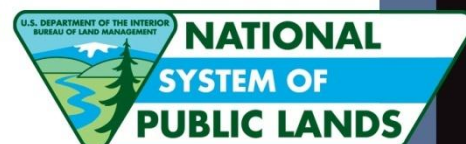


**Draft Business Plan for
Baker Dam Recreation Area
May 2015**



United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
St. George Field Office



Draft Business Plan for Baker Dam Recreation Area

RECOMMENDATIONS, REVIEWS and APPROVALS

Recommended by:

RCNCA Outdoor Recreation Planner

Date

Approved By:

Jimmy Tyree
St. George Field Office Manager

Date

This Business Plan was prepared pursuant to Section 803 (g) of the *Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act* (REA -P.L. 108-447); the *Code of Federal Regulations* at 43 CFR 2930, the BLM Recreation Permits and Fees Manual (MS-2930), the BLM Recreation Permit Administration Handbook (H-2930-1) and BLM Recreation and Visitor Services Program policy, as outlined in Washington Office and Utah State Office Instruction Memoranda and Information Bulletins. This business plan proposes recreation and visitor services goals and priorities for the Baker Dam Recreation Area.

Table of Contents

Section 1 - Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background Information	1
1.3 Legal Authorities.....	2
1.4 Agency Policy and Guidance	3
Section 2 – Recreation Area Description	4
2.1 Location	4
2.2 Environmental Setting.....	4
2.3 Land Management.....	5
2.4 Amenities	6
2.5 Visitation	7
2.6 The Visitor.....	8
Section 3 – Recreation Area Operations	9
3.1 Operating Schedule	9
3.2 Fee Collection and Revenue.....	9
3.3 Operating Costs.....	10
3.4 Estimated Future Operating Costs.....	11
3.5 Fee Revenue Expenditures	12
Section 4 - Proposed Fees	13
4.1 Introduction	13
4.2 Analysis of Current Fees	13
4.3 Proposed Fee Change	15
4.4 Public Benefits of Fee Increase	16
4.5 Economic Impacts of Fee Increase.....	16
Section 5 – Priority Expenditures for Unobligated Balances	19
5.1 Unobligated Balance	19
5.2 Deferred Maintenance and Capital Improvements.....	19
5.3 Other Projects.....	19
Section 6 - Public Outreach	20
References	21

List of Tables

Table 1: Recreation Area Amenities7
Table 2: Visitation.....7
Table 3: Seasonal Visitation8
Table 4: Recreation Area Fee Revenues9
Table 5: Total Average Annual Operating Costs10
Table 6: Average Annual Staffing Costs.....10
Table 7: Average Annual Contractual Costs10
Table 8: Average Annual Equipment, Supplies, and Materials Costs.....11
Table 9: Future Total Average Annual Operating Costs11
Table 10: Annual Fee Account Expenditures.....12
Table 11: Comparison of Developed Recreation Areas and Fees in Washington County14
Table 12: Estimated Fee Revenues for Partial Cost Recovery15
Table 13: Estimated Fee Revenues for Partial Cost Recovery after Fee Increase15

List of Charts

Chart 1: Washington County Employment by Sector16
Chart 2: Visitor Use Data for Baker Dam in 201317
Chart 3: Baker Dam Direct Economic Impacts in 2011.....17
Chart 4: Annual Household Income of Residents in Washington County17

List of Maps

Map 1: Baker Dam Recreation Area Boundary2
Map 2: Baker Dam Recreation Area, Washington County, Utah4

List of Photos

Photo 1: Baker Dam Recreation Area Campsite1
Photo 2: Baker Dam Reservoir BLM-Managed Shoreline1
Photo 3: Baker Dam Recreation Area Environmental Setting.....5
Photo 4: Typical Recreation Area Amenities7
Photo 5: Typical Visitors8
Photo 6: Pay Station with Iron Ranger9

Dear Reader,

I would like to present for your review and comment the draft Business Plan (Business Plan) for the Baker Dam Recreation Area (Recreation Area), a recreation fee site located on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) St. George Field Office in Washington County, UT. The Recreation Area was developed in the 1980s to take advantage of the recreational opportunities of fishing, swimming, and boating afforded by the nearby Baker Dam Reservoir, located 25 miles north of St. George, Utah on State Route 18. Approximately 2,500 visitors annually use the Recreation Area, which offers a wide variety of amenities, including a hiking trail, vault toilets, trash receptacles, designated parking, camping sites, sheltered tables and campfire rings.

In the Draft Business Plan, the St. George Field Office proposes to increase Recreational Use Permit (RUP) fees for the public's use of the Recreation Area. Through the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, BLM is authorized to regulate the use of the public lands through permits; the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act authorizes BLM to collect recreational fees when sites and areas meet specific criteria. The purchase of a RUP includes the use of all facilities located within the special area. Fees at the Recreation Area have not been increased since 1997, when they were first approved under the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program. Operational costs have risen substantially since that time. The proposed fee change would raise the current \$2 day use fee to \$5.00 and the overnight camping fee from \$6 to \$12. Interagency Annual, Access, Senior, Volunteer, and Military passes would continue to be honored for day use fees in the Recreation Area.

The draft Business Plan provides information on how the Recreation Area is managed and how collected fees fund operations, improvements, and repairs. The Business Plan will be available for a 30 day public review and comment period on the proposed fee changes; the comment period ends on XXXX 2014. Comments can be mailed to BLM, Campground Business Plan, 345 E. Riverside Drive, St. George, UT 84790 or emailed to kvoyles@blm.gov (put "Campground Business Plan" in the subject line). If you have questions concerning the Business Plan or the Recreation Area, please contact Kyle Voyles, Outdoor Recreation Planner, at 435-688-3274.

Thank you for your continued interest in your public lands.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Tyree
St. George Field Office Manager

Business Plan for Baker Dam Recreation Area (Recreation Use Permits WBS# LVRD UT260000)

Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This Business Plan (Plan) has been prepared by the St. George Field Office (SGFO) of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to address needed management changes for the Baker Dam Recreation Area (Recreation Area) in Washington County, Utah. The Recreation Area includes a developed campground, day use area, non-motorized trails, and other visitor amenities that satisfy the *Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004 (REA)* requirements for the collection of Expanded Amenity Fees and Standard Amenity Fees. This Plan describes how the Recreation Area is currently managed and how collected fee revenues are used for direct operating and capital costs associated with site management. It proposes increases in the recreation fee rates and identifies priorities for expenditures of collected fee revenues to maintain or improve site facilities and services to provide for high quality recreation experiences.

1.2 Background Information

Fees

The campground and day use facilities of the Recreation Area were constructed by BLM in the early 1980s; fee collection for camping use began shortly after the campground was completed. In 1997, a Business Plan was approved for the Recreation Area that authorized the collection of day use fees for the site and established the fee schedule for camping and day use, using a Fair Market Value Calculation Method that compared fees charged at public and private campgrounds in southwest Utah. The camping fee was set at \$6.00 per night (which included the day use fee) and \$2.00 per carload for day use. These fees have remained unchanged over the past 17 years.

Recreation Area Boundary

The 290 acre Recreation Area boundary was defined in 1993 and includes a 19 site campground, a seven site day use area, one mile of riparian habitat along the Santa Clara River, and 0.20 miles of Baker Dam Reservoir shoreline (Map 1).



Photo1. Baker Dam Recreation Area Campsite



Photo2. Baker Dam Reservoir BLM- Managed Shoreline



Map 1. Baker Dam Recreation Area Boundary Encompassing the Santa Clara River and the Baker Dam Reservoir

1.3 Legal Authorities

Legal authorities that pertain to the management of public lands and, in particular, the collection of recreation fees by BLM include the following:

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), 1976, established BLM’s general management authority over the public lands and land uses, including outdoor recreation as one of the principal uses of those lands. Section 302 (b) of FLPMA directed the Secretary of the Interior to regulate the use of the public lands through permits or other instruments. Section 303 of FLPMA contains BLM’s authority to enforce regulations and impose penalties. The initial legal authority for the collection of fees for recreational use of public land was derived from FLPMA.

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C 6802), 2004, replaced Fee Demo and FLPMA as BLM’s primary legal authorities relating to the collection of recreation fees. This legislation authorizes BLM to collect recreation fees at sites that meet certain requirements. Fee revenues are legally authorized to be retained at the local BLM office where they were collected and must be managed and expended according to specific REA criteria for direct operating or capital costs associated with the Recreation and Visitor Services program, including facility repair, maintenance, enhancement, interpretation, visitor information, visitor services, visitor needs assessments, signs, habitat restoration, and law enforcement. REA also established the America the Beautiful –National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass Program.

Under REA, an Expanded Amenity Fee, as defined at 16 U.S.C 6802 (g) (2), is the category which covers developed campgrounds, such as that at Baker Dam Recreation Area. As this facility was in place when REA was passed in 2004, the campground was “grandfathered” as a fee site, as provided for by 16 U.S.C 6802 (a).

As defined at 16 U.S.C 6802 (f), a Standard Amenity Fee may be charged for day use sites. The day use site must be a developed day-use area that provides significant opportunities for outdoor recreation and has substantial Federal investments, where fees can be efficiently collected, and contain all of the following six amenities:

- Designated developed parking;
- Permanent toilet facility;
- Permanent trash receptacle;
- Interpretive sign, exhibit, or kiosk;
- Picnic tables; and
- Security services.

BLM policy and guidelines require that fee sites have a business plan in place that:

- Informs the public about the objectives for use of collected recreation fee revenues;
- Provides an opportunity for public comment on those objectives;
- Assists BLM to determine the appropriateness and level of fees, costs of administering fee programs, and provides a structured communication and marketing plan;
- Serves as official documentation in the event of an audit.

1.4 Agency Policies and Guidance

This 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 Administration*, Rel. 2-295 dated August 7, 2006.
- BLM Recreation Fee Proposals Step-by-Step Review & Approval Process, March 22, 2007
- BLM Instruction Memorandum 2007-028: *Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act – Final Public Participation Policy for Certain Recreation Fee Adjustments and Proposed New Fee Sites/Areas*
- BLM Utah Instruction Memorandum UT 2013-037: *Utah Recreation Fee Program Toolbox*

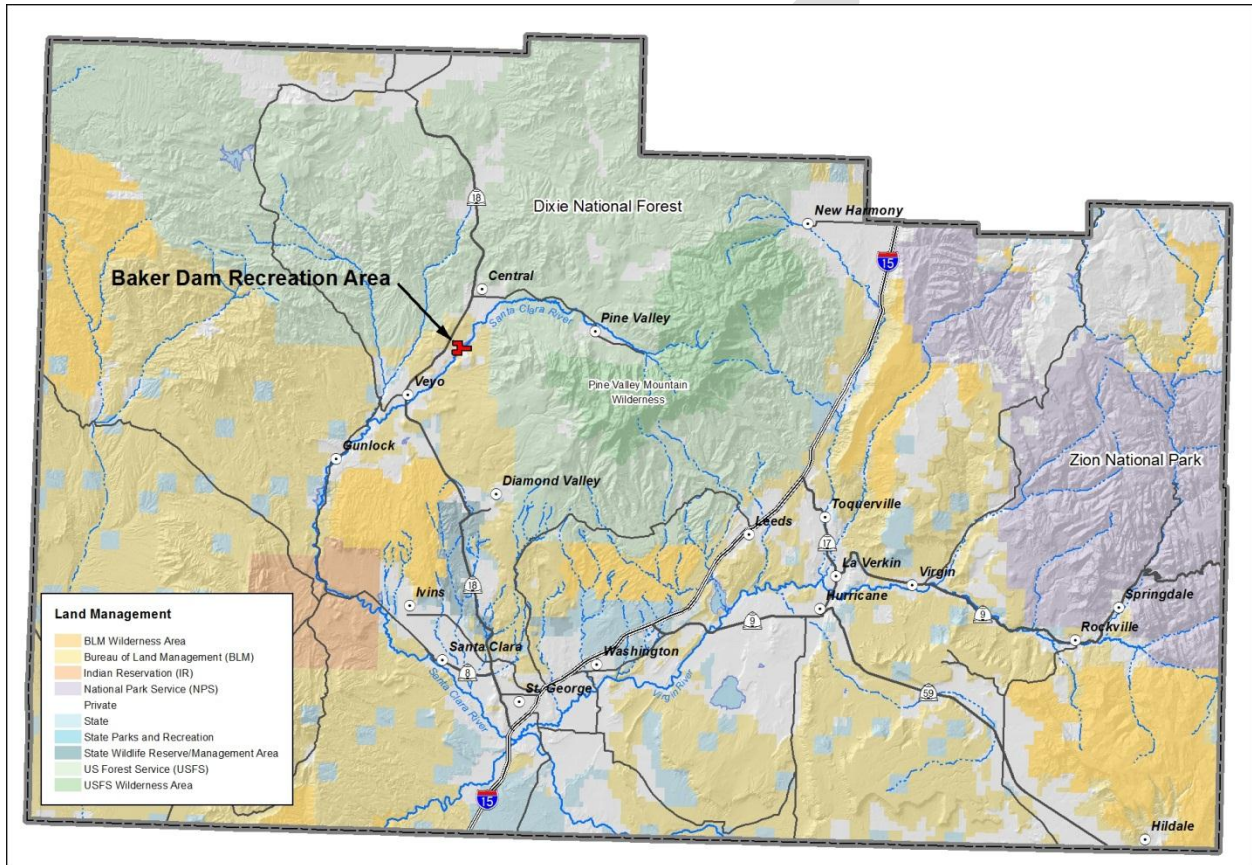
The BLM strives to manage recreation and visitor services in order to serve the diverse outdoor recreation demands of the visitor while helping to maintain sustainable setting conditions needed to conserve public lands so the visitor’s desired recreation choices remain available. The BLM’s goals for delivering recreation benefits from BLM-administered lands to the public are:

- 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.

Section 2 – Recreation Area Description

2.1 Location

The Recreation Area is located adjacent to State Route 18, 25 miles north of St. George, Utah (Map 2). Access to the Recreation Area is from Baker Lake Road, a paved county road. Baker Dam Reservoir, which is the main attraction in the area, lies within walking distance of the campground and day use areas. The Recreation Area sits at approximately 5,000 feet in elevation at the foot of the Pine Valley Mountains, which are part of the Dixie National Forest.



Map 2. Baker Dam Recreation Area, Washington County, Utah

2.2. Environmental Setting

The Baker Dam Recreation lies in the transition zone between the Basin and Range Physiographic Province and the Colorado Plateau Physiographic Province. Vegetation is very similar to that of the Great Basin, consisting of Basin big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), pinyon pine (*Pinus monophylla*), Utah juniper (*Juniperus utahensis*) and various types of riparian vegetation.

The massive Pine Valley Mountain laccolith dominates the colorful and rugged landscape and forms the scenic backdrop to the Recreation Area. Directly below the campground, to the east, the Santa Clara River flows through a narrow basalt gorge. The gorge contains mature shade trees of cottonwoods and willows and a dense riparian understory. The rim of the gorge offers an unobstructed panorama of the rugged peaks and deep valleys of the Pine Valley Mountains (Photo 3). The campground sits back from the river's west rim on a large, flat bench consisting of pinyon/juniper trees. To the east of the Santa Clara River, the pinyon/juniper woodland eventually transitions to a ponderosa pine forest on the Pine Valley Mountains.

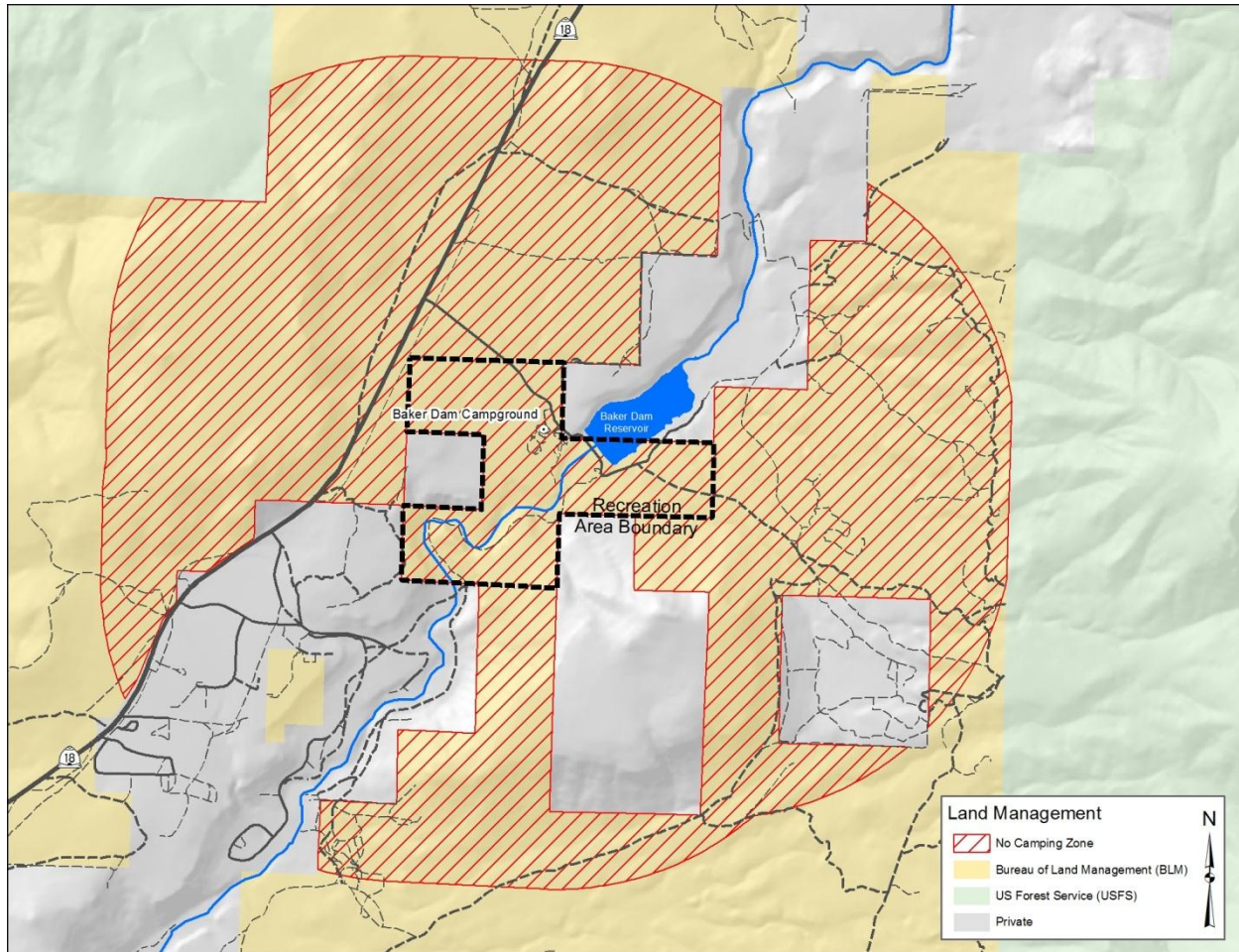


Photo3. View of Baker Dam Reservoir and Pine Valley Mountains from Santa Clara River gorge in Baker Dam Recreation Area

2.3 Land Management

The majority of lands around Baker Dam Reservoir are primarily privately owned and BLM manages only 0.2 miles of shoreline. BLM does not manage the reservoir with regards to water levels, fish stocking, dam maintenance, or any other aspects of this facilities operation.

In 1999, the St. George Resource Management Plan (RMP) prohibited dispersed camping on BLM managed lands within one mile of the Recreation Area (Map 3).), in order “[t]o improve sanitation, reduce overcrowding, enhance public safety, restore degraded areas, and minimize impacts to intermingled private lands.” In addition, the RMP directed that “[t]o protect public investment and facilities from incompatible disturbance, conveyance, or activities”, the Recreation Area would be closed to mineral materials and fuel wood sales, and that stipulations would be applied for fluid materials leasing. Motorized OHV use was not permitted in the Recreation Area. These management decisions continue to be applied to the operation of the Recreation Area.



Map 3. Recreation Area in relationship to No Camping Zone and Private Property

2.4 Amenities

The Recreation Area has numerous amenities, including facilities and services. Table 1 lists these amenities. The day use area is comprised of designated graveled parking, picnic tables, fire pits, barbeque grills, shade shelters, and regulatory signing. In the campground, there are 19 campsites that contain designated graveled parking, fire pits, barbeque grills, and picnic tables. A limit of two vehicles per single occupancy site is in force. One of these sites is walk-in with segregated designated parking. Two restrooms, with two vault toilets each, serve the day use area and campground, in centralized locations convenient to each set of visitors. There are no garbage receptacles, but garbage dumpsters are provided for self-service. There is no water available in the campground or day use area. Both the day use area and the campground offer accessible facilities that comply with the Architectural Barriers Act. Photo 4 illustrates some of the provided amenities.

Short footpaths facilitate movements within the Recreation Area, e.g. between the parking lot and individual day use picnic sites. The Flycatcher Trail, 0.15 miles in length, leads to an overlook of the Santa Clara River and offers an interpretative panel. Unfortunately, this interpretive panel is quite outdated and faded and is in need of replacement. Revenue from the proposed fee increases will allow this type of amenity to be replaced and upgraded.

Table 1: Recreation Area Amenities

Facilities							
Information Kiosks	Interpretive Stations	Shade Shelters	Vault Toilets	Campsites	Day Use Area	Garbage Dumpsters	Non-Motorized Trails
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Services						
Law Enforcement	Park Ranger	Toilet Janitorial	Toilet Pumping	Waste Disposal	Maintenance	Information Brochures
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

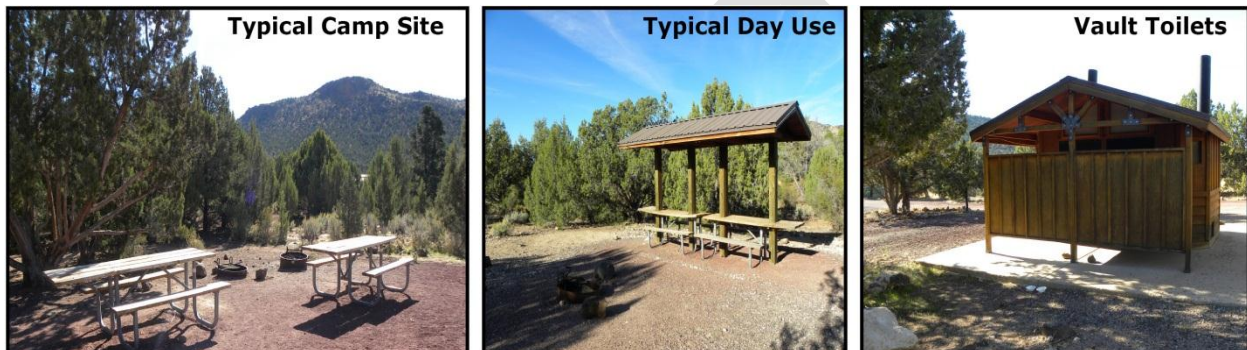


Photo 4. Typical Recreation Area Amenities

2.5 Visitation

Visitation to the Recreation Area has not been consistent over the past six years, but the overall average visitation shows an increase (Table 2). The visitation data are derived from the number of Recreation Use Permits (RUPs) issued for this site. Visitors averaged approximately 2,310 annually over the past six years: 301 day use visitors and 2009 overnight camping visitors.

Table 2: Visitation

FY	Day Use RUPs	% Change	Camping RUPs	% Change	Day Use Visitors	% Change	Camping Visitors	% Change
2008	70	---	481	---	185	---	1283	---
2009	85	21%	770	60%	237	28%	2438	90%
2010	153	80%	684	(11%)	233	(2%)	1833	(25)%
2011	79	(48%)	547	(20%)	307	31%	2009	10%
2012	109	38%	598	9%	338	10%	2575	28%
2013	176	61%	658	10%	506	50%	1913	(26%)
AVG	112	31%	474	10%	301	23%	2,009	15%

Source: BLM RMIS Database

Visitation to the St. George area is typically higher in Spring and Fall because of the desert climate: extremely hot summers and cold winters. As the Recreation Area sits at an elevation of 5,000 feet, summers at the Recreation Area are cooler and busier than normal for the region. Another factor that influences visitation is the Recreation Area’s close proximity to Baker Dam Reservoir. As this reservoir is a popular recreation feature, specifically for fishing, it draws visitors to the Recreation Area. Seasonal

visitation to the Recreation Area increases during the fall and early winter, as hunters use the campground as a base camp during mule deer and elk hunting activities. See Table 3 for the monthly visitation for 2013 and 2102 that illustrates seasonal visitor fluctuation.

Table 3: Seasonal Visitation

Fiscal Year 2013												
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Visitors	110	200	0	7	6	122	364	580	232	412	242	144
Fiscal Year 2012												
Visitors	207	246	0	10	18	113	342	577	574	192	393	241

Source: BLM RMIS Database

2.6 The Visitor

There are two types of visitors who come to the Recreation Area: day users and overnight campers (Photo 5). Campers are the predominant user group, averaging 87% of the totals from 2008 to 2013, and come primarily from outside of Washington County (70%). A vast majority of those visitors from out side of Washinton County are also from outside Utah. Campers are an equal mix of small recreational vehicle campers and tent campers. Day users average 13% of total visitors and are primarily residents of Washington County.

Recreational activities in the Recreation Area are camping and picnicing, with the majority of other types of activities being water-based. The main recreation activities for visitors are fishing, swimming, and boating at the Baker Dam Reservoir in the spring and summer. In the winter,visitation to the Recreation Area is primarily for camping.

As part of the self-pay permitting process, the only demographic information available comes from the fee envelope that lists the state where each visitor’s vehicle is registered. These data show that the majority of overnight campers are from other western states in the region and most day-users are local residents. Despite a lack of specific demographic data, national trends indicate the average overnight campground visitor is likely to be in a moderate income bracket. This information is reflected at local campgrounds where observations show overnight visitors to be an equal mix of recreational vehicles and tent campers.

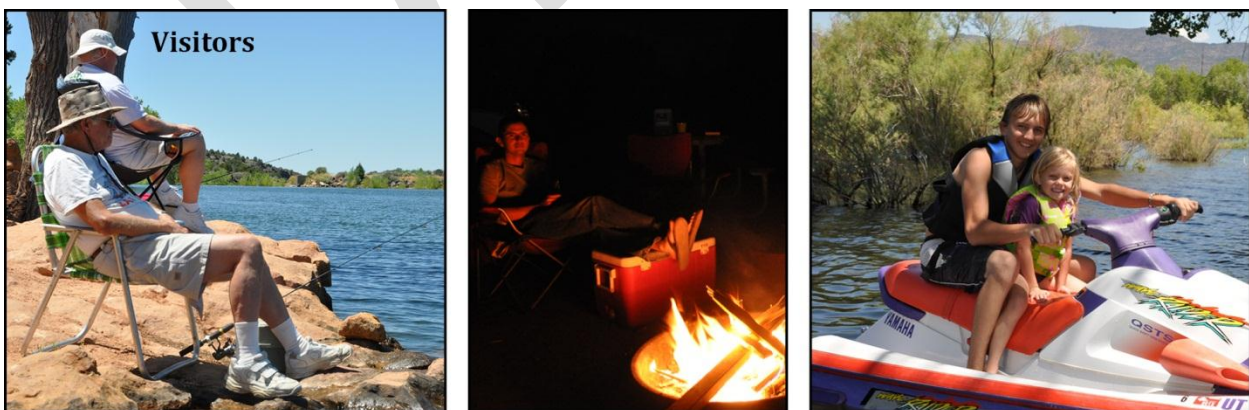


Photo 5. Typical Visitors

Section 3 – Recreation Area Operations

3.1 Operating Schedule

The Recreation Area operates on a year-round schedule and visitors may use the facilities daily throughout the year. The day use area hours are from 7 a.m. (end of quiet time) to sunset.

3.2 Fee Collection and Revenues

Campsites and day use areas are available year-round on a “first come, first served” basis. Recreation Use Permit fees (fees) are collected onsite, through Pay Stations (Photo 6), consisting of a self-pay “iron ranger” system and payment information. BLM recreation staff and Law Enforcement Rangers conduct daily patrols to verify that all visitors are in compliance with fee payment requirements.



Photo 6. Pay Station with Iron Ranger

The Dixie/Arizona Strip Interpretive Association (DASIA), a not-for-profit association, assists with fee collection operations at the Recreation Area, through a Grant and Cooperative Agreement with SGFO. Two DASIA employees are compensated to retrieve the fees from the self-pay “iron rangers”, tally the fees and visitor numbers, and prepare the fees for deposit.

Recreation Area fees are deposited in a fee account; funds from this account are used to pay for certain operation costs for the Recreation Area. Any balances remaining in this fee account at the end of the fiscal year (October 1 - September 30) remain in the account and become the beginning balance for the next year, rather than being returned to the U.S. Treasury. Table 4 displays revenues collected in the fee account for the Recreation Area during the past six fiscal years.

Table 4: Recreation Area Fee Revenues

Fiscal Year	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Revenues	\$6,027	\$6,995	\$6,173	\$7,621	\$8,441	\$5,509
% Change	-14%	13%	-19%	-10%	53%	---

Source: BLM RMIS Database

3.3 Operating Costs

The total average operating cost, as shown in Table 5, includes staff labor; contractual services; and equipment, materials, and supplies (E/M/S). The details of these costs are described in the following breakdowns for each category.

Table 5: Total Average Annual Operating Costs

Fiscal Year 2013			
Staff Labor Table 7	Contractual Services Table 8	E/M/S Table 9	Total Cost
\$20,485	\$7,232	\$4,000	\$31,717
61%	27%	12%	100%

Staff Labor

Salaries for BLM staff engaged in the operation of the Recreation Area are funded through Congressionally-appropriated funds to BLM, not by fee revenues. Table 6 lists the staff involved in operating the Recreation Area and their average costs calculated over the last two fiscal years

Table 6: Average Annual Staffing Costs

Fiscal Year 2013		
Position	Appropriated Account	
	Workdays Per Year	Cost
SGFO Manager	5	\$2,800
Outdoor Recreation Planner (2)	5	\$2,050
Landscape Architect	5	\$2,100
Administrative Assistant	2	\$450
Maintenance Crew Foreman	3	\$1,260
Maintenance Crew (3)	3	\$3,500
Law Enforcement Ranger	7	\$3,400
Park Ranger (Rec. Tech)	15	\$4,125
Recreation Intern (2)	5	\$800
Totals	55	\$20,485

Contractual Services

Contracted services are used for the daily/weekly/monthly cleaning and regular pumping of the one of the two restrooms and for a small number of other specialized services such as an arborist and electrician. (The restroom located in the day use area is currently not in use and contractual service costs are not being incurred as a cost saving measure). Fee revenues are also used to compensate DASIA employees for providing fee collection assistance as described in 3.2. Table 7 lists the contractual services used to operate the Recreation Area and their average costs calculated over the last two fiscal years.

Table 7: Average Annual Contractual Costs

Fiscal Year 2013		
Service	Fee Account	Appropriated Account
Janitorial Services	\$1,392	\$0
Toilet Pumping Services	\$3,540	\$0
DASIA Fee Collection Staff	\$1,300	\$0
Miscellaneous Professionals	\$0	\$1,000
Totals	\$6,232	\$1,000

Equipment, Materials, Supplies (E/M/S)

Table 8 lists the costs of the E/M/S needed to maintain, improve, and market the Recreation Area. The costs shown in Table 7 are averages from the last five fiscal years. Since 2009 a number of DM/CI projects (a combination of deferred maintenance and new construction) have been completed: replacement of all traffic, regulatory, guidance and directional signs; installation of Pay/Interpretive Stations; trail markers; and installation of barrier fencing for a total of approximately \$10,000. All of the E/M/S associated with these DM/CI projects were funded by Congressionally-appropriated funds to BLM.

Table 8: Average Annual Equipment, Materials, and Supplies Costs

Expenditure	Fee Account	Appropriated Account
Equipment/Materials/Supplies	\$1,000	\$0
DM/CI Projects	\$0	\$3,000
Totals	\$1,000	\$3,000

Other Services

Additional services required to operate the Recreation Area include waste disposal associated with the garbage dumpsters. These costs are funded by Congressionally-appropriated funds and are not quantified in this Business Plan. Other costs of administering the Recreation Area that are not quantified here include overhead: office space; information services; fleet operations; and managerial, engineering, administrative, and budget support.

3.4 Estimated Future Operating Costs

Table 9 provides an estimate of the total average annual operating costs for the next five years. Increases are based on the average increase of the Consumer Price Index over the last three years (2011-2013) of 2.2%. As contracts for 2014-2016 have been awarded, the costs shown for 2014-2016 for contractual services include actual contract costs for janitorial, pumping, and DASIA, but estimates for miscellaneous professionals.

Table 9: Future Total Average Annual Operating Costs

FY				Total Costs
	Staff Labor	Contractual Services	E/M/S	
2013	\$20,485	\$7,232	\$4,000	\$31,717
2014	\$20,936	\$8,249	\$4,088	\$33,273
2015	\$21,397	\$8,249	\$4,178	\$33,824
2016	\$21,868	\$8,430	\$4,270	\$34,568
2017	\$22,349	\$8,615	\$4,364	\$35,328
2018	\$22,841	\$8,805	\$4,460	\$36,106

3.5 Fee Revenue Expenditures

Currently fee revenues are used to partially fund contractual services and E/M/S. Table 10 illustrates the annual difference between revenues and expenditures (not including annual appropriation expenditures), showing a net loss of \$1,205 for FY 2013. The fee account would sustain a much larger negative balance estimated at \$8,290 for 2013, if the average annual appropriation expenditures were to be covered by fee revenues. Table 10 also indicates the amount of unobligated balances that would be available (if annual appropriation expenditures were not included), while still maintaining a one year reserve¹.

Table 10: Annual Fee Account Expenditures

FY	Actual Fee Revenue	Fee Account Expenditures	Difference Between Revenue & Expenditures	Fee Account Beginning Balance ²	Unobligated Balance ³	Annual Appropriations	Difference Including Estimated Appropriations
2013	\$6,027	\$7,232	(\$1,205)	\$17,400 ⁴	\$8,486	\$24,485	(\$8,290)
2012	\$6,995	\$5,376	\$1,619.00	\$9,006	\$3,288		
2011	\$6,173	\$7,236	(\$1,063.00)	\$7,387	\$6,223		
2010	\$7,621	\$11,399	(\$3,778)	\$8,450	\$8,734		
2009	\$8,441	\$7,302	\$1,139	\$12,228	\$5,658		
2008	---	---	---	\$11,089	---		
Average	\$7,051	\$7,709	\$ 228	\$8,027	\$5,522		

¹ In order to prepare for unforeseen circumstances, the Field Office attempts to maintain a one year reserve based on a five year average of fee account expenditures.

² Until April 2013, Baker Dam Recreation Area and Red Cliffs Recreation Area had a joint fee account. Estimates for each site are based on a 20/80 split for Baker and Red Cliffs respectively.

³ Unobligated balances are those above the one year reserve (average of fee account expenditures) that could be used to support additional operating costs.

⁴ Fee Account beginning balance does not match fee revenue minus expenditures, as the single joint account was split into two accounts (one for Baker Dam Recreation Area and one for Red Cliffs Recreation Area). The account split was estimated on a 20/80 split for Baker and Red Cliffs respectively. There is a large increase in the amount of beginning balance from 2012 to 2013, due to the inexact nature of the fund split.

Section 4 - Proposed Fees

4.1 Introduction

The goal of a fee increase would be to cover 100% of the average annual operating costs of contractual services, E/M/S, and maintain fee revenue reserves to cover one year of average annual operating costs. An additional goal would be to provide revenue for some DM/CI and other projects that would benefit visitors.

Fees have been at their current levels since 1997. In 1997, the average annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) was at 160.5; by 2013 it had climbed to 232.9. Using the CPI, costs have increased by 36.3% since 1997, while fees collected for day use and overnight camping remained unchanged. Average annual fee revenues (see Table 10) currently cover approximately 21% of the total average annual operating costs (see Table 5) of the Recreation Area, excluding other costs as identified in 3.2 Other Costs. However, average annual fee revenues currently cover approximately 54% of the average annual operating costs of contractual services and E/M/S.

4.2 Analysis of Current Fees

Two methods were used to assess the adequacy of current fees: Fair Market Value¹ (FMV) and Cost Recovery² (CR). The FMV method was used to see what visitors to the area are willing to pay for similar amenities as the Recreation Area. The CR method was used to determine how much visitors would have to pay to fully cover the average annual operating costs for contractual services and E/M/S, maintain fee revenue reserves to cover one year of average annual operating costs, and provide a small unobligated balance for DM/CI and other projects.

Fair Market Value

When the fee schedule was set up for the Recreation Area, fees in the market area for sites with similar settings and services were examined to determine the fair market value for day use and overnight camping. Those same Recreation Areas, as well as new additions to the area, were examined as part of this Business Plan. Table 11 displays the Recreation Areas assessed and the fees charged; sites are a mix of state and federal government sites. (Note that there are no private facilities shown; they are not comparable, offering far more amenities such as RV hookups, pools, sport courts, laundromats, etc.). An assessment of the fees was made to determine what level of fee increase would be appropriate for the Recreation Area. The purpose of this assessment was to determine a fair market value for the Recreation Area that provided the greatest cost recovery possible, without creating unfair federal competition or overcharging visitors.

The majority of Recreation Areas most similar to the Recreation Area (marked with an * in Table 11) charge different fees for tent camping and RV sites, and these range from \$12 to \$16. At the Recreation Area, services for both tent and RVs are the same and consequently should be charged an equal fee. This range of fees also shows that the Recreation Area, at \$6, is below the market rate for camping. When comparing tent fees at the other Recreation Areas that have more amenities than the Recreation Area

¹ Fair Market Value is the price for a good, resource, or service that is based on competition in open markets that creates neither a shortage nor a surplus of the good, resource, or service.

² Cost Recovery is the price of a good, resource, or service that is based on recovering the full cost to produce that good, resource, or service.

(such as the availability of showers, flush toilets, etc.), fees range from \$13 to \$36. This indicates that the Recreation Area should stay at the lower end of the market, since these amenities are not available.

Of those Recreation Areas that have day use fees, all are comparable in terms of offering recreational activities and basic amenities to support day use (restrooms, trails, water feature, picnic area, etc.). Fees range from \$5 to \$10. This indicates that the Recreation Area, at \$2, is below the going market rate for day use.

Table 11: Comparison of Developed Recreation Areas and Fees in Washington County

Recreation Area	Public/Private	Campsites	Group Campsites	RV/Tent Sites	RV Hookups	Day Use Fee	Tent Fee	RV Fee
Baker Dam	BLM	19	Yes	RV/Tent	No	\$2	\$6	\$6
Red Cliffs*	BLM	12	Yes	RV/Tent	No	\$5	\$15	\$15
Gunlock State Park*	State	6	No	RV/Tent	No	\$7	\$13	\$13
Snow Canyon State Park	State	34	Yes	RV/Tent	Yes	\$6	\$16	\$20
Sand Hollow State Park	State	50	No	RV/Tent	Yes	\$10	\$13	\$25
Quail State Park*	State	23	No	RV/Tent	No	\$10	\$15	\$15
Dixie NF Blue Springs*	USFS	17	Yes	RV/Tent	No	N/A	\$12	\$12
Dixie NF South Juniper*	USFS	7	Yes	RV/Tent	No	N/A	\$12	\$12
Dixie NF North Juniper*	USFS	11	Yes	RV/Tent	No	N/A	\$12	\$12
Dixie NF Pines*	USFS	13	No	RV/Tent	No	N/A	\$12	\$12
Zion NP South*	NPS	180	No	RV/Tent	No	N/A	\$16	\$16
Zion NP Watchman*	NPS	170	No	RV/Tent	No	N/A	\$16	\$16

Cost Recovery with No Fee Change

Currently 61% of the Recreation Area’s operating costs are allocated to staff labor and 39% to contractual services and E/M/S. This analysis looks at only a partial cost recovery to fund 39% of the operating costs. Estimated revenues are based on a conservative growth projection of 2% for overnight camping. This is based on a 4% historical average increase in camping revenues from 2008 to 2013, and the fact that increased overnight camping could be accommodated. Estimated revenues for day use are based on a conservative 18% growth projection based on a 36% historical average increase in day use revenues from 2008 to 2013, and the fact that increased day use could be accommodated. Under this scenario, using the current fee structure, a significant shortfall develops immediately by the end of 2014. If full cost recovery was to be realized, including staff labor, or even a percentage of staff labor costs, the deficit would be substantially greater. The additional goals of maintaining fee account reserves to cover one year of the average annual operating costs and providing revenue for some DM/CI projects could not be achieved.

Table 12: Estimated Fee Revenues for Partial Cost Recovery

Fiscal Year	Contractual Services	E/M/S	7% Sequester	Total Partial Operating Cost	Fee Account Beginning Balance	Revenues without Increase	Unobligated Balance
2014	\$8,249	\$4,088	\$ 434	\$12,771	\$17,360	\$6,193	(\$2,423)
2015	\$8,249	\$4,178	\$ 448	\$12,875	\$10,782	\$6,383	(\$8,915)
2016	\$8,430	\$4,270	\$ 462	\$13,162	\$4,290	\$6,589	(\$15,488)
2017	\$8,615	\$4,364	\$ 478	\$13,457	(\$2,283)	\$6,813	(\$22,132)
2018	\$8,805	\$4,460	\$ 496	\$13,761	(\$8,927)	\$7,059	(\$28,834)
AVG	\$8,470	\$4,272	\$ 464	\$13,205	---	---	---

4.3 Proposed Fee Change

After careful consideration of the fee calculation process (as described in 4.2 Analysis of Current Fees), and reviewing several scenarios for cost recovery using different fees structures (as described in this section) the proposed changes to fees are as follows:

- Increase \$2.00 day use fee per vehicle to **\$5.00**
- Increase \$6.00 overnight camping fee (includes day use) to **\$12.00**

The America the Beautiful Interagency Passes are honored at all BLM fee sites that meet the requirements for collecting standard or expanded amenity recreation fees; these passes will continue to be accepted at the Recreation Area for day use fees (Sec.5.(a)(1) of REA). All passes provide free entrance to the day-use area (standard amenity fee); Senior or Access pass holders receive a 50% discount on the overnight camping fee (expanded amenity fee).

Cost Recovery with Proposed Fee Change

Table 13 shows the estimated revenues after the proposed fee increase, which will meet the stated goals:

- Cover 100% of the average annual operating costs of contractual services and E/M/S (and sequestration should it continue in the future);
- Maintain fee revenue reserves to cover one year of average annual operating costs; and
- Provide revenue for some DM/CI and other projects that would benefit visitors.

Estimated revenues are based on the same growth projections used in Table 12. Under this scenario, using the proposed fee increase of \$5.00/\$12.00, a small unobligated balance develops over time. If full cost recovery was to be realized, including staff labor, or even a percentage of staff labor costs, a deficit would develop. The additional goals of maintaining fee account reserves to cover one year of the average annual operating costs and providing revenue for some DM/CI projects could be achieved.

Table 14 illustrates a scenario based on a fee increase of \$5.00/\$10.00 that could lead to a deficit over time, if estimated operating costs and estimated visitor use assumptions hold.

Table 15 illustrates a scenario base on a fee increase of \$5.00/\$15.00 that could lead to a large unobligated balance of funds, exceeding the desired goals, but providing potential revenue for staff labor costs. However, a \$15.00 overnight camping fee is at the high end of the market for the services provided.

Table 13: Estimated Fee Revenues for Partial Cost Recovery after Fee Increase \$5.00/\$12.00

Fiscal Year	Total Partial Operating Cost	5 Year Average Operating Cost	Fee Account Beginning Balance	Estimated Revenues with Fee Increase	Unobligated balance
2014	\$12,771	\$13,205	\$17,360	\$12,593	\$3,977
2015	\$12,875		\$17,182	\$13,011	\$4,113
2016	\$13,162		\$17,318	\$13,467	\$4,418
2017	\$13,457		\$17,623	\$13,968	\$4,929
2018	\$13,761		\$18,134	\$14,520	\$5,688

Table 14: Estimated Fee Revenues for Partial Cost Recovery after Fee Increase \$5.00/\$10.00

Fiscal Year	Total Partial Operating Cost	5 Year Average Operating Cost	Fee Account Beginning Balance	Estimated Revenues with Fee Increase	Unobligated balance
2014	\$12,771	\$13,205	\$17,360	\$10,667	\$2,051
2015	\$12,875		\$15,256	\$11,047	\$ 223
2016	\$13,162		\$13,428	\$11,464	(\$1,475)
2017	\$13,457		\$11,730	\$11,924	(\$3,008)
2018	\$13,761		\$10,197	\$12,436	(\$4,333)

Table 15: Estimated Fee Revenues for Partial Cost Recovery after Fee Increase \$5.00/\$15.00

Fiscal Year	Total Partial Operating Cost	5 Year Average Operating Cost	Fee Account Beginning Balance	Estimated Revenues with Fee Increase	Unobligated balance
2014	\$12,771	\$13,205	\$17,360	\$15,906	\$7,290
2015	\$12,875		\$20,495	\$16,837	\$11,252
2016	\$13,162		\$24,457	\$17,838	\$15,928
2017	\$13,457		\$29,133	\$18,918	\$21,389
2018	\$13,761		\$34,594	\$20,085	\$27,713

4.4 Public Benefits of Fee Increase

Revenues for Amenity Maintenance

Increased fees will provide revenues to fully cover the average annual operating costs for contractual services and E/M/S, maintain fee revenue reserves to cover one year of average annual operating costs, and provide a small unobligated balance for DM/CI and other projects. This will ensure basic health and safety needs are being met, and that the quality of the visitor’s recreation experience remains satisfactory, based on the condition of the facilities and the variety of the amenities.

Revenues for Expanded Amenities

Increased fees will provide a small annual unobligated balance that will be used to expand and maintain visitor amenities as discussed in 5.2 Deferred Maintenance and Capital Improvements, and 5.3 Other Projects. These amenities enhance the diverse and meaningful recreation opportunities that provide outdoor skills, build group and family relationships, and encourage stewardship of local public land resources.

Fair Government Competition

The FMV analysis indicated that the Recreation Area fees were the lowest in Washington County, when compared to other similarly developed Recreation Areas managed by federal and state entities. Increasing fees to be on a par with those that offer similar services and amenities would reduce the potential that BLM is unfairly competing with other recreational providers, by charging lower fees at the Recreation Area.

4.5 Economic Impacts of Fee Increase

Washington County’s economy is diversified and not reliant on any one economic sector to remain viable (Chart 1). The proposed fee increases for the Recreation Area would not likely result in any measurable negative impacts on recreational users on public lands in Washington County.

Maintaining safe, clean facilities in the Recreation Area and high quality visitor services would continue to provide direct and indirect economic benefits to the local economy. Visitors would be satisfied with their experiences and therefore be more likely to prolong their stays or return on a regular basis. Should facilities and services in the Recreation Area be allowed to deteriorate, visitation could be expected to decline, negatively impacting recreation-derived revenues for the local economy.

Data from studies completed on the economic impact of visitor spending for recreational activities on public lands managed by the St. George Field Office (Yardley 2011, Pinkham 2012) and BLM data indicate that the direct economic impact of this level of visitor use to the local economy is estimated to be \$124,893 (Chart 2).

Based on data derived from the Recreation Use Permit (RUPs) from Baker Dam, visitor use in Baker Dam Recreation Area totaled approximately 2,419 visitors in 2013. Of that total, approximately 1,451 were from outside Washington County and 968 were Washington County residents (Chart 3).

These studies also showed that recreational uses by non-local visitors on public lands in Washington County resulted in \$32.6 million dollars in direct and indirect benefits to the regional economy. It found that visitors were attracted to Washington County because of the *variety* of recreational opportunities that are available for visitors. Maintaining local Recreation Areas in safe and attractive condition directly contributes to the overall

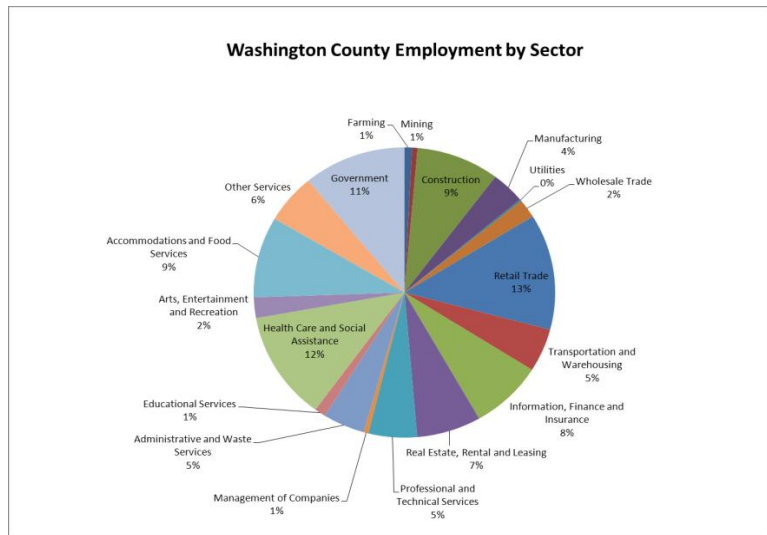


Chart 1. Washington County Employment by Sectors

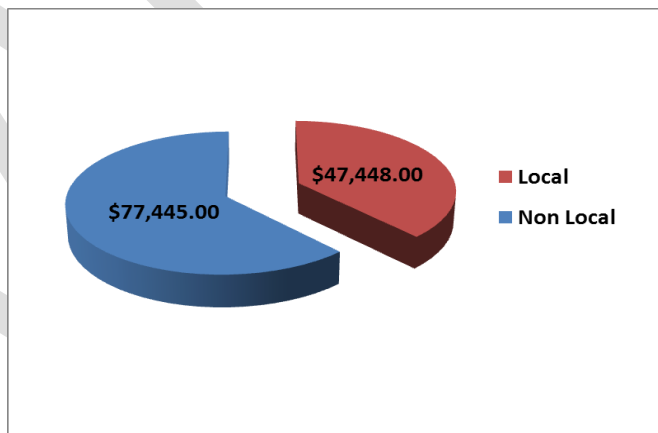


Chart 2. Baker Dam Direct Economic Impact 2013

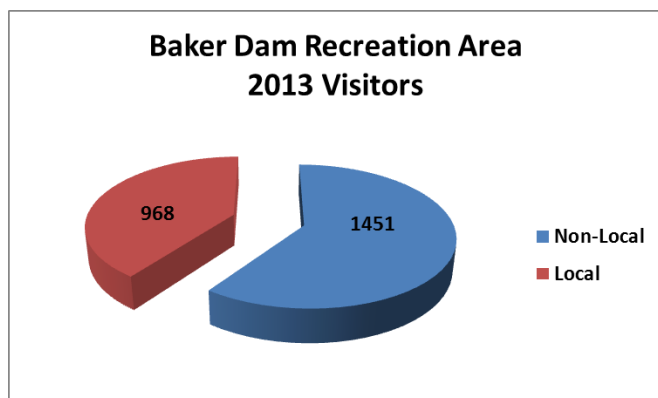


Chart 3: Baker Dam Visitation

quality of the visitor experience and indirectly to the economic benefits derived from this economic sector.

Socioeconomic Impacts to Low-Income Populations

The socioeconomic profiles of visitors specifically to the Recreation Area are unknown at this time. Based on current data obtained from the RUPs collected through the fee system at Baker Dam, over 60% of visitors are non-local. The Recreation Area offers a very low-cost alternative to visitors from outside the area, when compared to staying in local motels and hotels (where prices range from \$40 to over \$100 per room per night), particularly for large groups that can take advantage of the group use camping and day use site in the Recreation Area.

Based on U.S. Census data (2012), approximately 14% of residents in Washington County have annual household incomes that place them in low income categories. This percentage is higher than the state average of 11% and lower than the national average of 15%. As shown in Chart 4, household incomes in Washington County are well above poverty and low income level. Based on these data, the proposed Recreation Area fee increases would have little or no effect on the small percentage of low income residents of Washington County.

Very low income is defined as 50 percent of the median family income for the area. Low income is defined as 80 percent of the median family income for the area. Washington County median household income average for 2007-2011 was \$50,300.

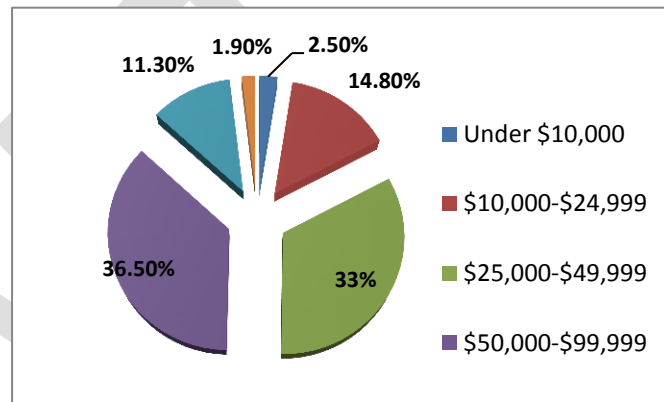


Chart 4. Annual Household Income of Residents in Washington County

Section 5 – Priority Expenditures for Unobligated Balances

5.1 Unobligated Balances

Unobligated balances are those in excess of what is required to cover the average annual operating costs for contractual services and E/M/S, 7% sequestration, and maintain fee revenue reserves to cover one year of average annual operating costs. Table 13 indicates that, with the proposed fee increase, an estimated average of \$13,528 in unobligated balance could be available annually for expenditures.

5.2 Deferred Maintenance and Capital Improvements

Major DM/CI projects within the Recreation Area should be funded by Congressionally-appropriated funds. For example, through BLM's 5-Year Deferred Maintenance and Capital Improvement Program, major projects may be initiated to increase safety, improve accessibility, and repair or replace deteriorating structures. However, additional health and safety, as well as functional projects may need to be accomplished outside the Deferred Maintenance and Capital Improvement Plan as they have in the past. Such projects include:

- Deferred maintenance to facilities over and above calculations included in the average annual operating costs for E/M/S; and
- Construction of new trails to improve non-motorized access throughout the Recreation Area.

5.3 Other Projects

Outreach is a critical component of visitor satisfaction. Current outreach materials include an informational brochure, website, on-site information kiosks (including fee information, rules and regulations, and activity ideas), and wayside interpretation panels at the Santa Clara River overlook. Additional interpretative outreach will continue as funding is available for the production of new interpretive materials.

Section 6 – Public Outreach

6.1 Outreach Efforts

The following outreach efforts are being used to notify the public about the proposals contained in the draft Business Plan and the timeframes and methods through which the public can provide comments on these proposals:

- Copies are available at the Interagency Visitor Center, St. George Field Office, 345 East Riverside Drive, St. George, Utah.
- Posting of the draft Business Plan on the BLM St. George Field Office website, and social media sites hosted by BLM;
- Posting of Information in the Recreation Area, Towns of Veyo and Brookside
- News Releases provided to regional print and broadcast media;
- Mailing of news releases to local Tribal and community governments (Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Shivwits Band of Paiutes, Kaibab Band of Paiute, Washington County Commissioners)
- Informal staff and management contacts with members of the public and visitors to the Recreation Area.

The draft Business Plan will be provided for review and comment to the BLM Utah Recreation Resource Advisory Council (RAC). The Utah RAC is a 15-member advisory panel which provides advice and recommendations to the BLM on resource and land management issues for 22.9 million acres of public lands in Utah. The *Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act* mandates that the appropriate Recreation RAC reviews BLM recreation fee proposals, prior to agency approval. Comments from both the public at large and the BLM Utah RAC will be considered and modifications made to the draft Business Plan, if needed, prior to approval and implementation.

6.2 Summary of Public Comments

The following is a summary of all the written public comments received during the 30 day public comment period provided on the draft Baker Dam Recreation Area Business Plan. There were a total of 2 written comments received.

2-Supported Proposal

0-Opposed

0-No Opinion

Comments from those who supported the proposal:

- “In sum, I think the fee increases (from \$2 to \$5 for cars, \$6 to \$12 for camping) are more than reasonable, especially in light of the growing visitation, and accompanying expenses. In particular, the convenience of restroom facilities and refuse service are not only helpful, but essential to maintaining a high-quality outdoor experience for visitors. I would happily support the increases to ensure the BLM can successfully service the area.”

- “I don't object to the fee increases, as I am confident that they are necessary.”

There were no additional comments.

6.3 Summary of Utah Recreation Advisory Committee Recommendations

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References Used to Develop Business Plan

Headwaters Economics 2011, *Economic Value of Public Lands in Washington County, Utah*, <http://headwaterseconomics.org>

Pinkham, Richard, 2012 *Socioeconomic Baseline Report for the Resource Management Plans for the Beaver Dam and Baker Dam National Conservation Areas and the Amendment to the St. George Field Office Resource Management Plan and the associated Environmental Impact Statement*, unpublished report on file, St. George Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

Yardley, Braden 2011 *Economic Impact of Visitor Spending, St. George Field Office, Bureau of Land Management*, unpublished report on file, St. George Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Forest Service, 2007 *National Visitor Use Monitoring Report for BLM St. George Field Office*

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