



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

Madison River Recreation Fee Program 2024 Business Plan

Dillon Field Office

1005 Selway Drive

Dillon, MT 59725



Kitchen Sink Rapid, Bear Trap Canyon

Dear Reader:

We would like to present for your review and comment the Madison River Recreation Fee Program 2024 Business Plan. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Dillon Field Office (DFO), manages public lands in Beaverhead and Madison Counties and is releasing an updated proposed business plan needed to implement fee increases at existing fee sites and new fees at day use sites.

Based on significant increases in use and in consideration of the services that are needed to adequately support a quality recreation experience at these highly developed sites, the DFO proposes to increase fees at select developed recreation fee sites currently charging fees and proposes charging new fees at other DFO developed recreation sites. Details of the new fee proposals will be discussed in this document. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) authorizes federal agencies to collect fees at developed recreation sites and retain them to maintain and improve those sites.

The Madison River Recreation Fee Program 2024 Business Plan is available for public comment and review from December 5, 2023, to January 5, 2024. The plan will be presented to the BLM Montana Resource Advisory Council (RAC) for their review and approval for the fee increase on January 11, 2024. After incorporating public comments and RAC input, the final Madison River Recreation Fee Program 2024 Business Plan would be approved in February 2024.

The BLM Dillon Field Office understands the value that visitors place on their public lands, and the importance of free and open access to public lands. In anticipation in reviewing this business plan, you will notice that we have focused these fees and increases in places with intensive development; places that require more services and investment to support and protect quality experiences, and where it is appropriate that users share in the higher level of investment needed to run these sites.

Public comments may be mailed to:

Attention:
Madison River Recreation Fee Program
Dillon Field Office
1005 Selway Drive
Dillon, MT 59725

Or emailed to (with a subject line of "Madison River Recreation Fee Program"):

[BLM MT Dillon FO@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_MT_Dillon_FO@blm.gov)

Comments are due by January 5, 2024. Thank you for your interest in your public lands.

Sincerely,

Amanda James
Field Manager

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Introduction/Executive Summary

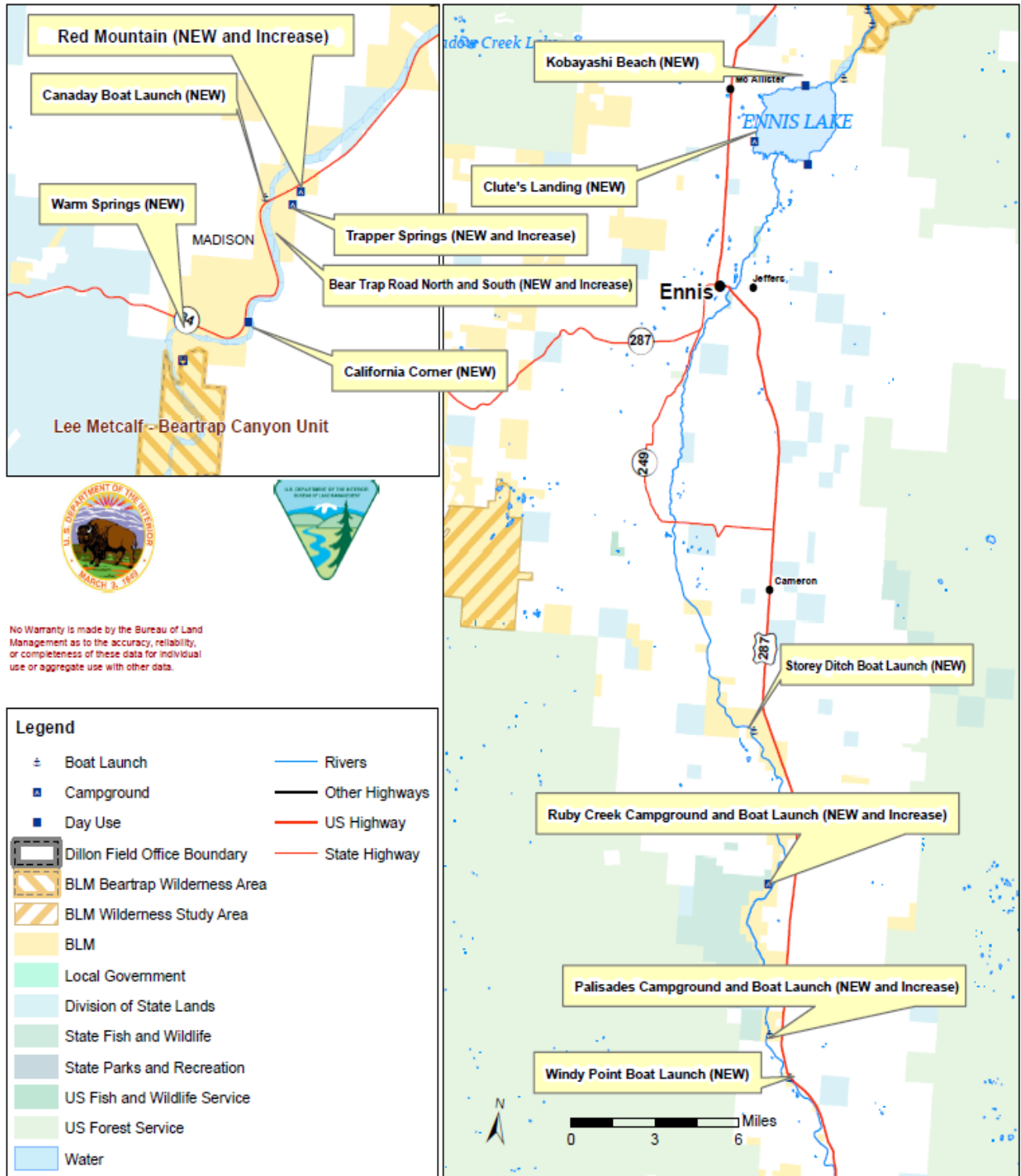
The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Dillon Field Office (DFO) has prepared this business plan to meet the criteria defined in the “Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, 2004” (FLREA). The BLM originally began collecting recreational fees for the use of public lands under the authority of the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of 1976. The FLREA now provides the BLM with the authority to collect a Standard and Expanded Amenity Fee for sites and services that provide direct benefits to individuals and groups. Standard amenity fees cover BLM federal recreational lands while Expanded amenity fees cover specialized outdoor recreation sites and services. FLREA authorizes the BLM to locally retain collected Standard and Expanded Amenity Fees and outlines how revenues may be used for things such as facility repair, facility maintenance, facility enhancement, interpretation, visitor information, visitor services, visitor needs assessments, signs, habitat restoration, law enforcement related to public use and recreation, and operating or capital costs directly associated with the Recreation and Visitor Services Program.

FLREA guidelines require that each fee program have a business plan which thoroughly discusses fees and explains how fees are consistent with the criteria set forth in FLREA and other agency directives. Business plans assist management in determining appropriate fee rates, outline the cost of administering fee programs, and identify priorities for future fee program expenditures. The primary purpose of the plan is to serve as public notification of the objectives for use of recreation fee revenues and to provide the public an opportunity to comment on these objectives.

The Madison River Recreation Fee Program 2024 Business Plan was developed by the DFO while identifying that additional services may be needed to support a quality recreation experience, or that previous recreation fees were not adequate given use demands and need for services at some of our remote developed recreation sites. Costs for general maintenance and daily operations of these sites is increasing annually. In addition, there has been a sharp increase in recreation use of these sites over the past five years. Increasing operational costs and more visitor pressure has highlighted the need for year-round maintenance of these sites, as well as required supplemental staff presence to provide adequate visitor services and amenities.

The data used to analyze and prepare this business plan was obtained through internal BLM tracking and accounting mechanisms such as the Recreation Management Information System (RMIS), Collections and Billing Systems (CBS), Federal Business Management System (FBMS), and other locally generated recreation and visitor use tracking systems. For more detailed information, please contact the BLM DFO. Some of the additional data may be subject to Privacy Act requirements.

2024 Madison River Recreation Fee Program



Recreation Sites	Fee Structure	Amenities
BLM DFO Campgrounds		
Red Mountain Campground	Fee Increase	Expanded Amenity
Trapper Springs Campground/Pavilion	Fee Increase	Expanded Amenity
Bear Trap Road North Campground	Fee Increase	Expanded Amenity
Bear Trap Road South Campground	Fee Increase	Expanded Amenity
Ruby Creek Campground	Fee Increase	Expanded Amenity
Palisades Campground	Fee Increase	Expanded Amenity
Day Use Fees		
Warm Springs	New Day Use Fee	Expanded Amenity
California Corner	New Day Use Fee	Expanded Amenity
Canaday Boat Launch	New Day Use Fee	Expanded Amenity
Red Mountain and Trapper Springs	New Day Use Fee	Expanded Amenity
Bear Trap Road North, and Bear Trap Road South	New Day Use Fee	Standard Amenity
Palisades Boat Launch	New Day Use Fee	Expanded Amenity
Ruby Creek Boat Launch	New Day Use Fee	Expanded Amenity
Storey Ditch Boat Launch	New Day Use Fee	Standard Amenity
Kobayashi Beach	New Day Use Fee	Expanded Amenity
Clute's Landing	New Day Use Fee	Standard Amenity
Windy Point Boat Launch	New Day Use Fee	Expanded Amenity

Background and Authorities

The DFO will use a combination of Standard and Expanded amenity authorities to justify the collection of fees at newly established and existing fee sites. Standard fee sites may be upgraded to Expanded fee sites should increasing visitation reveal the need for improved visitor amenities. These proposed fees will also support improved visitor safety and experiences.

Standard Amenities

Except as limited by subsection (d-Limitations of Recreation Fees-16 U.S. Code § 6802 - Recreation fee authority), the Secretary of the Interior may charge a standard amenity recreation fee for Federal recreational lands and waters under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, but only at the following:

- A. A National Conservation Area
- B. National Volcanic Monument
- C. A destination visitor or interpretive center that provides a broad range of interpretive services, programs, and media
- D. An area -
 - a. that provides significant opportunities for outdoor recreation.
 - b. that has substantial Federal investments.
 - c. where fees can be efficiently collected; and
 - d. that contains all the following amenities:
 - (i) Designated developed parking
 - (ii) A permanent toilet facility
 - (iii) A permanent trash receptacle
 - (iv) Interpretive sign, exhibit, or kiosk
 - (v) Picnic tables
 - (vi) Security services

Expanded Amenities

Except as limited by subsection (d-Limitations of Recreation Fees-16 U.S. Code § 6802 - Recreation fee authority), the Secretary of the Interior may charge an expanded amenity recreation fee, either in addition to a standard amenity fee or by itself, at Federal recreational lands and waters under the jurisdiction the Bureau of Land Management, but only for the following facilities or services:

- A. Use of developed campgrounds that provide at least a majority of the following:
 - a. Tent or trailer spaces
 - b. Picnic tables
 - c. Drinking water
 - d. Access roads
 - e. The collection of the fee by an employee or agent of the Federal land management agency
 - f. Reasonable visitor protection
 - g. Refuse containers
 - h. Toilet facilities
 - i. Simple devices for containing a campfire
- B. Use of highly developed boat launches with specialized facilities or services such as mechanical or hydraulic boat lifts or facilities, multi-lane paved ramps, paved parking,

- restrooms, and other improvements such as boarding floats, loading ramps, or fish cleaning stations
- C. Rental of cabins, boats, stock animals, lookouts, historic structures, group day-use or overnight sites, audio tour devices, portable sanitation devices, binoculars, or other equipment
 - D. Use of hookups for electricity, cable, or sewer
 - E. Use of sanitary dump stations
 - F. Participation in an enhanced interpretive program or special tour
 - G. Use of reservation services
 - H. Use of transportation services
 - I. Use of areas where emergency medical or first-aid services are administered from facilities staffed by public employees or employees under a contract or reciprocal agreement with the Federal Government
 - J. Use of developed swimming sites that provide at least a majority of the following:
 - a. Bathhouse with showers and flush toilets
 - b. Refuse containers
 - c. Picnic areas
 - d. Paved parking
 - e. Attendants, including lifeguards
 - f. Floats encompassing the swimming area
 - g. Swimming deck

Authorities

The authorities and regulations guiding this business plan are:

- **The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976** (Public Law 94-579), 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 authorizes the BLM to manage the use of the public lands through permits.
- **Section 315 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 1996**, established the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program (Public Law 104-134) as a 3-year pilot program, which authorized the BLM to keep recreation fees collected and expend them within the guidelines of the law. Public Law 106-291 extended the authorization for the program through September 30, 2004, until enactment of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA).
- **The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004** (Public Law 108-447) repealed applicable portions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and replaced BLM’s authority to collect recreational fees. This 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 are collected, and directs how BLM will manage and utilize these revenues.

- **Code of Federal Regulations, Title 43, Part 2930 (43 CFR 2930)**, contains the regulations governing BLM’s recreation permitting programs. 43 CFR, Subpart 2933.11 contains BLM’s authority to issue recreation use permits. It states that, “You must obtain a Recreation Use Permit for individual or group use of fee areas. These are sites where BLM provides or administers specialized facilities, equipment, or services related to outdoor recreation. These sites may have specific uses and time periods. BLM will post these uses and limits at the entrance to the area or site and provide this information in the local BLM office with jurisdiction over the area or site. The public may contact a BLM office for permit information when planning visits.”
- **BLM Recreation Permit Administration Handbook (H-2930-1)** explains how the BLM implements its recreation permit and fee program. Chapter 2, page 70, states: “Recreation use permits (RUPs) are issued for short-term recreation use of specialized sites, facilities, equipment, or services furnished at federal expense. Most often, the BLM uses RUPs to authorize individual and group use of recreation facilities, also known as fee sites. RUPs are the fee envelopes (BLM Form 1370-036) used at campgrounds to collect day-use fees. RUPs may also be used at such facilities as group shelters or boat launch areas to collect any day-use fees charged. RUPs may be issued without an associated fee, as a way of allocating use of an area.”
- **BLM Manual 2930 – Recreation Permits and Fees**
- **BLM Manual 2930-1 – Recreation Permit and Fee Administration** – describes how the BLM implements the recreation fee program.
- **BLM Information Bulletin No. 2019-056 – Recreation Fee Revenue Spending Plans and Accomplishment Report**
- **BLM Manual 1105 – Donations, Solicitations, and Fundraising**

The BLM strives to manage recreation and visitor services to serve diverse outdoor recreation demands 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 American people and their communities are to:

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

This business plan will assist the DFO in meeting these recreation and visitor service goals.

Management Plans

Recreational fees are critical to our ability to meet national and regional recreation program goals. The following two goals were developed because of public comment received during the preparation of the Record of Decision and Approved Dillon Resource Management Plan, 2006.

They help guide the direction of the recreation program and determine priorities for fee collection and spending.

Goal 1

Provide a diverse array of quality, resource-based recreation opportunities while protecting and interpreting the resource values, providing educational opportunities, minimizing user conflicts, and promoting public safety.

Goal 2

Develop and maintain appropriate recreational facilities, balancing public demand, protection of Public Land resources, and fiscal responsibility.

The Lower Madison Recreation Area Management Plan (LM RAMP) EA #MT-050-01-012, signed February 2003, addressed, and analyzed recreation impacts in the Lower Madison Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA), while providing the DFO with management guidance. The LM RAMP discussed recreation fees in several sections throughout the EA. Day Use Fees for the Lower Madison SRMA was one of the main focuses of Alternative B. This alternative was not selected, however, the proposed action- Alternative A (which was selected and approved), also included guidance for implementing day use fees. On page 14, section 2.2.7. User Fees and Permits, it states,

- If operations and maintenance costs continue to exceed revenue, BLM would begin collecting fees for day use at Warm Springs Boat Launch and/or any day use areas within the Madison River corridor.

It goes on to state; “Warm Springs is the planning area’s most heavily used site, and it requires more maintenance and management effort than any other site. The BLM would not collect day use fees at this site unless they are sure that they would not drive that use to other undeveloped non-fee sites.” The BLM has improved, hardened, and developed these areas since that time. BLM will be implementing day use fees throughout the 7-mile corridor as well as the 4 sites along the upper Madison and the 7 sites in the vicinity of Ennis Lake/Lower Madison River.

At present there is no Upper Madison SRMA RAMP drafted or approved but one may be needed for future operations as visitation increases and impacts become more widespread.

Some visitors may be displaced by a day use fee, but the Upper/Lower Madison SRMA simply cannot continue to operate without implementing fees. Visitor pressure has grown substantially over the last 20 years. Operations and maintenance costs continue to climb with inflation and age of facilities at recreation sites. The Lower and Upper Madison is in dire need of additional staffing and maintenance to keep up with the continued increase in visitation.

Dillon Field Office Environmental Justice

Consistent with Department of Interior and BLM priorities, the BLM Dillon Field Office seeks to achieve environmental justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility and make a difference in Montana communities through expanding recreational access and opportunities and providing for natural resource interpretation. This includes:

- Encourage, facilitate, and improve partnership with and access for youth, tribes, and underserved communities to public lands through recreation partnerships and collaborations.
- Improve public health and safety at developed recreation sites and areas by updating and modernizing infrastructure - including meeting accessibility standards for people with disabilities.
- Invite education, interpretation, and recreational access for all Americans, especially for diverse populations and those near urban areas to encourage enjoyment of BLM-managed public lands and waters.
- Collaborate with community members, government organizations, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, and other stakeholders to address environmental and health-related challenges for recreation management.
- Enhance understanding of environmental and health-related issues at the community level.
- Improve methods for identifying, addressing, tracking, and measuring progress toward achieving environmental justice; and develop and support youth education and outreach programs.

Introduction to the Field Office Recreation Fee Program

The BLM DFO is in southwest Montana bordered on the south by Idaho and the Continental Divide. The area is rural in nature with small communities throughout Madison and Beaverhead counties. Neighboring Gallatin County is the largest population center in southwest Montana, and it has been one of the fastest growing counties in the country for the past 20 years. Gallatin County has doubled in population from 2000 to 2020, and as of the 2020 census has around 119,000 residents. Many of the visitors to the BLM administered public lands in the DFO come from Gallatin County. Many of the more popular recreation sites are located along the Madison River within the Lower Madison Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) and the Upper Madison SRMA. In the Lower Madison SRMA, where the weather is relatively mild and warmer than the surrounding areas, hiking, fishing, and boating are possible nearly year-round, and camping is busier than neighboring areas during the shoulder seasons. From June through August the Lower Madison SRMA is a very popular area for “tubing”, or recreational floating. The Upper Madison SRMA is a blue-ribbon trout stream and one of the most popular locations for fly-fishing in the state of Montana. Throughout the Field Office there are ample opportunities for river recreation, hunting, hiking, horseback riding, and fishing as well as winter recreation opportunities such as snowmobiling, skiing, snowshoeing, and others.

Dillon Field Office Recreation Programs

The DFO manages a diverse and ever-changing recreation program throughout Beaverhead and Madison Counties. Revenue for the program is acquired through Recreation Fee Permits (RFPs) at fee sites and Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) throughout the field office.

Madison River Recreation Sites

The Madison River Recreation Sites (listed below) are located south of Hebgen Lake on the BLM lands along the Madison River down to Red Mountain Campground along the lower section. The lower Madison River sites are close in proximity to Bozeman and afford many day use opportunities, including camping. The upper Madison River sites are excellent locations for fishing day floats and are in close proximity to other opportunities for camping, fishing, and visits to Yellowstone National Park. Gallatin County, especially Bozeman, has seen unparalleled growth in the last 20 years and the Madison River has become a popular area for recreationists. The BLM DFO recreation sites provide direct public access to the Madison River and other water bodies, as well as picnic areas and shelter, overnight camping, the Bear Trap Wilderness/National Recreation Trail, developed restrooms and drinking water systems, a floating dock on Ennis Lake, and myriad scenic views.

- Red Mountain Campground
- Trapper Springs CG/Pavilion
- Ruby Creek Campground
- Ruby Creek Boat Launch
- Palisades Campground
- Palisades Boat Launch
- Bear Trap Road North and South
- Warm Springs
- California Corner
- Canaday Boat Launch
- Storey Ditch Boat Launch
- Kobayashi Beach
- Clute's Landing
- Windy Point Boat Launch

Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs)

The BLM may designate SRMAs to provide specific recreational opportunities, such as developing trailhead areas for hikers, mountain bikers, or off-road vehicles. DFO manages nine SRMAs where recreation is the priority management objective. Table 1 summarizes the SRMAs within the DFO and identifies the primary recreation opportunities managed in each area.

Special Recreation Management Area	Primary Recreation Opportunities
Axolotl Lakes	Semi-primitive non-motorized summer recreation use, and both motorized and non-motorized winter use
Big Sheep Creek	Semi-primitive recreation, semi-primitive camping
Centennial Mountains	Primitive and semi-primitive, non-motorized recreation
East Fork Blacktail Deer Creek	Primitive and semi-primitive, non-motorized recreation, with limited camping
Lower Big Hole	River recreation, day use, and semi-primitive camping
Lower Madison	Day use, water-based recreation at Ennis Lake, wilderness opportunities in Bear Trap Canyon, non-motorized, river-based recreation with semi-developed camping opportunities along the Lower Madison River
Ruby Mountains	Primitive and semi-primitive non-motorized recreation
South Pioneers	Motorized recreation, mountain biking, day use
Upper Madison	Non-motorized river recreation use, semi-developed camping opportunities

Table 1: Management Objectives of Special Recreation Areas within the Dillon Field Office

Special Designation Areas

The DFO also manages several specially designated areas that include Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns (ACECs), National Trails, and Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs).

Specially Designated Areas	
Axolotl Lakes WSA	Beaverhead Rock ACEC
Bell-Limekiln Canyon WSA	Block Mountain ACEC
Blacktail Mountains WSA	Blue Lake ACEC
Centennial Mountains WSA	Centennial Mountains ACEC
East Fork of Blacktail Deer Creek WSA	Centennial Sandhills ACEC
Farlin Creek WSA	Everson Creek ACEC
Henneberry Ridge WSA	Muddy/Big Sheep Creek ACEC

Hidden Creek Pasture WSA	Virginia City ACEC
Ruby Mountains WSA	

Table 2: Summary of specially designated areas and the special values associated with each

Description of DFO Existing and Proposed Fee Sites

NorthWestern Energy fulfills its Project 2188 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license responsibilities for operating its nine hydropower developments (eight hydroelectric-generating facilities and one storage reservoir) on the Missouri and Madison Rivers in Montana. Through a unique collaborative program, NorthWestern Energy and its agency and private partners created the River Fund and are cost sharing to provide recreation opportunities and services in this river corridor well beyond the requirements of the Project 2188 License. More specifically than the increase in visitation over the past 20 years, DFO recreation sites along the Madison River have experienced an acute surge in visitor pressure these last five years. Table 3 summarizes Total Visits and Visitor Days Per Site reported by the DFO in the NorthWestern Energy Missouri-Madison 2022 Recreation Visitor Use Counts. Almost every location is seeing higher visitor day numbers, with a total increase in days of nearly 30% since 2017.

Madison River Recreation sites are patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and rangers, and when necessary, staff coordinates with Madison County Sheriff’s Department to enhance public safety support and enforcement through visitor contacts.

Recreation Site	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022
Windy Point Boat Launch	5,867	5,627	n/a	8,023	9,091	7,636
Palisades Recreation Area	8,132	8,586	7,906	11,120	10,643	8,258
Ruby Creek Campground	2,947	2,797	n/a	5,800	3,809	3,923
Ruby Creek Boat Launch	4,107	3,885	n/a	5,734	5,565	5,732
Storey Ditch Boat Launch	4,242	4,199	n/a	6,984	7,286	7,505
Kobayashi Beach	15,078	16,435	15,642	18,596	15,812	15,604
Clute’s Landing	6,091	6,853	6,734	5,589	4,738	4,264
Warm Springs Creek Access	34,145	37,082	37,617	67,440	61,014	58,347
California Corner	6,829	7,416	7,523	25,163	21,597	21,590
Canaday Boat Launch	7,853	8,529	8,652	10,711	7,630	8,169
Red Mountain Campground	7,762	6,910	8,027	17,050	9,611	8,500
Bear Trap Road	4,439	4,821	4,890	3,458	2,535	2,917
Trapper Springs	3,073	3,337	3,386	5,767	4,413	4,668
TOTALS	110,565	116,177	100,377	191,435	163,744	157,113

Table 3: Dillon Field Office Specific Site Visitor Days Per Site on Madison River. Numbers are reported as traffic (number of vehicles) volume. N/A notations indicate that data is not available those years.

Current Fee Season

Fees are charged at the BLM DFO recreation sites from May 1 to September 30 each year. No fees are charged from October 1 to April 30; however, all sites remain open for visitor use. Fee collection time periods remain flexible and may be adjusted should future needs become evident. For example, the collection period may be extended on the front and back end based on factors such as weather conditions, increasing demand, operational requirements, or staffing availability. This flexibility provides the DFO discretion to charge recreation fees earlier or later in the year based upon “on-the-ground” conditions and management considerations. The goal is to balance standardizing fee seasons across sites for simplicity while also retaining the ability to adjust operations as required. Off-season use has increased, particularly during the shoulder seasons (spring and fall) and the ability to provide visitor services during these times is difficult without the presence of staff and volunteers, both of which are funding dependent. Any modifications to fee collection seasons would be posted publicly at recreation site entrances and online.

Reservation System and Options

The DFO will use various e-commerce technologies, as directed in BLM Instruction Memorandum 2022-010, to provide recreation visitors opportunities to find, reserve, and pay for campsites and day use within the field office. Most of these options are provided through the interagency reservation service Recreation.gov. If the DFO decides to add additional reservation services or other types of e-commerce options available in the future, an expanded amenity fee 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. For visitors who wish not to pay the expanded amenity fee of reservation services, the field office will attempt to continue to provide a blend of reservation and first-come first served options at each of the campgrounds and day use areas. Other payment options may be considered in the future as software technology develops; onsite credit card payment or scan/pay systems are examples.

Existing DFO Fee Sites

Palisades Recreation Area



Photograph 1: Palisades Recreation Area

Palisades Recreation Area is located along the Upper Madison River about 25 miles south of Ennis Montana. Fees are collected for expanded amenities at Palisades Recreation Area from May 1 through September 30.

Palisades is popular for overnight camping, fishing, and river access. Use spiked in 2020 and has since returned to pre-Covid numbers.

Visitor use is usually highest in July and slowly decreases from there.

Palisades offers 12 designated camp sites that are currently available on a first come-first-serve basis. Day-use expanded amenities include an informational kiosk, fee station, vault latrines, garbage collection, picnic tables, drinking water, and fire rings. The area is patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and operation and maintenance of the sites is supported by BLM seasonal and permanent staff.

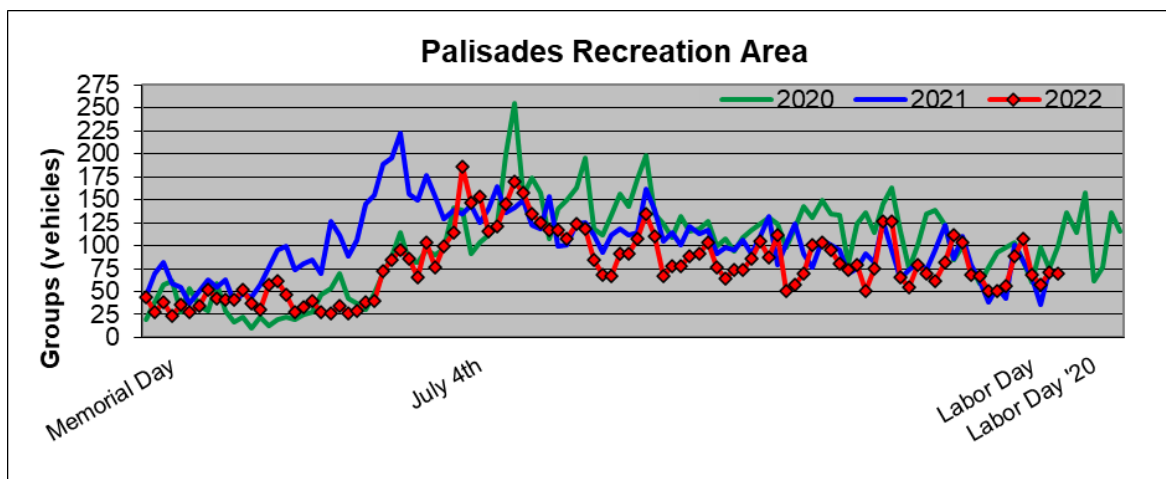


Figure 1: Palisades Recreation Area

Red Mountain Campground

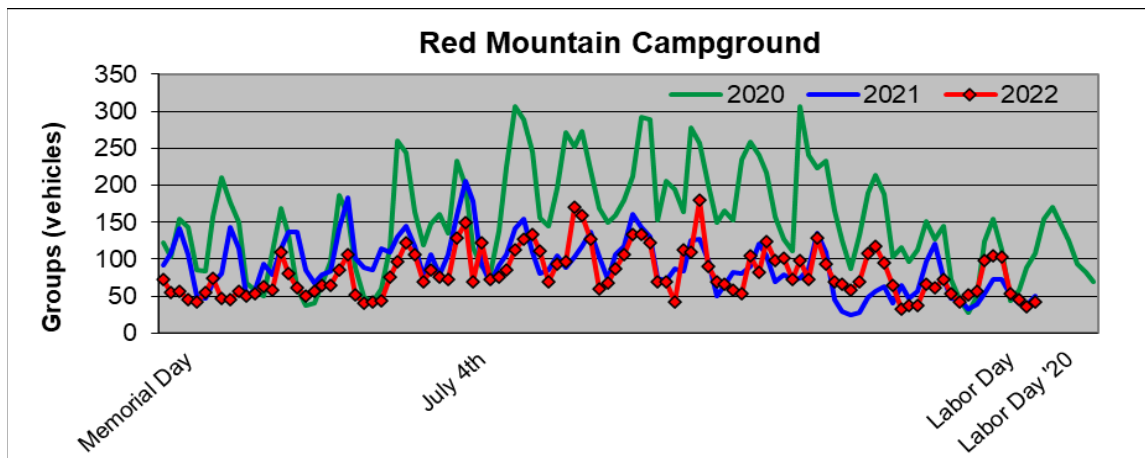


Photograph 3: Red Mountain Campground

Red Mountain Campground is located along the Lower Madison River about 23 miles north of Ennis Montana and east of Norris Montana. Fees are collected for expanded amenities at Red Mountain Campground from May 1 through September 30.

Red Mountain Campground has a camp host site and is popular for overnight camping, fishing,

and river access. Red Mountain offers 17 designated camp sites that are a mix of first come-first serve and reservation system (Recreation.gov). The site has day use parking, an informational kiosk, fee station, vault latrines, garbage collection, picnic tables, drinking water, and fire rings. The area is patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the sites is supported by BLM seasonal and permanent staff.



Trapper Springs



Photograph 4: Trapper Springs

Trapper Springs is located along the Lower Madison River about 23 miles north of Ennis Montana and east of Norris Montana, across from Red Mountain. Fees are collected for expanded amenities at Trapper Springs from May 1 through September 30.

Trapper Springs has a group pavilion and is popular for its overnight camping, fishing, and river access. Use spiked in 2020 and has since returned to pre-Covid numbers. Visitor use is usually highest in July and slowly decreases from there. Trapper Springs offers 15 designated campsites that are available on a first come-first serve basis and on a reservation basis for the pavilion (Recreation.gov). The site has day-use expanded amenities including an informational kiosk, fee station, vault latrines, garbage collection, picnic tables, drinking water, and fire rings. The area is patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the sites is supported by BLM seasonal and permanent staff.

Trapper Springs has a group pavilion and is

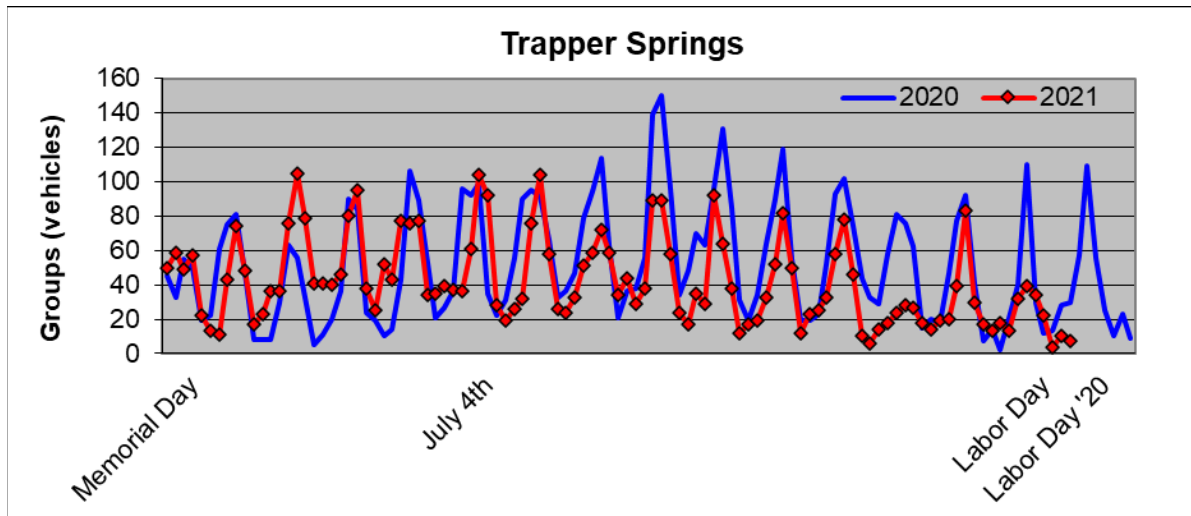


Figure 4: Trapper Springs

Bear Trap North and South



Photograph 5: Bear Trap North and South

Bear Trap North and South are located along the Lower Madison River about 23 miles north of Ennis Montana and east of Norris Montana. Bear Trap South runs along the Bear Trap Road and river south of Trapper Springs and Bear Trap North runs along the river North and west of the river. Fees are collected for expanded amenities at Bear Trap North and South from May 1 through September 30.

Bear Trap North and South are popular for overnight camping, fishing, and river access. Bear Trap North and South offer 12 designated camp sites on a first

come-first serve basis. The site has day-use standard amenities, an informational kiosk, fee station, vault latrines, garbage collection, picnic tables, drinking water, and fire rings. The area is patrolled by BLM Law Enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the sites is supported by BLM seasonal and permanent staff.

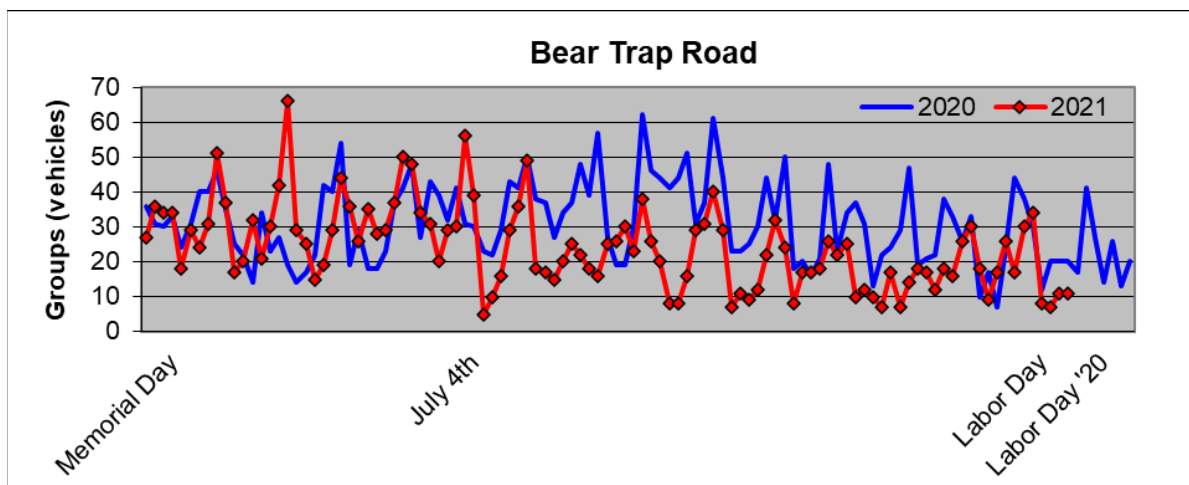


Figure 5: Bear Trap Road

Proposed New DFO Fee Sites

Warm Springs Creek Access



Photograph 6: Warm Springs Creek Access

Warm Springs Creek Access is located along the Lower Madison River approximately five miles east of Norris, Montana. It has become a very popular location for recreationists floating the river by innertube, hiking, picnicking, scenic viewing, float fishing the lower Madison, and whitewater rafters floating the Bear Trap

Wilderness. Visitor use increases once the area and water warm (around July 4th) and on the weekends. There is a vault toilet, picnic tables, boat ramp, reusable bags for trash, and garbage disposal on site. Warm Springs is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of expanded fees, construction of a safer pedestrian corridor between sites would be prioritized. An electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov would be installed for future fee collection and the need for a permit system would be assessed.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include a renovated boat ramp and installation of garbage receptacles.

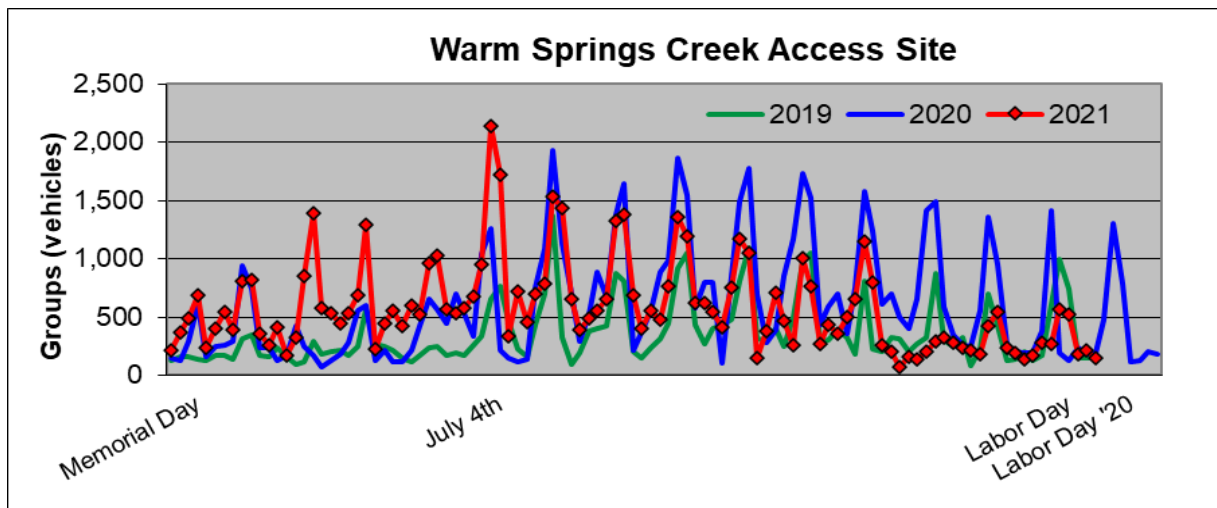


Figure 6: Warm Springs Creek Access

California Corner



Photograph 7: California Corner

California Corner is located along the Lower Madison River approximately five miles east of Norris, Montana. It has become a very popular location serving as an overflow site from Warm

Springs Creek Access and for recreationalists floating the river by innertube, hiking, picnicking, scenic viewing, float fishing the lower Madison, and whitewater rafters floating the Bear Trap Wilderness. Visitor use increases once the area and water warm (around July 4th) and on the weekends. There is a vault toilet, boat ramp, and garbage disposal on site. California Corner is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of expanded fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov would be installed for future fee collection and the need for a permit system would be assessed.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and the installation of the vault toilet.

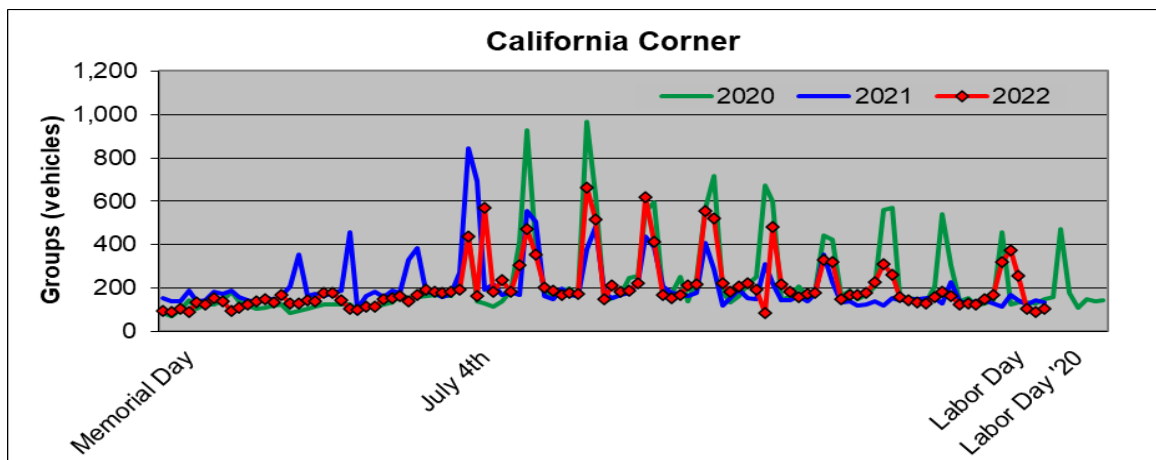


Figure 7: California Corner

Canaday Boat Launch



Photograph 8: Canaday Boat Launch

Canaday Boat Launch is located along the Lower Madison River approximately six miles east of Norris, Montana. It has become a very popular location for recreational activities including floating the river by innertube, hiking, picnicking, scenic viewing, angling, and whitewater rafters enjoying the Bear

Trap Wilderness. Visitor use increases once the area and water warm (around July 4th) and on the weekends. There are two vault toilets, a boat ramp, reusable bags for trash, and garbage disposal on site. Canaday Boat Launch is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of expanded fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov would be installed for future fee collection.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of the parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and installation of second vault toilet.

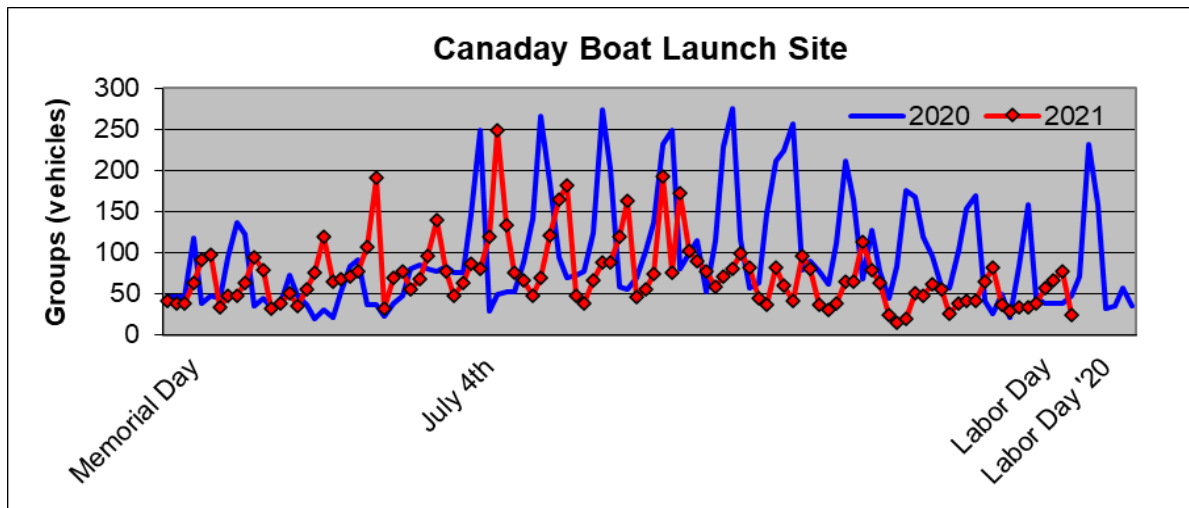


Figure 8: Canaday Boat Launch

Kobayashi Beach



Photograph 9: Kobayashi Beach

Kobayashi Beach is located along the Ennis Lake approximately three miles east of McAllister, Montana. It has become a very popular location for recreational activities such as floating the lake, picnicking, scenic viewing, lake fishing, swimming, and the use of the beach area. Visitor use increases once the area and water warm (around July 4th) and on the weekends. There are two vault toilets, a

boat ramp, boat docks, and garbage disposal on site. Kobayashi is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of expanded amenity fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov would be installed for future fee collection.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and installation of a new dock system.

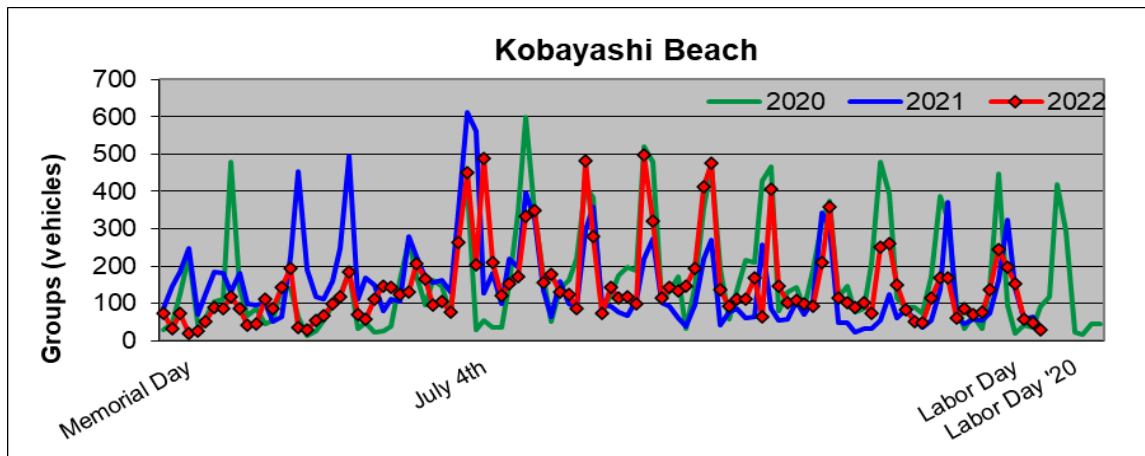


Figure 9: Kobayashi Beach

Clute's Landing



Photograph 10: Clute's Landing

Clute's Landing is located along the Ennis Lake approximately two miles southeast of McAllister, Montana. It has become a very popular location for recreational activities such as floating the lake, picnicking, scenic viewing, and lake fishing. Visitor use increases on the weekends. There is a vault toilet, a boat ramp, two free campsites above the lake, and garbage disposal

on site. Clute's Landing is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of standard amenity fees, an electronic pay station or "Scan and Pay" through Recreation.gov would be installed for future fee collection.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and installation of a new dock system.

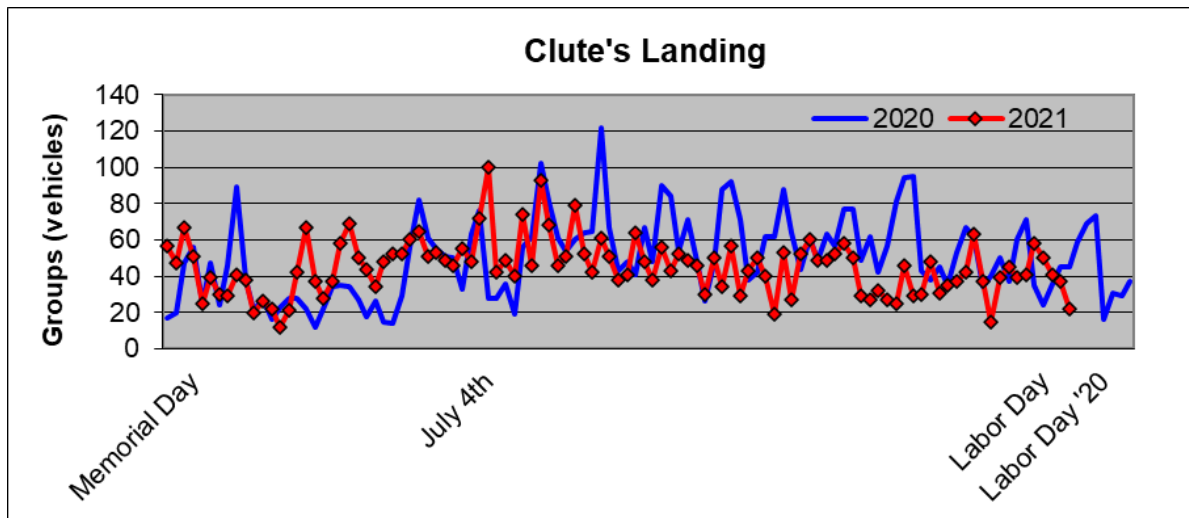


Figure 10: Clute's Landing

Storey Ditch



Photograph 11: Storey Ditch

Storey Ditch is located along the Upper Madison River approximately 15 miles south of Ennis, Montana. It is a very popular location for river access for anglers and boaters. There is a vault toilet, a dirt boat ramp, gravel parking area, picnic tables, and garbage disposal on site. Storey Ditch is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is

conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of standard amenity fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov would be installed for future fee collection.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of the parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and the installation of a vault toilet.

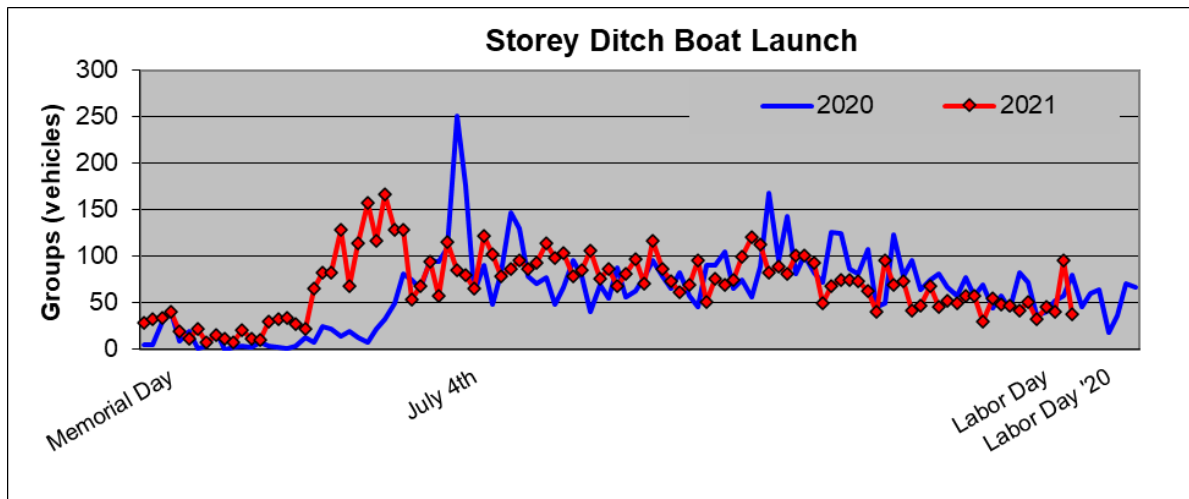


Figure 11: Storey Ditch Boat Launch

Windy Point Boat Launch



Photograph 12: Windy Point Boat Launch

Windy Point is also located along the Upper Madison River approximately 29 miles south of Ennis, Montana. It is a very popular location for river access for anglers and boaters. There is a vault toilet, multi-lane boat ramp, gravel parking area, picnic tables, and garbage disposal on site. Windy Point is patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by

seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of expanded amenity fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov would be installed for future fee collection.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of parking area, installation of garbage receptacles, and the installation of the vault toilet.

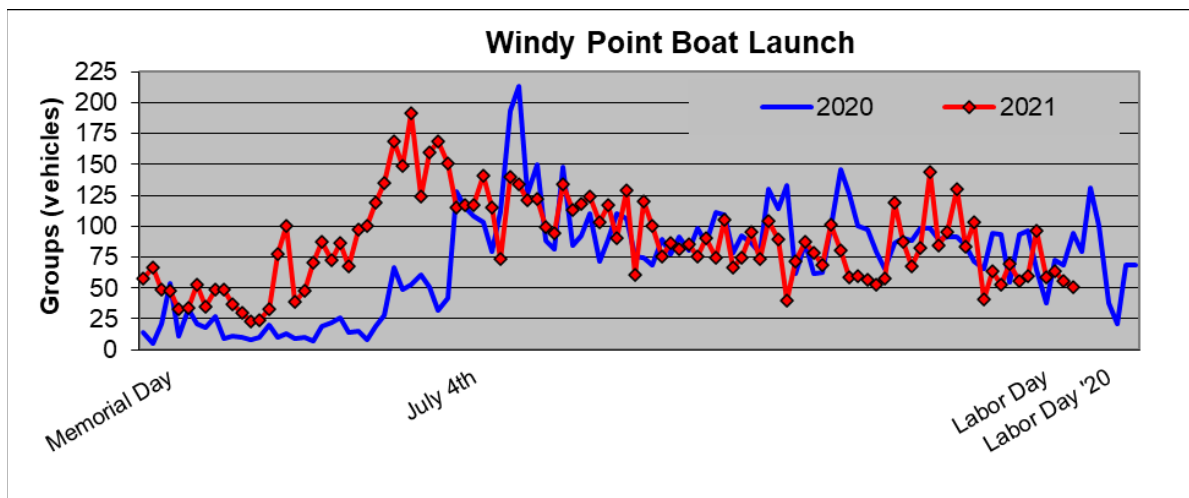


Figure 10: Windy Point Boat Launch

Red Mountain, Trapper Springs, Bear Trap Road North, Bear Trap Road South Day Use

Red Mountain, Trapper Springs, (expanded amenities) and Bear Trap Road North and Bear Trap Road South (standard amenities) are camping and day-use sites along the Lower Madison River. It has become popular location for overflow from Warm Springs Creek Access, California Corner, and Red Mountain Campground. Recreational activities include floating the river by innertube, hiking, picnicking, scenic viewing, angling, and whitewater rafters enjoying the Bear Trap Wilderness. There are vault toilets, parking areas, and a garbage disposal at these locations. These sites are patrolled by BLM law enforcement and the operation and maintenance of the site is conducted by seasonal and permanent staff. Upon approval of day use fees, an electronic pay station or “Scan and Pay” through Recreation.gov would be installed for future fee collection.

New improvements/upgrades completed over the past five years include renovation of parking areas, a new well at Trapper Springs, and installation of garbage receptacles.

Proposed Modification to DFO Recreation Fee Rates

The DFO is proposing to raise existing campsite fees at campgrounds currently charging fees to levels consistent with other camping areas in the region, establish a Madison River Day Use season pass, and begin collecting day use fees at recreation sites. Current and proposed fee rates, in addition to the amenities that each site provides, is summarized in Table 4.

Recreation Sites	Fee Structure	Amenities
BLM DFO Campgrounds		
Red Mountain Campground Expanded Amenity	<p>Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles</p> <p>Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles</p> <p>5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles</p>	Camp host, tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee or agent, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities.
Trapper Springs Campground/Pavilion Expanded Amenity	<p>Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles</p> <p>Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles</p> <p>5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles</p>	Group use pavilion with stone hearth BBQ, picnic area, group use, tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee or agent, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities.
Bear Trap Road North Campground Expanded Amenity	<p>Current: \$8 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles</p> <p>Proposed: \$15 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles</p> <p>5 years after initial implementation:</p>	Tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee or agent, reasonable visitor protection,

	\$25 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles	vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities.
Bear Trap Road South Campground Expanded Amenity	Current: \$8 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles Proposed: \$15 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles 5 years after initial implementation: \$25 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles	Tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee or agent, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities.
Ruby Creek Campground Expanded Amenity	Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles 5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles	Camp host, tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee or agent, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities.
Palisades Campground Expanded Amenity	Current: \$12 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles Proposed: \$20 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles 5 years after initial implementation: \$30 per night, \$5 per additional vehicles	Tent and trailer spaces, picnic tables, drinking water, access roads, collection of fees by BLM employee or agent, reasonable visitor protection, vault latrines, fire pits, and accessible facilities.
New Day Use Fees		
Warm Springs Expanded Amenity	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$12/vehicle \$60/Annual Pass	Multiple lane paved boat launch, several developed hand launch spots, paved designated developed parking, vault latrines, kiosk, picnic tables, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff.
California Corner Expanded Amenity	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$12/vehicle \$60/Annual Pass	Multiple lane paved boat launch, designated developed parking, vault latrines, kiosk, picnic tables, security service via BLM staff, and accessible facilities.
Canaday Expanded Amenity	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$12/vehicle \$60/Annual Pass	Raised boat launch, designated developed parking, vault latrines, picnic tables, kiosk and interpretive panels, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff.

Bear Trap Road North, Bear Trap Road South Standard Amenity	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$12/vehicle \$60/Annual Pass	River access sites, designated developed parking, kiosk, vault latrines, picnic tables, drinking water, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff.
Palisades, and Ruby Creek Expanded Amenity	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$12/vehicle \$60/Annual Pass	River access sites, boat launch designated developed parking, kiosk, vault latrines, picnic tables, drinking water, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff.
Red Mountain, Trapper Springs Expanded Amenity	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$12/vehicle \$60/Annual Pass	River access sites, designated developed parking, kiosk, vault latrines, picnic tables, drinking water, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff.
Story Ditch Day Use area Standard Amenity	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$12/vehicle \$60/Annual Pass	River access site, vault latrine, gravel boat launch, parking, picnic tables, and security services via BLM staff
Kobayashi Beach Expanded Amenity	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$12/vehicle \$60/Annual Pass	Paved boat launch, docks, paved designated developed parking, vault latrines, kiosk, picnic tables, accessible facilities, and security services via BLM staff
Clute's Landing Standard Amenity	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$12/vehicle \$60/Annual Pass	Concrete boat launch, designated developed parking, vault latrine, kiosk, picnic tables, free camping, and security services via BLM staff
Windy Point Day Use area Expanded Amenity	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass 5 years after initial implementation: \$12/vehicle \$60/Annual Pass	River access site, vault latrine, multi lane boat launch, parking, picnic tables

Table 4: DFO Current and Proposed Recreation Fees and the amenities that each recreation site provides.

Operating

Yearly operating expenses are estimated but unexpected expenses that are required throughout the year - drinking water systems, for example. As described below, extensive infrastructure and staffing is required to support these highly valued recreation opportunities that stretch across two southwestern Montana counties. Costs associated with operating and maintaining the infrastructure and visitor amenities associated with these sites include labor, vehicles, service contracts, supplies, and maintenance operations. Table 5 summarizes the approximate annual operations and maintenance budget. Values are approximate because

actual spending can vary each year based upon maintenance needs, visitor use, ability to recruit and retain temporary staff, and equipment costs.

Staff	Work Month Cost	Work Months	Cost
2 Career Seasonal Park Rangers-GS 7	\$6,175	20	\$123,500
Career Seasonal River Ranger GS-7	\$6,175	10	\$61,750
4 Seasonal Park Rangers GS-7	\$4,984	24	\$119,616
2 Seasonal Maintenance Workers WG-5	\$3,774	12	\$45,288
Law Enforcement	\$9,500	6	\$57,000
Law Enforcement (Detailers for Madison) with Per Diem	\$13,500	1	\$13,500
Engineering/ Force Account	\$8,500	2	\$17,000
Operation and Maintenance Costs (estimated)			
Critical Expenses		Cost	
Vault Latrine Pumping Contract		\$50,000	
Garbage Collections/Solid Waste Fees		\$20,000	
Winterization of Water System		\$2,200	
Campground Host Reimbursement		\$9,000	
Road Maintenance		\$5,000	
Cleaning Supplies, Toilet Paper		\$10,000	
Vehicle Costs (fuel, repairs, etc..)		\$24,000	

Costs Table 5: DFO Developed Recreation Program Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs

Revenues

The Developed Recreation Program within the DFO is funded primarily through fees obtained from recreation users at the developed recreation sites (1232 funds), from SRPs for commercial uses of public lands within DFO, operation and maintenance support from Northwest Energy as part of their FERC license, and project specific funding from the River Fund Grant Program. Appropriated recreation program funding also provides for overall recreation staffing for the DFO which supports these sites, and additional appropriated funding provides for maintenance of facilities through the deferred and annual maintenance program. Currently, funds acquired through fees are used to maintain and operate the sites from which these funds are collected (i.e., Madison River recreation sites and rental cabins). Funds received from SRPs are used to operate and maintain recreation sites and the areas where the SRPs occur, and to manage commercial recreational use of the public lands. Funds received from Northwest Energy for operation and maintenance are restricted to the operation and maintenance of the Madison Recreation Sites that are included under the FERC license.

Fee Program			
Year	Northwestern Energy O&M Contributions	River Fund Grant	Revenue from Fees
2018	\$22,350.00	\$145,000.00	\$76,250.57
2019	\$40,675.00	\$0	\$80,127.25
2020	\$40,675.00	\$0	\$100,759.75
2021	\$42,325.00	\$75,450.00	\$119,497.39
2022	\$44,680.00	\$0	\$91,149.25
2023	\$48,919.00	\$20,000.00	\$109,770.93

Table 6: DFO Revenue for the Previous 5 Years

Priorities for Future Expenditures

The DFO Developed Recreation Program strives to maintain an overall positive fee balance. That is, a balance that provides for annual staffing and expenses, with a small positive balance to respond to unexpected expenses related to facilities or water system maintenance, or threats to public health and safety. These sites are not supported solely by recreation fees; as described above, some recreation and annual maintenance funding is also available to support the recreation use in these areas. These sites are highly developed; the use they experience is quality and consistent, and the number of amenities provided to ensure the public enjoys a superior recreation experience is exhaustive. The proposed fee increases would help to ensure that fee revenues support the expected level of visitor amenities and maintenance of all the facilities and water systems.

Priorities for the DFO Developed Recreation Fee Program would be to maintain and improve upon the current levels of visitor services currently provided and address on-going maintenance needs due to historic lack of staffing while covering the rising cost of operations. Visitor services that would be maintained/improved would include the following:

- Implementation of on-site digital fee pay stations that would increase compliance and minimize additional workload from new fee sites; on-site users often do not have cash and frequently request a digital pay option.
- Increased compliance checks for resource protection and visitor safety. Based upon regular monitoring, fee compliance is a necessary function at areas like these. Without some level of compliance attention, it is estimated that 30-40 percent of visitors (both day use and overnight) pay the required fees, and 60-70 percent do not.
- Increased public outreach to improve visitor safety and experiences.
- Regular maintenance of recreation facilities including pavilions, administration buildings, shade structures, drinking water systems, boat ramps, day-use areas, kiosks, signage, and parking areas.

Specific staffing needs that would be supported with proposed fee increases include two GS-7 Career Seasonal Park Rangers, one Career Seasonal GS-7 River Ranger, two WG-5 Seasonal Maintenance Workers, and 2 Career Seasonal GS-7 Park Rangers, all at the Madison River Recreation Sites to address ongoing maintenance needs and to provide the visitor services and safety necessary at these highly developed recreation sites. (Table 5).

The DFO Developed Recreation Program also has projects proposed over the next five years to address ongoing maintenance needs, improve visitor experiences, and to respond to increases in recreation use. Table (7) identifies proposed projects over the next five years and their estimated cost. These projects will be funded by a combination of deferred maintenance funding, River Fund Grants, and Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) funding.

Planned/Proposed/Implemented Projects	Funding	Cost
Implemented-Trapper springs Well Replacement (2023-2024)	Split FO funding and River Fund Grand	\$40,000
Implemented -Ruby Creek Road Chip Seal Project (2023)	GAOA	\$300,000
Implemented-Warm Springs Boat Launch replacement and Chip Seal Project (2023)	Split River fund Grant and GAOA	\$346,000
Construct and Install Lower Madison Barracks for Recreational Staff	Planned Fee Expenditure	\$3,000,000
Kiosk/Fee Station Upgrades	Deferred Maintenance, Planned Fee Expenditure	\$200,000
California Corner Parking Area Surfacing	Deferred Maintenance	\$800,000
Bear Trap Road Re-Surfacing	Deferred Maintenance	\$400,000
Trapper Springs Campsite Renovation and Expansions	Deferred Maintenance	\$400,000
Red Mountain Landscaping and Expansion	Planned Fee Expenditure	\$800,000
Lower Madison Riverbank Stabilization	Planned Fee Expenditure	\$300,000
Madison Recreation Site Kiosk Fee Station Replacements	Planned Fee Expenditure	\$200,000
Ruby Campground Water Renovation	Planned Fee Expenditure	\$175,000
Palisades Campground Road Surfacing	Deferred Maintenance	\$300,000

Table 7: Planned and Proposed Projects for the DFO Developed Recreation Program

Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates

The BLM is authorized to use either the Cost Recovery Fee Calculation Method or the Fair Market Value Fee Calculation Method to determine appropriate fees at recreation sites. The Cost Recovery Method assumes that fee revenues should cover the recreation sites’ operating costs. The Fair Market Value Fee Calculation Method compares fee rates to those charged by other area recreation sites that provide similar opportunities.

The DFO has chosen to use the Fair Market Value Fee Calculation Method to ensure reasonably affordable rates for the region while allowing fees to support labor, operations, and maintenance of these sites to the highest extent possible. Table 8 summarizes recreation fees within the region with amenities similar to those provided by the DFO Recreation Sites.

Recreation Sites	Fee Structure	Amenities
FWP Fishing Access Sites		
All MT FWP Fishing Access Sites/Campgrounds	\$12 per night or \$7 with valid MT fishing license	Boat launch at most, vault latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities
USFS RECREATION SITES		
Wade Lake Campground (USFS)	\$15 per night, Madison Ranger District currently	Boat launch, drinking water, vault latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, garbage
Hilltop Campground, Madison River Riverview Campground (CG)	\$15 per night	Vault latrines, drinking water, garbage, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities
Rainbow Point CG	\$20 per night plus \$8 surcharge for electrical hookups	Boat launch, drinking water, vault latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, garbage, electric hookups
Beavercreek Campground, Lonesome Hurst CG	\$20 per night	Drinking water, vault latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities
Spire Rock CG	\$16 per night Group use site \$30-45	Drinking water, latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, trash cans and group use facility.
Greek Creek CG, Langhor CG, Swan Creek CG, Moose Creek CG	\$20 per night first two vehicles are included in fee and a \$8.00/night fee for each additional vehicle	Drinking water, latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, trash cans.
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK CAMPGROUNDS		
Slough Creek and Pebble Creek Campgrounds	\$20 per night	vault latrines, drinking water, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, trash, and recycling

Mammoth Campground	\$25 per night	flush toilets, drinking water, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities, trash, and recycling
BLM Butte Field Office Campgrounds		
Chain of Lakes sites (White Sandy, Devil's Elbow, Log Gulch, Holter Lake)	\$16/ night per sleeping unit (tent, RV, etc.) Group use site \$80-140	Boat launch, drinking water, latrines, picnic tables, fire pits, accessible facilities
USFS RENTAL CABINS		
Vigilante Cabin (USFS)	\$50 per night	Drinking water, vault latrine, electric lights
Bloody Dick Cabin (USFS), Horse Prairie Cabin (USFS)	\$20 per night	Drinking water, vault latrine, wood stove
Canyon Creek Cabin (USFS)	\$20 per night	vault latrine, wood stove
Day Use Fees		
Chain of Lakes sites (White Sandy, Devil's Elbow, Log Gulch, Holter Lake)	\$5/vehicle per day \$40/Annual Pass	Boat launch, parking, latrines, picnic tables, accessible facilities
Canyon Ferry Sites	\$5-\$10/day, or \$50-\$100/season	Boat launch, parking, latrines, picnic tables, accessible facilities
Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument	\$5/watercraft per day and \$4/ person for overnight use	Boat launch, parking, latrines, picnic tables, accessible facilities
Montana State Parks	\$8/day Nonresident and residents who opted out vehicle registration fee	Boat launch, parking, latrines, picnic tables, accessible facilities

Table 8: Fair Market Value for Recreation Sites within the vicinity of the DFO.

Impacts from Charging and Not-Charging Recreation Fee Rates

The primary purpose of the proposed fees is to maintain and preserve the investment that the public has made into the DFO recreation sites and to provide the visitor amenities that are expected at developed recreation sites.

The proposed fees and fee increases would help to defray the cost of staffing for maintenance and visitor services, commensurate with significant recent increases in visitation and associated needs and pressures, as well as help offset the rising costs of operating these sites.

Impacts from Modifying Fees to Recreation Users

Benefits to Recreational Users

If fees were raised, current services and facility maintenance standards at the Madison River Recreation Sites would continue uninterrupted for recreational users. The modified fees would offset the rising costs of operating the program and additional revenues would be used to increase staffing which would better support visitor services and public safety. Specifically, hardened parking along the Lower Madison corridor would increase safety for drivers, pedestrians, and recreationists, and reduce user conflicts at boat launches.

Benefits to Local Economy

The Madison River has become a heavily used recreation destination in the last 10 years due to its blue-ribbon fishing and tepid waters perfect for tubing. These visitors purchase food, gas, lodging, and vehicle shuttle services in the small surrounding communities. Some visitors also utilize commercial outfitters to experience various recreational activities within the corridor.

Benefits to the Environment

Recreation experiences provide visitors the opportunities to connect to the Madison River ecosystem and develop a desire to become stewards of the resources. Additional revenue would be used to develop an interpretive program that would include educational signage, special programming, and volunteer opportunities, reducing negative impacts to resources associated with higher levels of visitation in the area.

Socioeconomic Impacts, including Low Income Populations and At-Risk Communities

The Upper Madison River draws visitors locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally and is located near some of the world's best-known recreation sites. Among anglers throughout the world, the Madison River is known as a premier blue-ribbon trout fishery. Implementing day use fees will have minimal impact on the ability of private boaters or commercial passengers to afford to recreate on the Upper Madison. \$5 is a minimal fee for the average visitor and would not greatly impact low-income populations that recreate on the Upper Madison. This fee is a minor part of the total cost of a river trip. There are also numerous bank fishing access locations along this segment for those lower income visitors who cannot afford a guided experience, broadening the inclusivity of this stretch of river.

The Lower Madison draws recreationists looking to experience the calm waters flowing from Ennis Lake and enjoy the social component of floating with large groups. \$5 is a nominal fee for the average visitor and would not greatly impact low-income populations that recreate on the Lower Madison. The fee is a small part of the total cost of a social float trip when other costs such as food, beverages, and fuel are considered.

The proposed day use fees are incremental and include a season pass option to reduce the burden for regular, local users. The DFO believes that this stepped fee increase will minimize the economic impacts to visitors while still allowing for increased staffing and maintenance activities. Additionally, the BLM does offer many fee-less areas, available on a year-round basis, which include less developed infrastructure and fewer services, but offer visitors to opportunity to enjoy their public lands for free.

Additionally, inclusivity is practiced through honoring and acceptance of the following:

- Department of Interior Fee Free Days
- Every Kid Outdoors Pass (EKO)
- America the Beautiful Pass (Pass and fee type dependent)
- Madison River Recreation Site Annual Pass

Impacts from Not Modifying Fees to Recreation Users

A failure to increase fees would lead to a continued heavy reliance on appropriated funding to support the public's river recreation opportunities. While the current funds can support the operations on the Madison River, not increasing fees would severely inhibit the ability to implement more improvements at sites. A disruption or decrease in the current level of services would have negative impacts on recreational users, the local economy, and the environment.

Negative Impacts to Recreational Users

Maintaining the current fee structure (e.g., no change in fees) at the DFO Madison River recreation sites support would result in a decrease in essential staffing, and deterioration in infrastructure and timely facility maintenance. Without additional staffing, some sites such as Warm Springs Creek Access, will become unsafe and could result in catastrophes with pedestrians and motor vehicles. Some necessary improvements at sites, such as Kobayashi Beach, have not been implemented and users are getting frustrated with the lack of work that is able to be performed at these sites. With appropriated funding, sometimes it takes years to complete necessary projects. Projects that have been necessary but difficult to complete due to lack of funding include comprehensive bank stabilization and replacement of the boat dock at Kobayashi Beach, and Red Mountain Campground landscaping and expansion.

Many of the improvements that are needed are very costly and would take years of scrimping funds to prepare for. If fee increases are not implemented, many of these projects will not be completed for years if funding even becomes available at all.

The list below provides examples of recent impacts to recreation users:

- Warm Springs and California Corner have seen record generating visitor numbers between 2020 and present, resulting in crowding, conflicts, and danger to pedestrians.
- Staff turnover has increased over the past few years, the ability to support volunteers has become more challenging, and management has more often had to deal reactively with daily emergencies such as cleanliness, watering, safety, and other trials based on higher visitation. Like many others in the area, the DFO Recreation Program has struggled with inadequate staffing levels and inability to hire short-term workers. That has limited the ability to perform routine and proactive maintenance and caused interruptions to services to be considered.
- Additionally, low staff numbers result in a lack of a consistent BLM presence at many of our developed recreation sites which encourages user conflicts and can lead to a rise in illicit activity.
- With the difficulties in hiring seasonals, the DFO has had to rely on contracts to clean toilets along the Madison River, resulting in decreased ability to adequately staff sites.

Without modifications to the existing fee structure, a continued lack of maintenance and decreased visitor services would occur and continue to worsen with the increase of operating costs over time. Deteriorating facilities due to lack of maintenance and reductions in visitor services will significantly reduce recreation experiences for the public. There may also be an increase in conflicts between user groups due to limited services, decline in public safety support, and a drain on funds because of the increased need for Law Enforcement partnerships.

Negative Impacts to Local Economy

Without increases to and implementation of fees, erosion of services, such as limited cleaning of sites, or limited development or improvements to facilities will occur. This could impact the recreation sector of the local economy in its entirety. Decreased quality of the recreational experience could result in visitors going elsewhere to spend money on services such as gas, food, lodging, etc.

Negative Impacts to the Environment

The BLM recreation sites along the Madison River started to improve with the establishment of developed recreation construction and the enhanced management of these sites, many of which needed general maintenance and improvements. Dispersed and unmanaged boat access and hazardous parking occurred along the river corridor, resulting in impacts to riparian

resources, water quality, floodplains, cultural resources, and the safety and enjoyment of visitors. Human sanitation was also an issue at the undeveloped sites, as well as the limited maintenance at sites which exacerbated sanitation issues present due to high visitation.

Failure to maintain these BLM recreation sites would result in the reintroduction of the many negative impacts to the environment that have been previously solved. For example, should the Madison River recreation staff be unable to regularly service toilets along the river, visitors would be less likely to utilize toilets, resulting in sanitation issues in other areas of sites since human needs will not change. Additionally, limiting future development or improvement to sites would lead to negative impacts to the environment as increased use continues.

Socioeconomic Impacts, including Low Income Populations and At-Risk Communities

Keeping the same fee structure would most likely benefit low-income populations by maintaining low to no costs for recreation. However, first-rate visitor experiences would become difficult to provide which could prevent recreationists from continuing to use sites as quality decreases.

Public Outreach

In accordance with the FLREA, the DFO will provide the public with an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed fee changes and the intended uses of the revenue from these fees. The fee proposal and draft business plan would be presented to the BLM Western Montana Resource Advisory Council (RAC) for its formal review and vote in January 2024. The DFO also presented to the RAC in October 2023 for guidance for the development of the draft DFO Business Plan. Listed below are outreach efforts that are occurring, or will occur, to notify the public of their opportunity to provide comments on this Business Plan:

- Public notices of proposed fees posted at DFO recreation sites with information on how the public can provide comment
- Posting of the Draft Business Plan on the BLM ePlanning website which solicits feedback: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2030198/510> and to the BLM National Recreation Site Business Plan website which also solicits feedback: <https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/permits-and-fees/business-plans>
- BLM online News Release notifying the public of the proposed fee changes and request to comment
- Public Notice in local newspapers notifying the public of the proposed fee changes and request to comment
- Direct mail/email to stakeholders and interest groups, giving presentations as requested
- Notification of affected County Commissions, as well as Congressional Representatives
- Upon approval, the DFO will publish a Notice of Intent to Collect Recreation Fees in the Federal Register six months prior to implementing the new fee structure.