you clarify that there are no fees for active hunters?

A: That is correct.

**14:00 BLM Arizona Recreation Fee Proposals Presentations - Colorado River District - Kingman Field Office and Lake Havasu Field Office - William Mack, District Manager**

- See attached PowerPoint slides.

**Q: Eileen Baden:** 90% of folks are local residents? If Mohave County assisted with funds, would BLM reduce the fees?

A: This is an open conversation. Locals often have a preferred area. We try to balance everything.

**Q: Allison Ellingson:** I have a concern about CPI-U. Being from the public utility sector, I understand the difficulty in have to come up with numbers like the rate for electricity. If we start this process now with the number of 20% on CPI-U, are you setting up the potential for overcollection in the future?

- Raymond Suazo: Thank you for the question. It is not automatic that the fees will go up. The BLM will have to explain to the public what resources we use and what we use them for.
- Bill Brake comment: I propose we have time tomorrow before voting and someone among the BLM staff can explain the CPI-U further.

**Q: Mike Quigley:** One or two sites listed seem to get very low amounts of visitation, would it be worthwhile to close these sites completely?

**A:** We had previous litigation in the Kingman area that halted our work completely after closing a campground. As small as they may seem, every campground is important to the public.

- Bill Brake comments: I don't think you take into consideration what was avoided due to visual signs. Many of us went into a bank where there was a guard as a deterrent. I personally think cameras at sites are helpful. The BLM may want to revisit looking at cameras in the future.

**Q: Eileen Baden:** As per the cost of entry to some users at the boating sites, I am confused. People with very expensive vehicles, could be paying a higher fee percentage. Should these boating site fees be structured to charge varying amounts?

**A:** Would be welcome to have help in establishing and analyzing pricing points.

**Q: Eileen Baden:** Can you clarify the 10% compliance for day-use?

**A:** Docking and using facilities is where the fee comes in. We have checked for payments and have had individuals arguing for 30 minutes as to why they did not pay, when they have had cash on hand. Unfortunately, some folks do not think about the impact they have on the site. But we also have regular folks. We must balance and not punish the regular folks who just want to respectfully enjoy public lands.

**Q: Sharma Torrens:** About the 10% compliance with payment tubes, you said that staff is enforcing only 5 months of the year. With a fee increase, will there be more patrolling? Do you see a change?

**A:** We have a crew of eight rangers who do monitoring or patrolling. We have used law enforcement and other staff to fill gaps. People tend to pay fees at nighttime and often time the fee tubes are completely gone. It is an ongoing challenge to catch the thieves.

- Mike Quigley comments: There is a split between who can and can't afford million-dollar boats. It is very difficult to balance. With the 10% compliance rate, I wonder if that number is unique to this river. I feel uncomfortable raising the fee rates on the 1 in 10 who are actually complying.
- Raymond Suazo comments: I agree with the sentiments. The first step should be to keep the sites open. We are making progress towards getting cell towers for e-commerce which can help with compliance. There is a lot to be discussed. There is

potential for changes in fees on types of boats, for example, whether luxury boats should pay more than smaller ones.

- Bill Brake comments: We want to make the paying public have a role in policing our public lands. Many in the public want to help, but the government hasn't told them how they can do that.

#### **15:45          Public Comment Period**

- RAC Coordinator stated that any member of the public who identifies that they wish to speak will be given an opportunity to do so. If no one identifies, we will continue with the agenda and monitor for anyone from the public wishing to speak within the allotted time on the agenda.
- Bill Brake mentions that RAC members should reflect on the groups they represent and come back tomorrow with some specific items to discuss.
- Raymond Suazo follows up, that this month's session is to discuss business plans. Ray mentions the election next week and that depending on how it goes, there will be new priorities for the next administration. At this level, we try to focus on items that affect the whole state. Specific issues can be handled at the field or district level.
- Bill Brake reiterates on the importance of the RAC giving the State Director feedback and comments, and that he is a conduit to Washington DC.
- Jill Bunnell commends the BLM on their proposals and reiterates her support for them. As far as working in conjunction with other entities, an example she notes is the Arizona Game and Fish Department having a poaching reward program where the public can send information in via phones/cameras. If you see a poacher and report them, you get a significant reward. It would be nice to see something similar implemented on BLM lands. She also mentions free days for volunteers or a volunteer hours program with matching incentives. She encourages working with Arizona State Parks for overlapping/bordering lands and installing the same business plans between them. She also mentions an example of Lake Havasu, Parker, and Boulder City having a conjunctive management plan.
- Gerald Davis addresses Jill's comments: We can look into rewards, however there are limitations. As for passes in exchange for volunteering, we are currently doing this and will look at opportunities to expand. Reduce investment in collecting fees and increasing fees via compliance. We do have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) regarding Lake Havasu and we are looking at the potential to bring groups together as

partners and discuss how can we all help each other and better manage cooperatively. Later in 2025, BLM Arizona will hold a state-specific recreation summit. It will bring together managers, recreation staff, and external partners looking for opportunities and thoughts moving forward.

- Eileen Baden comments: I am excited for the prospects of a recreation summit, as the public wants to see leadership and how sites are being managed. We like to see agencies working together. I would also like to see tribal partners at the table. I would also draw attention to the Maricopa Association of Governments website, where a member of public can address and make comments on specific locations, such as “we need a crosswalk here.” After, they will be followed up with. It would be interesting if BLM could implement this.
- Paul David comments: I serve on the committee for homeless in my county. Dispersed camping is a growing problem with reports of the unhoused camping on BLM lands past the 14 days. It adds waste problems and is an currently evolving issue.

**16:15      Public Comment Period Ends**

**\*\*\*NO PUBLIC COMMENTS\*\*\***

**16:20      Meeting start time for Day 2 adjusted to 8:30 a.m. - RAC Chair adjourns meeting.**

## Day 2 - Arizona Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Meeting Minutes:

October 30, 2024

**08:30 Meeting started by RAC Coordinator and turned over to Chairman Brake to bring to order.**

Based on questions posed in the previous day, Maile Adler and Nancy Patterson have been allotted time this morning before the plans go to the RAC for a vote, to answer any questions from the members. They provided additional information on the CPI-U option, as well as volunteer passes and volunteering options with BLM. The use of the CPI-U and standardization of its implementation to adjust rates into the future has several members concerned.

**10:00 Chairman Brake has asked the members for any further questions or concerns before entering the voting session.**

Round Robin of comments on the proposed fee increase business plans

- Michael E. Quigley had concerns on the CPI-U portion of the business plans but agreed on recommending the plans for implementation.
- All other members showed full support with business plans with a request that the CPI-U portion of the plans be explained in detail and how they would be considered for future fee increases.

BLM Arizona's Division of Resources and Planning's Recreation staff have committed to draft internal policy as it relates to the evaluation of the need for rate increases, the use of the CPI-U, and its proposed implementation. The staff have also committed to provide an update on this policy development at the December RAC meeting.

**11:00 Public Comment Period**

RAC Coordinator stated that any member of the public who identifies that they wish to speak will be given an opportunity to do so. If no one identifies, we will continue with the agenda and monitor for anyone from the public wishing to speak within the allotted time on the agenda.

Bill Brake:

- Reminded the RAC why they are important to the business of BLM Arizona
- Asked the members to think about how they can make the RAC more functional
- Asked members to think about all the resource areas that they are accountable for
- Asked the members to remember that no matter what there is a new administration in January which most likely means new priorities
- if a renewable energy project is approved what kind of fees to cover recreational mitigation is charged.

11:30

**Public Comment Period Ends**

**\*\*\*NO PUBLIC COMMENTS\*\*\***

**[RAC Coordinator confirms quorum is present.]**

**Chairman Brake calls for motion to enter voting on recommending all plans for implementation as written and presented, with commitment from BLM Arizona staff to draft policy for implementation for CPI-U future increases as proposed within the plans presented today and those expected in December.**

Sharma Torrens motions in support citing the need for policy and the motion is seconded by Patrice Horstman. A round robin vote shows all but Allison Ellingson are in favor of the plans as proposed. Member Engel is not present for the vote

- **13 in favor – 1 opposed; Recommendations passed with majority**

Round Robin of suggestions from the RAC on improvements or things they would like to see at future meetings:

- Is there a mascot? If not, can one be developed?
- Partnering with a non-profit to do heavy lifting on educational outreach
- Aaron Divine asked if we could partner with Northern Arizona University to develop interpretive signage
- There was a request to prioritize education over law enforcement
- It was asked that the BLM Arizona explain the environmental compliance process once a mining project is permitted
- It was asked that there be a summary of the BLM budget so they can fully understand what money goes to what programs

Bill Brake:

- Reminded the RAC of how important the members' role is to BLM

**12:30 RAC Chair Adjourns Meeting – Next meeting scheduled December 11-12, 2024**



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

# BLM Arizona Recreation Fee Proposals Overview

Presentation for the Arizona Resource Advisory Council - October 29, 2024



BLM Wild Cow Springs Campground



# Overview Session

At this session, BLM will share:

- Why these draft business plans were developed
- Introduce the fee proposals and process

The BLM seeks the RAC's recommendation to implement the proposed recreation business plans.



Buckskin Gulch/Paria Canyon,  
BLM Vermilion Cliffs National Monument







# Why Now?

Visitation climbed from 4.9 million in FY19 to 6.8 million in FY23

Operating expenses have increased

Recreation \$\$ per visitor has been flat

Funding methods vary and can be time-limited

Some fee sites have not increased fees in 20+ years

Market analysis: BLM fee rates below other providers + recreation user interests evolved



# 5 Recreation Business Plan Proposals

Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area



Lake Havasu Field Office



Kingman Field Office



Phoenix District Recreational Shooting Sites



VCNM Paria Canyon, Coyote Buttes, White Pocket





# Recreation Fees Contribute to Maintenance: LHFO Shoreline Sites

## Steamboat Cove Trash Removal



## Maintaining Clean Recreation Campsites





# Recreation Fees Provide Site Improvements: KFO Burro Creek Campground

## Planned Access Road Repairs



## Working with Scouts





# Recreation Fees Enhance Accessibility: VRCRA Accessible Campsite Improvements

**During Improvement Construction**



**After Improvements Completed**





# Recreation Fees and Special Funding: VCNM Wire Pass Parking Area Expansion Project

**Before Site Improvements**



**After Site Improvements**





# Recreation Experience Improvements: PDO Church Camp Shooting Sports Site

## Before Site Improvements



## After Site Improvements

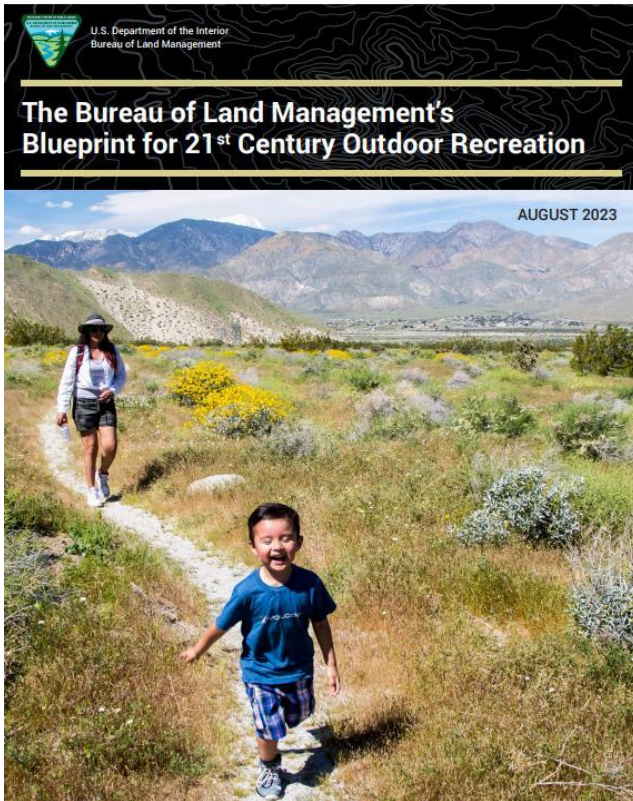






# Blueprint for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Outdoor Recreation

*To provide exceptional and one-of-a-kind recreational experiences that invite all to share in the enjoyment and stewardship of their public lands.*



Grow and Diversify Resources for BLM Recreation

Prioritize and Embrace Partnerships

Expand Outreach and Establish a Culture of Inclusion

Meet the Demand, Protect Resources, and Improve Access

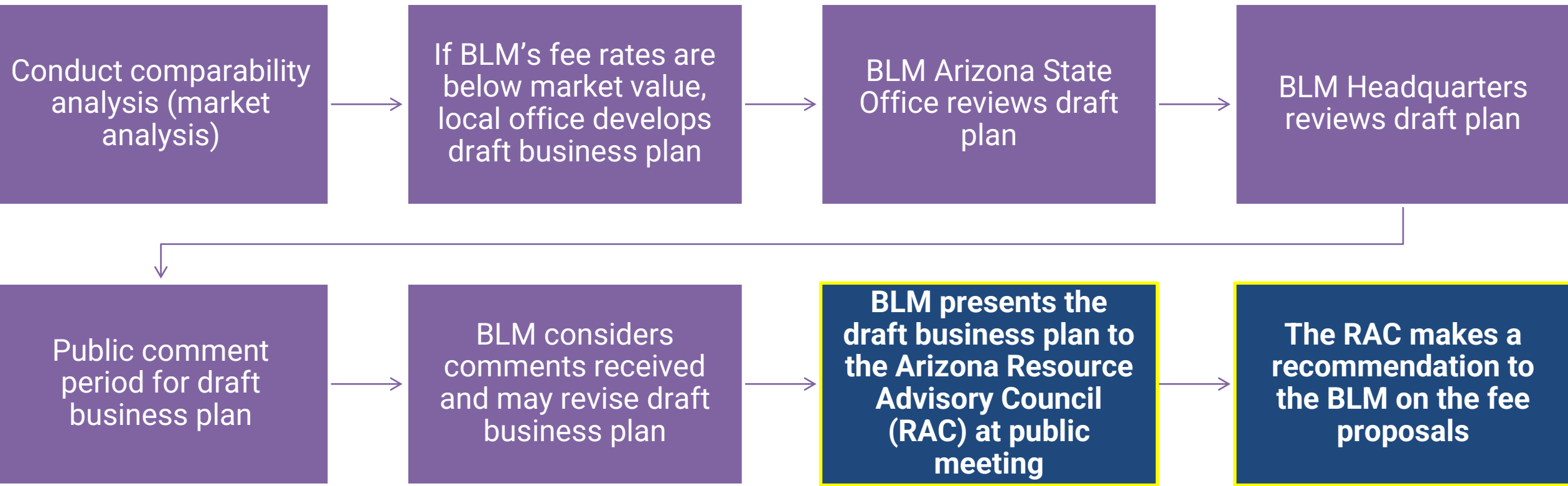


# BLM's Recreation Funding Strategies





# Recreation Fee Proposal Process





16 U.S.C. 6801 et seq.

# **REVIEW OF THE FEDERAL LANDS RECREATION ENHANCEMENT ACT (FLREA)**



# FLREA (16 U.S.C. 6801 et seq.) Authority

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) allows the BLM to collect recreation fees at sites and areas that provide certain amenities and for the issuance of Special Recreation Permits.





100% of fees are reinvested directly  
back into the local recreation program  
to maintain and improve recreational  
opportunities



# How are recreation fees set?



**MARKET ANALYSIS**



**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

# How Fees Are Used



Repair, maintain, and enhance facilities related directly to visitor access, and health and safety.

- Toilet cleaning
- Toilet pumping
- Supplies for restrooms
- Water system testing
- Site improvements



Interpretation, visitor information, visitor services, visitor needs assessments, and signs.

- Visitor services
- Wayfinding and Interpretive Signs
- Brochures
- Interpretive and Educational Programs



Law enforcement related to visitor use.

- Visitor and site safety
- Search and Rescue
- Support for local LE agencies



Habitat restoration directly related to wildlife-dependent recreation including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and photography.

- Habitat restoration projects with volunteers
- Boat cleaning stations



Direct operating associated with the recreation fee program.

- Park Ranger Labor
- Fee Compliance
- Site cleaning
- Visitor contacts





# **FLREA CATEGORIES, RECREATION PASSES, AND FEE FREE OPPORTUNITIES**



# What fee changes cannot be proposed through the business planning process?

- Fees for commercial, competitive, organized group or vending Special Recreation Permits – set by BLM Director
- Fees charged for use of the interagency reservation system – part of the Recreation-One-Stop Initiative



# FLREA Types in the Business Plans\*

FLREA Fee Category	Description
Standard Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(f))	Typically associated with a Day Use Fee. Site must include all 5 described amenities: Designated developed parking; A permanent toilet facility; A permanent trash receptacle; Interpretive sign, exhibit, or kiosk; Picnic Tables; Security services
Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	Provides specific and enhanced amenities (e.g., highly developed boat launch, campgrounds, reservation fee). Developed Campgrounds must include majority of 9 specific amenities: Tent or trailer spaces; picnic tables; drinking water; access roads; collection of fee; reasonable visitor protection; refuse containers; toilet facilities; simple devices for containing a campfire.
ISRP (16 U.S.C. 6802(h))	Individual Special Recreation Permits (duration varies). Associated with use of designated special areas.
Site-Specific Pass (16 U.S.C. 6804(c))	Site-Specific Pass (duration varies). Provides access to a particular recreation site or area.

\*Additional e-commerce processing fees may apply. Option to increase fees if/when CPI increases 20%.



# CPI-U: Proposed Future Fee Adjustments

- Use an index for routine adjustments to fees
- Avoid steep fee increases in the future
- Ensure fees evolve in tandem with the changing costs of goods & services

**Proposal: if/when there is a 20% increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) annual average, the BLM would have the option to adjust fees by 20%.**



# Recreation Passes

- Site-specific passes
  - Relate to the specific sites and have specific uses.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Every Kid Outdoors (EKO) Passes
- America the Beautiful Passes:
  - Free: Military Pass, Access Pass
  - Paid: Senior Pass, Annual Pass





# How to Use Site-Specific Passes



- Lake Havasu Shoreline Sites Annual Pass
- PDO Shooting Sports Month and Annual Individual Special Recreation Permits (ISRP)
- Additional Items
  - State Park
  - Culture Pass

BLM, Lake Havasu Field Office Shoreline Sites



# How to Use America The Beautiful (ATB) Passes

## Standard Amenity Sites

- All ATB passes and EKO passes
  - Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area Day Use
  - VCNM White Pocket (proposed)
  - Lake Havasu:
    - Shoreline Sites Day Use
    - Bullfrog Day Use Area



BLM LHFO Bullfrog Day Use Area

## Expanded Amenity Sites

- Only Senior Pass and Access Pass provide discounts at expanded amenity campgrounds for individual (ind.) campsites
  - Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area Ind. Campsites
  - Lake Havasu Shoreline Sites Ind. Campsites
  - Kingman Field Office Campgrounds Ind. Campsites



BLM Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area Campground



# Fee Free Day Opportunities

In 2024, the 5 fee free days are:

- January 15 (Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.)
- June 19 (Juneteenth National Independence Day)
- July 16 (BLM's birthday)
- September 28 (National Public Lands Day)
- November 11 (Veterans Day)

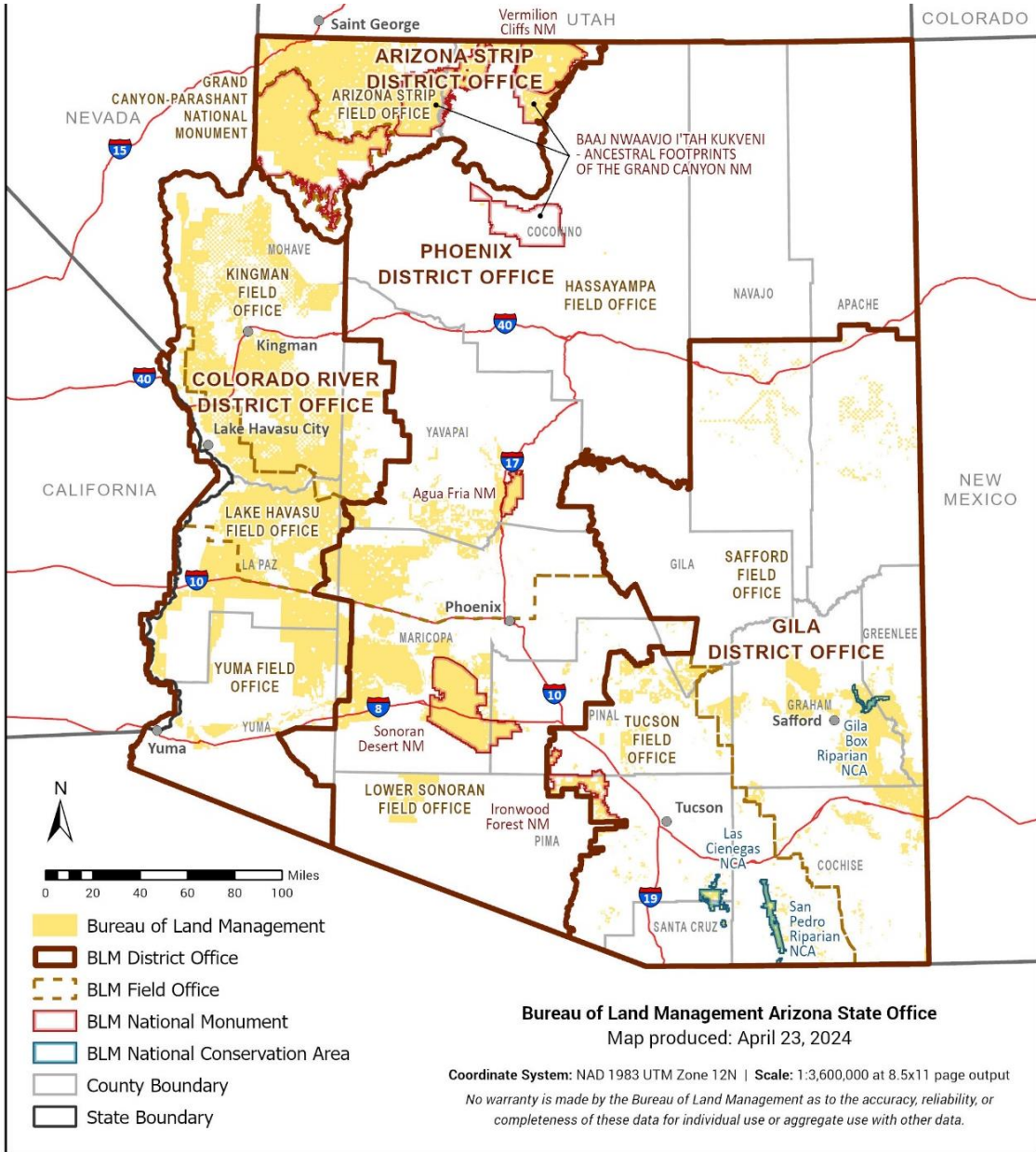
BLM Arizona sites with fee free days (Standard Amenity Sites):

- Bullfrog Day Use Area
- Shoreline Sites Day Use
- Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area Day Use
- White Pocket (proposed fee site)



BLM VCNM White Pocket





11.9 million acres of BLM Arizona’s 12.1 million acres of public lands are available to enjoy fee-free.

BLM Arizona has 40+ fee free developed recreation locations.



# Free Recreation Area Example: LHFO Take Off Point





Outreach, Feedback, and Responses

# **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**



# BLM AZ's Draft Business Plans

Phoenix District's Recreational Shooting Sports Sites

Vermilion Cliffs National Monument's Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes Special Management Area and White Pocket

Arizona Strip Field Office's Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area

Kingman Field Office

Lake Havasu Field Office



# Business Plan Outreach Before, During, and After the Public Comment Period



Business Plan Flyer at Burro Creek Campground





# Business Plan Outreach Before, During, and After the Public Comment Period May 13-June 26, 2024

- 2 Virtual Information Sessions
- News Release and outreach to media outlets around the state
- Interactive ArcGIS StoryMap
- Plans and notices posted on BLM websites and recreation.gov visit pages
- Social media: Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube
- Outreach to Tribes, Congressional staffs, Governor's office, federal and state agencies, county/municipal contacts, interest groups, Arizona and Utah Resource Advisory Councils
- Flyers posted onsite, in public rooms, visitor centers, and at area locations
- Emails sent to 26,798 former recreation users
- Presentation at a U.S. Representative-hosted public information session at Lake Havasu on Aug. 5
- Concurrence from the BLM UT State Director for Arizona RAC to serve as the lead RAC for the recommendation of the VCNM Paria Canyon, Coyote Buttes, and White Pocket plan



# Draft Business Plans Website

All draft business plans are available at this site:



Home / Programs / Recreation and Visitor Services / Recreation Programs / Permits and Fees / Business Plans

## Recreation Site Business Plans

BLM requires each recreation fee site or area to complete a business plan which analyzes and explains how fees are consistent with criteria set forth in the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act. Business plans assist in determining appropriate fee rates, outline the cost of administering fee sites, and identify priorities for future expenditures. A primary purpose of the business 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 before a fee site is designated, or when existing site fees are adjusted.

### Draft Business Plans for Public Comment:

*Before including an address, phone number, email address, or other personally identifiable information in any comments, be aware that the entire comment - including personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. Requests to withhold personal identifying information from public review can be submitted, but the BLM cannot guarantee that it will be able to do so.*

**Arizona**

The Bureau of Land Management is seeking public input on five draft Recreation Business Plans that would modernize the way recreation fee sites are managed for the following locations: Kingman Field Office, Lake Havasu Field Office, the Arizona Strip Field Office's Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area, the Phoenix District's Recreational Shooting Sites, and the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument's Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes Special Management Area and White Pocket. [Learn more](#), and [review an interactive story map](#) of the locations.

**Arizona Strip Field Office**

- [Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area Draft Business Plan](#)

**Vermilion Cliffs National Monument**

- [Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes Special Management Area and White Pocket Draft Business Plan](#)

**Kingman Field Office**

- [Amenity Fee Sites Draft Business Plan](#)

**Lake Havasu Field Office**

- [Amenity Fee Sites Draft Business Plan](#)

**Phoenix District Office**

- [Shooting Sports Sites Draft Business Plan](#)

**Permits and Fees**

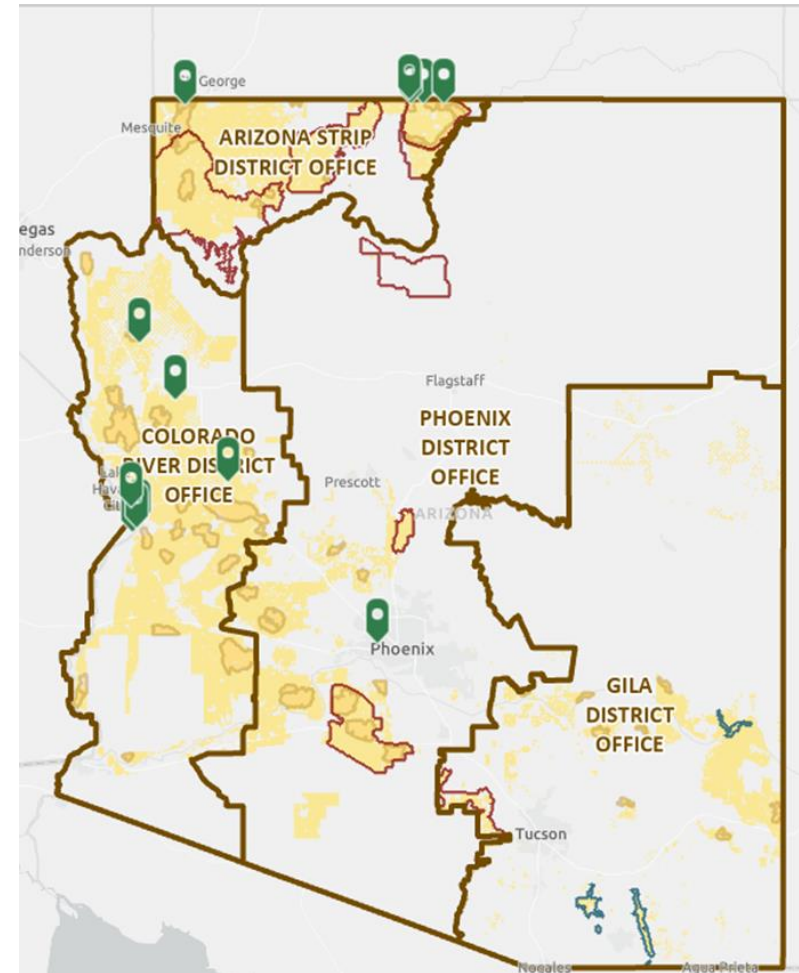
**Business Plans**

- FLREA Revenue and Spending Plans
- Lotteries and Permit Systems +
- Recreation Fee Program
- Special Recreation Permits +



# Draft Business Plans StoryMap

The StoryMap is an interactive way to see the draft business plans.







# Common Comments Received

Common Comments	BLM Response
Length of comment period	Adjusted length of comment period from 30-days to 45-days.
Changes to local economy/tourism	Reviewed socio-economic impacts. Fees informed by market research in surrounding geographic area.
Discounts for local residents and other groups	The FLREA (16 U.S.C. 6802(b)(1)) does not grant the authority for BLM to provide discounts or reduced recreation fees for local residents or other groups.
Steep fee increases	CPI-U will help moderate fee increases in future to ensure fees evolve in tandem with ever-changing environment of the future and increasing costs.
E-commerce fees	E-commerce reservation fee is set through contracting requirements. First come first serve fee collection methods exist onsite.
Questions regarding market research/fees	BLM reviewed market research and adjusted some proposals.

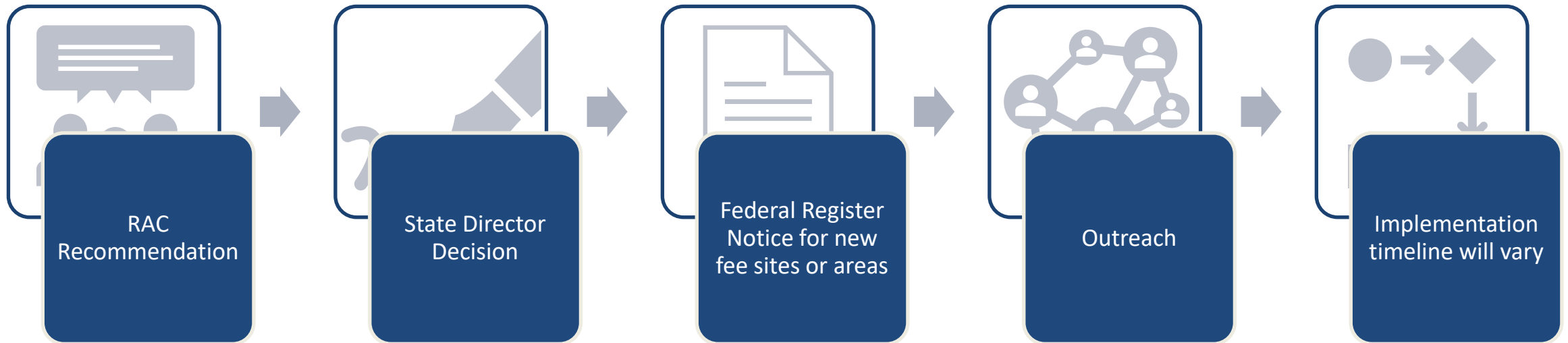


# “General Public Support” Interpretation

- The FLREA Section 4(d)(9) requires that “general public support” for recreation fee proposals be documented before the RACs can provide a recommendation on the proposal.
- The FLREA is clear that the agencies’ role is to expend the appropriate public outreach and participation effort commensurate to each project proposal and document the results.
  - Comments are gathered to inform the decisionmakers of possible issues or findings that were not previously considered.
- The role of the RAC is to assess the context of the proposal, benefits to the public and adequacy of the agency’s public participation efforts, and provide a recommendation based on that assessment.
- The primary question for the agencies is “do people support the recreation opportunities that are provided?” The secondary question is “how to best ensure long-term viability of the facilities around that opportunity?”
- It is the responsibility of public agencies to both assess public desires and demand and to ensure efficiency, accountability and consideration of costs and benefits.



# Next Steps







# Questions?



Box Canyon Recreational Shooting Area



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

# Recreational Shooting Sites Business Plan

Presentation for the Arizona Resource Advisory Council – October 29-30, 2024





# Purpose of Briefing

- Present BLM AZ recreation business plan proposal, background information, outreach, and public comments received.
- Seek recommendation from RAC to implement the recreation business plan proposal.



# Background

- The Recreational Shooting Sites Business Plan is proposed by the Phoenix District Office.
- Sites originated as a need to actively manage recreational shooting.
- The sites are the first developed recreational shooting sites in the BLM.



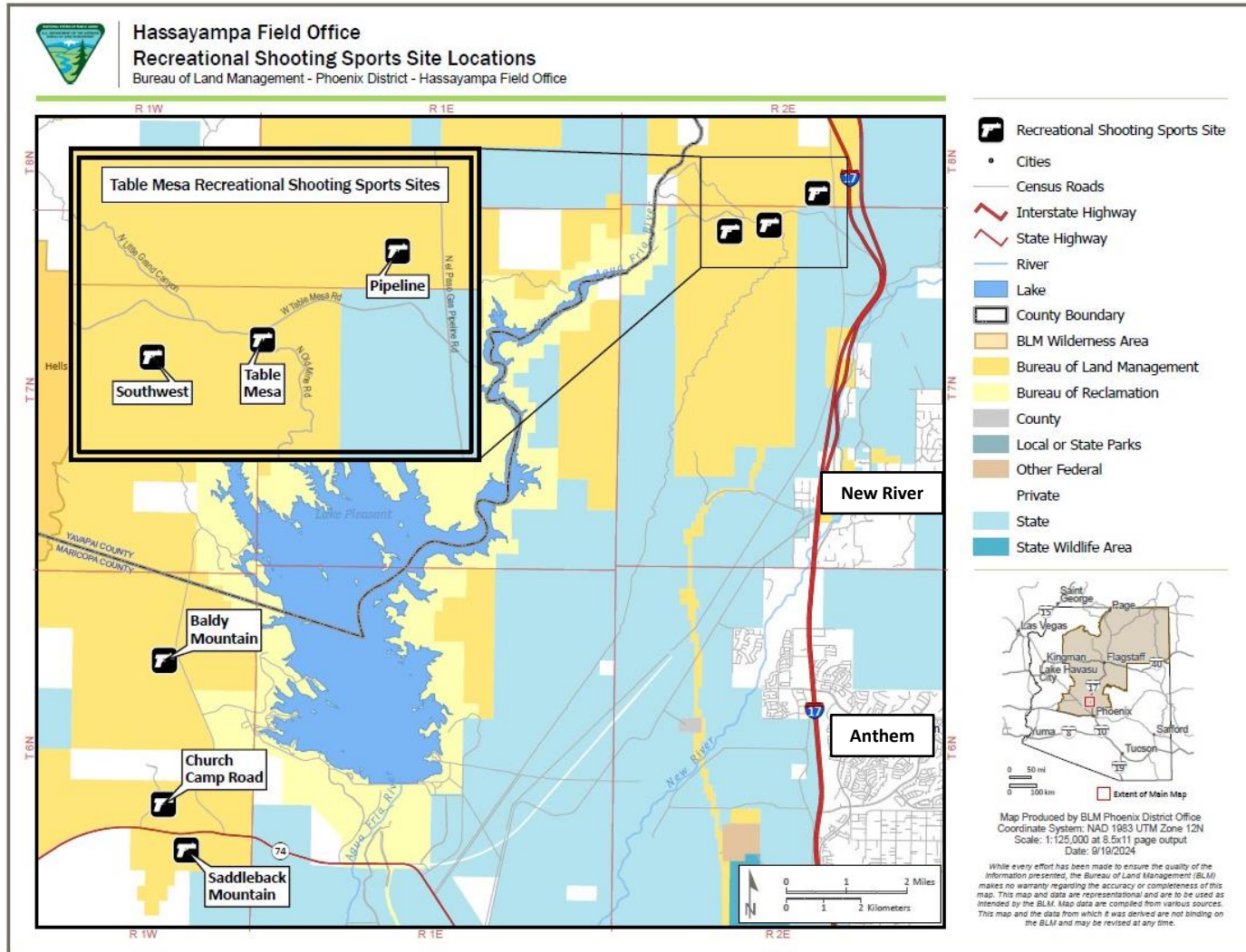
# Recreational Shooting Sites Background and History

- Four constructed sites plus four proposed sites
- Most were existing dispersed shooting sites.
- Recreational Shooting Sports Project – 2020
- Table Mesa Recreation Area – 2024



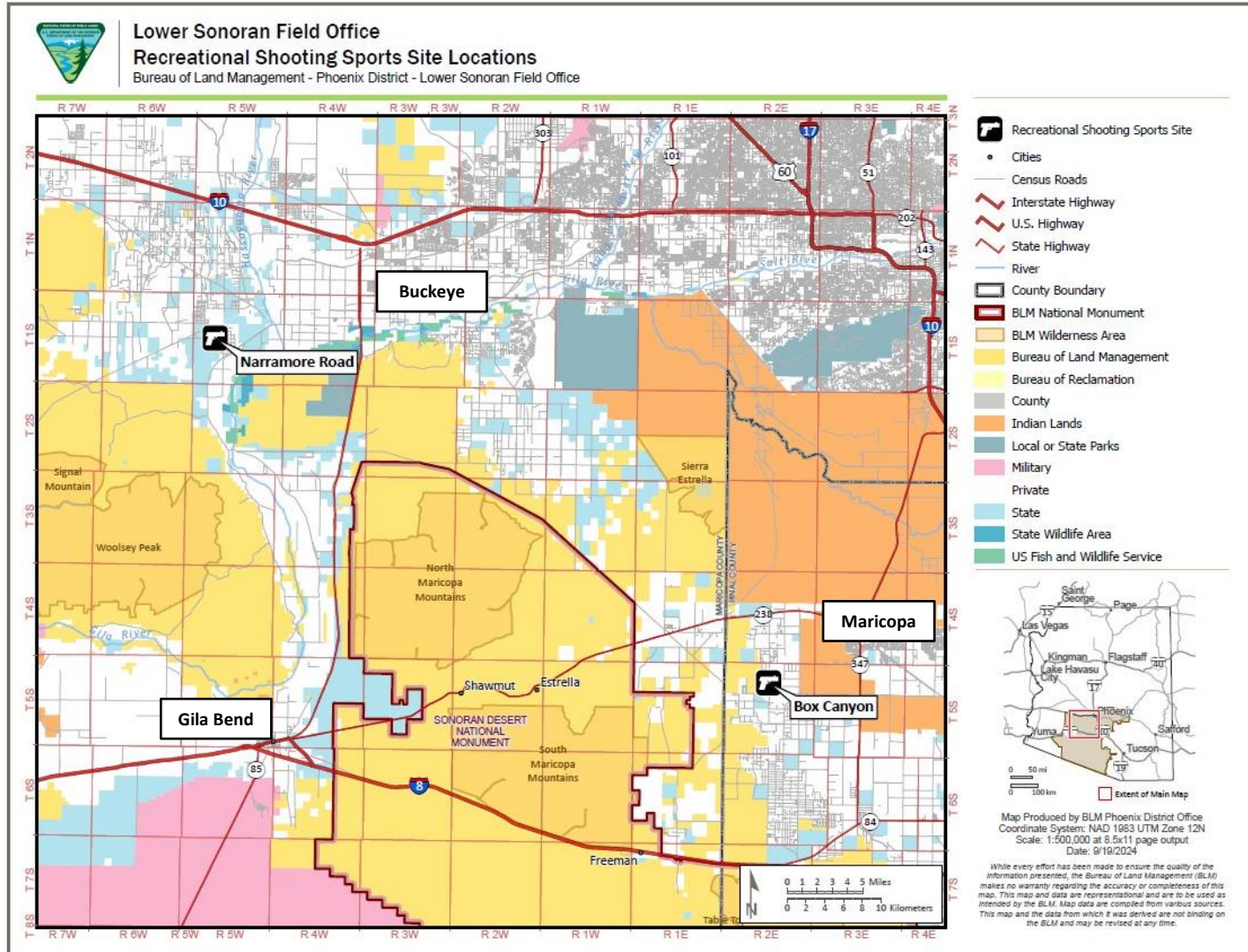


# Map of Hassayampa Field Office Sites





# Map of Lower Sonoran Field Office Sites





# Recreation Experience Improvements: Church Camp Road Recreational Shooting Site

## Before Site Improvements



## After Site Improvements





# Background: Fee Free Sites/Areas

- More than 93% of the 12.1 million acres of BLM-managed public lands in Arizona remain open to dispersed recreational target shooting.



# Site Visitation

Site	FY 2023	FY 2024
<b>Baldy Mountain</b> (opened Feb. 2023)	5,021	8,672
<b>Box Canyon</b> (opened Sept. 2023)	2,774	36,111
<b>Church Camp Road</b> (opened Oct. 2022)	47,811	55,966
<b>Saddleback Mountain</b> (opened Oct. 2022)	16,330	18,932
<b>Total Visitation</b>	<b>71,936</b>	<b>83,570</b>

\*Visitation is estimated using a vehicle counter at the facility entrance with the assumption of two occupants per vehicle.



# Site Maintenance and Operations





# Examples of Site Improvements



## Building Targets

Recreational Shooting Sites  
Phoenix District Office







# Projected Annual Operating Costs

*Annual Operating Costs for each individual site of Church Camp, Box Canyon, Narramore Road, and Table Mesa Shooting Sport Facility Developed Sites*

Operating and Maintenance Expenses	Annual Costs
Commercial Trash Pickup (dumpster)	\$8,000
Target Repair/Replacement	\$40,000*
Restroom Cleaning/Pumping	\$15,000
BLM Law Enforcement (LE) Patrols	\$50,000
Non-LE Staff Patrols	\$30,000
Maintenance Staff	\$30,000
Accounting and Administration	\$8,000
Dirt work (parking lot, berm, backstop repair)	\$15,000
Equipment Rental	\$10,000
Misc repairs (gates, fence, signage)	\$8,000
Vehicle expenses (fuel, maintenance, etc.)	\$5,000
<b>Subtotal of annual expenses per site</b>	<b>\$219,000</b>
<b>Total annual expenses for these sites</b>	<b>\$876,000</b>

\* Material and labor cost to cut and replace all AR500 steel targets and components once per quarter.



# Projected Annual Operating Costs

*Annual Operating Costs for each individual site of Saddleback Mountain, Baldy Mountain, Table Mesa Southwest, and Table Mesa Pipeline Developed Sites*

Operating and Maintenance Expenses	Annual Costs
Target Repair/Replacement	\$5,000
BLM Law Enforcement (LE) Patrols	\$20,000
Non-LE Staff Patrols	\$15,000
Maintenance Staff	\$10,000
Accounting and Administration	\$8,000
Dirt work (parking lot, berm, backstop repair)	\$5,000
Equipment Rental	\$5,000
Misc repairs (gates, fence, signage)	\$8,000
Vehicle expenses (fuel, maintenance, etc.)	\$5,000
<b>Subtotal of annual expenses per site</b>	<b>\$81,000</b>
<b>Total annual expenses for these sites</b>	<b>\$324,000</b>

Annual operating cost of all Phoenix District Shooting Sport facilities is estimated at \$1.2 million/year.



# Business Plan Proposal

- This business plan proposes:
  - an Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) requirement for all users at developed recreational shooting sites.



# Proposed Fees

- Each recreational shooting sites will be designated as a “special area” allowing for the use of an Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) In compliance with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA).
- The BLM Phoenix District is proposing a one-day individual permit of **\$10.00**, an individual **\$25.00** monthly permit, and an individual **\$80.00** annual permit. Children aged 17 and under are free with an adult permit holder.
- The proposed fees would address facility maintenance and public safety needs due to increased use and cost of operation. Additional revenue would also enable BLM to improve services and amenities desired by visitors and construct additional facilities.



# Recreational Shooting Sites Existing & Proposed Fees

Fee Description	FLREA Fee Type	Year of Last Fee Increase	Existing Fee	Proposed Fee
Individual Special Recreation Permit (Day)	ISRP (16 U.S.C. 6802(h))	N/A	Free	\$10
Individual Special Recreation Permit (Monthly)	ISRP (16 U.S.C. 6802(h))	N/A	Free	\$25
Individual Special Recreation Permit (Annual)	ISRP (16 U.S.C. 6802(h))	N/A	Free	\$80

- ISRPs are free for users aged 17 and under when accompanied by an adult permit holder.
- Additional e-commerce processing fees may apply.
- Option to increase fees if CPI increases 20%



# District Wide Coverage

- The recreational shooting sites ISRP would cover a user at all developed Phoenix District recreational shooting sites.



# Annual Revenue Projection

Pass Type	Price	Estimated # Sold	Total
Day Permit	\$10.00	15,000	\$150,000
1 Month Permit	\$25.00	3,500	\$87,500
Annual Individual Permit	\$80.00	10,250	\$820,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$1,057,500</b>

\*Estimates based on all 8 shooting ranges being constructed and fully operational



# Priorities for Future Expenditures

Future Expenditures	Cost Estimates
Lead Remediation - Long-Term Ongoing	\$4,000,000 (estimated to be done every 4 years)
Fee Collection Adoption - Short-Term	\$10,000
Shade Structures - Short-Term	\$150,000
Shooting Benches - Short-Term	\$75,000
Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Compliant Paths and Shooting Pads - Short-Term	\$250,000
Access Road Enhancement - Short-Term	\$75,000
Site Host Spot at Church Camp - Short-Term	\$250,000





# Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates

- **Cost Recovery**

- Full cost recovery to operate all eight shooting sport facilities would require a fee of \$25/day, \$44/month permit, \$163/annual permit.

- **Fair market value calculation method.**

- Phoenix District Office Shooting Sports Sites Proposed Fee: Day Pass \$10, Monthly Pass \$25, Annual Pass \$80
- Joe Foss Shooting Facility \$7 per day, with no annual or monthly pass option
- Ben Avery Shooting Facility \$12 per 1.5 hours for steel target range, with no annual or monthly pass option
- Phoenix Rod and Gun Club \$15 per day, with no annual or monthly pass option



# Public Outreach

- 45-Day Public Comment Period from May 13-June 26, 2024.
- Notified the public via press releases, social media, YouTube video, recreation.gov alerts, and ArcGIS StoryMap.
- Posted on BLM websites.
- Presented 2 virtual statewide public information sessions
- Sent notification and outreach to potentially affected Tribes, Congressional representatives, state government and agencies, local government and municipalities, and interest groups.
- Posted flyers at existing and proposed shooting sites.
- Shared flyers with area gun shops.
- Sent emails to 40 nearby Special Recreation Permit holders and other local interested parties.



# Public Outreach - In Person Meetings and Contact

- Presentation to boards of supervisors in Pinal and Yavapai counties
- Quarterly congressional staffers' briefing





# Responses

- During the 45-day comment period, 42 unique comments were received.



# Comment Summary

Draft Business Plan Comments Received	Supportive	Conditionally Supportive	Opposed w/ Recommended Changes	Opposed General Anti-Fee	Opposed	Total Responses
Phoenix District Office Shooting Sports Sites	3 (7%)	8 (19%)	5 (12%)	7 (17%)	15 (35%)	42 replies

3 of the 42 replies contained suggestions, and 1 of the replies had general questions.

No changes to the fee proposal were made after receiving and reviewing comments.



# Comment Summary

- Concerns
  - Fees for the shooting sports sites would push public land users back out into desert and sensitive areas.
  - The proposed fees are too high and would have a disproportionately negative impact on lower income users.
- Recommendations
  - Adding shade coverage, shooting lanes and other amenities would make the proposed fees more justifiable.
  - Users do not want the ranges closed in the summer. Not believed to be a big fire hazard.
- Support
  - Fees go towards upkeep, improvement and expanding shooting sites.
  - Number of users from OHV, target shooting and camping has significantly increased. More and more people are visiting public lands and agency budgets are shrinking.



# Summary

- The Phoenix District Office is proposing an Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) for use of the recreational shooting sites, which will be designated as a “special area.” The BLM is proposing a one-day permit of **\$10.00**, an individual **\$25.00** monthly permit, and an individual **\$80.00** annual permit. Children aged 17 and under are free with an adult permit holder. The fees were determined through a comparative analysis of similar recreation sites throughout the region and in compliance with the criteria in the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act.
- The fees would address facility maintenance and public safety needs due to increased use and cost of operation. The fees would also enable BLM to improve services and amenities desired by visitors and construct additional facilities.
- The Phoenix District office is requesting the **BLM Phoenix District Office Shooting Sports Sites Business Plan** for RAC recommendation.



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

# Questions?



**Church Camp Road  
Recreational Shooting Site**

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Phoenix District**





U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

# Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area Business Plan

Presentation for the Arizona Resource Advisory Council – October 29-30, 2024





# Purpose of Briefing

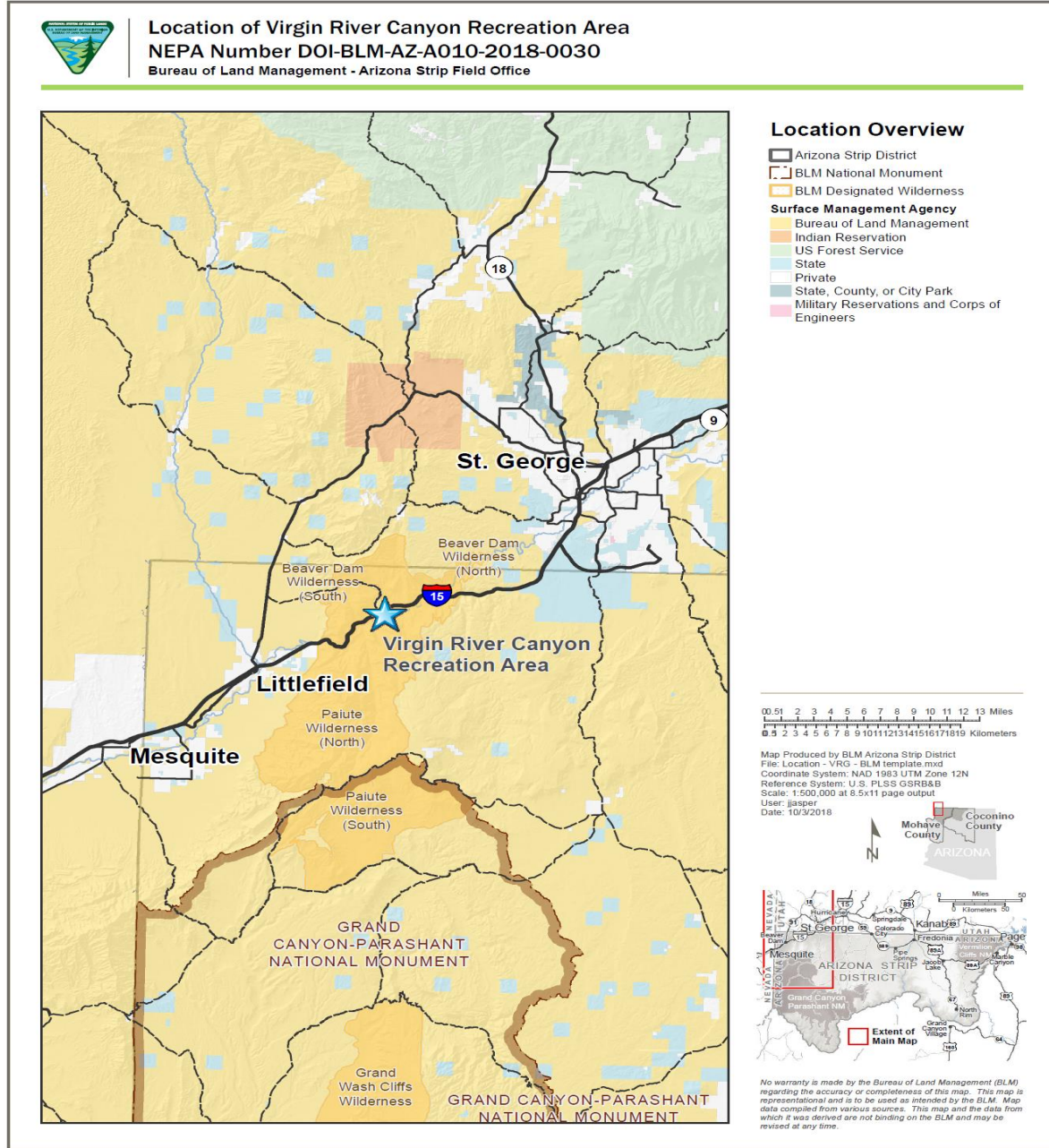
- Introduce the Virgin River Canyon Recreation Area managed by the BLM Arizona Strip Field Office and this unique site's value to the public.
- Provide background information on the history, labor, costs, and resources BLM has invested into caring for this site, review the proposed fee changes, BLM's outreach efforts, and review public comments received.
- Seek recommendation from RAC to implement the recreation business plan proposal.





# Location of VRCRA:

The site is located along Interstate 15 approximately 20 miles southwest of St. George, Utah and 20 miles northeast of Mesquite, Nevada. It's accessed from the Cedar Pocket Exit (mile post 18). It was previously managed as a rest stop with Arizona Dept of Transportation and has received numerous upgrades since its opening.





# Site Visitation

- Use has nearly doubled from 11,435 visitors in 2014 to 20,578 in 2023.
- The site amenities include, paved access, pull through parking, drinking water, ADA compliant restrooms/flush toilets, shade structures, grills/ fire pits, RV parking, access to paved interpretive trail & other recreational opportunities.



Fiscal Year	VRCRA Number of Visitors (Camping/Day Use)
FY2014	11,435 (6,990 / 4,445)
FY2015	14,408 (7,899 / 6,509)
FY2016	15,600 (7,720 / 7,880)
FY2017	15,781 (8,007 / 7,774)
FY2018	16,573 (8,608 / 7,965)
FY2023	20,578 (not differentiated)

# VRCRA Facts at a Glance

- Built in January 1976.
- Buildings & amenities are 48 years old.
- Total of 135-acres.
- 15,729 visitors per year.
- Fees at the VRCRA have not been modified since 1998 (26 years)
- BLM Arizona has invested approximately \$900K in renovations to maintain a quality visitor experience at this exceptional site.





# Purpose of the Business Plan

This business plan proposes increases in standard and expanded amenity fees for the Virgin River Campground to help pay for maintenance and operations costs, which have risen greatly since the last fee increase in 1998.





# Background

- The Arizona Strip Field Office has invested significant resources in restoring aging infrastructure to continue to provide quality services at this beautiful, convenient, 1970's era, recreation area.
- The BLM closed the campground in April 2019 to allow for renovations of the facilities to ensure the health and safety of visitors and updated restrooms and other infrastructure at this 48-year-old site.





# Background

- **Restoring aging infrastructure** to continue to provide quality services at this beautiful, convenient, 1970's era, recreation area.





# Background

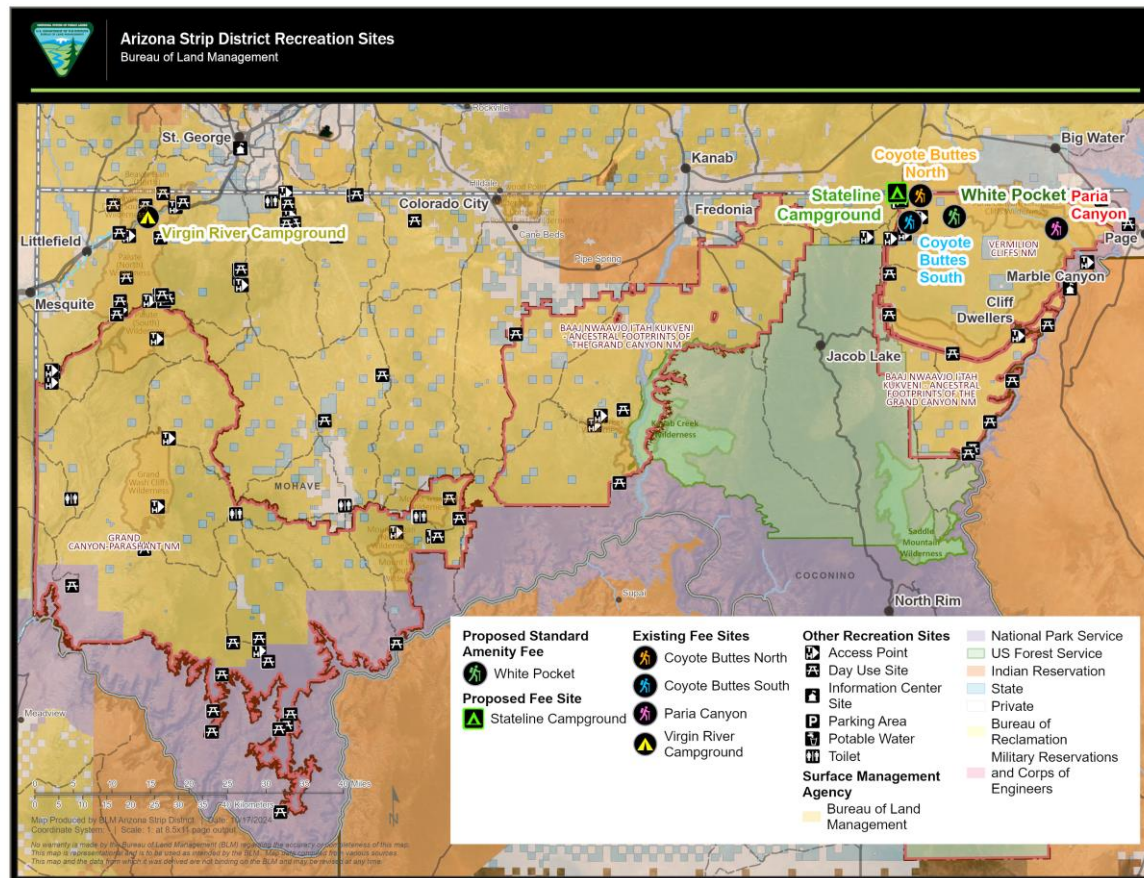
- **Provide quality services** at this beautiful, convenient, 1970's era recreation area.





# Background: Fee Free Sites/Areas

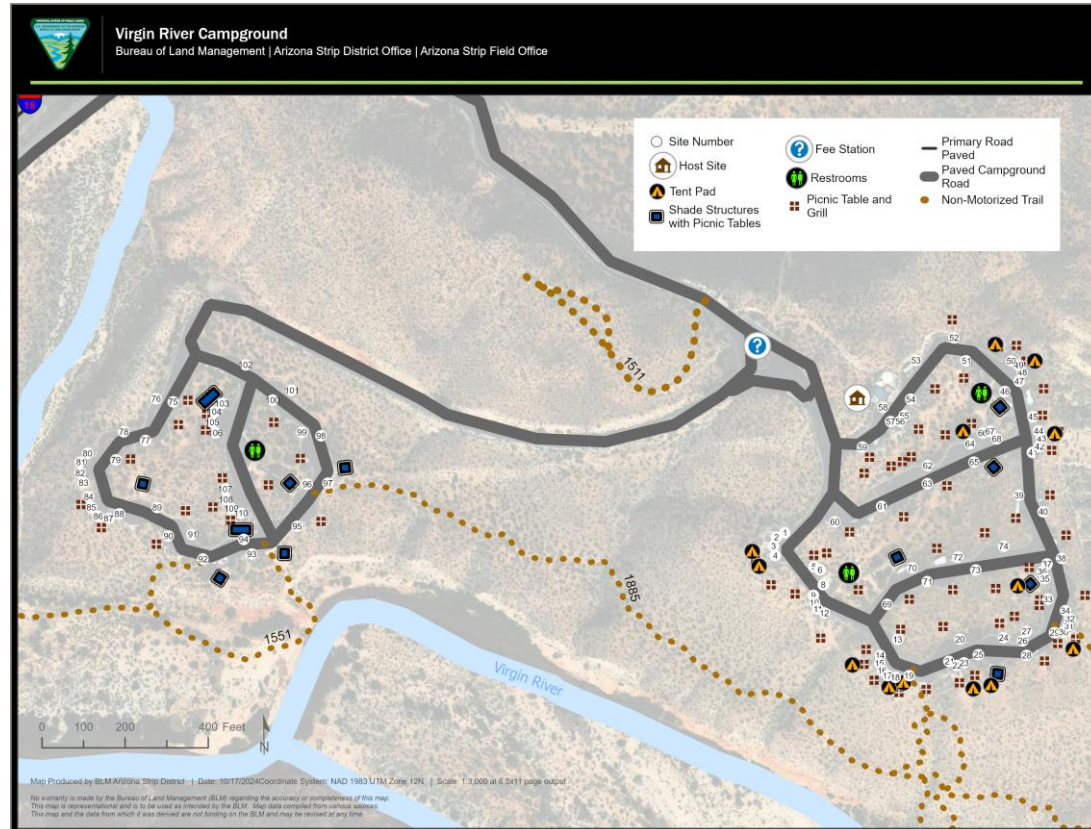
- The ASF0 administers approximately 1.15 million acres of public lands on the Arizona Strip. The remote landscape offers visitors a wide array of dispersed (undeveloped) recreation opportunities.





# VRCRA Site Map

- Overnight use is limited to a 14-night stays.
- 25 campsites are available through recreation.gov reservations.
- The remaining 83 sites are first come, first serve, payable via the Scan and Pay feature on the recreation.gov app and by cash using onsite Iron Rangers.





# VRCRA Background and History

- The VRCRA was closed from April 2019 until April 2022.
- The cost of these renovations was approximately \$900K.





# FY23 Operating Costs

Site Name	Labor	Maintenance/Operations	Total Operating Costs
VRCRA	\$63,663	\$26,074	\$89,737





# Operating Costs, Recreation Revenue, and Revenue Projection

Sites	FY23 Operating Costs	FY23 Revenue	FY24 Projected Revenue
VRCRA	\$89,737	\$52,360	\$53,407



# Examples of Site Maintenance and Operations

- Trash Dumpster (weekly) and plumbing and electrical maintenance services (as needed).
- Purchase of hand soap, toilet paper, paper towels, toilet seat covers, trash bags, restroom cleaning supplies and equipment, PPE, etc.
- Required water quality sampling and testing for public water system at the VRCRA.



# Business Plan Proposal

- This business plan proposes
  - Modifying fees for day use and individual and group site camping at the VRCRA Campground.







# VRCRA Campground Existing & Proposed Fees

Fee Description*	FLREA Fee Type	Year of Last Fee Increase	Existing Fee	Proposed Fee
Day Use Fee per vehicle	Standard Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(f))	1998	\$2	\$6
Individual Campsite Use Fee	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	1998	\$8	\$22
Group Site Fee	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	1998	\$8	\$42

\*Additional e-commerce processing fees may apply.  
Option to increase fees if/when CPI increases 20%

# America the Beautiful Passes

- For expanded amenity camping (for up to two vehicles), there is a 50% discount with Senior and Access America the Beautiful Passes.
- Day Use is free with any America the Beautiful Pass.





# Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates

- **Fair Market Value Method**

- The comparable recreation area camping fees range from **\$12 to \$35** with an average of **\$22.67**.
- The comparable recreation day-use fees range from **\$5 to \$20** with the average being **\$6.25**.



# Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates

- **Cost Recovery**

- The estimated revenue for FY24 is approximately **\$53,407**.
- The estimated total annual cost of future priority expenditures (including all labor and ops) is **\$260,188**.
- The goal of cost recovery is to recover as much of these costs as possible. To accomplish this would require a \$38 camping fee and a \$9.50 day use fee.



# Priorities for Future Expenditures

Position/Contract/Materials	Workdays Per Year	Cost
Outdoor Recreation Planner (1)	100	\$58,580
Administrative Assistant Public Land Information Center 1)	1	\$10,000
Maintenance Staff (1)	20	\$9,000
Law Enforcement Ranger (2)	30	\$24,100
Park Ranger (1)	100	\$30,160
Community Water System Testing (1)	3	\$20,000
Campground hosts (1)	1	\$1,000
Fire personnel Labor (2-6)	30	\$11,060
Contracted Bathroom Cleaning and Maintenance (proposed but not implemented currently)	116 days for 16 toilets.	\$68,788
Trash Dumpster (weekly) and plumbing and electrical maintenance services (as needed)	As needed	\$5,000
Equipment/Materials/Supplies & DM/CI projects	As needed	\$22,500
<b>Total</b>	N/A	<b>\$260,188</b>



# Public Outreach

- 45-Day Public Comment Period from May 13-June 26, 2024.
- Notified the public via press releases, social media, YouTube video, recreation.gov alerts, and ArcGIS StoryMap.
- Posted on BLM websites.
- Presented 2 virtual statewide public information sessions.
- Sent notification and outreach to potentially affected Tribes, Congressional representatives, state government and agencies, local government and municipalities, and interest groups.
- Posted flyers at VRCRA and Desert Rat (local outdoor equipment business).
- Sent emails to approximately 800 previous VRCRA visitors.
- Responded to U.S. Representative regarding concerns expressed about transition to a cashless payment system.



# Responses

- During the 45-day comment period, 42 comments were received, including comments from Arizona Game & Fish (AZGF) and Mohave County Board of Supervisors.





# Comment Summary

Draft Business Plan Comments Received	Supportive	Conditionally Supportive	Opposed w/ Recommended Changes	Opposed, General Anti-Fee	Opposed	Total Responses
VRCRA	9 (21%)	20 (48%)	6 (14%)	2 (5%)	5 (12%)	42 replies

No changes to fee proposal were made after receiving and reviewing comments.





# Comment Summary

- **Concerns**

- Public comments were generally favorable, although there was concern about the overnight camping fee increasing by such a large amount (\$8 to \$22).

- **Recommendations**

- A recurring recommendation was to raise the fee incrementally and/or to a smaller amount.

- **Support**

- Public comments were generally favorable. Most favorable comments expressed support of the BLM's market research and need to increase fees to help maintain the site.



# Government Organization Responses

- **Mohave County Board of Supervisors**
  - Recreational activities and tourism are drivers of local economy.
  - Accessing BLM-managed public lands is important for county residents and visitors.
  - Recreation is integral to quality of life and local economy.



# Government Organization Responses

- **Arizona Game & Fish (AZGF)**
  - Requested further consideration and analysis be implemented to ensure that these increased fees will not limit equitable public access to lands managed by the BLM.
  - Mohave County and the State of Arizona have the lowest income levels, which is likely to impact and restrict low-income users from recreating on public lands.



# Summary

- This business plan proposes the following fees based on comparative market research within the region. The proposed fees are needed to meet growing and needed operational and maintenance expenses.
- **Day Use Fee per Vehicle** – Standard Amenity - \$8
- **Individual Campsite Use Fee** (Tent, RV) – Expanded Amenity - \$22
- **Group Site Fee** – Expanded Amenity - \$42
- Based on most public comments being in favor of the proposed fees and the cost of operational and maintenance needs associated with the VRCRA, the BLM requests RAC recommendation to implement this business plan.



# Questions?





U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

# Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes Special Management Area (SMA) and White Pocket Business Plan

Presentation for the Arizona Resource Advisory Council – October 29-30, 2024





# Purpose of Briefing

- Present BLM AZ recreation business plan proposal, background information, outreach, and public comments received.
- Seek recommendation from Arizona RAC to implement the recreation business plan proposal.
  - BLM Utah State Director has provided concurrence for the Arizona RAC to be the lead for the RAC recommendation.



# Background



The Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes Special Management Area (SMA) is on BLM lands in Arizona and Utah.

It is located entirely within the Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness Area, part of the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument (VCNM), in Arizona and the Kanab Field Office (KFO) in Utah.





# Background

White Pocket is a proposed fee area.

Visitor use and resource management is monitored and managed by VCNM.

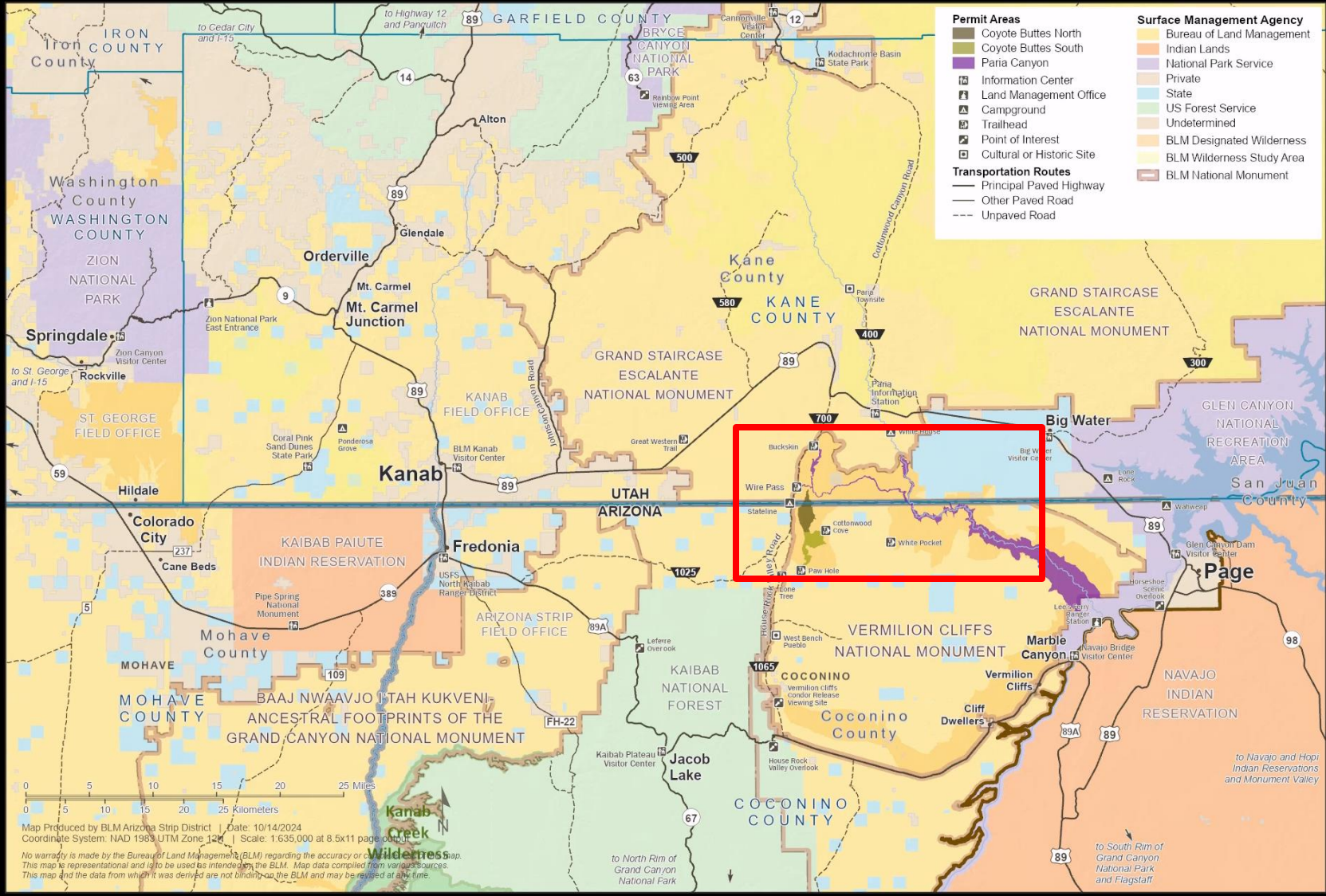
White Pocket is situated north on the Paria Plateau, adjacent to the SMA and bordering Wilderness.





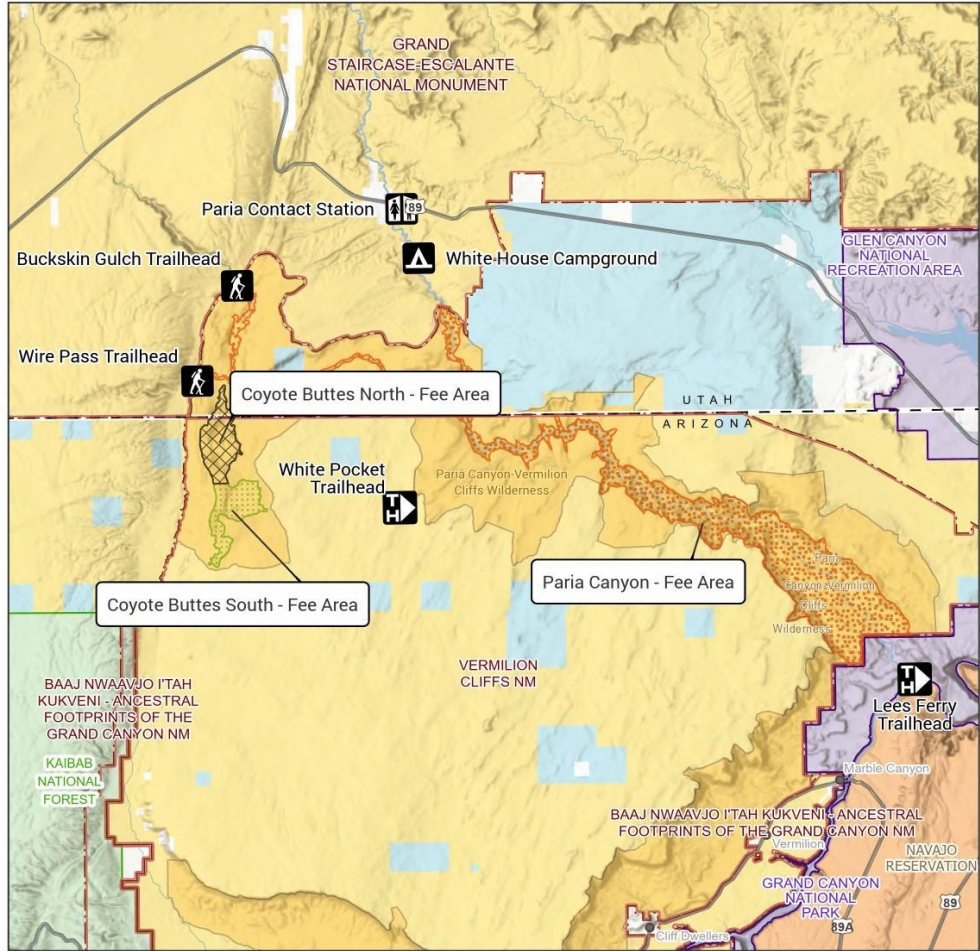
### Regional Map

Bureau of Land Management - Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, Arizona Strip Field Office, and Kanab Field Office





# Map of Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes SMA and White Pocket



- BLM National Monument
- USFS Forest Boundary
- NPS Unit Boundary
- State Boundaries
- Bureau of Land Management
- Indian Lands
- National Park Service Private
- State
- US Forest Service

0 5 10 Miles  
0 5 10 Kilometers

Map Produced by BLM Arizona Strip District  
File: VCNMBusinessPlan2024.aprx  
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N  
Reference System: U.S. PLSS GSRB&M  
Scale: 1:275,000 at 6.5x11 page output  
Date: 3/20/2024

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# Site Visitation

These areas provide approximately 80,000 visitors annually with outstanding recreational opportunities on public lands.

- Quotas limit visitor use for
  - Coyote Buttes North (CBN)
  - Coyote Buttes South (CBS)
  - Paria Canyon Overnight (PCO).
- Day use visitation for Buckskin Gulch/Paria Canyon is unlimited and continues to increase.
- White Pocket does not have a visitor limit and visitation continues to increase.





# FY19-FY23 Visitation

SMA Permit Area or Proposed Fee Site	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
<b>Coyote Buttes North</b>	7,300	6,393	10,509	16,119	16,240
<b>Coyote Buttes South</b>	5,941	5,971	6,130	6,013	4,581
<b>Paria Canyon Overnight</b>	4,395	4,743	4,915	4,434	3,715
<b>Paria Canyon Day Use</b>	24,856	37,245	41,830	38,761	24,554
<b>White Pocket – Proposed Fee Site</b>	20,771	8,900	19,734	12,905*	25,861
*Inaccurate numbers due to trail counter being stolen					

# Visitation Issues





# Background: Fee-Free Sites/Areas

263,424 acres (90%) of VCNM's 280,000 acres are fee-free, including sites like the Condor Viewing Site and the Maze Rock Art Site.





# Background

The Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes SMA and White Pocket Business Plan is proposed by:

- VCNM (Arizona Strip District)
- Kanab Field Office
- Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
  - Both part of Paria River District in Utah







# Background: Safety Concerns

## VERY remote area

- Little to no cell service
- Extreme weather
- 30 Search and Rescue Operations (SARs) annually
- Multiple deaths
- Unprepared visitors
- Roads affected by weather





# Background: Partners in Safety Program

## Safety Patrol Volunteers

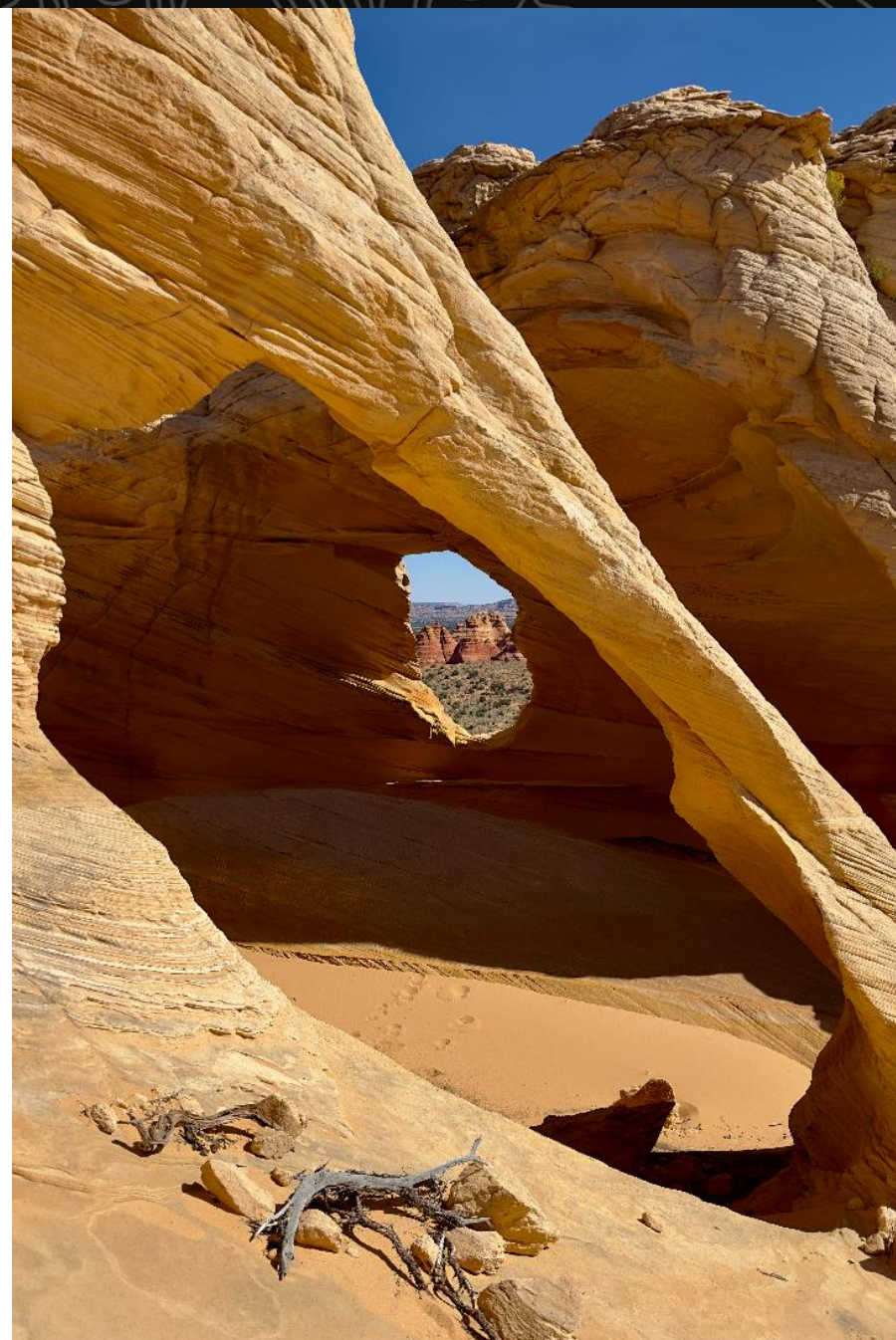
- Coverage through most of the crucial summer months
- 4,074 hours FY24

## Safety Briefs

- For Coyote Buttes Daily Lotteries
- Page HUB (Lake Powell Chamber of Commerce)
- Kane County Office of Tourism

## Paria Contact Station

- Glen Canyon Conservancy
- In-person pick up for permits
- Inform public of conditions & weather





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## Paria Canyon/Buckskin Gulch Background and History

Paria Canyon, Buckskin Gulch, and Wire Pass are widely recognized as one of the longest and most stunning slot canyon combinations in the world.

Visitation is steadily increasing (for day use).

Fees were first implemented in 1997 and last increased in 2008.



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## Coyote Buttes North (CBN) Background and History

CBN is an international destination with the main attraction being “The Wave”.

Interest and demand for access has grown exponentially due to trending social media posts naming the hike one of the top 10 places to visit in the US.

Fees were first implemented in 1997 and last increased in 2008.



## Coyote Buttes South (CBS) Background and History

CBS is the southern extension of the same geologic formations found in the north unit with features as unique as The Wave.

Travel requires a four-wheel drive vehicle to navigate deep sand that is prevalent throughout the area.

Visitation fluctuates based on season, weather, and road conditions.

Fees were first implemented in 1997 and last increased in 2008.





# White Pocket Background and History

White Pocket has no developed trails and is becoming increasingly popular; outfitters & guide and film/photo permit demand has grown exponentially.

Visitors explore these colorful slickrock formations, created over time by mineral deposits and shaped by the elements.

White Pocket has not required a fee.





# Business Plan Proposal

This business plan proposes:

- increases in Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) fees for Coyote Buttes North, Coyote Buttes South, and Paria Canyon/Buckskin Gulch (Overnight & Day Use)
  - Fees are for people and dogs
- A new proposed standard amenity fee at White Pocket
  - Dogs are not subject to fees



# Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes SMA and White Pocket Existing & Proposed Fees

Fee Description*	FLREA Fee Type	Year of Last Fee Increase	Existing Fee	Proposed Fee
Coyote Buttes North (The Wave) Individual Special Recreation Permit	ISRP (16 U.S.C. 6802(h))	2008	\$7.00	\$20.00
Coyote Buttes South Individual Special Recreation Permit	ISRP (16 U.S.C. 6802(h))	2008	\$5.00	\$10.00
Paria Canyon Overnight Individual Special Recreation Permit	ISRP (16 U.S.C. 6802(h))	2008	\$5.00	\$10.00
Buckskin Gulch/Paria Canyon Day Use Individual Special Recreation Permit	ISRP (16 U.S.C. 6802(h))	2008	\$6.00	\$10.00
Proposed White Pocket Day Use Fee (per individual)	Standard Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(f))	N/A	N/A	\$10.00

\*Additional e-commerce processing fees may apply.  
Option to increase fees if/when CPI increases 20%





# America the Beautiful Passes and Fee Free Days

All America the Beautiful Passes would be accepted at White Pocket for the pass owner plus 3 others that arrive in a non-commercial vehicle.

- Annual Pass
- Senior Annual & Lifetime Pass
- Access Pass
- Military Pass
- 4th Grade Pass
- Volunteer Pass





# Fee Free Day Opportunities

White Pocket VCNM Arizona  
BLM fee-free days in FY24:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
(January 15)
- Juneteenth National Independence Day  
(June 19)
- BLM's Birthday  
(July 16)
- Great American Outdoors Act  
Anniversary  
(August 4)
- National Public Lands Day  
(September 28)
- Veterans Day  
(November 11)





# Operating Costs, Recreation Revenue, and Revenue Projection

Past 5 years (CBN, CBS, PC & BG, & White Pocket)	Operating Costs	Revenue	Projected Revenue
2019	\$573,642	\$309,050	-\$264,592
2020	\$655,490	\$389,0081	-\$266,409
2021	\$899,194	\$438,752	-\$460,442
2022	\$551,127	\$463,061	-\$88,066
2023	\$946,145	\$350,784	-\$613,361
5-year average	\$725,120	\$378,270	-\$285,825



# Recreation Experience Improvement Opportunities

**Before Site Improvements**

**After Site Improvements**



***Wire Pass Parking Area Expansion Project***



# Site Maintenance and Operations

## Toilets!

One of the main costs managing the area is purchasing, pumping, cleaning, and generally maintaining toilets for public health & safety.

Prices for installing, cleaning, and pumping are much higher than typical due to area remoteness and difficult driving conditions.

- Composting toilet - \$150,000
- Pumping contract - \$80K
- Cleaning contract - \$90K
- Wag bags - \$14,000
- Toilet paper - \$8,000





# White Pocket Site Improvement



White Pocket is largely undeveloped and requires the following improvements:

- Composting toilets
- Signs / kiosks
- Picnic tables
- Permanent trash receptacles
- Fencing
- Parking area upgrades



## Priorities for Future Expenditures

- Provide visitor information, issue permits, conduct field patrols, interpretive programs, maintenance of recreation facilities and rehabilitate natural resource damage
- Reinitiate partnership with SUU or other local schools for recreation impact monitoring
- Printing and copying of maps, brochures, route descriptions and permits
- Law enforcement
- Appropriate share of government vehicle costs in support of operations
- Safety videos created for each permit area
- Supplies such as toilet paper, human waste bags, permit paper, etc.
- Services such as garbage collection, septic pumping, satellite phones, etc.
- Maintenance, replacement, and construction of recreational facilities such as vault toilets, etc. Installing composting toilets at White Pocket, picnic tables, permanent trash receptacles, fee signage, and parking area improvements
- Scientific research related to the area such as recreation site impact monitoring and visitor satisfaction surveys



# Priorities for Future Expenditures

## Road Work



Item	Projected Cost
Magnesium chloride for dust abatement	\$200,000
Road grading / maintenance; drainage management	\$250,000
Parking areas improvements	\$140,000
Equipment	\$10,000





# Priorities for Future Expenditures

Maintenance and upkeep for the Paria Contact Station is vital for the safety and education of visitors.





# Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates

Fees are lower than comparable areas and would need to be double current prices to be completely self-sustaining.



Site	Current price	Average of comparable fees	Difference	Proposed fee
CBN	\$7	\$27.60	\$20	\$20
CBS	\$5	\$13.25	\$8	\$10
PCO	\$5	\$15.55	\$10	\$10
White Pocket	NA	\$13.25	\$13.25	\$10



# Public Outreach

- 45-Day Public Comment Period from May 13-June 26, 2024
- Notified the public via press releases, social media, YouTube video, recreation.gov banners, and ArcGIS StoryMap
- Posted on BLM and Recreation.gov websites
  
- Presented 2 virtual statewide public information sessions
- Sent notification and outreach to potentially affected Tribes, Congressional representatives, state government and agencies, local government and municipalities, and interest groups
- Emailed all Special Recreation Permit holders
- Sent emails to just over 25,000 previous visitors
  
- Posted flyers at all trailheads
- Posted flyers at 7 visitor centers



# Responses

During the 45-day  
comment period,  
151 comments  
were received.





# Comment Summary

Location	Generally in Favor	Generally Against
Coyote Buttes North	82%	18%
Coyote Buttes South	77%	22%
Paria Canyon Overnight	76%	25%
Paria Canyon/Buckskin Gulch Day-Use	80%	22%
White Pocket	73%	27%

No changes to fee proposals were made after receiving and reviewing comments.



# Responses

Site	Supportive	Conditionally Supportive	Opposed with Recommended Changes	Opposed General Anti-fee	Opposed	Total Replies for Fee Areas (out of 151 received)
Coyote Buttes North	72 replies (63%)	22 replies (19%)	8 replies (7%)	12 replies (10%)	1 reply (0%)	115 replies
Coyote Buttes South	72 replies (68%)	10 replies (9%)	8 replies (7%)	12 replies (11%)	4 replies (4%)	106 replies
Paria Canyon Overnight	69 replies (66%)	10 replies (10%)	8 replies (8%)	12 replies (12%)	5 replies (5%)	104 replies
Paria Canyon/ Buckskin Gulch Day-Use	70 replies (78%)	9 replies (1%)	8 replies (8%)	12 replies (12%)	0 replies (0%)	99 replies
White Pocket	70 replies (60%)	14 replies (12%)	9 replies (8%)	12 replies (10%)	10 replies (9%)	115 replies



## Concerns – Recommendations/Support

Summary of Comment	Response
Concern about the amount of fees going to Recreation.gov and not staying with the BLM; also, clarity of fees	E-commerce reservation fee is set through contracting requirements and is outside the scope of this business plan.
Keep public lands affordable for lower income households	Also a concern for the BLM; fees proposed in this business plan are comparable or lower than fees for similar nearby areas.
Keep the monument undeveloped	BLM intends to develop the bare minimum facilities needed for public health, safety, and visitor enjoyment.
Local residents should receive priority and/or discounts for permits	FLREA does not grant the authority for BLM to provide priorities, discounts or reduced recreation fees for local residents or other groups.



## **Government and Organization Responses**

- Arizona Game & Fish (AZGF)
- Kane County, Utah
- Grand Staircase Regional Guides Association (GSRGA)





# Arizona Game & Fish

- Requests further analysis for additional funding sources to avoid multiple or layered fees
- Asks for greater clarity with Recreation.gov fees & proposed fees
- Calls for language to be included stating that hunters are exempt from recreation fees



# Kane County, Utah

- Believes fees are excessive and place an undue burden on the public
- Would like to see local residents, veterans, and underprivileged populations receive fee discounts



# Grand Staircase Regional Guides Association (GSRGA)

Although not a government agency, GSRGA are heavily invested in the area consisting of local SRP holders.

- Prefers less development
- Fees should be used to protect people & resources
- Suggest guide companies should be given a year notice of fee increases to adjust their pricing as their bookings are sometimes up to one year in advance
- Requests more clarity in the monetary split between Recreation.gov and the BLM



# Summary

Based on the majority of public comments being positive, the Arizona Strip requests RAC recommendation to implement the proposed business plan.



# Questions?





# Kingman Field Office Amenity Fee Site Business Plan

Presentation for the Arizona Resource Advisory Council – October 29-30, 2024



Wild Cow Springs  
Campground

Windy Point Campground



Burro Creek Campground



# Purpose of Briefing

- Present BLM AZ recreation business plan proposal, background information, outreach, and public comments received.
- Seek recommendation from RAC to implement the recreation business plan proposal.



# Background

- The Kingman Field Office Amenity Fee Site Business Plan is proposed by the Kingman Field Office within the Colorado River District.
- The Kingman Field Office (KFO) manages four developed campgrounds, three of which collect fees pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) of 2004.



# Background

- The KFO completed the most recent business plan in 2009. Since then, visitation to the KFO has nearly doubled, costs have increased, and nearly \$900K was expended at fee sites in deferred maintenance.
- The current proposal is to raise fees for the first time in 15 years. The proposed business plan enables proactive management while allowing flexibility to address emerging use and economic trends.



Lower restroom at Burro Creek  
before renovation



Lower restroom at Burro Creek after  
renovation



# Background: Fee Free Sites/Areas

Over 2.4 million acres of the KFO remains fee free to for the recreating public. This includes:

- 18 free developed sites, including one developed campground (Packsaddle)
- 17 developed trailheads that access over 80 miles of non-motorized and motorized trails and three Wilderness areas.

Only 61 acres in KFO require an overnight camping fee.



Packsaddle Campground



Cerbat Foothills  
Recreation Area

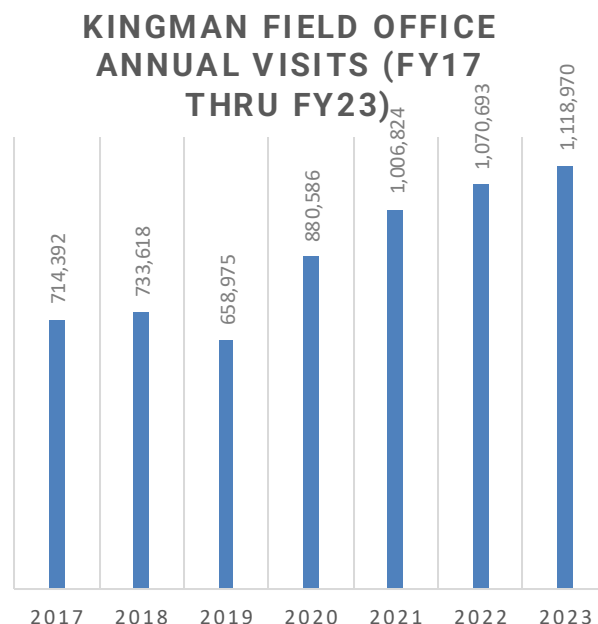


Dispersed camping area



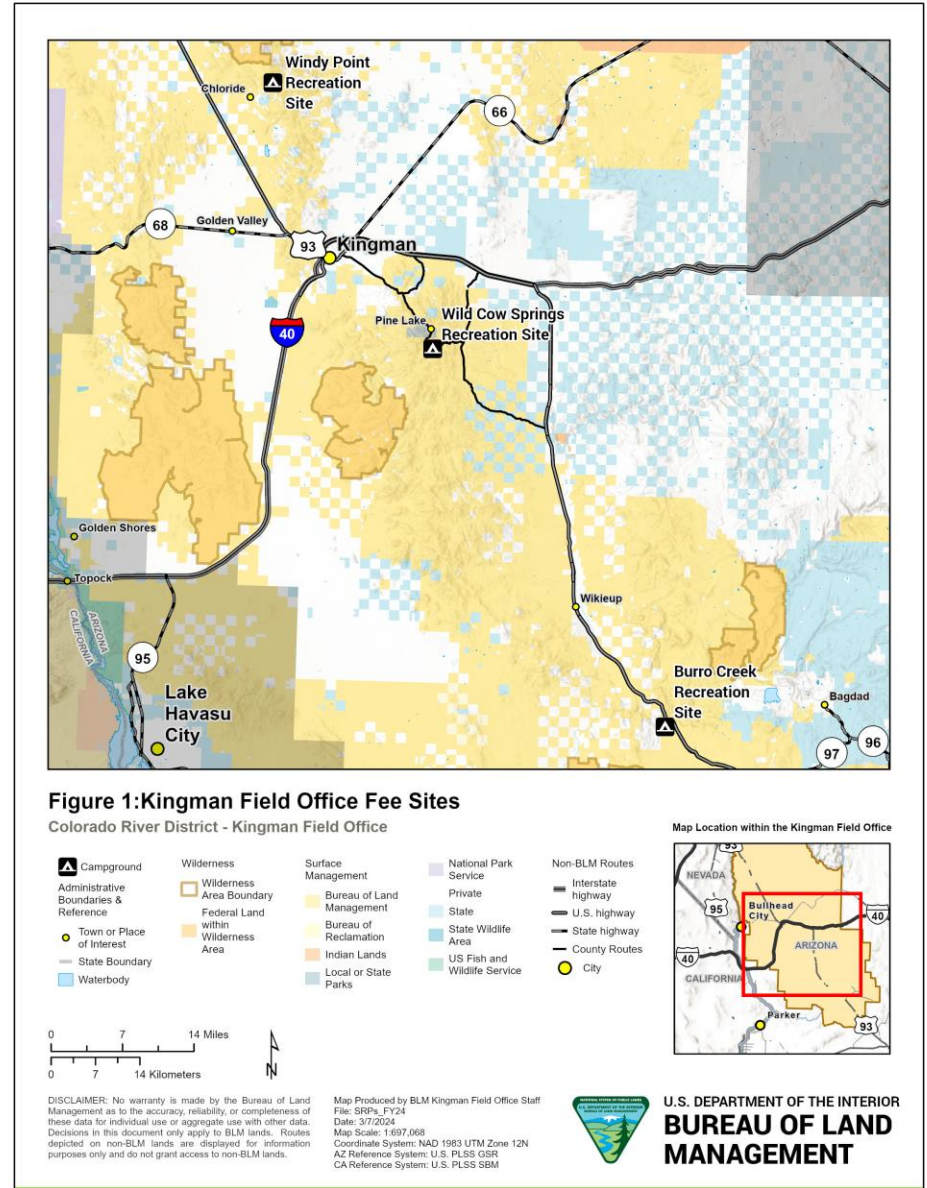
# Kingman Field Office Visitor Preferences & Site Visitation

- Visitors to the KFO participate in a variety of activities to include:
  - Off-highway vehicle riding (side-by-sides, technical 4WD, motorcycles, etc.)
  - Non-motorized activities (hiking, mountain biking, equestrian use)
  - Camping (developed and dispersed)
  - Hunting
  - Viewing wildlife and cultural sites
  - Rockhounding (Burro Creek area particularly)
- Across all three fee sites, 79% of visitors are generally satisfied with their visit.
- Total Visits to the KFO increased from 714,392 in FY17 to 1,118,970 in FY23.



# Fee Site Overview

- **Site Background Relevant to All Fee Sites** – The KFO began collection and retention of fees in 1998 and has prepared business plans in 1999 and again in 2009.
- **Burro Creek Campground** – Situated along Burro Creek easily accessed off U.S. Highway 93 and serves wintertime visitors.
- **Wild Cow Springs Campground** – Situated the Hualapai Mountains and is just a 45-minute drive south of Kingman, AZ serving summertime visitors.
- **Windy Point Campground** – Situated in the Cerbat Mountains in a pinyon juniper woodland forest serving visitors in the spring, summer, and fall.





# Burro Creek Campground Visitation and Description

- Receiving an average annual visitation of 4,439 visitors, the site encompasses 23 individual sites, group site, picnic area (fee free day use area), potable water, and two flush toilet facilities.
- The KFO employs a site host October through April to assist visitors with recreation.gov reservations, site selection, fee compliance, and interpretive information.



Watchable Wildlife panels needing renovation

# Wild Cow Campground Visitation and Description

- Receiving an average annual visitation of 754 visitors, the site offers 16 individual sites, a group site, and three vault restroom facilities.
- The KFO works with local scout troops to complete a variety of development and maintenance projects in the site. Most recently an Eagle Scout constructed a new pedestrian bridge at the site to enhance access.



Scouts Construct New Pedestrian Bridge



# Windy Point Campground Visitation and Description

- Receiving an average annual visitation of 241 visitors, the site provides eight campsites and a vault restroom facility.
- The KFO works with local scout troops to complete a variety of development and maintenance projects in the site.

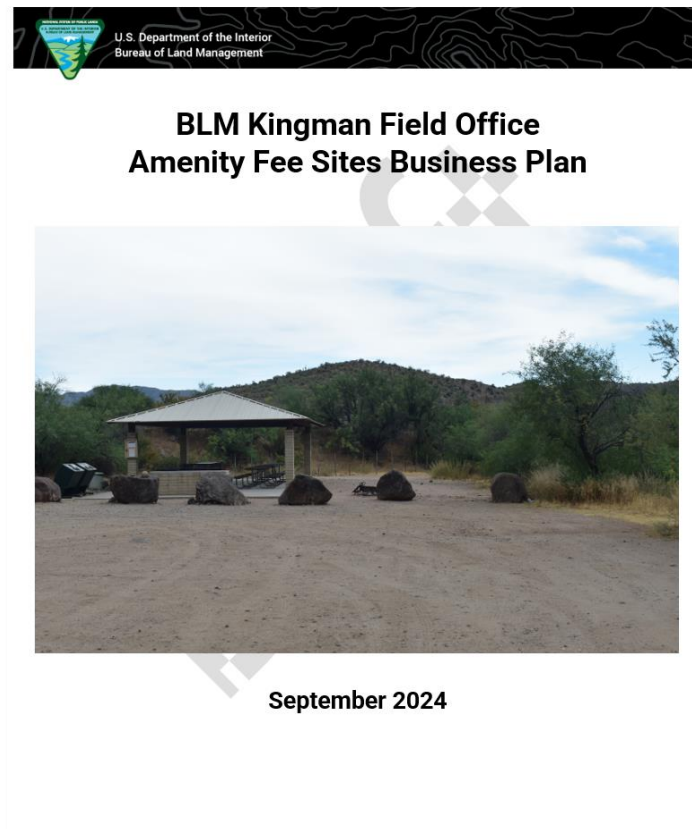


Site 3 at Windy Point Campground



# Business Plan Proposal

- This business plan proposes
  - increases in fees at the Burro Creek, Wild Cow Springs, and Windy Point Campgrounds.
  - The KFO is proposing to raise all fees currently charged.







# Kingman Field Office Existing & Proposed Fees

Fee Description*	FLREA Fee Type	Year of Last Fee Increase	Existing Fee	Proposed Fee
Burro Creek Overnight Site Fee	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	2009	\$14	\$22
Burro Creek Group Site Overnight Fee	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	2009	\$50	\$80
Burro Creek Dump Station Fee (if not camping at the site)	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	2009	\$10	\$15
Wild Cow Springs Overnight Site Fee	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	2009	\$8	\$15
Wild Cow Springs Group Site Overnight Fee	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	2009	\$20	\$30
Windy Point Overnight Site Fee	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	2009	\$8	\$15

\*Additional e-commerce processing fees may apply.  
Option to increase fees if/when CPI increases 20%.



# America the Beautiful Passes and Fee Free Days

For individual campsites (Burro Creek, Wild Cow Springs, and Windy Point Campgrounds) managed under this plan, half off camping would apply for holders of the following Interagency passes subject to legislative changes that may preclude a discount on expanded amenity fees in the future:

- Senior Annual and Lifetime Passes
- Access Pass

Fee Free Days **would not apply** to the Kingman Field Office as only expanded amenity fees are charged as part of this fee proposal.





# FY23 Operating Costs, Recreation Revenue, and Projected Revenue

Site Name	FY23 Labor	FY23 Maintenance/Operations	Total FY23 Operating Costs	FY23 Revenue	Projected FY25 Revenue
KFO Amenity Fee Sites	\$101,872.42	\$83,514.27	\$185,386.69	\$39,651.53	\$70,079.80

Between FY19 and FY22, the Burro Creek Campground underwent nearly \$900k in major deferred maintenance (DM) projects to renovate the two restroom facilities, waterlines, sewer lines, and potable water storage tank serving the site.



Waterline Renovation – Burro Creek Campground

# Recreation Facility Improvements

## Burro Creek Campground Restroom During Renovation



## Burro Creek Campground Restroom After Renovation



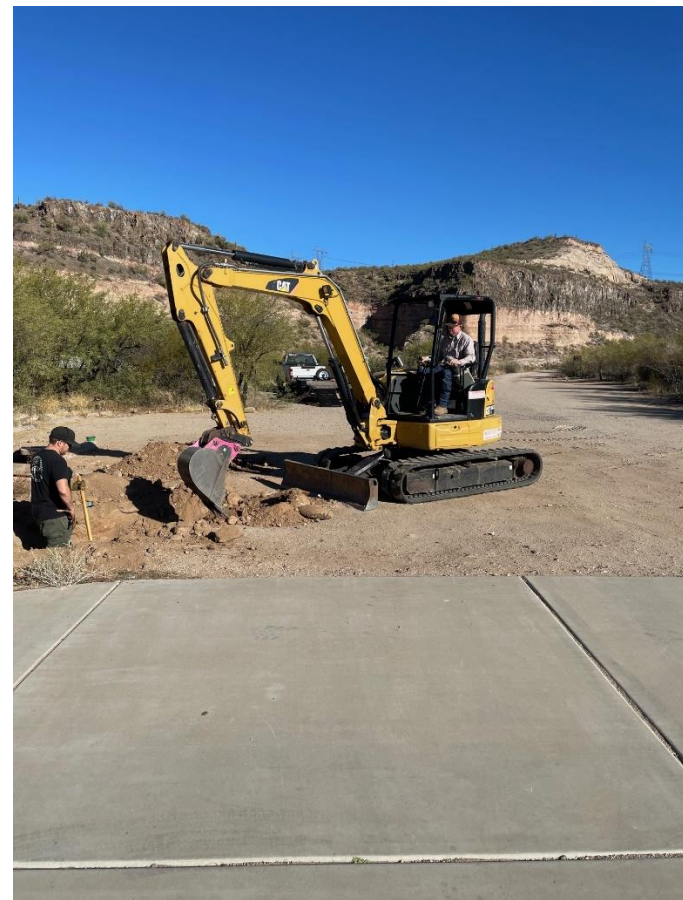
Restroom renovations at the Burro Creek Campground leveraged existing slump block design to create a long-lasting facility that would stand-up to harsh summertime temperatures common in the area while providing more reliable facilities for the public.



# Priorities for Future Expenditures

The expenditures of fees collected in the KFO fill annual and recurring needs:

- Clean, well-maintained restrooms stocked with toilet paper
- Clean campsites
- Designated and functioning fire rings
- Clean and operational picnic tables
- Shelter from sun and rain
- Level pads for tents and/or parking RVs (maintenance of driveways)
- Trash collection
- Universally accessible facilities compliant with the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA)
- Interpretive and educational information and pamphlets
- Maintained access roads
- A sense of security
- Reservation services
- Improvement and regular annual maintenance of access roads, site roads, and driveways.
- Increased ABA access through construction of sidewalks, retrofitting facilities, and development of new facilities.
- Increased interpretive signage and development of educational brochures that could be distributed at the fee sites.
- Construction of additional shelter facilities at the Wild Cow Springs and Windy Point Campgrounds.



BLM Staff Replace a Failed Water Valve



# Priorities for Future Expenditures

Item	Projected Cost
Burro Creek Desert Garden Signage Project	\$5,500
Burro Creek Site Driveway Aggregate Project	\$60,000
Burro Creek ABA Trail Project	\$35,000
Wild Cow Springs Group Site Renovations	\$25,000
Wild Springs Driveway Aggregate Project	\$40,000
Wild Cow Springs Interpretive Panel Project	\$15,000
Windy Point Driveway Aggregate Project	\$40,000
Windy Point Shade Ramada Project	\$30,000
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>\$250,500</b>



# Priorities for Future Expenditures

**Windy Point Shade Ramada Project:  
Without Ramada**



**Windy Point Shade Ramada Project:  
Conceptual With Ramada**





# Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates (Cost Recovery)

A full cost recovery fee increase was calculated for purposes of this analysis in which the KFO reviewed total operating costs between Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 and FY 2023.

Fee Description	Full Cost Recovery Fee
Burro Creek Overnight Site Fee	\$53
Burro Creek Group Site Overnight Fee	\$92
Burro Creek Dump Station Fee (if not camping at the site)	\$49
Wild Cow Springs Overnight Site Fee	\$42
Wild Cow Springs Group Site Overnight Fee	\$58
Windy Point Overnight Site Fee	\$32





# Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates (Fair Market Value)

A regional survey of fees charged at sites comparable to the three campgrounds covered under this business plan was conducted to identify a fair market value fee increase.

Fee Description	Average Comparable Cost	BLM Proposed Fee
Burro Creek Overnight Site Fee	\$24.40	\$22.00
Burro Creek Group Site Overnight Fee	\$117.40	\$80.00
Burro Creek Dump Station Fee (if not camping at the site)	\$16.25	\$15.00
Wild Cow Springs Overnight Site Fee	\$18.20	\$15.00
Wild Cow Springs Group Site Overnight Fee	\$40.00	\$30.00
Windy Point Overnight Site Fee	\$18.20	\$15.00



# Public Outreach

- 45-Day Public Comment Period from May 13-June 26, 2024.
- Notified the public via press releases, social media, YouTube video, recreation.gov alerts, and ArcGIS StoryMap.
- Posted on BLM websites.
- Presented 2 virtual statewide public information sessions
- Sent notification and outreach to potentially affected Tribes, Congressional representatives, state government and agencies, local government and municipalities, and interest groups.
- Posted flyers at Burro Creek, Wild Cow Springs, and Windy Point Campgrounds as well as the KFO public room.
- Posted notices on BLM websites & recreation.gov.
- Sent emails to 998 previous Burro Creek Campground visitors.



# Responses

- During the 45-day comment period, 31 comments were received.
- Of those 31 comments, the KFO received two comments from government agencies including the Mohave County Board of Supervisors and the Arizona Game and Fish Department.



# Comment Summary

Draft Business Plan Comments Received	Supportive	Conditionally Supportive	Provided Suggestions	Opposed w/ Recommended Changes	Opposed	Total Responses
KFO Amenity Fee Sites	5 (16%)	7 (23%)	4 (13%)	5 (16%)	10 (32%)	31

The KFO adjusted several items in the draft business plan as a result of public outreach. The changes are described on slide 28.



# Comment Summary

## • Concerns

- Opposed to proposed increase that is double or more than double the current fee
- Validity of the comparable sites used to set fees based on fair market value
- Concerns with the use of CPI-U for future fee increases
- Concerns with acceptance of interagency pass for camping discounts
- Increased costs from recreation.gov fees
- Concerns with sites no longer accepting cash

## • Recommendations

- Identified strategies for how fees should be used
- Provided an alternative fee proposal

## • Support

- Based on evidence presented in the business plan, there was support for a fee increase provided the sites were improved
- Several commenters supported a fee increase, but disagreed with the amount of the proposed fee increase
- A few commenters were in full support of the fee proposal as presented in the business plan



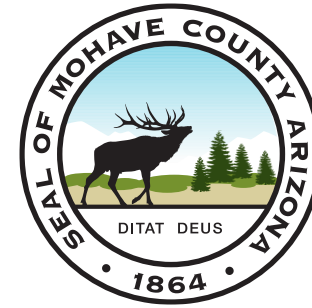
# Government Organization Responses

- Mohave County Board of Supervisors
- Arizona Game and Fish Department



# Mohave County Board of Supervisors

- Concerned that steep fee increases at less developed sites such as Wild Cow Springs and Windy Point Campgrounds could deter visitors seeking budget-friendly camping options.
- Acknowledged that these BLM sites (Wild Cow Springs and Windy Point Campgrounds) require maintenance but there was concern that a proposed fee increase of \$12 was not warranted given the limited amenities.
- The comment did not specifically relate to the Burro Creek Campground fee increase proposal.



**MOHAVE  
COUNTY**



# Arizona Game and Fish Department

- Concerned that large fee increases coupled with use of CPI-U for future fee increases could impact local population as data shows that local populations are mostly lower-income households.
- Concerned that large fee increases could create additional obstacles for recreation on public lands, particularly for low-income groups.







# Changes as a Result of Public Comment

- Reduced the proposed individual site fee for overnight camping for Burro Creek, Wild Cow Springs, and Windy Point Campgrounds.
- Removed two of the comparable sites due to their higher level of development (e.g., full RV hookups) to better assess proposed fees.
- Reviewed and clarified historical CPI-U increases to better understand how often future fee increases covered under this business plan may take place to ensure equitable access to recreational opportunities.
- Included a list of site improvements in the business plan that were recommended by commenters for use of recreation fee revenue dollars.



# Proposed Fee Changes as a Result of Public Comment

Fee Description	Proposed Fee Before Public Comment	Proposed Fee After Public Comment
Burro Creek Overnight Site Fee	\$28	\$22
Burro Creek Group Site Overnight Fee	\$80	\$80
Burro Creek Dump Station Fee (if not camping at the site)	\$15	\$15
Wild Cow Springs Overnight Site Fee	\$20	\$15
Wild Cow Springs Group Site Overnight Fee	\$30	\$30
Windy Point Overnight Site Fee	\$20	\$15



# Summary

- Average overnight fee increases:
  - Individual sites would increase on average **\$7.33 per night**
  - Group sites would increase on average **\$20.00 per night**
- Benefits from the fee increases would include:
  - Continued maintenance
  - Reduced future costs
  - Enhanced visitor experience
- The BLM's Colorado River District appreciates the RAC's time and would like to request RAC recommendation to implement the proposed KFO Amenity Fee Site Business Plan.



# Questions?



Site 14 at Wild Cow Springs Campground



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

# LHFO Amenity Fee Sites Business Plan

Presentation for the Arizona Resource Advisory Council – October 29-30, 2024



Shoreline Site in the Lake Havasu Field Office



# Purpose of Briefing

- Present BLM AZ recreation business plan proposal, background information, outreach, and public comments received.
- Seek recommendation from RAC to implement the recreation business plan proposal.



# Background

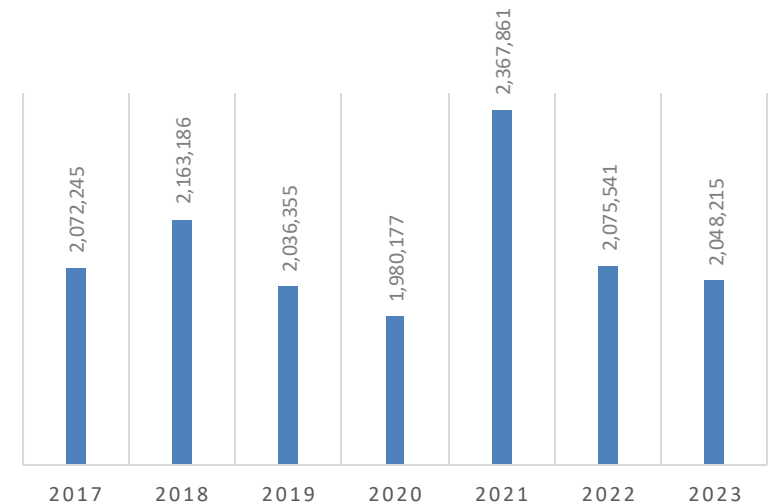
- The Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO) Amenity Fee Site Business Plan is proposed by the Lake Havasu Field Office within the Colorado River District.
- This business plan proposes
  - Increases in standard and expanded amenity fees for the Crossroads Campground, Lake Havasu Shoreline Sites, and Bullfrog Day Use.
  - A new proposed expanded amenity fee site at Quail Hollow.



# Site Visitation

- Visitors to the LHFO participate in a variety of activities including:
  - Boating
  - Fishing
  - Off-highway vehicle riding (side-by-sides, technical 4WD, motorcycles, etc.)
  - Non-motorized activities (hiking, mountain biking, equestrian use)
  - Camping (developed and dispersed)
- Total Visits to the LHFO in FY23 were 2,048,215.
- Visitation between FY17 and FY23 has been relatively consistent.

LAKE HAVASU FIELD OFFICE  
ANNUAL VISITS (FY17 THRU  
FY23)







# Background: Fee Free Sites/Areas

- Over 1.3 million acres of the LHFO remains fee free, including:
  - day use sites that provide access to boating and fishing opportunities
  - access to motorized and non-motorized opportunities.



Accessible fishing pier, shade structure, and fish cleaning table at Take Off Point, Lake Havasu.

# LHFO Amenity Fee Sites Background and History

- The LHFO Shoreline overnight and day-use permits, and Parker Strip Day-use permits have been at their current fee schedule since they were introduced in 1997.
- The annual LHFO Shoreline site-specific pass fee was last increased in 2006.
- LHFO Visitation data is derived from permits issued and fees collected.



Pilot Rock Shoreline Site



# LHFO Shoreline Sites Visitation and Description

- 112,000 visitors in FY23.
- Shoreline Sites are accessible only by boat or very limited hiking trails.
- Based on the needs of each location, retaining walls, pathways, steps and safety handrails are constructed at the sites.
- Site amenities include restrooms, grills, picnic tables, shade ramadas, watercraft moorings, interpretive signs, trash receptacles, and beaches.



Steamboat Shoreline Site



# Bullfrog Day Use Area Visitation and Description

- 11,950 visitors in FY23.
- Situated along the California side of the lower Colorado River within the Parker Strip SRMA.
- This site provides river access, a swimming beach, shaded picnic areas, open green recreation space, and vault toilets. Visitors enjoy this riverfront site year-round.



Bullfrog Day Use Area as viewed from the Colorado River

## Crossroads Campground Visitation and Description

- 46,380 visitors in FY23.
- Campground is located near the Rock House Visitor Center and boat launch.
- There are 26 individual campsites for overnight camping without electrical hookups, and one accessible campsite.
- All campsites provide a picnic table and grill. There is one vault toilet.



Campsite at Crossroads Campground



# Proposed Quail Hollow Campground Visitation and Description

- This proposed expanded amenity site would include a developed parking area, toilet facility, campsites with and without electricity, trash collection, and security services.
- It is anticipated that visitor use could be similar to Bullfrog Day Use Area and Crossroads Campground.



# Business Plan Proposal

- This business plan proposes
  - increases in standard, expanded amenity, and site-specific annual pass fees for the Shoreline Sites (Day and Overnight Use), Bullfrog Day Use Area, and Crossroads Campground (to include electric hookups).
  - New proposed expanded amenity fee site at the proposed Quail Hollow Campground.





# LHFO Amenity Fee Sites Existing & Proposed Fees

Fee Description*	FLREA Fee Type	Year of Last Fee Increase	Existing Fee	Proposed Fee
Lake Havasu Shoreline Sites Day Use Fee (per day)	Standard Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(f))	2002	\$10	\$20
Lake Havasu Shoreline Sites Overnight Use Fee	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	2002	\$10	\$20
Lake Havasu Shoreline Sites Annual Pass	Site-Specific Pass (16 U.S.C. 6804(c))	2006	\$100	\$200
Bullfrog Day Use Area (per day)	Standard Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(f))	2006	\$5	\$10
Crossroads Campground Overnight Site (without electrical hookups)	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	2002	\$5	\$20
Crossroads Campground Individual Site (with electrical hookups)	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	N/A	N/A	\$40
Proposed Quail Hollow Campground Overnight Use Fee (without electric hookups)	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	N/A	N/A	\$20
Proposed Quail Hollow Campground Overnight Use Fee (with electric hookups)	Expanded Amenity (16 U.S.C. 6802(g))	N/A	N/A	\$40

\*Additional e-commerce processing fees may apply.  
Option to increase fees if/when CPI increases 20%



# America the Beautiful Passes

- The America the Beautiful Passes are accepted where a standard amenity fee is in place:
  - LHFO Day Use Shoreline Sites
  - Bullfrog Day Use Area
- Interagency Senior Lifetime or Annual and Access Pass Holders receive a 50% discount on overnight camping at expanded amenity sites:
  - LHFO Overnight Shoreline Site(s)
  - Crossroads Campground
  - Proposed Quail Hollow Campground



# How to Use America The Beautiful (ATB) Passes

## Standard Amenity Sites

- All ATB passes and Every Kid Outdoors passes
  - LHFO Day Use Shoreline Sites
  - Bullfrog Day Use Area



Bullfrog Day Use Area

## Expanded Amenity Sites

- Senior and Access passes provide ½ off at campgrounds
  - Overnight Shoreline Site(s)
  - Crossroads Campground
  - Proposed Quail Hollow Campground



Crossroads Campground



# Fee Free Day Opportunities

LHFO Amenity Fee Sites with fee free days:

- Standard Amenity Sites
  - LHFO Day Use Shoreline Sites
  - Bullfrog Day Use Area



Bullfrog Day Use Area



# Site Specific Passes

- Lake Havasu Shoreline Sites Annual Pass
  - This pass only works at the lake sites but does cover day and overnight use of the Shoreline Sites.



Steamboat Cove Campsite



# FY23 Operating Costs, Recreation Revenue, and Projected Revenue

Site Name	FY23 Labor	FY23 Maintenance/ Operations	Total FY23 Operating Costs	FY23 Revenue	Projected FY25 Revenue
LHFO Amenity Fee Sites	\$863,000	\$79,000	\$942,000	\$65,600	\$128,000

Operating costs include routine service and maintenance, law enforcement patrol, compliance patrol, restocking supplies, transportation, and administrative management costs.



One of 3 vandalized shoreline vault toilets in 2023.



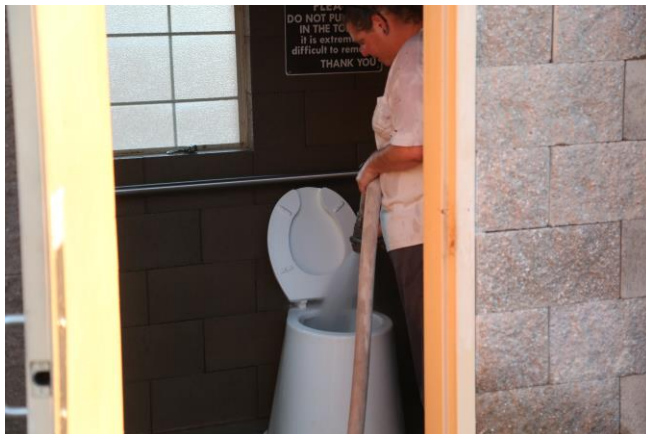
# Maintenance and Operations

Staff  
access  
Shoreline  
Sites by  
boat



Staff are  
responsible  
for site  
maintenance  
for launch  
ramps and  
docks

Staff  
clean  
and  
restock  
vault  
toilets



Sample of  
common  
damage at  
boat docks



# LHFO Amenity Fee Site Improvements



The LHFO replaced the failing retaining wall at the Bullfrog Day Use Area in 2018 and 2019.







# Priorities for Future Expenditures

The LHFO will focus on expanding amenities at the Quail Hollow Day Use Area and Crossroads Campground to meet public visitation demand to the Parker Strip Area. The LHFO expects to utilize staff to grade and prepare the land, to pour concrete, and to contract services for electrical and concrete.

Item	Projected Cost
Permits	\$17,500
Electrical Access	\$125,000
Land Preparation	\$182,500
Concrete	\$250,000
Landscape	\$75,000
Personnel	\$695,000
Vault Toilets	\$100,000
Shade Structures	\$50,000
Trash Cans	\$5,000
	<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>
	<b>\$1,500,000</b>

# Priorities for Future Expenditures

- Develop Quail Hollow Campground
- Maintain the Shoreline Sites, Bullfrog Day Use Area, and campgrounds including all aspects of current levels of service to users, such as maintaining a standard of cleanliness that would promote visitor health and safety.
  - Continued replacement of site amenities (picnic tables, fire rings, etc.)
  - Replacement of toilet facilities
  - Major repair of visitor facilities (e.g., waterlines, sewer lines, etc.)



Staff replace a ramada at Crossroads Campground



# Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates (Cost Recovery)

A full cost recovery fee increase was calculated for purposes of this analysis in which the LHFO reviewed total operating costs for FY23.

Fee Site	Actual FY23 Expenditures	Actual FY23 Revenues	Funding Deficiency
LHFO Shoreline Sites	\$550,000	\$46,803	-\$503,197
Bullfrog Day Use Area and Crossroads Campground	\$392,000	\$18,888	-\$373,112



# Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates (Fair Market Value)

A regional survey of fees charged at adjacent sites that are comparable to the LHFO existing and proposed fee sites was conducted.

Fee Description	Average Comparable Cost	Proposed Fee
Lake Havasu Shoreline Sites Day Use Fee (per day)	\$15	\$20
Lake Havasu Shoreline Sites Overnight Use Fee	\$38	\$20
Lake Havasu Shoreline Sites Annual Pass	\$200	\$200
Bullfrog Day Use Area (per day)	\$15	\$10
Crossroads Campground Overnight Site (without electrical hookups)	\$38	\$20
Crossroads Campground Individual Site (with electrical hookups)	\$45	\$40
Proposed Quail Hollow Campground Overnight Use Fee (without electric hookups)	\$25	\$20
Proposed Quail Hollow Campground Overnight Use Fee (with electric hookups)	\$45	\$40



# Public Outreach

- 45-Day Public Comment Period from May 13-June 26, 2024.
- Notified the public via press releases, social media, YouTube video, recreation.gov alerts, and ArcGIS StoryMap.
- Posted on BLM websites.
- Presented 2 virtual statewide public information sessions.
- Sent notification and outreach to potentially affected Tribes, Congressional representatives, state government and agencies, local government and municipalities, and interest groups.
- Posted flyers at each of the Shoreline Sites, Bullfrog Day Use, Crossroads Campground, and Quail Hollow.



# Public Outreach - In Person

## Meetings and Contact

- Presentation at a U.S. Representative-hosted public information session at Lake Havasu on August 5 to provide information about the fee proposals.



# Responses

- During the 45-day comment period, 14 comments were received.
- Of those 14 comments, the LHFO received one comment from the Mohave County Board of Supervisors.



# Comment Summary

Draft Business Plan Comments Received	Supportive	Supportive Suggestion	Conditionally Supportive	Suggestion	Opposed w/ Recommended Changes	Opposed	Total Responses
LHFO Amenity Fee Sites	1 (7%)	2 (14%)	5 (36%)	1 (7%)	2 (14%)	3 (22%)	14

The LHFO did not make changes to the proposal based on public input but did clarify six different issues raised through comments.





# Comment Summary

- Concerns
  - Concerns over the use of the CPI-U to adjust for future inflation.
  - Concerns that a fee increase would drive down tourism.
  - Concerns that fee increases would impact minority or low-income populations.
- Recommendations
  - Suggested having more law enforcement services and suggesting a fee increase but at a lower rate.
- Support
  - Supportive of proposed fee increase with specific input on improvement of toilet facilities.



# Government Organization Responses

- Mohave County Board of Supervisors
  - Commented that BLM should improve fee compliance prior to raising fees due to business plan acknowledgement of low fee compliance.



# Summary

Business plan proposes modifications to existing fees, and one new proposed fee site. Proposed fees are in line with comparable fair market analysis.

- Standard Amenity Day Use Fees:
  - Shoreline Sites would increase from \$10 to \$20
  - Bullfrog Day Use Fees would increase from \$5 to \$10
- Site-Specific Pass:
  - Shoreline Sites Annual Pass would increase from \$100 to \$200, in line with three other providers issuing similar passes.
- Expanded Amenity Fees Overnight Individual Campsite:
  - Shoreline Sites Overnight Use would increase from \$10 to \$20
  - Crossroads Campground non-electric would increase from \$5 to \$20, and electric would be \$40.
  - Proposed new Quail Hollow Campground non-electric would be \$20 and electric would be \$40.



# Summary

- Benefits from the fee increases would include:
  - Continued regular/annual maintenance at the same or better level as currently occurs
  - Reduction in deferred maintenance expenses
  - Completion of project that enhance the visitor's experience
  - Less potential for environmental impacts from unaddressed issues
- Proposed Quail Hollow Campground and electric site at Crossroads Campground are aligned with other sites in the area and would provide an additional recreation opportunity to better serve the influx of winter visitors to the area.
- The BLM's Colorado River District appreciates the RAC's time and would like to request RAC recommendation to implement the proposed LHFO Amenity Fee Site Business Plan.



# Questions?

