



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

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Business Plan

El Centro Field Office

December 2024



Prepared by: El Centro Field Office

Mission statement

The Bureau of Land Management sustains the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Cover Photo

Photo Collage of Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area- Dunes Landscape, rider operating dirt bike on sand dunes, kids playing in camp, and rider operating ATV on sand dunes. BLM Photo.

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BLM Signatory Page

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1. Executive Summary

This business plan was prepared pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) of 2004, (P.L. 108-447) and BLM recreation fee program policy. It establishes future management goals and priorities for the El Centro Field Office's recreation fee program in the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA). This business plan outlines an Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) fee increase within ISDRA fee-area identified in the ISDRA Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP). The proposed fee increase would take effect October 1, 2025.

This document presents historical visitation and revenue data, provides a fair market value analysis and shows the need to increase fee revenue to pay for operating costs. Consistent with FLREA, the intent of this business plan is not to maximize fee revenue but to help protect natural resources, provide for public health and safety, and facilitate access to public lands and related waters. Fees are a way of ensuring that those who actively use recreation opportunities make a greater, but reasonable, contribution toward protecting and enhancing those opportunities than those who do not utilize recreational opportunities.

Background:

The El Centro Field Office includes active management of the ISRP within the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA). The ISDRA established an Individual Special Recreation Permit program to help cover the operational expenditures, enhance recreational opportunities, and increase services and amenities provided in the ISDRA.

When implemented the individual special recreation permit (ISRP) was levied on a per-primary-vehicle basis and charged either weekly at \$25 with an off-site purchase or \$40 with an on-site purchase, or seasonally at \$90 for an off-site purchase or \$120 for an on-site purchase.

The differential between on-site and off-site sales is an incentive for visitors to purchase permits prior to arrival in the ISDRA. This allows for increased customer service (i.e., wider availability of permits) and reduces the dependency on BLM staff or contractors on-site. In addition, off-site permit sales reduce traffic build-up at key ISDRA access points and caused by visitors purchasing permits during periods of peak visitation.

Historically, these fees have been collected by a contracted organization. As such, fee revenue is considered to be the gross collected minus the cost of collection.

In 2013, in order to continue to maintain the recreational opportunities and experiences within the ISDRA, the BLM increased fees to their current levels of \$35 with an off-site purchase or \$50 with an on-site purchase for weekly permits, or seasonally at \$150 both on and off-site.

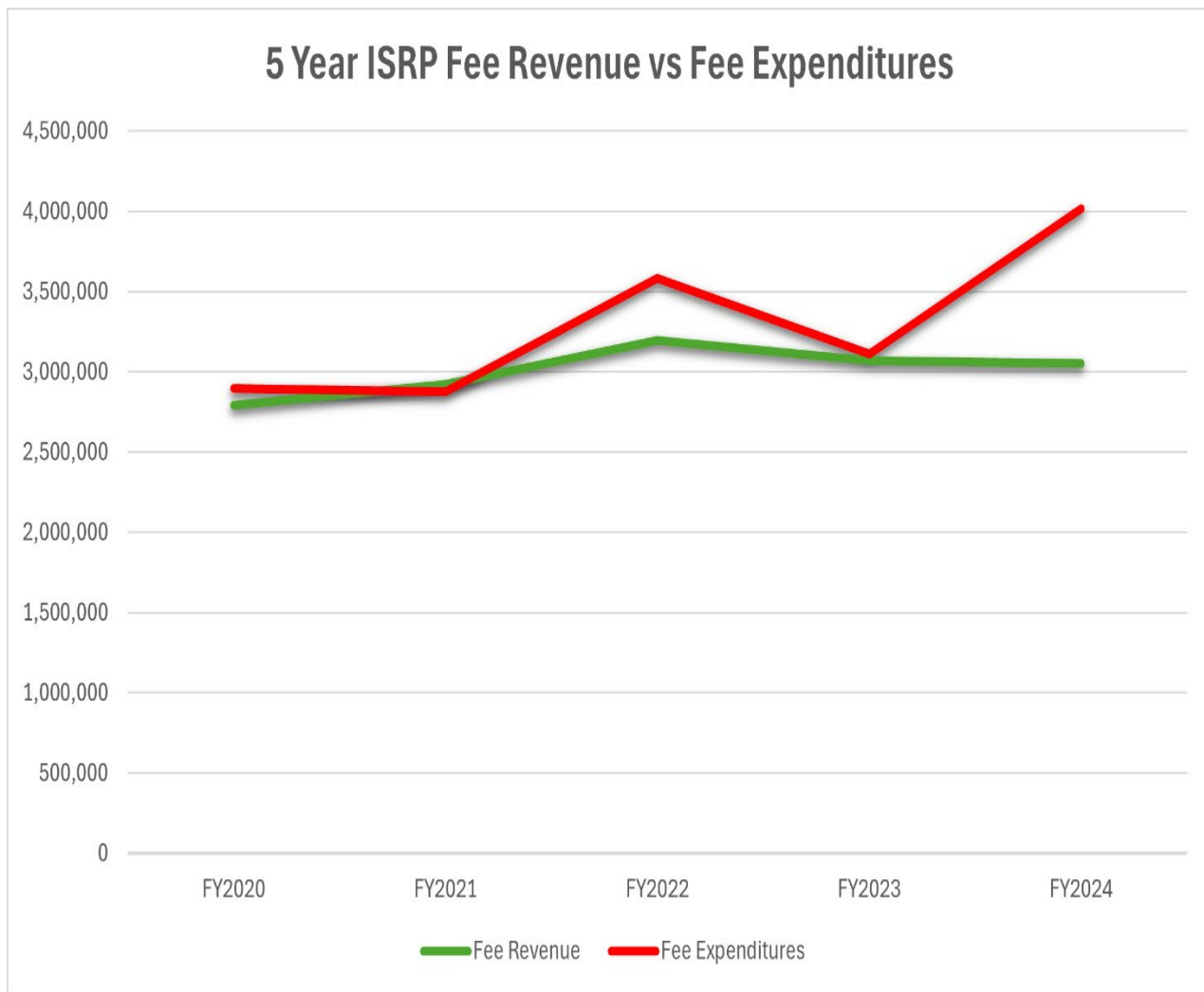
The 2013 ISDRA Business Plan had an option to increase fees by \$5 for weekly permits and \$15 for season permits in 2016, halfway through the life cycle of the business plan, however, BLM elected to not increase fees at that time. That decision to not increase ISRP fees in 2016 was due the conditions of the economy at the time, and operational costs expended by the fee program remained below the ISRP Fee Revenues generated.

ISRP Fee revenues have been the main source of funding used to provide services in the ISDRA. These services include Emergency Medical Services and Search and Rescue, Law Enforcement, Trash collection and removal, facilities maintenance of ranger stations and vault toilets, sand removal from access roads and camping pads, and pumping of vault toilets annually. Since 2017 visitation to the ISDRA has been increasing annually, along with

increases in the costs of goods and services from the rise in Consumer Price Index (CPI) and increases in inflation, and as a result the ISDRA ISRP fee revenues no longer cover the majority of the costs to provide these essential services. In order to continue to provide the high level of customer service, and continue to provide essential services, an Increase to ISDRA ISRP Fees is needed.

Since 2020, operational costs for maintaining the ISDRA have risen significantly. Key factors include higher visitation levels and increased prices for goods and services driven by inflation. Due to the operational costs increasing the expenditures to ISRP Fees have broken even with or exceeded the ISRP Fee revenues over the last few years. In order to continue to provide essential services, increase customer service, and continue to enhance recreational opportunities in the future, ECFO is proposing to increase the ISDRA ISRP fees effective October 1, 2025

Graph 1: 5 Year ISRP Fee Revenue vs. Fee Expenditures



Graph, 5 Year ISRP Fee Revenue vs. Fee Expenditures

Table 1: Proposed Fee Increase to take effect October 1, 2025

ISRP type	Current Fee Structure	Proposed Fee Structure
Off-Site Weekly ISRP	\$35 per primary vehicle per week off-site.	\$55 per primary vehicle per week.
On-Site Weekly ISRP	\$50 per primary vehicle per week on-site.	\$70 per primary vehicle per week
Season ISRP (Sticker)	\$150 per primary vehicle per season.	\$185 per primary vehicle per season.

Note: The BLM Fiscal Year (FY) begins October 1st and ends September 30th each year.

All proposed fees are based on a fair market analysis of fees charged by other public agencies and private providers for similar services within the respective geographic area of each recreation site. More information on the fair market analysis, and a list of comparable sites (Table 6) can be found on page 23. The proposed fee increases have taken into consideration the increases in inflation and the 31% increase in Consumer Price Index since 2013. It is worth noting, that on average off-site weekly permit sales account for 84% percent of all permits sold.

Table 2: Second Proposed Fee Increase beginning October 1, 2028

ISRP Type	Fee Structure FY	Proposed – Fee Structure Increase after 3 years if necessary
Off-Site Weekly ISRP	\$55 per primary vehicle per week off-site.	\$65 per primary vehicle per week off-site.
On-Site Weekly ISRP	\$70 per primary vehicle per week on-site.	\$80 per primary vehicle per week on-site.
Season ISRP (Sticker)	\$185 per primary vehicle per season.	\$200 per primary vehicle

The proposed fees would be reviewed and adjusted if needed by the Authorized Officer every three years. Fee decisions would be based on multiple factors including the visitation numbers, the cost to government of operating, maintaining, and improving the recreation area, and the impacts of dispersed camping on the cultural and natural resource values of surrounding public lands. Fee increases are necessary to better meet the expenses of the recreation program, including maintenance and operations to prevent resource damage and provide better visitor services. Every three years ECFO will conduct a comprehensive review to evaluate ISDRA visitation and visitor use trends, ISRP Fee revenues, and expenditures of ISRP Fees for operational costs and site improvements, and evaluation of economic conditions including inflation and the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Evaluation of these factors would be used in the determination if additional fee increases will be needed in order to continue and improve upon the services provided in the future.

ISDRA visitation trends and visitor use patterns. Review of visitation and visitor use patterns would determine if visitation trends were increasing, stabilizing, or decreasing. Historically increases in visitation has directly correlated to an increase in the use of services, or increased frequency of maintenance actions such as vault toilet pumping or trash collection thus resulting in increased annual operations costs. In contrast, a decrease in visitation and visitor use trends would result in the opposite. In addition, annual ISDRA ISRP Fee revenues and expenditure reports will be reviewed to see if expenditures to the fee account for operational costs and site improvements are remaining below the revenues. If expenditures are trending towards breaking even or exceeding the fee revenues, it may trigger the need for additional incremental ISRP fee increases to be implemented. The third factor would be based on the evaluation of economic conditions. Inflation and CPI increases have contributed to increased costs for goods and services and have directly resulted in increased operational costs, so if CPI and or inflation increases, it may be necessary to increase ISRP fees.

2. Introduction

2.1 Fee and Business Plan Requirement

This business plan outlines direction for the operation and maintenance of the Bureau of Land Management, El Centro Field Office ISDRA, Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) program. The plan conforms to state and national direction for recreation management and is built on partnerships with local communities. This plan was prepared pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) of December 2004 (P.L. 108-447, as amended and codified at 16 United States Code (U.S.C.) Chapter 87), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recreation fee program policy and manual (Manual 2930-Recreation Permits and Fees) and handbook (H-2930-1 Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook).

2.2 Regulatory Background

This business plan has been prepared to meet the criteria defined in the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-447; Title VIII, Section 801; 16 U.S.C. 6801–6814). The authorities and regulations for this business plan are:

- **The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976** (Public Law 94-579; 43 U.S.C. 1701–1787), contains BLM’s general land use management authority over the public lands, and establishes outdoor recreation as one of the principal uses of those lands. Section 302 (b) of FLPMA directs the Secretary of the Interior to regulate through permits or other instruments the use of the public lands. Section 303 of FLPMA contains BLM’s authority to enforce the regulations and impose penalties.
- **The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) of 2004** repealed applicable portions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and replaced BLM’s authority to collect recreation fees. This current law authorizes BLM to collect recreation fees at sites that meet certain requirements, allows BLM to keep the fee revenues at the local offices where they were collected, and directs how BLM will manage and utilize these revenues. FLREA also established the America the Beautiful – The National Parks and Federal Recreational Pass Program.
- **Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 2930 (43 CFR 2930) Permits for Recreation on Public Lands** contains the regulations governing BLM’s recreation permitting program.

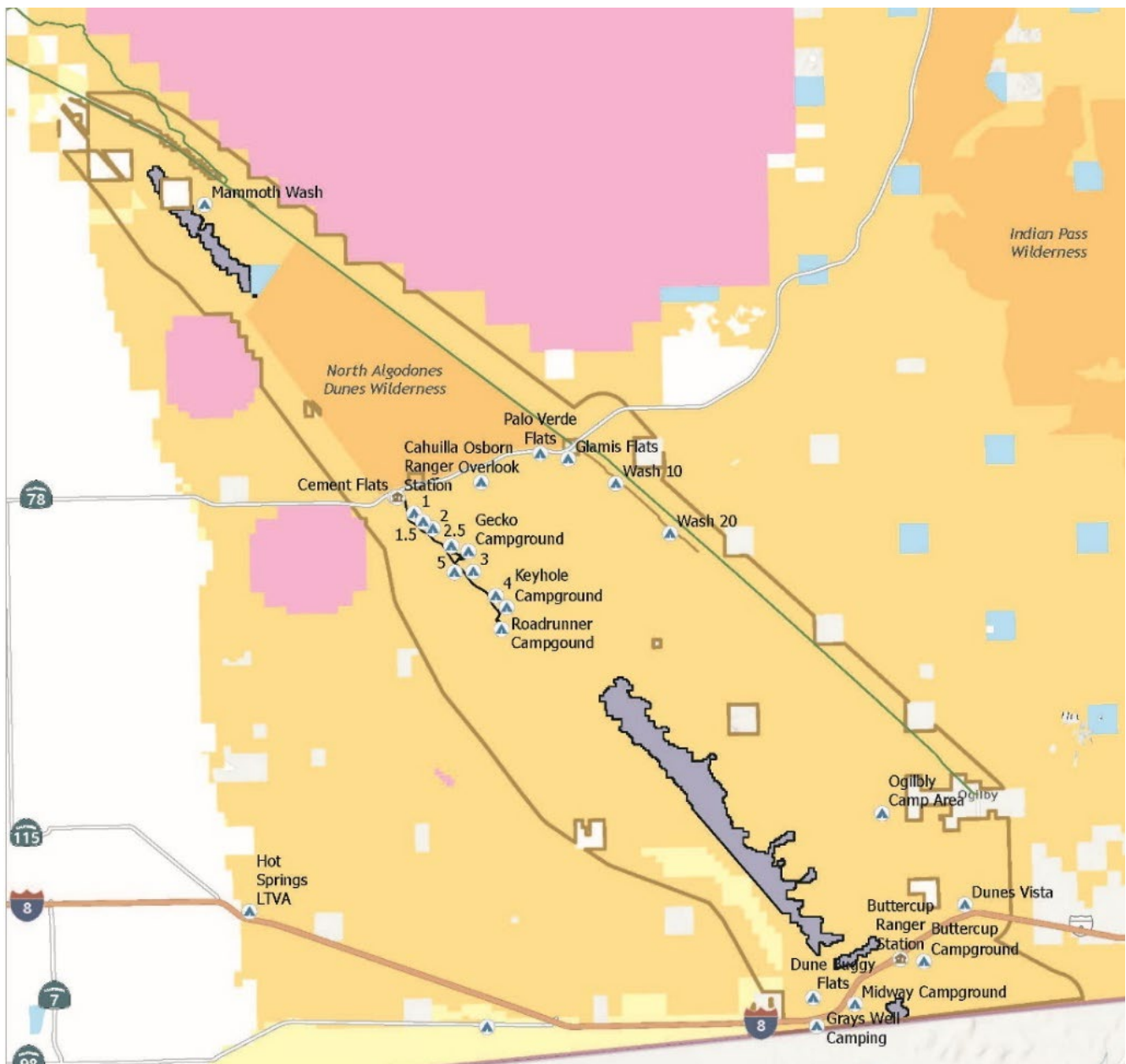
This business plan has also been prepared pursuant to all applicable BLM recreation fee program policies and guidance, including:

- BLM Manual 2930, *Recreation Permits and Fees*, Rel. 2-296 dated October 22, 2007
- BLM Handbook 2930-1, *Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook*, Rel. 2-300 dated November 17, 2014

The BLM strives to manage recreation and visitor services to serve the diverse visitor outdoor recreation demands while helping to maintain sustainable setting conditions needed to conserve the public lands, so the visitors' desired recreation choices remain available. The BLM's goals for delivering recreation benefits from BLM-administered lands and waters to the American people and their communities are to:

- Improve access to appropriate recreation opportunities,
- Ensure a quality experience and enjoyment of natural and cultural resources, and
- Provide for and receive fair value in recreation.

Map 1: Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area



Map, Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area

3. Background

3.1 Area Description

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA)

The ISDRA is considered a premier destination for off highway vehicle recreation, and offers a world-class, multigenerational family oriented, OHV experience. The ISDRA represents one of the most popular OHV areas in the United States. It is well-known to Southern California residents and the thousands who visit each year from the southwest and beyond. The ISDRA is the most heavily and intensively visited OHV-recreation area on public lands managed by the BLM with more than 1.2 million OHV-related visits each year. The ISDRA receives visitation year-round however, the most visits to the ISDRA occur on weekends between the months of October and May each year. During these months the ISDRA receives on average between 20,000 to 40,000 visitors per week with peak visitation occurring around the holiday weekends of Halloween, Thanksgiving, New Years and Presidents Day. During these times the ISDRA receives between 80,000 to 130,000 visits per holiday weekend with Thanksgiving historically being the busiest holiday weekend of the year with almost 200,000 visitors.

In addition, the ISDRA is recognized for its frequent use as a backdrop for commercials and movies because of its unique beauty and landscape. Furthermore, the area is also recognized for providing unique habitat for several endemic and sensitive plant, insect, and animal species. The overwhelming popularity and regional importance of the ISDRA to visitors, recreational enthusiasts, and others require careful management to protect its recreational, natural, and cultural resources. The ISDRA is located in eastern Imperial County, California. The area is almost entirely made-up of inland sand dunes oriented in a northwest to southeast direction. This dune system is the largest in California, stretching from Niland, CA, in the north for more than forty miles southeast to the US- Mexico border near Winterhaven, CA and at its widest is approximately five miles across. The fee area, containing approximately 214,930 acres of public lands, is bisected by two major roads: Interstate 8 (I-8) in the southern portion of the ISDRA and State Highway 78 northern portion of the ISDRA, which provide the primary access points to the area.

The ISDRA Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) (approximately 164,000 acres) itself is bounded by the Coachella Canal to the west and the Union Pacific Railroad to the east. The current fee area considered for fee increase is not changing. It extends for a mile around this boundary, encompassing an additional 50,722 acres of public lands. This larger fee area was created to avoid changing user visitation patterns i.e., maintain the normal geographic distribution of visitors – essentially having users camp outside the area in order to avoid fees (Casey, 2003). The fee area– is therefore the entire SRMA and the one-mile fee boundary around the SRMA. For the purposes of this Business Plan, the fee area is referred to as the ISDRA unless otherwise specified.

The area contains six distinct geographic areas of visitation, with the most intensive visitation occurring from State Highway 78 south to the Mexican border. The areas, moving north to south, are as follows; Mammoth Wash, Glamis, Gecko Road, Ogilby, Gordons Well (Dunebuggy Flats), and Grays Well (Buttercup). In addition to the areas with notable visitation, the ISDRA also includes the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness established by the 1994 California Desert Protection Act. Facilities in the aforementioned areas vary greatly from none to paved roads, groomed camping pads, and vault toilets. Visitors to all areas can, however, use these

facilities as they travel throughout the dunes. Furthermore, all areas are visited by, and have access to, visitor services personnel, emergency medical staff, and law enforcement.

The following two lists summarize the facilities and services provided within the ISDRA. The policy and planning direction that has led to the construction of these facilities and establishment of these services is described in detail in Overarching Management Guidance. Facilities provided in the ISDRA can be summarized as:

- Nearly 80 acres of groomed camping pads, vending pads, and trash collection areas.
- 61 vault toilets.
- More than 17 miles of maintained routes.
- A bridge over the All-American Canal connecting portions of the ISDRA.
- Numerous visitor information signs and interpretive kiosks.
- Sensitive resource protection fencing and signage.
- Communication infrastructure.
- Two permanent ranger stations, including parking areas and one temporary visitation-contact station used on holiday weekends.
- A watchable wildlife area and wilderness access point.
- A scenic overlook.

Services provided in, and for, the ISDRA recreation include, but are not limited to:

- Law enforcement presence to protect resources and provide for visitor and staff health and safety.
- Visitor service staff trained to conduct search and rescue efforts and provide emergency medical services.
- Visitor services staff to provide area information and conduct interpretive programs – including maintaining an ISDRA specific website.
 - Sanitation services, including vault-toilet pumping and cleaning, as well as trash collection and removal.
 - Natural and cultural resource monitoring, inventory, and protection work.
 - Administrative services to manage ISDRA vendors.
 - Administrative services to provide overall management, direction, and supervision of the ISDRA program.

3.2 Visitor Demographics

The El Centro Field Office does not collect or maintain comprehensive visitor demographic information for recreational users across the public lands it administers. In 2017, ECFO conducted a visitor satisfaction survey, and in the results of the survey it was found that 62 percent of visitors to the ISDRA were California residents, 29 percent were residents of Arizona, and 9 percent of visitors were from other states. The majority of visitors to the ISDRA visited from the counties of Riverside, San Diego, San Bernadino, Los Angeles, Orange, and Imperial. San Diego and Riverside counties represented the highest percentage of visitors, with 26 percent of visitors from Riverside County and 24 percent of visitors from San Diego County. Imperial County had the lowest percentage of visitors to the ISDRA at 6 percent of surveyed visitors from the local county.

Imperial County. According to the United States Census Bureau the population of Imperial County in 2020 was 179,702 with a median household income of \$57,310.

San Diego County. According to the United States Census Bureau the population of San Diego County in 2020 was 3,298,634 with a median household income of \$98,928.

Riverside County. According to the United States Census Bureau the population of Riverside County in 2020 was 2,418,185 with a median household income of \$86,748.

Orange County. According to the United States Census Bureau the population of Orange County in 2020 was 3,186,989 with a median household income of \$106,209.

San Bernadino County. According to the United States Census Bureau the population of San Bernadino County in 2020 was 2,181,654 with a median household income of \$79,091.

Los Angeles County. According to the United States Census Bureau the population of Los Angeles County in 2020 was 10,014,009 and a median household income of \$82,516.

3.3. Recreational Visitation

Visitation at the ISDRA primarily includes OHV riding, family get-togethers, and people seeking the leisure and relaxation offered by camping. Other recreational opportunities exist, including scenic appreciation, wilderness recreation, and cultural resource viewing. The ISDRA is generally visited October through May with concentrated use around the four major holidays of Halloween, Thanksgiving, New Year's, and Presidents' Day weekends. Most campers stay for one to three nights; however, there is a small percentage of users that will stay for one to two weeks. Visitation also comes from the local and often underserved communities.

3.4. Season of Use

Most visitation at the ISDRA occurs between October and May. Visitation is largely dependent on seasonal factors. Weather is the largest factor each season that affects visitation, most visits occur when temperatures are below 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and historically these more favorable conditions occur between the Fall and late Spring seasons. Visitation differs by season and day of the week, but weekly visitation is generally observed to be low mid week, and high on the weekends during the peak months. Visitation to the ISDRA always fills on popular weekends, such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, New Year's, and Presidents' Day. Historically, visitors to the ISDRA spend between 2- 3 nights per visit. The majority of visitors come and go near the weekends with most visits occurring between Friday through Monday.

3.5. Operating Costs

The El Centro Field Office expends substantial resources in managing visitor use at developed recreation sites. All sites require and benefit from staff presence and visitor contacts, signage, interpretive opportunities, cleaning, trash pick-up, maintenance, emergency medical and rescue services, and Law Enforcement. Direct costs for these services are primarily BLM employees' labor. Costs also include services contracts such as vault toilet pumping, garbage collection sites fee collection contract, vehicles, law enforcement, signage, maintenance supplies, brochures and other interpretive materials, and single use medical supplies and rescue equipment. BLM Staff labor rates have increased significantly since the last ISDRA business plan was written. Since 2014 GS Base Pay and Locality Pay for employees has increased annually, and in total has resulted in a 57% percent increase in BLM Staff labor costs since the 2013 business plan was implemented. Direct costs have continually increased since 2014. Inflation has increased at an average rate of 3% per year since 2014, and the Consumer Price Index has risen 31% percent since 2013. The increases from inflation have also contributed to increased operational costs with increases in the cost of fuel for LE patrol, rescue, maintenance, and off highway vehicles, consumable field supplies such as medical and rescue and equipment, restroom supplies such as toilet paper and cleaning/ sanitizing chemicals, paint, construction materials, and many other supplies and equipment used.

Inflation has led to higher operating costs for service contracts, including garbage collection and disposal, as well as septic pumping for the 61 vault toilets spread across the ISDRA..

3.6 Annual Operating Costs of Recreation Sites

The greatest operating expenses are related to staff labor, for visitor services, law enforcement, and maintenance actions. The second largest operating expense is the fee collection contract at just under \$1 million dollars. Table 2 summarizes the annual operating costs associated with the ISDRA. BLM recreation employees, and contractors ensure the cleanliness and safety of the facilities. These staff are responsible for responding to visitor inquiries, resolving disputes, fee collection, cleaning campsites, infrastructure maintenance, construction of amenities, and road maintenance.

The ISDRA is also patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement Rangers to assist with fee compliance, adherence to law, rules and regulations, protection of natural and cultural resources and BLM facilities, and help ensure the safety of campers.

OHV Park Rangers assigned to visitor services patrol the recreation are providing, maps and information and safe responsible OHV recreations. OHV Park Rangers assigned to BLM El Centro Field Office (ECFO) provide austere emergency medical and search and rescue operations (EMS/SAR) in the ISDRA. OHV Park Rangers are certified as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), or Advanced EMTs, and respond to emergency medical and search and rescue calls and providing basic life support (BLS) and limited advanced life support (LALS) treatment to ISDRA visitors. During each season, OHV Park Rangers respond to an average of 400 calls to service in the ISDRA, and majority of the calls are traumatic injuries, and range from minor cuts, bruises, and broken bones to traumatic amputations of limbs, or major multi-system traumas. Many of these patients have serious and critically life-threatening injuries.

Toilet cleaning, pumping and effluent disposal services are performed by staff and/or specialized contractors certified to address hazardous wastes. The cost of cleaning and maintaining the recreation area also includes buying toilet paper, garbage bags, cleaning supplies, paint, and solar lighting kits for vault toilets. The program also supports the cost for government vehicles and equipment used to support patrols, maintenance work, resource and visitor use monitoring.

Large projects involving visitor center design, construction, and road maintenance are supported by engineering staff or contractors as needed. Other annual operating costs include monitoring of visitor use, contract procurement and administration, public affairs, GIS mapping, and support functions such as providing information services to the public from the front desk of the Field Office and two visitor centers located at Cahuilla and Buttercup Ranger Stations.

Since 2020, the operational costs to provide these services and maintain the ISDRA has increased significantly due to the factors stated above. Due to the operational costs increasing the expenditures to ISRP Fees have broken even with or exceeded the ISRP Fee revenues over the last few years. In order to continue to provide essential services, increase customer service, and continue to enhance recreational opportunities in the future, ECFO would need to increase the ISDRA ISRP fees. The detailed tables below in Table 3 (pages 14 – 18), outline the annual operational expenditures to ISDRA ISRP fees from 2020 to 2024.

Table 3: Annual Operating Costs for the ISDRA

FY20 Expenditures	
<i>Maintenance</i> - Incudes staff labor, trash collection contract, vault toilet pumping contract, vault toilet maintenance, vehicles and heavy equipment, road maintenance (Gecko Rd, Wash Rd, Osborne Overlook, and Glamis Flats ramp.), camping pad grading, and sand removal from roads and camping areas.	\$637,774
<i>Visitor Services</i> - Includes Staff labor for OHV Park Rangers and Outdoor Recreation Planners, Emergency Medical / Rescue Services, supplies and equipment, dispatch, travel costs for holiday assistance, vehicles, education and outreach, and maps.	\$850,419
<i>Law Enforcement</i> - Includes Law enforcement staff labor, vehicles, equipment, and travel costs for holiday assistance.	\$674,705
Fee Program Management Includes Management and labor for permit program, fee permit contract including on and off-site sales, website management, permit printing, mailing, and vendor management.	\$724,946
<i>Overhead</i> - Includes staff labor, training, and travel costs.	\$9,354
Total Recreation Fee Expenditures for FY20	\$2,897,198
FY20 Revenue from ISRP Sales	\$2,790,580

FY21 Expenditures	
<i>Maintenance</i> - Incudes staff labor, trash collection contract, vault toilet pumping contract, vault toilet maintenance, vehicles and heavy equipment, road maintenance (Gecko Rd, Wash Rd, Osborne Overlook, and Glamis Flats ramp.), camping pad grading, and sand removal from roads and camping areas.	\$763,883
Visitor Services Includes Staff labor for OHV Park Rangers and Outdoor Recreation Planners, Emergency Medical / Rescue Services, supplies and equipment, dispatch, travel costs for holiday assistance, vehicles, education and outreach, and maps.	\$543,782
Law Enforcement- Includes Law enforcement staff labor, vehicles, equipment, and travel costs for holiday assistance.	\$721,151
Fee Program Management Includes Management and labor for permit program, fee permit contract including on and off-site sales, website management, permit printing, mailing, and vendor management.	\$839,252
Overhead- Includes staff labor, training, and travel costs.	\$7,177
Total Recreation Fee Expenditures for FY21	\$2,875,245
FY21 Revenue from <i>ISRP Sales</i>	\$2,919,6267

FY22 Expenditures	
Maintenance- Incudes staff labor, trash collection contract, vault toilet pumping contract, vault toilet maintenance, vehicles and heavy equipment, road maintenance (Gecko Rd, Wash Rd, Osborne Overlook, and Glamis Flats ramp.), camping pad grading, and sand removal from roads and camping areas.	\$856,000
Visitor Services- Includes Staff labor for OHV Park Rangers and Outdoor Recreation Planners, Emergency Medical / Rescue Services, supplies and equipment, dispatch, travel costs for holiday assistance, vehicles, education and outreach, and maps.	\$746,000
Law Enforcement- Includes Law enforcement staff labor, vehicles, equipment, and travel costs for holiday assistance.	\$995,000
Fee Program Management Includes Management and labor for permit program, fee permit contract including on and off-site sales, website management, permit printing, mailing, and vendor management.	\$975,000
Overhead- Overhead- Overhead staff labor, training, and travel costs.	\$10,000
Total Recreation Fee Expenditures for FY22	\$3,582,000
FY22 Fee Revenue from ISRP Sales	\$3,194,817

FY23 Expenditures	
Maintenance- Incudes staff labor, trash collection contract, vault toilet pumping contract, vault toilet maintenance, vehicles and heavy equipment, road maintenance (Gecko Rd, Wash Rd, Osborne Overlook, and Glamis Flats ramp.), camping pad grading, and sand removal from roads and camping areas.	\$588,000
Visitor Services- Includes Staff labor for OHV Park Rangers and Outdoor Recreation Planners, Emergency Medical / Rescue Services, supplies and equipment, dispatch, travel costs for holiday assistance, vehicles, education and outreach, and maps.	\$617,000
Law Enforcement- Includes Law enforcement staff labor, vehicles, equipment, and travel costs for holiday assistance.	\$1,175,000
Fee Program Management Includes Management and labor for permit program, fee permit contract including on and off-site sales, website management, permit printing, mailing, and vendor management.	\$719,000
Overhead- Overhead staff labor, training, and travel costs.	\$10,000
Total Recreation Fee Expenditures for FY23	\$3,110,000
FY23 Fee Revenue from ISRP Sales	\$3,054,132

FY24 Planned Expenditures	
Maintenance- Includes staff labor, trash collection contract, vault toilet pumping contract, vault toilet maintenance, vehicles and heavy equipment, road maintenance (Gecko Rd, Wash Rd, Osborne Overlook, and Glamis Flats ramp.), camping pad grading, and sand removal from roads and camping areas. * Cahuilla Ranger Station Construction- \$1.22 million obligated towards construction project.	\$1,600,000.00
Visitor Services- Includes Staff labor for OHV Park Rangers and Outdoor Recreation Planners, Emergency Medical / Rescue Services, supplies and equipment, dispatch, travel costs for holiday assistance, vehicles, education and outreach, and maps.	\$900,000.00
Law Enforcement- Includes staff labor, vehicles, equipment, and travel costs for holiday assistance.	\$1,500,000.00
Overhead	\$16,000
Total Recreation Fee Expenditures for FY24	\$4,016,000
FY24 Fee Revenue from ISRP Sales	\$3,054,132

3.7 Recreation Use & Fee Revenues

As previously stated, some form of recreational-use fee has been in place for the ISDRA for more than 20 years. Over that time, revenue from the fee program has constituted the majority of funds used for operations. Fee revenue itself is a factor of three things: the amount of the individual fee, the level of visitation, and the rate of compliance. A drop in any of these three items results in a decrease in fee revenue. The fee revenue collected has supported all business lines to some degree, however, the greatest expenditure has been to Law Enforcement, EMS, Visitor Services, and Maintenance and Operations – the latter being the business line that has operated below optimum levels when fee revenue or other funding has declined.

Table 4 shows sales of weekly and season ISRPs and annual revenue from these sales for the past 5 years (FY 2020 through FY 2024) for the ISDRA. Fees collected show fluctuations in visitation, with an annual average revenue collected \$3,005,668

Table 4: Five Year Sales for ISRPs

FY Year	On - Site Weekly ISRPs Sold	Off- Site Weekly ISRPs Sold	Season ISRPs Sold	Annual Revenue
2020	2,647	52,625	6,321	\$2,789,788
2021	3,764	57,682	5,699	\$2,919,627
2022	3,433	54,720	8,446	\$3,194,817
2023	4,094	53,263	7,619	\$3,069,183
2024	3,578	55,923	7,103	\$3,054,132

Fee compliance fluctuates largely based on BLM recreation and law enforcement staff presence, but from 2018-2024 on average 86 percent of visitors were compliant with purchasing and properly displaying ISRP permits.

Recreation staff and law enforcement all play a role in recreation fee site compliance. BLM staff directly interface with visitors to ensure visitors clearly understand payment requirements and procedures. Weekly ISRPs must be displayed hung from rearview mirror, and Season ISRPs must be displayed on the exterior driver's side corner of windshield. If the permit will be hidden due to a windshield cover, then the season permit can be adhered to the exterior side window directly behind the RV driver. There is a consistent presence at recreation fee sites by BLM personnel, and compliance issues are addressed through recreation staff or law enforcement rangers as appropriate.

To continue to improve ISRP permit compliance, and combat compliance issues such as the transfer of permits from one primary vehicle to another while in the ISDRA, non authorized resale of ISRPs, and sales of counterfeit ISRP permits, ECFO law enforcement is proposing a requirement that the ISRP's be registered to the primary vehicle. This would require the ISRP purchaser to enter their primary vehicle's license plate information including the license number and issuing state along with ISRP permit serial number into an online database for ISRP to be valid.

The highest recorded compliance was in FY2019 at 95 percent, and the lowest recorded compliance was in FY 2021 at 77 percent. The lower permit compliance can be contributed to impacts from the COVID-19 Pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted recreational visitation in 2020 and 2021. California State Parks OHV Areas, and other California State Recreation sites remained closed during COVID-19 which led to a significant increase in visitation in those years due to increased demand by people looking to recreate outdoors. Along with an increase in visitation, visitor services EMS staff saw a significant increase in emergency medical and rescue calls. During FY 2021 the ISDRA saw a 21 percent increase in annual visitation, and with the increase in visitation emergency medical and rescue call for service increased 42 percent compared to the previous fiscal year. Permit compliance decreased in FY2021 because of an increase in new visitors to the ISDRA, and law enforcement and visitor services staff not making regular public contacts to mitigate BLM Staff risk of exposure to COVID-19. Also, during the 2020 summer season, the National Forest closed all public access to forests throughout California because of extreme wildfires in California. This put an unusually high demand on BLM campgrounds which remained open such as the ISDRA.

3.8 Identification of Fee Program Goals

The BLM El Centro Field Office has identified the need for visitor use recreation fees to contribute more equitably to the cost of providing recreational opportunities in ISDRA and day-use area facilities and services to the recreating public. In review of the average operating costs for fee sites, recreational users currently contribute to 56% of the operating costs based off of a historic 5.5-million-dollar annual operating budget. If the El Centro Field Office received the average number of permit sales based of the last 5 years of sales, we can estimate the initial proposed fees would cover approximately 83% of the annual operating costs. The additional revenues generated from the proposed fee increase would allow for El Centro Field Office to continue to provide and improve essential services, increase customer service and visitor satisfaction, and continue to enhance recreational opportunities in the future.

4. Fee Proposal

Visitor fees continue to provide an important revenue steam for the management and maintenance of opportunities and experiences provided within the ISDRA. It is deemed appropriate (BLM H2930-1 Chapter 1 Section II Fees A.1) that those visitors specifically benefiting from these opportunities contribute above and beyond that of a non-benefiting member of the public (i.e., a taxpayer and/or California OHV registrant who does not use the ISDRA).

4.1 Proposed Fees

The ISRP will continue to be levied on primary vehicles i.e., those street-legal vehicles primarily used for transportation to the ISDRA. Permits would be required between October 1st and April 15th annually. Permit-free days would be consistent with those authorized by the President, the Secretary of the Interior, the BLM Director, California State Director, and the El Centro Authorized Officer.

No permit would be needed for short-term visitation (Day Use) at the following locations: Osborne Overlook, Plank Road Cultural Resource Site, Buttercup Ranger Station, or the Watchable Wildlife Area.

The adjusted fee for the Individual Special Recreation Permit ISRP effective October 1, 2025, would be:

- \$55 per seven-day period (week) when purchased off-site. Per primary vehicle
- \$70 per seven-day period (week) when purchased on-site. Per primary vehicle
- \$185 per season. The season permit will continue to remain as a sticker. Per primary vehicle

The differential between on-site and off-site sales is an incentive for visitors to purchase permits prior to arrival in the ISDRA. This allows for increased customer service (i.e., wider availability of permits) and reduces the dependency on BLM staff or contractors on-site. In addition, off-site permit sales reduce traffic build-up at key ISDRA access points and caused by visitors purchasing permits during periods of peak visitation.

The El Centro Field Office will continue to use one official online (website) sales outlet for its online sales, have approved retail locations for off-site ISRP sales, and continue to provide opportunities for on-site sales at the BLM ranger stations, or from approved on-site retail locations.

Knowing that a number of visitors bring multiple primary vehicles, BLM's official off-site sales venue: the website, would afford a discount of \$10 on a second weekly permit. One discounted permit could be purchased for every full-priced permit sold in the same transaction e.g., a visitor purchasing two weekly permits through the website would pay a total of \$100 (one permit for \$55 and one for \$45), or a visitor purchasing 10 weekly permits through the website would pay a total of \$500 (five permits for \$55 and five for \$45). The weekly

permits purchased could be purchased for the same week period, or different weekly periods throughout the season.

To keep permit prices in line with inflation and avoid sharp price increases in the future, the weekly permit prices would increase by \$20 for weekly permits, and \$35 for season permits. The proposed increase for the ISRP Fee Structure would begin October 1, 2025, at the start of Fiscal Year (FY) 2026.

ISRP sales and revenue will be reviewed every 3 years going forward. Future ISRP Fee increases would be \$10 for weekly permits, and \$15 for season permits. Every three years ECFO will conduct a comprehensive review to evaluate ISDRA visitation and visitor use trends, ISRP Fee revenues, and expenditures of ISRP Fees for operational costs and site improvements, and evaluation of economic conditions including inflation and the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Evaluation of these factors would be used in the determination if additional fee increases will be needed in order to continue and improve upon the services provided in the future.

ISDRA visitation trends and visitor use patterns. Review of visitation and visitor use patterns would determine if visitation trends were increasing, stabilizing, or decreasing. Historically increases in visitation has directly correlated to an increase in the use of services, or increased frequency of maintenance actions such as vault toilet pumping or trash collection thus resulting in increased annual operations costs. In contrast, a decrease in visitation and visitor use trends would result in the opposite. In addition, annual ISDRA ISRP Fee revenues and expenditure reports will be reviewed to see if expenditures to the fee account for operational costs and site improvements are remaining below the revenues. If expenditures are trending towards breaking even or exceeding the fee revenues, it may trigger the need for additional incremental ISRP fee increases to be implemented. The third factor would be based on the evaluation of economic conditions. Inflation and CPI increases have contributed to increased costs for goods and services and have directly resulted in increased operational costs, so if CPI and or inflation increases, it may be necessary to increase ISRP fees.

Should the BLM see the need to increase ISRP fees, the fee increases would take effect on October 1st at the beginning of the Fiscal Year as identified in Table 5. The BLM reserves the ability not to implement fee increases should changes in technology or drops in visitation and levels of service dictate that no price increase is needed. The resulting price structure is as follows (Table 5)

Table 5: ISRP Fee Increase Schedule

Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) Fee Increase Schedule			
ISRP Type	October 1, 2025	October 1, 2028	October 1, 2031
Off-Site	\$55	\$65	\$75
On- Site	\$70	\$80	\$90
Season	\$185	\$200	\$215

All proposed fees are based on a fair market analysis of fees charged by other public agencies and private providers for similar services within the respective geographic area of each recreation site. Fee increases are necessary to better meet the expenses of the recreation program, including maintenance and operations to prevent resource damage and provide better visitor services.

There is no proposed change as to how “towed-in” vehicles – whose use is only for cross country travel within the ISDRA – would be managed. Once street-legal towed-in vehicles leave the sand on their own power, they will continue to be required to hold a separate ISRP permit.



ISDRA Dunes landscape picture

4.2 Existing and Proposed Fee Types

All visitors using recreation site amenities are required to obtain an Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP). These permits can be obtained on-line, on site at Cahuilla and Buttercup Ranger Stations, several local businesses and on-site vendors located in the recreation area. The El Centro Field Office will use various e-commerce technologies, as directed in BLM Instruction Memorandum 2022-010, to provide recreation visitors opportunities to find, and pay for ISRPs within the ISDRA.

If the ECFO decides to make additional reservation services or other types of e-commerce options available in the future, for reservation services would be charged in addition to any other standard or expanded amenity fees in accordance with 16 U.S.C. 6802(g)(2)(G). Reservation services fees could range from \$0.50 to \$10.00 depending on the type of service provided. The reservation service fee is subject to contracting requirements and will be adjusted with contract changes or with future updates to the business plan. The traditional ISRP sales model will continue to exist until the field office decides to move ISRP Fee collection in the ISDRA completely to an e-commerce option.

4.3 Fee Calculation

BLM policy provides several items to consider when establishing recreation fee rates: direct cost to the government, level of benefits and services provided, and comparability with fees charged by others in the area. Direct costs consider a fee rate calculated to provide revenue to cover most of the projected annual operating and maintenance costs. Level of benefits and services provided looks at fees that are reasonable and fair based

on the amenities available, and the services provided. Comparability fee calculation method considers a fee rate that is calculated to be comparable with fees charged at similar or comparable federal, state, and local recreation sites. The fee rate analysis in this business plan focuses on the comparability of other fees in the area. An analysis of comparable fees charged by similar state, federal, and local park facilities was completed. To determine whether BLM ISRPs are currently priced at a comparable rate, an assessment of fees at other areas was conducted. The assessment revealed the BLM ISDRA is currently priced well below other areas with similar amenities. With an average 2- 3 nights stay per visit, the proposed fee increases are comparable with other similar or nearby campgrounds or OHV areas.

Table 6: Similar or Nearby Campgrounds and OHV Areas

ISDRA Vicinity	Current Fees	Agency
Dumont Dunes OHV Recreation Area	Seasonal w/ Holiday Weekends \$110, Seasonal for non holiday weekends \$80, Weekly Pass for Non-Holiday \$30. (1 pass per primary vehicle) Proposed Fee Increase to \$35 Weekly.	BLM
Sand Mountain Recreation Area	\$40 Weekly Permit, \$90 Season Permit	BLM
Laguna Campground (Cleveland National Forest, San Diego County)	\$35 per night, \$10 per night for additional vehicle (2 allowed per campsite)	USFS
Burnt Rancheria Campground (Cleveland National Forest, San Diego County)	\$35 per night, \$10 per night for additional vehicle (2 allowed per campsite)	USFS
California State Parks SVRA (State Vehicle Recreation Area)	\$10 per night camping, Weekly Camping rate \$70	California State Parks

4.4 Financial Projection

Financial projections require good-faith assumptions and professional estimates to confidently estimate future conditions with the proposed updates and new fee structure in place. The history of visitation at the ISDRA is known by observation to be full on weekends during the peak months, with weekdays varying from 30-50% occupancy. Annual visitation has fluctuated up and down over the years due to several factors such as the economy, weather conditions, and other factors. ISDRA annual visitation peaked at its highest in FY2007, at 1.45 million visitors and began to decline in FY2008 with the economic recession at a rate of 2 percent per year. The ISDRA reached its lowest level in FY2017 at 803,000 visitors. Since FY2018 Annual ISDRA visitation has steadily trending upward and has averaged approximately 1 million visitors over the last 3 years.

All recreation sites within the ISDRA tend to fluctuate in fee compliance depending on BLM staff presence. By considering observational data, ISRPs visitation data, and the known fluctuations, a financial projection is considered possible only as a rough approximation based of the average of the past 5 years of permit sales. If the El Centro Field Office received the average number of permit sales based of the last 5 years of sales, we can estimate the initial proposed fees would provide about 83 percent of the annual operating costs based of a \$5.5

million-dollar annual budget historically. The tables below show a financial projection with three updated fee increases

Table 7: Fee Increase Projected Revenue

Fee Increase Projected Revenue		
5 Year Average Off Site Weekly 54,843 Permits Sold	5 Year Average On- Site Weekly 3,503 Permits Sold	5 Year Average Season Permit 7,038 Permits Sold
Off- Site Weekly Increased Rate	On- Site Weekly Increased Rate	Season Increased Rate
\$55	\$70	\$185
\$3,016,365.00	\$245,210.00	\$1,301,956.00
Total Estimated Sales with Fee Increase- \$4,988,574.00		
Average Cost of ISDRA Fee Contract \$884,795		
Total Estimated Revenue FY 2026 (Total Sales minus Fee Contract) \$4,103,780		
Estimated additional revenue generated from October 1, 2025, ISRP Fee Increase \$1,098,112		

The financial projections for the initial proposed increased fees, under the current level of fluctuating visitation, reveals that fees could provide an estimated \$1,098,112 in additional annual ISDRA fee revenues per year. The increase in revenue would provide for high quality recreational opportunities and the associated maintenance needs. Improvements to the facilities, expanded recreational opportunities, may increase visitation and revenue, however, it is unknown by how much. Increasing visitation and improving fee compliance would help cover costs related to public recreation and generate revenue for high-quality recreational opportunities and their maintenance. Enhancing facilities and expanding recreational options could increase visitation and revenue, but the precise impact remains uncertain.

4.5. Use of Fees

The historical norm for funding recreational site operations and maintenance is to draw on base appropriated funds and for the field office to supplement that funding with fee revenues collected within the specific field office and OHV Grant Funds. OHV Grant funding from the California Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division also helps to offset operational costs. ECFO Currently applies for annual OHV Grant funding in the following categories: Safety (Emergency Medical Services/ Search and Rescue), Ground Operations, Law Enforcement, and Restoration. It is important to note, while a majority of OHV grant funding received is spent within the ISDRA, these funds are also used outside of the ISDRA in Lark Canyon, Plaster City, Superstition Mountain Areas, and the over 2,300 miles of OHV routes of travel across public lands management by ECFO. Historically, ECFO has received approximately \$1 million dollars in OHV grant funding each year; however, ECFO must apply for OHV Grant funding and compete with other local, state, and federal agencies, or nonprofit organizations every year.

There is no guarantee that ECFO will always be awarded requested OHV grant funds from the California OHMVR Division. Over the last several years OHMVR Division, OHV Grants, have become increasingly more competitive among applicants, and the amount of money available to distribute to OHV Grant Projects has been decreasing. In years when less OHV Grant funding is awarded, or in the event that OHV grant funds are not awarded, ISRP Fee revenue would most likely be used to cover the difference in operational expenditures within the ISDRA.

The projected increased ISRP fee revenues would fund the development and implementation of additional recreational opportunities in the field, such as family orientated OHV safety training (ASI ATV Training, ROHVA, MSI Dirt bike) and interpretive panels and kiosks. Increased ISRP fee revenues will also afford for further develop recreation access and sites for the enjoyment of the recreating public, and would include maintenance and upkeep of BLM Ranger Stations, improvements and maintenance of access roads including Wash Road, Gecko Road, and Grays Well Road. Development of additional ADA compliant camping area sites to expand and provide better recreation access and enhance visitor and recreational experiences of disabled persons.

Table 8: Future Proposed ISDRA Capital and Equipment

Future Proposed ISDRA Capital and Equipment		
Project/Equipment/Other	Replacement Year	Estimated Cost
Osbourne Overlook Day Use Area Improvements	2025	\$10,000
Osborne Overlook Post and Cable Repairs	2025	\$8,000.00
EMS/ Rescue truck offroad and emergency response outfitting	2027-2029	\$100,000
EMS/ Rescue Buggy Replacements	2030	\$400,000
Water Filtration System Buttercup Ranger Station	2028	\$14,5000
Osborne Overlook Pavement Sealing	2027	\$100,000
Gecko/ Greys Road Pavement Sealing	2028	\$1,000,000
Wash Road Dust Abetment	2026	\$150,000
Buttercup Ranger Station HVAC Unit Replacement	2027	\$50,000
Cahuilla Ranger Station Visitor Parking Lot	2028	\$2,000,000

4.6 Impact of Fee Changes

Anticipated Benefits to Updating Recreational Fee Rates:

The proposed fees in this business plan ensure that services may continue at the BLM operated ISDRA. Services for the recreational area include trash removal, basic sanitation, continued emergency medical and

rescue responses, and provision of enforcement for health and safety. The updated fees will additionally allow for improved recreation experience through improved signage, interpretation, and amenities.

Benefits to the Local Economy

The ISDRA is near the communities of El Centro, Brawley, Glamis, Niland, and Yuma, AZ. Therefore, the continued and improved service for recreators in these communities is anticipated to contribute to the overall sustained success of retail outlets, outfitters, lodging, restaurants, youth centers, and additional tourism industry associations.

Benefits to the Environment

The recreation fee program enables the El Centro Field Office to reduce impacts to sites and resources through provision of adequate infrastructure required for continuous visitation and human impacts. Routine law enforcement patrols can go a long way toward reducing vandalism. This helps retain the distinctive natural landscape features and preserve historic sites. Overall, a healthy environment is encouraged through regular staff presence, and the maintenance of routes of travel and camping areas. Taken together, these agency efforts have a positive effect on the soil, and vegetation, health.

Socioeconomic Impacts, Including Low-Income Populations

Socioeconomic impacts are expected to be low for many traveling populations, as the proposed rates are well below the costs of hotels and are less than nearby comparable recreation areas. Rates were considered with reference to the locality, and the new fees reflect a rate that is considered affordable for low-income populations.

Dispersed camping is allowed throughout the ISDRA as long as you have the ISRP. When people seek no-cost options for camping, the BLM staff will educate the inquiring public on responsible recreation and provide locations where free dispersed camping is available.

Environmental Justice

The BLM ISDRA is managed with respect to environmental justice, which is defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” Furthermore, the BLM ISDRA abides by fair treatment as defined by the EPA, where “no group should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies.” In upgrading fees to the minimum for meeting operating costs with select and few amenities, campgrounds are anticipated to serve multiple segments of society with camping opportunities where a sense of health and safety are equally felt, valued, and appreciated, to include within low-income communities. BLM El Centro will expand recreational opportunity through education on principles such as Leave No Trace and information sharing on locations available for dispersed camping. Where feasible and appropriate, Local managers may reward volunteer work with a local or regional recreation pass, Special Area permit, or Interagency Volunteer Recreation Pass.

Additionally, ensuring camping areas meet or exceed accessibility requirements will be a priority, and developing this infrastructure is done with recreational fee dollars. Tourism growth is expected to continue and

in acknowledgement of diversity of visitors, the BLM El Centro will implement additional signage for multiple languages and continue to look for ways to improve access.

Anticipated Impacts of Not Changing Recreation Fee Rates:

The Impact of not changing fee rates would lead to deteriorating conditions of facilities. Maintenance will be needed more frequently than is possible to provide due to lack of funding for contracts or workers.

Impacts to the Local Economy

Visitation to the ISDRA has a major economic impact on both local communities and on those industries related to OHV recreation. Deterioration of facilities and decreased services provided due a shortage of ISRP revenues could have impacts resulting in reducing ISDRA visitation. This would result fewer visitors spending money in the local area while traveling to and from the ISDRA leading to significant impacts to the local community and surrounding areas. Currently vault toilets, and other facilities are cleaned and maintained daily; however, with operational costs exceeding fee revenues, the BLM would have to prioritize funding for essential services and operational expenditures and could result in facilities being cleaned or maintained on a less frequent basis leading to dirtier facilities, and increased deterioration of facilities from less maintenance actions being performed. In the long-term lack of regular maintenance would result in more costly facility maintenance actions as a result of deterioration.

Impacts to the Environment

Over time, it is unknown if multiple recreation opportunities are sustainable when appropriated funding and recreational fees do not meet operating costs. Fees are a way of ensuring that those who actively use recreation opportunities make a greater, but reasonable contribution toward protecting and enhancing those opportunities than those who do not. Impacts to the environment would include hazards to human health due to poor sanitation, impacts to wildlife due to refuse, degradation of ecosystems through human impact, such as unmitigated erosion and the dumping of toxic waste.

Socioeconomic Impacts, Including Low-Income Populations

Where current fees and visitation allow the recreational area to continue to operate within the bounds of health and safety, socioeconomic impacts would be negligible. Any reduction in services would carry socioeconomic impact, especially to low-income populations seeking more modest costs when on vacation.

Environmental Justice

Principles of environmental justice would be upheld regardless of fee rates. Priority in funding services would be given to upholding fair treatment and equitable access. If upholding these principles is no longer feasible across all recreation sites, operating seasons or availability would be curtailed to ensure fair treatment occurs where it is possible to provide recreational opportunities. Providing infrastructure to meet Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) specifications will be prioritized over keeping a campground open when there is low to no visitation and introducing brochures or signage for multiple languages would be considered before investment in recreational programs that enhance leisure for one subset of the population only, for example.

5. Public Outreach

5.1. Public Communication and Marketing Plan

As part of the proposal to modify ISRP fees, the El Centro Field Office will conduct the following outreach to notify the public of its opportunity to review and provide comments during the 30-Day Public Comment Period:

- Post a public notice of the proposed fee changes onsite.
- Distribute a news release to media, partners, OHV interested groups and parties to inform the public of the proposed fee changes and request public input.
- Post the proposed fee changes on the BLM California website and social media including Facebook and X.
- Update fee signs and paper materials to reflect the proposed fee changes, including notice of the fee rate(s), accepted passes, and where the fees are charged.

The BLM El Centro Field Office will present the ISRP fee increase proposal to the Desert Advisory Council (DAC) in order to seek recommendation and approval by the DAC to move forward with implementation of the proposed fee increase. The FLREA mandates the appropriate resource advisory council reviews all BLM recreation fee proposals prior to approval and implementation. Both comments from the public at large and the recommendation from the BLM California DAC will be considered prior to approval of the BLM ISDRA business plan and proposed fee increase implementation.

Gather and document written and oral communication from visitors during routine monitoring of sites in ISDRA.

Outcomes

During the public comment period from October 25, 2024, through November 25, 2025, the El Centro Field Office received a total of 36 Comments from the public. In addition, the American Sand Association conducted a survey at during the Polaris Camp RZR event held November 1- 2, 2024 with 200 responses that was provided to the El Centro Field Office. Of the 200 responses 192 supported increasing ISDRA ISRP Fees. In total from all responses, 85 percent were in support of increasing ISDRA ISRP Fees, 10 percent were not in support of increasing ISDRA ISRP Fees, 1 percent were neutral on the proposed ISDRA fee increase, and 3 percent of comments were not related to the proposed fee increase.

ECFO presented the proposed fee increase to the DAC during the December 7, 2024 DAC meeting. After presenting the proposed fee increase to the DAC, the DAC voted to on the proposed fee increase. All members of the DAC voted in favor of the proposed fee increase.