



United States Department of Agriculture

Coronado National Forest  
**Fee Program Strategy and  
Business Plan**

September 30, 2013



Forest Service

Coronado National Forest

# Fee Program Strategy and Business Plan

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## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Background and Purpose</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Description of the Coronado National Forest .....	1
Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles .....	3
National Context .....	4
SOAR Analysis .....	5
Goals, Strategies and Actions .....	6
Implementation Schedule for 2013 .....	9
<b>Business Plan</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Introduction .....	10
Market Analysis .....	10
Civil Rights Analysis .....	15
Financial Analysis .....	16
Operating Costs .....	16
Maintenance Reserve .....	17
Criteria for New Fee Sites .....	18
Pricing Analysis .....	20
Funding for Fee Program .....	24
Fee Collections .....	24
Current Fee Collections .....	24
Future Fee Collections .....	25
Partners .....	26
Communications and Marketing .....	27
<b>Appendix A: Draft Fee Board By-laws and Charter</b> .....	<b>34</b>
<b>Appendix B: Fee Sites</b> .....	<b>41</b>
<b>Appendix C: Fee Collection Standards</b> .....	<b>45</b>
<b>Appendix D: Cost of Collections</b> .....	<b>48</b>

## Executive Summary

The Coronado National Forest (CNF) was an “early adopter” in charging fees for recreation use at developed recreation sites. The Mt. Lemmon Recreation Area was one of the first 50 sites in the Forest Service to collect fees under the fee demonstration program. Sabino Canyon and Madera Canyon followed soon after. Additional stand-alone sites, including day use areas, campgrounds and cabins, were added to create the current fee program of 78 day-use and overnight sites across the forest.

Several concerns about the effectiveness of the CNF fee program, including consistent implementation of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA), lawsuits concerning the Mt. Lemmon Recreation Area, and an agency-wide review of recreation fee areas (formerly known as HIRAs) led to the need to develop a comprehensive fee strategy. The purpose of this fee strategy is to identify short term and long term actions for creating an efficient and user-friendly Forestwide fee program on the Coronado.

The fee strategy has two parts: a Strategic Plan to guide overall fee program management and a Business/Operating Plan that provides the foundation for a sustainable fee program, which contributes to sustainability on the forest and in communities surrounding the forest. The intent is for the fee strategy to be used and updated regularly to reflect changing conditions and new information.

Specific actions to implement the Fee Strategy are included throughout this document. An Implementation Schedule for 2013 (p. 9) outlines actions and timelines for making immediate changes to the fee program. Communications tasks identified on page 28 will ensure timely and effective communications about the fee program to employees, partners, visitors, and communities.

## Background and Purpose

The Coronado National Forest (CNF) has been a major player in the Forest Service fee program since the mid-1990s. Beginning with fee demonstration and now under the Recreation Enhancement Act (REA), day use sites on Mt. Lemmon, Sabino Canyon and Madera Canyon as well as campgrounds across the forest collect fees to provide enhanced services to visitors and protect natural resources. The Coronado has four rental cabins that are part of the Arizona “Rooms with a View” program.

The purpose of this fee strategy is to identify short term and long term actions for creating an efficient and user-friendly Forestwide fee program on the Coronado. The intent is for the fee strategy to guide management of the fee program and be adaptable to changing conditions such as anticipated changes to fee legislation in 2014 and changes in visitor use.

There are several key reference resources for fee program management incorporated in this fee strategy:

- [Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act \(REA\)](#)
- [REA Toolbox](#)
- [Framework for Sustainable Recreation](#)
- Coronado National Forest Vision Statement
- [Recreation Facility Analysis \(RFA\) Program of Work](#) (2007)

## ***Description of the Coronado National Forest***

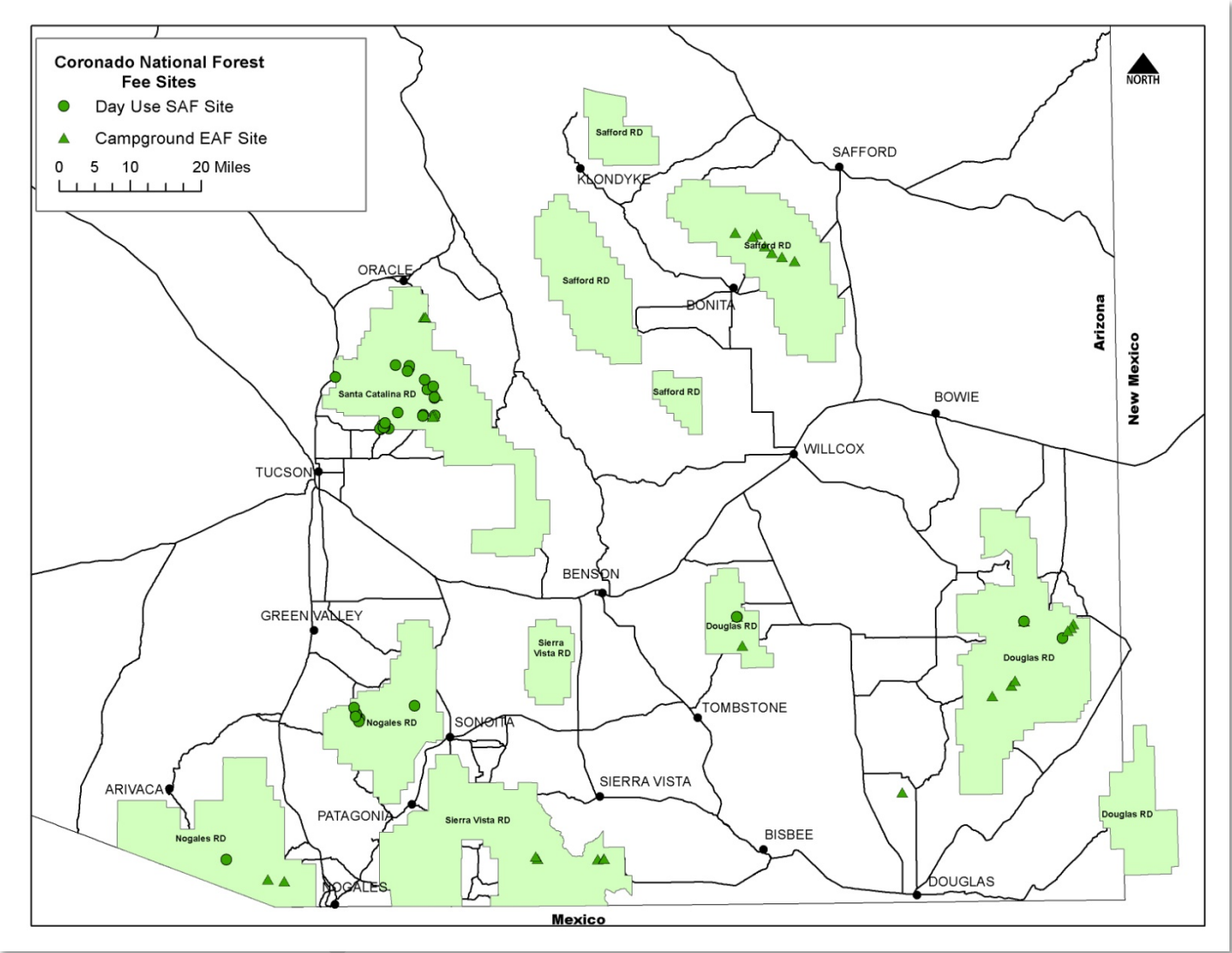
Recreation opportunities on the CNF are described in the forest’s recreation niche:

*The Coronado National Forest is southern Arizona’s Mountain Playground! From warm, sprawling deserts and rugged canyons to cool alpine forests, the Coronado displays a richness and depth of landscape found nowhere else in the United States. The forest connects visitors to a past rich with history and fosters respect for a land of niches upon niches; from rare birds to intensely focused recreation.*

*The proximity of the “Sky Islands” to large urban areas and nearby rural communities creates the opportunity for intense and numerous four-season short-duration recreation activities that allow visitors to beat the summer heat, enjoy the mild winter climate, see the fall colors, go play in the snow, and briefly escape the sights and sounds of the city.*

Most of the CNF is undeveloped and offers dispersed recreation opportunities from wilderness hiking to OHV-riding to internationally known bird watching. Recreation sites (Figure 1) such as campgrounds, trailheads, picnic areas, and fishing sites are concentrated in the Tucson Basin

Figure 1. Coronado Fee sites.



and in small pockets across the rest of the forest. In contrast to dispersed recreation opportunities, the CNF's fee sites offer structured recreation opportunities where visitors can gather with friends and family in an outdoor setting. Recreation sites are generally found at higher elevations in a forested setting, which are used during the summer months, and in lower-elevation canyons that are busy during the winter and spring.

### ***Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles***

Management of the CNF is aligned with the Forest Service mission: *To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.*

The CNF has developed a vision statement "to steer us as we make choices on priorities, allocations of funds and of our time."

- Nurture a high performing team of employees and volunteers
- Gain the reputation as environmental leaders in our southern Arizona and southwest New Mexico communities
- Press toward restoration and sustainability
- Ignite a passion for outdoor recreation and environmental education

Both the agency's mission and the CNF vision provide overall guidance for management of forest resources, including employees, volunteers and partners. Without these human resources, it is impossible to deliver a high quality fee program.

Another key aspect of the fee program is its contribution to sustainability on the national forest and in surrounding communities. Sustainability is influenced by three components: society, the environment, and economics. The CNF fee program contributes to all three of these components by providing facilities and amenities to support visitors' outdoor recreation experiences; by protecting cultural and natural resources through site design and visitor management; and by using fees to maintain and improve recreation sites for visitors' use and enjoyment.

The Forest Service's national recreation strategy is outlined in the *Framework for Sustainable Recreation* (FSR). The FSR identifies focus areas to help identify and leverage recreation's role in forest and community sustainability. The CNF fee program contributes to the following focus areas for sustainable recreation:

- Restore and Adapt Recreation Settings
- Implement Green Operations
- Forge Strategic Partnerships
- Develop a Sustainable Financial Foundation

Finally, the Agency's REA Interim Implementation Guidelines (2005) identifies six principles for implementing REA:

1. An enduring program is only possible with wide public and Congressional support. Involve communities of place and interest in decisions about fee project design and where the fee money is invested. Use a variety of methods to report to the public about the recreation enhancement fee program.
2. Fees are acceptable if they have a direct connection to a perceived benefit such as at developed areas and where expanded or specialized services are provided.
3. Each National Forest and Grassland provides a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities that are free of charge.
4. Fairness, consistency, convenience of payment (credit cards, internet sales, etc.), and accountability are important to visitors.
5. Administrative agency boundaries or jurisdictions are not always apparent or of concern to recreation visitors. Operate seamlessly across agency boundaries where feasible.
6. Fees for multiple facilities, services, or enhanced benefits are acceptable if they are seamless and not layered. Where possible, offer a single fee where standard amenity recreation facilities and services are grouped or clustered.

### ***National Context***

The REA allows the Forest Service and other federal agencies to collect fees at recreation sites with specific amenities. When REA was passed in 2004, the CNF and other national forests made some adjustments to which sites are part of the fee program based on REA requirements. However, several lawsuits and an agency-wide review of standard amenity recreation fee areas have led to increased scrutiny of the fee program at a national level.

The REA expires in 2015 and it is currently unknown what, if any, changes will occur to the Forest Service's fee program at that point. Any recommendations or proposals included in this fee strategy will comply with REA and will be vetted through the public involvement process as required by REA.

In 2010, the Washington Office asked national forests to not bring forward any new fee proposals in light of the difficult economic situation in America. In October 2011, forests were given the green light to move forward with new fee proposals that "represent the most important needs of the Forest Service and have strong public support." While this document addresses overall fee program management, it is anticipated that some recommendations from the strategies identified below will be developed into a fee proposal. The proposal will align



with national direction and only include changes that meet the criteria for Group One Proposals.

### ***SOAR Analysis***

To prepare for the Fee Strategy, the CNF conducted a SOAR Analysis – Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results. Participants included forest and district staff as well as key partners that have an interest in the fee program. The results of the SOAR analysis helped shape the goals, strategies and actions below. The following is a summary of the results of the SOAR analysis.

#### *Strengths*

- The fee program provides benefits to fee site visitors through enhanced facilities and amenities, increased recreation opportunities and interpretive programs, and improved health and safety.
- Sites are better maintained and have less vandalism as a result of user fees.
- Visitors recognize the value of fee paid and see the improvements that are a result of fee revenue.

#### *Opportunities*

- Provide more convenient methods for fee payment.
- Develop partnerships to increase understanding of recreation opportunities and work more collaboratively on fee program management.
- Provide better information pre-trip and on-site through social media and signing.

#### *Aspirations*

- Be a model for fee program management in the Forest Service.
- Use technology to increase convenience for visitors and efficiency of program administration.
- Exceed public expectations by providing high quality recreation experiences.

#### *Results*

- Effectively communicate both internally and externally.
- Provide enhancements/improvement to fee sites aligned with visitors' needs.
- Support from the public for the fee program.

## ***Goals, Strategies and Actions***

The following goals, strategies and actions are the initial steps toward creating an efficient and user-friendly fee program on the CNF. This strategy is intended to be a flexible and adaptable document to guide fee program management. The implementation schedule/action plan (see page 9) will be updated annually and reflect forest priorities for each year.

### **Goal 1: Ensure a consistent Forestwide fee program**

**Strategy 1:** Develop consistent operations, fee collections, and enforcement across the forest.

- Establish a chartered CNF Fee Board to provide overall guidance for fee program management (see [Appendix A](#) for draft charter and fee board roles and responsibilities). The initial tasks for the fee board include:
  - Develop and apply consistent criteria for sites included in fee program.
  - Develop and implement fee collection standards.
  - Develop and implement a fee compliance policy.
  - Develop operating standards for recreation sites/complexes.

**Strategy 2:** Improve internal and external support for fee program.

- Develop a communications and marketing plan for the fee program (see pp. 26-31 in Business Plan).
- Develop a Forestwide sign plan.
- Develop partnerships, vendor agreements and technologies to support the fee program both on and off forest.
- Provide visitors with information about the range of recreation opportunities across the CNF.

**Strategy 3:** Use evaluation metrics to make adjustments to the fee program based on learnings.

- Conduct an annual fee program “check-up” using the following indicators:

**Indicator 1:** CNF Vision

*Question:* How does the fee program contribute to the CNF vision? What areas do we need to focus on in the coming year to better align with the vision?

*Measure:* The fee program contributes to all four vision areas for the CNF.

**Indicator 2:** Compliance rate

*Question:* What is our compliance rate? How much has compliance increased since last year?

*Measure:* Compliance annually increases from baseline; by year 5, compliance is 80% or better.

**Indicator 3:** Public value for fee program

*Question:* Do visitors see the value in the CNF fee program?

*Measure:* Visitor feedback indicative of value/benefits they received at fee sites.

**Indicator 4:** Management effectiveness

*Question:* Are visitors using hardened sites (fee and non-fee)? Are impacts to dispersed areas acceptable?

*Measure:* Impacts at indicator sites (non-fee, dispersed or sensitive) are within acceptable range.

**Indicator 5:** Financial sustainability

*Question:* Are fees being used to make investments based on visitor input and ensure fee sites are managed to standard?

*Measure:* Fees account for at least 60% of operating costs by year 5 and fee revenue in excess of annual O&M costs is put into a maintenance reserve fund.

**Goal 2: Manage the fee program to support sustainable recreation on the CNF**

**Strategy 4:** Use a mix of appropriated funds, fee revenue and partnerships to deliver benefits to visitors and enhance recreation opportunities at fee sites.

- Develop a reserve fund to re-invest into fee sites (see p. 22 in Business Plan).
- Manage the fee program at 60% cost recovery by year 5 as outlined in the business plan (see p. 23).
- Identify priorities for recreation site sustainability.

**Strategy 5:** Provide opportunities at fee sites that support local culture and Sky Islands Children's Forest (SICF).

- Ensure that a range of developed recreation opportunities are available free of charge.
- Establish free days and/or vouchers that align with cultural events and SICF programs.

**Strategy 6:** Introduce “green” operations at fee sites.

- Develop or revise collection/maintenance schedules to minimize number of trips and reduce emissions.
- Establish a recycling program where feasible.
- Model innovations in green technology.

**Goal 3: Implement modern fee payment and collection methods**

**Strategy 7:** Implement fee payment methods that are efficient and user-friendly.

- Pilot fee machines at Sabino and Madera canyons.
- Expand vendor network.
- Develop an implementation schedule for changes to fee payment methods.

**Strategy 8:** Implement cost effective fee collection and accounting methods.

- Identify best management practices for fee collections and accounting (see [Appendix C](#) for current collection standards).
- Decrease fee collection costs by implementing non-cash payment methods.
- Develop an implementation schedule for changes to fee collections.

**Goal 4: Implement on-the-ground changes to recreation fee sites.**

**Strategy 9:** Successfully implement the outcomes of the national standard amenity fee area review.

- Convert standard amenity fee areas to stand-alone standard amenity sites
- Remove fees from sites that do not qualify as stand-alone

**Strategy 10:** Identify new fee sites and fee increases at existing sites.

- Identify potential new fee sites that qualify under REA categories (SAF, EAF or SRP)
- Identify appropriate fees for existing and new sites based on market value and industry standards analysis

**Strategy 11:** Prepare fee proposal for public and RRAC review.

- Gather feedback from the public about proposed changes
- Present changes to AZ Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (RRAC) for review
- Implement recommended changes

### ***Implementation Schedule for 2013***

The accompanying Business and Operating plan identifies many of the details outlined in the above goals, strategies and actions. However, some actions will need further attention to be implemented. The following action plan will guide Fee Board tasks in 2013.

**Table 1. Implementation Schedule for 2013-2014.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Due</b>
Implement Communications Tasks (see pg. 28)	PAO, Fee Program Manager	Start immediately and on-going
Update district operating plans to improve consistency across the forest	Fee Board, District recreation staff	Annually
Present final strategy to FLT	Fee Program Manager	September 2013
Finalize and sign Fee Board charter Implement Fee Board	Fee Program Manager	September 30, 2013
Develop compliance policy including monitoring protocol (see REA Toolbox)	LEOs, Fee Board, District recreation staff	Fall 2013
Monitor compliance to establish a baseline compliance rate		2014 Field Season
Identify additional vendors and outreach to them to expand vendor network	Fee Program Manager, Fee board	Fall 2013
Apply Mt. Lemmon sign plan to rest of forest Implement sign plan	Fee Program Manager, Fee Board, Landscape Architect, district recreation staffs	Fall 2013 Winter 2014
Identify investment priorities for recreation sites	Landscape Architect, District Rangers, Recreation SWAHLT, Engineers	Winter 2014
Public involvement around fee program; develop fee proposal	Fee Program Manager, Fee Board	Winter 2014
Pilot fee machines at Sabino and Madera	Fee Board, D2 and D5 District Rangers, AQM	Winter 2014
Establish and implement free days and vouchers for local culture/Children's Forest programs	Fee Board, PAO, District Rangers, FOET, SICF Program Manager	FY 2014
Identify opportunities for recycling/green technology at recreation sites	Fee Board, CNF Green Team, District recreation staffs, PAO	FY 2014

## Business Plan

### *Introduction*

A Business Plan is a tool that helps staff efficiently plan, organize, evaluate, and implement available resources to meet the organization's goals and objectives. In general, business plans forecast 2 to 3 years into the future and are task oriented.<sup>1</sup>

The Coronado National Forest's Fee Program Business and Operating Plan (plan) takes many actions from the Fee Strategy and makes them real. The purpose of this plan is to provide the CNF Fee Board, district rangers and district fee program managers with resources and standards to effectively administer the fee program. This plan should be updated regularly to reflect changing conditions and new information.

The plan is organized in the following sections:

- Market Analysis
- Civil Rights Analysis
- Financial analysis
- Fee Collections
- Partners
- Marketing and Communications

### *Market Analysis*

#### **Visitor Use**

The CNF participated in the Forest Service's National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) surveys in 2007. These surveys are part of an on-going, statistically valid sampling process to understand visitor use on national forests. National Forests conduct surveys on a 5-year cycle.

The CNF has approximately 2.4 million national forest visits annually. In Arizona, the Tonto National Forest has the most visitors at nearly 4.8 million while the Kaibab has the fewest at just over 500,000.

Demographic results for the Coronado show that the majority of visitors are male (58%) and females comprise nearly 42% of visits. Racial and ethnic minorities are not uncommon, especially Hispanics (14 percent) and Native Americans (10 percent). Children under the age of 16 account for 15% of visits. People in their 50s and 60s make up over one-third of the visits. Most visits come from local residents – nearly seventy percent live within 50 miles of the forest

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<sup>1</sup> Outdoor Recreation Business Plan Guidebook, Bureau of Reclamation, 2008.

(Figure 2). However, about one in every 6 visits is made by someone who lives over 500 miles away.

Consistent with having a largely local customer base, visit durations on the Coronado are generally short (Table 2). Half of the visits last three hours or less, and the overall average visit duration is just over 10 hours. Visits to overnight sites (e.g., campgrounds, cabins) average just over 27 hours.

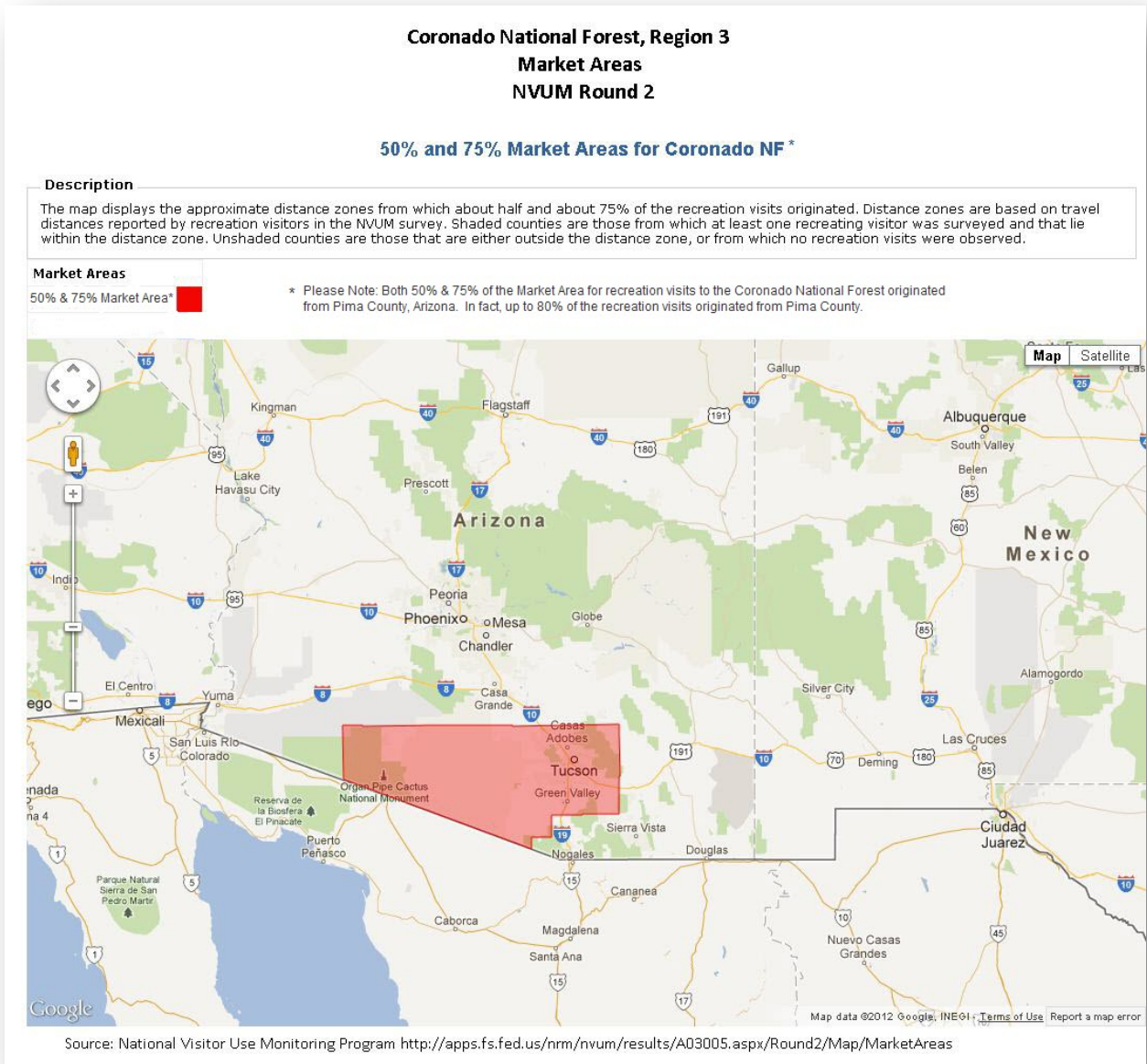
**Table 2. Visit duration**

Visit Type	Average Duration	Number of Visitors
Site visit*	6.7	2,793,000
Day use developed	2.3	758,000
Overnight use developed	27.3	439,000
Undeveloped areas	4.8	1,108,000
Designated wilderness	4.8	488,000
National Forest visit <sup>^</sup>	10.2	2,453,000

*\*A Site Visit is the entry of one person onto a national forest site or area to participate in recreation activities for an unspecified period of time. Sites and areas were divided into four site types as listed here.*

*<sup>^</sup>A National Forest Visit is defined as the entry of one person upon a national forest to participate in recreation activities for an unspecified period of time. A National Forest Visit can be composed of multiple Site Visits.*

Figure 2. CNF Market Area.





Survey respondents were asked to identify all the activities they participated in during their visit to the CNF and how much time they spent participating in their primary recreation activity. Hiking/walking is by far the most common primary activity. Over half of all visitors to the Coronado report this as their main reason for visiting. The top primary activities associated with recreation facility use are displayed in Table 3.

**Table 3. Activity participation.**

Activity	Percent participating in activity during visit	Percent reporting as main activity	Hours doing main activity
Hiking/walking	75.6%	52.1%	2.7
Viewing natural features	67.4%	9.3%	2.6
Driving for pleasure	23.8%	6.0%	2.8
Relaxing	45.9%	5.3%	7.7
Picnicking	12.8%	3.3%	3.4
Developed camping	6.4%	3.5%	29.9
Fishing	3.7%	2.5%	6.7
Nature center	17.2%	0.8%	1.7
Motorized trail activity	3.2%	1.3%	2.2

## Trends

Population growth is the dominant driver in recreation participation trends<sup>2</sup>, and the West is experiencing some of the highest growth rates in the country. Arizona's population grew from just over 5 million in 2000 to approximately 6.5 million in 2009, a 28.6% increase.<sup>3</sup> By 2030, Arizona is projected to be the nation's tenth largest state in population with 10.4 million people, and a population density of 92 people per square mile.<sup>4</sup> Most of the population increase will occur in urban areas.

One driver of the population growth in Arizona is the state's scenic beauty and outdoor recreation opportunities. People are drawn to Arizona because of its availability for year-round recreation. However, with population increases comes potential decreases in access and increases in crowding and environmental impacts. An increase in development to

<sup>2</sup> Outdoor Recreation for the 21st Century, A Report to the Nation: The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment. Cordell, H. Ken. 2004.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.census.gov/popest/states/states.html>

<sup>4</sup> Arizona SCORP

accommodate incoming residents and visitors will undoubtedly conflict with demand for more and varied outdoor recreation opportunities.<sup>5</sup>

### Baby Boomers

According to the 2008 Arizona SCORP<sup>6</sup>, Arizona has the second highest net migration of people over the age of 65 and the proportion of Arizona's population classified as elderly is expected to increase from 13% in 2000 to 22% in 2030. These changes will significantly impact outdoor recreation in Arizona. In order to accommodate this older population, it is important for outdoor recreation providers to understand the leisure opportunities that are being and will increasingly be sought out by this group as the Baby Boomer generation hits its stride.<sup>7</sup>

Previously, participation in outdoor activities decreased with age; however, in terms of Baby Boomers and activity participation, "It is difficult to quantify the size of the net effect, but the general direction of the effect is that there will be more demand for activities than in the past."<sup>8</sup> Many Baby Boomers want to continue their active lifestyles by participating in more adventurous activities. Baby Boomers are also likely to be interested in the historical and interpretive/educational aspects common to Forest Service opportunities.

### Kids in the Woods

The decline of outdoor recreation participation among children has been well documented by books such as *Last Child in the Woods*. More people live in urban areas, families have less time to spend outdoors, and parents and their children often have fears about nature. In 2007, Forest Service Chief Gail Kimbell issued a challenge to the American people to introduce children to national forests. She said, "Our most important resource in this country is not forests, vital as they are. It is not water, although life itself would cease to exist without it. It is people. The challenges of climate change and looming water shortages will not be resolved in a few years. It will take generations. Today's children—and theirs—will need to be able to take the baton and finish the race. For that, they will need a full understanding of why forests are so valuable, along with a strong land ethic. It is our imperative to give them both."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Arizona Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, p. 61

<sup>6</sup> Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

<sup>7</sup> Arizona SCORP, p. 36

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 32.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.fs.fed.us/news/2007/speeches/09/climate.shtml>

### Heritage Tourism

There is evidence of increasing demand for visiting cultural sites in Arizona. A 2005 travel industry report shows that 14% of Arizona's leisure travelers visited historic sites and generated \$17.5 billion in tourism revenue, making it the second largest industry in the state<sup>10</sup>. In the Arizona SCORP, participation in activities such as visiting cultural and natural features and nature study or environmental education is expected to increase by 40-50%.

### Staycations

Following the 2008 economic recession, there was a significant increase in close-to-home vacations, or staycations. While some people choose to stay at home and do day trips, others go to nearby campgrounds to still have a sense of "getting away." Either way, outdoor recreation is an affordable way to spend time with family and develop life-long memories.

### ***Civil Rights Analysis***

Population growth is the major driver for increased visitation on the CNF and the population in the forest's market zone is expected to increase by 37% by 2030<sup>11</sup>. However, cost of living increases and higher gas prices may impact visitors' ability to travel to the forest. While other factors such as gas prices, lack of free time and family commitments likely have a greater effect on recreation use, having to pay to visit a recreation site may also contribute to this.

Some visitors may not be able to afford fees at recreation sites. Visitors most likely to be impacted include families and individuals who have limited extra income for recreation. Seniors (age 62 and over) and people with disabilities are eligible for a low cost or free America the Beautiful Interagency recreation pass which gives them free access to standard amenity sites and half-price access to expanded amenity campgrounds. The CNF participates in a variety of fee-free days.

Recreation sites that collect fees make up a small percent of the 1.78 million acre CNF. Collecting user-generated revenue at developed sites with higher amenities is an appropriate way to ensure visitors receive the services and benefits they expect from these sites. The CNF will continue to manage the majority of the forest for free public use and enjoyment.

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<sup>10</sup> Arizona Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. 2008. pg 67

<sup>11</sup> [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

## ***Financial Analysis***

There are currently<sup>12</sup> 78 sites ([Appendix B](#)) where a fee is charged on the CNF. These sites meet the requirements identified in REA for standard amenity or expanded amenity fees. There are four recreation cabin rentals on the CNF; however these rental cabins are not included in the financial analysis because they are part of the Arizona “Rooms with a View” Cabin Rental program. The CNF does not have any special recreation permit fees.

## **Operating Costs**

Table 4 shows expected annual operations and maintenance costs (O&M) and total deferred maintenance (DM) costs for the fee program from the INFRA database. INFRA calculates annual O&M costs based on “working circles” while deferred maintenance costs are manually entered into the database based on condition surveys.

**Table 4. O&M and deferred maintenance costs.**

<b>Annual Operations and Maintenance Costs</b>	<b>Total Deferred Maintenance Costs</b>
\$ 1,641,580	\$1,374,555

*Source: Infra Database, Jan. 2013*

However, predicted annual O&M costs and actual O&M costs do not always match. Table 5 shows actual funding and expenses for the fee program for fiscal years 2011 and 2012, which includes O&M and DM costs. The Coronado relies on recreation fee revenue and appropriated funds to manage the fee program.

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<sup>12</sup> As of Nov. 30, 2012

**Table 5. Funding sources and fee site expenses.**

<b>Funding Sources</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Fee revenue (FDDS36 & DS0701)	\$869,424	\$727,586
Rec Appropriations (NFRW & CMFC)	\$785,714	\$1,082,063
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$1,655,138</b>	<b>\$1,809,649</b>
<b>Fee Site Expenses</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Rec fee (FDDS36 & DS0701)	\$898,554	\$687,493
Rec Appropriations (NFRW & CMFC)	\$785,714	\$1,082,063
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$1,684,268</b>	<b>\$1,769,556</b>
<b>% of Cost funded by fees</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>46%</b>

### **Maintenance Reserve**

Establishing a maintenance reserve is part of an overall facility management strategy. The maintenance reserve supports the cyclic maintenance portion of the facility lifecycle. It represents the funds which should be “put aside and or budgeted” to make sure adequate resources are in place to take care of cyclic maintenance activities (see [Best Practices in Facilities Maintenance](#)).

As part of this plan, Capital Hotel Management (CHM) conducted a [Maintenance Reserve Analysis](#) to determine annual funding needed to address cyclic maintenance of fee sites. Cyclic maintenance is defined as *“the preventative maintenance activities that occur on a periodic and scheduled cycle that are typically greater than annually.”* Examples include replacing the roof of a building, replacing planks of a picnic table, and painting the inside of a toilet building. The Forest Service INFRA database only captures annual and deferred maintenance needs by individual recreation site and does not account for cyclic maintenance.

CHM used the Sherman and Dergis Method to estimate a maintenance reserve for the CNF’s fee program. This method uses a formula based on building life cycle and point in time lifecycle analysis. Based on this method, the CNF would need to put aside \$675,000 each year for cyclic maintenance.

However, the basic analysis does not take into account the priority or importance of the maintenance needs. The Forest Service uses the Facility Condition Index, or FCI, as an indicator of developed recreation site performance. A FCI of .90 or above indicates the site is in acceptable condition. Presently, FCI is the only data set that the agency has available and therefore it must serve as an available metric to compare like groups of assets to review in the process of funding allocations. The INFRA database provides data that can be used for an evaluation of the condition of the elements of the facility. These are divided up into Minor

Constructed Features (MCF), Buildings (BLDG), Drinking Water (DW) and Waste Water (WW). A FCI which is low based upon MCF poses a different challenge to visitors than one that is based on higher costs items such as DW or WW.

It is important when evaluating FCI indices to understand what components of the facility are contributing to the overall FCI number. For example, many of the deferred maintenance items for facilities within a Good rating are within the MCF category which have a nominal impact on visitor services and potentially are less expensive components to replace. In the Fair category, the DM often lies within the BLDG and DW categories, which typically are larger costs to eliminate.

Currently, sites with the lowest FCIs (< .90) have a needed maintenance reserve of \$150,000. However, if cyclic maintenance is not performed on sites currently in good condition, their FCI ratings will fall below .90. To ensure an adequate maintenance reserve, the CNF has a goal of collecting \$300,000 in fee revenue to fund the maintenance reserve annually. Using the maintenance reserve analysis and the FCI will allow the Coronado to make informed choices about where to invest fee revenue in excess of annual operations and maintenance costs.

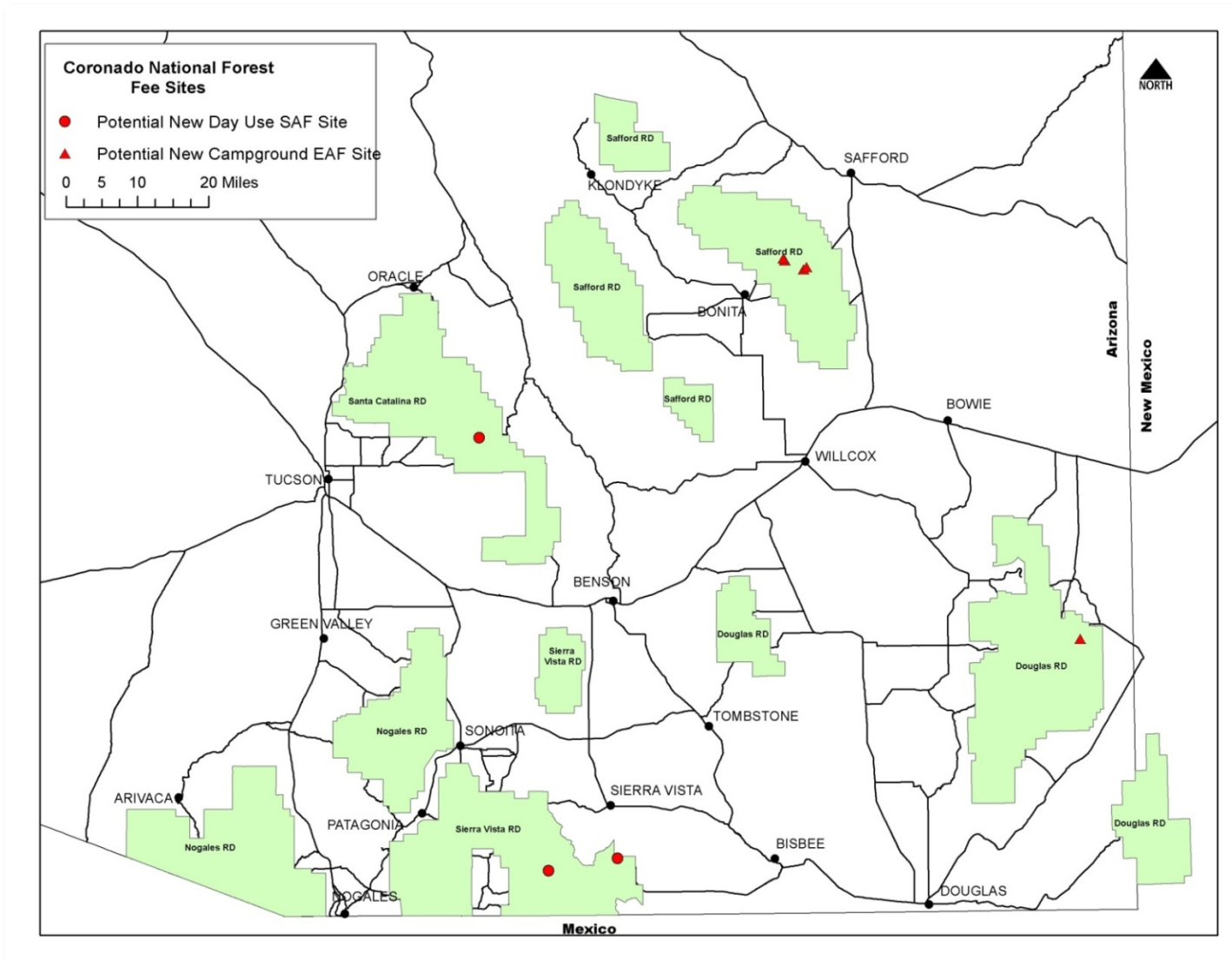
### **Criteria for New Fee Sites**

The CNF has identified these criteria for establishing a new fee:

- Identify the added value for having a fee; public needs to recognize they are getting something more.
- Is the fee identified in the RFA Program of Work?
- Is the site in an established working circle (e.g. part of routine maintenance and collections)? If not, what is the cost-benefit for charging a fee?
- Does visitor use/occupancy trigger maintenance standards that are commensurate with collecting a fee?
- What are the added administrative costs to process fee collections?

Based on the above criteria, the following sites will be considered for inclusion in the fee program (Figure 3 and Table 6):

Figure 3. Potential Fee Sites.



**Table 6. Sites to consider including in the fee program.**

District	Site Name	Development Scale	Total O&M	Total DM
Douglas	Herb Martyr Campground	4	\$4,086	N/A
	John Hands Campground	4	\$4,509	\$11,018
	Sycamore Campground	4	\$5,889	N/A
Sierra Vista	Carr Canyon Picnic Area	4	\$7,128	\$600
	Parker Canyon Lake Fishing	5	\$15,649	\$1,925
	Parker Canyon Lake Boating	5	N/A	N/A
Safford	Treasure Park Campground	1	\$5,996	\$39,500
	Twilight Group Campground	3	\$3,443	N/A
	Upper Arcadia Group Campground	3	\$6,827	\$9,276
	Upper Hospital Flat Group Campground	1	\$3,393	N/A
Santa Catalina	Alambre OHV Staging Area	3	\$12,618	N/A

### Pricing Analysis

Prices for Coronado fee sites have not changed since the program was initiated in 1997. There are advantages and disadvantages to this static fee amount. On the one hand, visitors know how much to pay and think the value for the price is good. However, operating costs have risen over the past 15 years and the fee amount has not been adjusted for inflation. Costs for comparable sites have also increased. For example, in 1997 the entrance fee to Catalina State Park was \$4; currently it is \$7 a day.

As part of this fee strategy/business plan development, Capital Hotel Management (CHM) identified [Best Practices for Establishing a Price at Fee Sites](#). The following four elements, discussed in detail below, should be considered in establishing fees:

1. Determine Cost Recovery Thresholds;
2. Determine the Market Supportable rate;

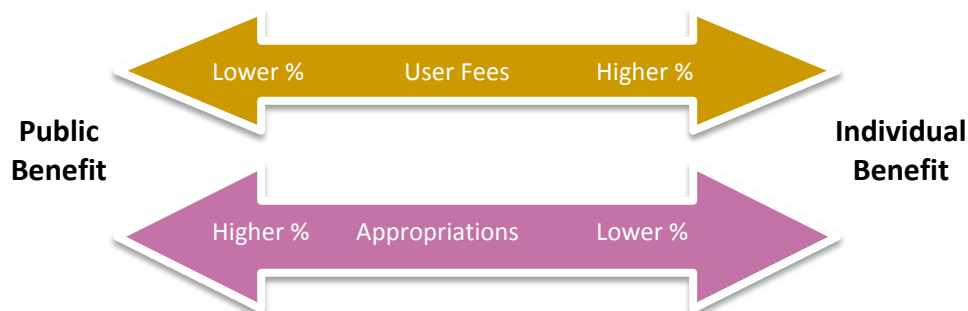


3. Examine the Appropriateness of the pricing based upon agency priorities; and,
4. Public Consideration of Pricing Decisions.

### *Cost Recovery*

Approximately 50% of the fee program O&M is supported by recreation fee revenue and 50% by appropriated funds (see Table 5). As a public agency, the Forest Service is committed to providing goods and services that benefit the majority of Americans at no cost. There is also recognition that some goods and services directly benefit a smaller portion of the public. According to the REA Interim Implementation Guidelines (2005), “Public lands recreation sites and services provide an array of amenities and benefits ranging from collective societal /public good to highly individual or personal benefits. This forms a spectrum of benefits for the provision of visitor services” (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Spectrum of Benefits.**



REA authorizes the Forest Service “to retain recreation fee revenues to supplement appropriations and other funding sources to repair, improve, operate, and maintain recreation sites and areas to quality standards (including elimination of recreation deferred maintenance), and to enhance the delivery of recreation services to quality standards.” It specifically identifies sites/areas where fees cannot be charged (e.g., parking, scenic pullouts) and emphasizes that agencies will provide free access to a variety of recreation opportunities and undeveloped public lands. The REA Interim Implementation Guidelines establish three categories for funding recreation facility and program operations:

- Category 1: Emphasis on appropriations (no recreation fees). Includes general access, parking, scenic overlooks, and dispersed areas with low or no improvements.
- Category 2: Mix of appropriations and recreation fees. Includes developed day use areas and destination visitor centers.
- Category 3: Emphasis on recreation fees. Includes campgrounds, rental cabins, highly developed boat launches, specialized interpretive programs and tours.

One-half of the CNF’s fee sites fall in category 2 and include picnic areas, trailheads, visitor centers, and interpretive sites. The other half of the sites are in category 3 and include campgrounds, group campgrounds, and rental cabins. It is anticipated that appropriated funds for fee site O&M and deferred maintenance will remain flat or decrease in the foreseeable future. At the same time, the CNF recognizes the “value-add” aspect of the fee program. Fee revenue is intended to be used for on-the-ground enhancement, not for program administration.

The CNF will continue to use a mix of appropriated and fee revenue for fee site O&M with a goal of increasing the fee revenue portion of the mix to approximately 60% by 2018, primarily to contribute to the cyclic maintenance reserve.

*Market Supportable Rate*

Other federal (national forest, national park, and BLM) and state recreation sites were used to compare prices for campground and day use sites across southern Arizona (Table 7). In general, current recreation fees on the CNF are comparable or slightly lower than other publically-managed sites. For example, day use fees are \$6 on the Tonto National Forest and from \$5-\$8 at Arizona State Park facilities. National Park Service sites have a weekly entrance fee ranging from \$5-\$10. Camping fees are generally \$10-\$20 for campgrounds with water and vault toilets, with higher end amenities such as RV hookups and dump stations having additional fees. Several campgrounds on the Coconino and Kaibab National Forests charge a 2<sup>nd</sup> vehicle fee of half the campsite fee. The Tonto National Forest has a standard fee structure of \$6 per vehicle per day for all day use and overnight sites.

**Table 7. Comparable fee sites.**

Site/Area	Day use	Annual	Overnight
Coronado National Forest	\$5/vehicle	\$20	\$10
Tonto Pass	\$6/vehicle	\$95	Included
Red Rock Pass	\$5/vehicle	\$20	\$8-20 per site
Catalina State Park	\$7/vehicle or \$3/person for 7 days	\$75 (all state parks)	\$15 non-electric \$25 electric
Gilbert Ray Campground	N/A	N/A	\$10 tent \$20 hook-ups
Saguaro National Park	\$10/vehicle or \$5/person for 7 days	\$25	N/A
Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument	\$8/vehicle or \$4/person for 7 days	\$25	\$12 developed \$8 primitive

Site/Area	Day use	Annual	Overnight
Owl Creek Campground (BLM)	N/A	N/A	\$5
Painted Rock Petroglyph Site (BLM)	\$2	N/A	\$8
Chiricahau NM	\$5 per person for 7 days	\$20	\$12
Patagonia Lake State Park	\$10-15/vehicle or \$3/person per day	\$75 (all state parks)	\$17 non-electric \$25-28 electric

In general, fees on the CNF are the same or slightly less than comparable sites on federal and state lands. The market supportable rate is 20-50% higher than current fee prices.

#### *Agency Priorities*

As described above, the Forest Service strives to provide a spectrum of benefits to visitors aligned with the agency's mission. This includes providing opportunities free of charge and collecting fees at sites with a higher level of amenities and individual benefit. Other priorities include providing access for tribal or traditional cultural purposes and using fee revenue as part of an overall sustainable funding strategy.

#### *Public Consideration of Pricing Decisions*

There has been much debate about how to assess public support for pricing of public recreation sites. While some people feel that access to recreation sites should be free on public lands, surveys such as the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) indicate that people consistently support recreation fees.

#### *Summary of Pricing Considerations*

Based on the four elements considered in establishing a price for recreation sites, the CNF has an opportunity to revise its pricing structure for both day use and overnight sites to support cost recovery thresholds, to be aligned with comparable sites in the market area, and to help achieve agency goals. As outlined in REA and agency guidelines, all new fees or fee changes will go through a public review process and recommendation from the Recreation Resource Advisory Committee.

## Funding for Fee Program

A mix of appropriated funds and fee revenue is needed to support Goal 2: *Manage the fee program to support sustainable recreation*. Table 8 shows annual funding sources and objectives of each to achieve this goal.

**Table 8. Funding sources and objectives.**

Funding Source	Objective	Amount	% of Program
NFRW	Operations	\$600,000	31
CMFC	Annual Maintenance	\$200,000	11
FDDS	O&M	\$800,000	43
FDDS	Maintenance Reserve	\$300,000	15
Volunteers and partnerships	All	Varies	
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,900,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

The CNF expects to rely on approximately \$800,000 of appropriated funding (NFRW and CMFC) annually to support recreation sites in the fee program, including fee collections when necessary. This amount provides enough funding to ensure high quality recreation opportunities at fee sites while also allowing appropriated funds (only NFRW) to be spent on other aspects of recreation program management (including wilderness, heritage, special uses, interpretation, and dispersed use) that are also important to visitors.

Fee revenue is expected to fund 58% of fee program management, or approximately \$1.1 million. While this is more revenue than was collected in 2011 and 2012, past years revenue has been closer to this amount. The CNF will consider several options to increase fee revenue to support sustainable recreation including increasing compliance, increasing marketing, and considering fee increases based on the above pricing analysis.

## Fee Collections

### Current Fee Collections

Fees are currently collected on the CNF via three methods:

- Vendor pass sales (paid up front by check or credit card)
- On-site via fee tubes (iron rangers) (cash or check)
- Pass sales at Forest Service offices/Supervisor's Office (cash or check)

Prior to 2012, fees were also collected at welcome stations located at Sabino Canyon, Mt. Lemmon Recreation Area (Molino booth), and Madera Canyon. Appendix C documents

standards for fee collections and processing. As new fee collection methods are implemented (i.e., fee machines, additional vendors), these standards will be updated.

### **Future Fee Collections**

The CNF wants to implement modern fee payment and collection methods (Goal 3 of the Fee Strategy) for these reasons:

- Collecting fees from fee tubes, or iron rangers, is a safety hazard to employees. Employees are exposed to theft by carrying large amounts of cash in Forest Service vehicles.
- The cost of collections for cash collections is high (see Appendix C) and takes a large amount of time to process.
- Security controls for cash handling are difficult.
- Many visitors want alternative payment methods such as purchasing passes online and on-site payment via credit card.
- Additional vendors would provide more convenience to visitors and local businesses would benefit from selling the Coronado Pass.

CHM developed [Fee Collection Implementation Recommendations](#) by reviewing fee collection strategies on other national forests and interviewing industry product providers. Their analysis shows that, in 2012, 66% of fee collections occurred on-site and 34% through the vendor network. The vendor network includes both non-profits located on-site (Sabino Canyon) as well as off-site providers such as Walgreens, Reays Mobile and Santa Rita Lodge. Off-site vendors represent only 23% of the total recreation revenue collected. The data indicates that visitors are trained to purchase passes on-site and moving pass purchases to pre-site visits will require education and awareness.

CHM also evaluated the revenue collection by types of recreation locations (Table 9). CHM undertook this analysis since the strategies for collecting fees may be different based upon the type of recreation site. The majority of fee purchases occur at day use sites, while campgrounds represent 14% of total recreation fee revenue. However, campgrounds represent approximately one third of the recreation fee site inventory. A review of the detailed fee collection data indicates that there are many campgrounds where there is minimal fee collection. Therefore, as strategies for fee collections are considered, evaluating whether fee collection should be changed at low use and remotely located campgrounds needs to be considered.

**Table 9. 2012 Fee Revenue and # of Transactions by Site Type.**

Site/Area	Sales	Percent of Total Revenue	Estimated # of Transactions
Campgrounds	\$98,834.42	14%	6,829
Day Use	\$439,926.15	62%	87,934
Palisades Visitor Center	\$3,232,24	<1%	646
Coronado Pass - Vendor	\$133,607.50	19%	6,680
Interagency Pass	\$28,817.00	4%	360
Unknown	\$5,702.19	1%	476
Total	\$710,119.50	100%	102,925

Based on CHM recommendations and an analysis of collections costs ([Appendix D](#)), the CNF will implement the following changes to fee collections over a three-year period:

- Continue to sell Coronado Passes at Forest Service (FS) offices.
- Develop camping pass/sticker to sell through vendors, fee machines and FS offices.
- Pilot fee machines at Sabino Canyon and Madera Canyon. If successful, implement in other locations on the CNF.
  - 4 machines at Sabino Canyon – day use passes only
  - 2 machines at Madera Canyon – day use and camping passes
- Expand vendor network across the CNF.
  - Market vendor opportunities to businesses near recreation sites including campgrounds.
  - Secure one or more web-based vendors.
  - Expand vendor manager duties from SO.
- Discontinue on-site cash collections by 2016.
  - Ensure vendor sales are proximate to all day use and overnight sites.
  - Install fee machines for on-site sales where financially feasible.

### ***Partners***

The CNF has several significant, long-term partnerships related to the fee program. Table 10 shows current and potential roles for the forest to explore with its partners.

**Table 10. Partners and roles.**

Partner	Existing or potential role
Public Lands Interpretive Association (PLIA)	Non-profit partner at Sabino Canyon and Palisades visitor centers including merchandise sales and vendor for recreation passes; potential for online sales of recreation passes.
Friends of Sabino	Volunteer organization that supports projects and education in Sabino Canyon; potential to assist FS in highlighting the benefits and improvements as a result of fees.
Friends of Madera	Volunteer organization that supports projects and education in Madera Canyon; potential to assist FS in highlighting the benefits and improvements as a result of fees and online sales of recreation passes.
Sabino Volunteer Patrol	Volunteer organization that patrols the trails, roads and picnic areas at Sabino Canyon and Mount Lemmon; potential to assist FS in highlighting the benefits and improvements as a result of fees
Friends of Huachuca Mountains	Volunteer organization that supports projects and education in the Huachuca Mountains; potential to sell passes through a vendor agreement and to assist FS in highlighting the benefits and improvements as a result of fees.
Saguaro National Park	Provides road and trail-based recreation opportunities and sells federal recreation passes; potential to partner with the Coronado on a regional/Tucson Basin pass.
Arizona State Parks	Provides primarily trail-based recreation opportunities and historic sites; potential to partner with the Coronado on a regional/Tucson Basin pass.
Concession permittees	Manage FS-owned developed recreation sites for a fee and/or provide services to visitors; potential to operate additional sites and offer additional services to recreationists.
Sky Islands Children's Forest participant organizations	Partners provide programs where youth play, learn, grow and care for their world; potential to increase awareness of recreation opportunities for youth and their families at fee and non-fee sites.
Vendors	Sell Coronado daily and annual passes; potential to expand vendor program across forest.

### ***Communications and Marketing***

The purpose of fee program communications and marketing is to let visitors know about the recreation opportunities and benefits on the CNF and when a recreation pass is required on the forest. Communications will focus on promoting the benefits of recreation on the CNF, including opportunities at fee sites, increasing public awareness of fee program improvements, and timely information sharing with customers, frontline employees and vendors. Marketing actions will focus on providing information about and access to CNF pass products (local and national).

## Communication Messages and Outlets

The CNF has made a renewed commitment to providing public benefits through a variety of recreation opportunities and managing for a consistent, forestwide fee program. Several lawsuits related to recreation fees on Mt. Lemmon have led to negative messages about fees on the forest. The CNF has an excellent opportunity to provide strong, positive messages through frontliners, partners and media outlets about the need for, success of, and acceptance of recreation fees.

### Key messages

- Your experience at \_\_\_\_\_ (insert site/area name) is enhanced through the recreation fees you pay. Thank you for:
  - Valuing this place.
  - Contributing to your national legacy.
  - Sharing your memories with friends and family.
- Pass sales help sustain this great resource that is part of the community identity. We want to work together to better understand community needs and how recreation can or should contribute to improving them.
- Recreation fees benefit the forest and community by:
  - Staying local to help fund the opportunity/experience.
  - Providing flexibility by allowing investments in volunteers, youth programs and partnerships.
  - Funding improvements/enhancements desired by visitors.
- Visitors benefit directly from paying recreation fees. The majority of fee revenue returns to the area where it was collected to be used on those local sites and facilities.
- Having free public lands is important to the Forest Service and most places to recreate on the Coronado National Forest lands are free. Fees exist at some sites to help cover facilities and service costs.
  - We have a variety of free days in line with national events such as National Public Lands Day and Veteran's Day. In addition, we have free days in recognition of local cultural events.
  - Participants in Sky Islands Children's Forest programs can receive vouchers for use at fee sites.
- We want to know about YOUR experiences on the Coronado National Forest. What keeps you coming back for more?
- We are working to make purchasing passes more convenient. Coming soon:
  - On-site credit card payment
  - Purchase passes on the web and print for daily use



- More vendors such as Circle K

Communication Outlets

Media (newspapers, radio, television)

- Newspapers and radio
- Public service announcements
- Transit system public service space
- Billboards

Internet/Social Media

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Flickr
- Partner websites

**Communications Tasks**

**Table 11. Communication Tasks.**

Task	Lead	Due	Notes
Submit REA Accomplishment Report	Fee Program Manager	Annually	Ensure report is posted on forest website and available at district offices and visitor centers.
Improve internet/social media presence and information	PAO, Fee Program Manager	Review and update quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to provide information about recreation opportunities and pass requirements.</li> <li>• Update CNF website information about recreation passes.</li> <li>• Update 'Features' on CNF website to highlight fee sites and notable accomplishments.</li> </ul>
Update information about recreation opportunities to highlight benefits and help visitors choose sites that match their desired experiences	PAO, Recreation Program Lead, District Recreation Staff	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on opportunities and benefits and developed sites.</li> <li>• Provide information about appropriate places to recreate to reduce impacts to sensitive/dispersed areas.</li> </ul>

Task	Lead	Due	Notes
Highlight local 'white hat' stories that involve recreation fees.	PAO, Fee Program Manager	Frequently	<p>Ensure white hat stories are prominently displayed on websites, to offer examples and encouragement. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major facility changes that benefit the public.</li> <li>• Projects that involve youth or disadvantaged workers.</li> <li>• Projects that are community driven</li> <li>• Projects that involve something unique.</li> <li>• Projects that address a known issues such as safety, trash, graffiti, etc.</li> </ul>
Seek third party support for recreation fees and encourage visible documentation where possible	Fee Program Manager, Line Officers	Begin by April, 2013; then on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss annual program of work with Friends groups.</li> <li>• Work with partners, companies and organizations that see the benefits of recreation fees to share their perceptions through their websites, media, their contacts, etc.</li> <li>• Ask for written support.</li> <li>• Use their ideas for sharing positive messages about recreation fees.</li> </ul>
Identify community perceptions on the role of recreation fees	Fee Program Manager, Line Officers	Spring 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have 'tough' discussions about how to improve perceptions and be willing to implement ideas.</li> <li>• Be clear on how the Forest Service is implementing the REA.</li> <li>• Enable better representation of what people are truly saying concerning recreation fees.</li> <li>• Tie-in with fee proposal.</li> </ul>
Gather public input on forestwide fee proposal	Fee Program Manager	Summer 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow AZ RRAC guidelines for gathering public input.</li> </ul>
Reach across agency boundaries and develop common messages about recreation fees	Line Officers, Fee Program Manager	Begin by June 2013, then on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tie-in with Service First interagency meetings.</li> </ul>
Ensure all communications are in English and Spanish	PAO, Fee Program Manager	On-going	

Task	Lead	Due	Notes
Target resorts and commercial operators to disseminate information about fee program	Fee Program Manager, District recreation staff	Begin by June 2013, then on-going	Provide recreation opportunity information to visitors bureaus, resorts and commercial operators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approach resorts about becoming vendors for recreation passes.</li> <li>Identify commercial operators that need a special use authorization and send letter explaining requirements.</li> </ul>

## Marketing Strategies

Although the focus of marketing is often on promotion, marketing traditionally includes the “4 Ps” – product, price, place and promotion. Understanding all four Ps sets the stage for effective marketing strategies.

- The ‘product’ that the CNF fee program offers is:
  - Year-round short-duration recreation
  - Historical and cultural sites
  - Backyard (easy to access) recreation opportunities
  - Rustic facilities and amenities
  - International attractions
  - Beginning of the Arizona Trail
- The ‘price’ for the product is based on:
  - Agency/forest priorities
  - Public consideration of pricing decisions.
  - Market value
  - Cost recovery thresholds
- The ‘place’ for the product:
  - Southern Arizona Sky Islands
  - Accessible canyons
- The ‘promotion’ for the product includes:
  - An identifiable Forest Service “brand” (use FS shield on all products)
    - Logo for passes and marketing materials
    - Signs/placards for vendor use
  - Comprehensive information on the CNF website.
    - Fee sites and locations
    - Free days

- Passes and vendors (including online sales)
- Promotion through partners and national/regional organizations
  - Vendors and Friends groups
  - SICF –youth identify and plan events, write stories
  - Submit stories to national organizations such as Choose Outdoors, Audubon society
- Payment convenience
  - Online pass sales
  - On-site fee payment machines

The CNF has identified the following market segments, infrastructure and marketing outlets (Table 12).

**Table 12. Market segments and needs.**

Recreationists	Activities	Needs/Demand	Marketing Outlets
<b>Generalists (residents and visitors)</b>	Hiking/walking, driving for pleasure, viewing wildlife and scenery, relaxing, visiting nature center	Scenic drives, trails, scenic overlooks, picnic areas	Forest website, partner websites, local tourism websites, chambers of commerce, vendors, FS offices and visitor centers
<b>Youth and families (primarily local)</b>	Hiking/walking, environmental education, camping	Trails, visitor/nature centers, picnic areas, campgrounds	Forest website, partner websites, local schools and community centers, FS offices and visitor centers
<b>Baby boomer (residents and visitors)</b>	Hiking/walking, bird watching, viewing wildlife and scenery, nature study, visiting historic sites	Scenic drives,, trails, scenic overlooks, picnic areas, interpretation	Forest website, partner websites, community and senior centers, local and national clubs, FS offices and visitor centers
<b>Specialists (residents and visitors)</b>	Mountain biking, OHV driving, bird watching, visiting historic sites, camping	Trails, staging areas, interpretation, visitor/nature centers, campgrounds	Forest website, partner websites, local and national clubs, FS offices and visitor centers

Recreationists	Activities	Needs/Demand	Marketing Outlets
<b>Outfitter-guide clients</b>	Hiking, birding, viewing scenery and wildlife, mountain biking, bus tours	Scenic drives, trails, scenic overlooks, picnic areas, interpretation,	Forest website, permittee/tour operator websites, local tourism websites, chambers of commerce, FS offices and visitor centers

## Appendix A: Draft Fee Board By-laws and Charter

### Coronado National Forest Recreation Fee Program Board of Directors Bylaws

#### Purpose

A Board of Directors (Board) is designated to oversee the Coronado National Forest Recreation Fee Program. The Board is an umbrella organization for directing, coordinating, and monitoring the fee program across the forest. The overarching goals are to have a Recreation Fee Program that:

- is easy to understand and use,
- has broad public understanding and acceptance,
- operates in a businesslike manner, and
- results in:
  - quality customer service to recreation users
  - improved facilities and services
  - resource protection of National Forest System

#### Operating Goals

The Board is responsible to the Forest Supervisor for the principle direction provided by the ***Charter, Coronado National Forest - Recreation Fee Program, Board of Directors (Exhibit 1)***.

The Board has a variety of responsibilities including, but not limited to:

1. Develops strategy, policy, direction, and guidelines for the CNF's Fee program.
2. Provides forestwide consistency and oversight for the CNF's Fee program.
3. Provides broad fiscal oversight of the CNF's Fee Program
4. Reviews and forwards fee proposals or other pertinent documents to the Region 3 Fee Board.
5. Provides leadership to develop understanding, support, and commitment to the Fee Program both internally and externally
6. Assesses needs, obtains resources, determines priorities or makes recommendations (to appropriate decision makers) to accomplish recreation fee program work
7. Oversees and monitors the program including operation assessments, overall quality, and accomplishments.

The CNF Fee Program Organization, Board of Directors, and Committee members are displayed in **Exhibit 2**.

### **Board Membership**

**Number and Selection** - The Board of Directors shall consist of seven members including supervisor's office and district representatives. Members will be appointed by the Forest Supervisor. The Board Chair(s) is (are) responsible to make recommendations for membership.

**Skill/Knowledge Mix** - Membership will include employees from the CNF reflecting a diversity of geographic distribution and a mix of backgrounds including financial management, law enforcement, public affairs, operations and maintenance, frontliners, and line officers. The Forest Fee Program Coordinator will be a permanent member of the Board.

**Appointments and Terms** - Members are appointed for a term of two (2) years. For appointed terms to be staggered so approximately one-half of the terms expire each year, half of the members appointed to the first Board. Re-appointment shall be limited to two additional terms. The intent is to maintain continuity on the Board. Terms expire on December 31.

**Recreation Fee Program Coordinator** - The Recreation Fee Program Coordinator is a full voting member of the Board and a permanent Co-Chair. The Coordinator will provide advice and counsel to the full Board, secure meeting rooms and facilitators, and ensure production of meeting minutes. The Recreation Fee Program Coordinator shall oversee and coordinate all standing and temporary committees.

### **Board Leadership**

**Officers** - The Board may elect a Chairperson or Co-Chairs from amongst the members. The term of office shall be a one year term with a two term limit. The Board Chair(s) is (are) responsible for calling meetings, setting agendas, and serving as a liaison between the Board and the Forest Supervisor. The Chair(s) has (have) authority to act on behalf of the Board, when and where so authorized by a majority vote of the membership. Elections will be held in January of each year.

The Forest Supervisor may also delegate authority to the Chairperson or members of the Board as appropriate.

### **Board Operations**

**Meetings** - Board meetings will be held at least once a quarter. Meetings will be scheduled subject to the call of the Chairperson. All Board meetings are open except for the infrequent need for confidential deliberations.

**Quorum** - Fifty (50) percent **plus one** of the Board members shall constitute a quorum. A quorum is required for decision making. Board members may send a knowledgeable representative in proxy, provided the Chair(s) is notified in advance.

**Decision Making** - The primary decision making mode is consensus based on informed consent of the members (or proxy). Other modes of decision making such as command, consultation or voting may be used depending on the situation. The decision style for a particular decision is to be determined prior to entering into the decision topic. When voting is used at a Board meeting, it will be based on a simple majority of members present with each Board member (or their proxy) entitled to one vote. When the Chair determines that a decision needs to be made by the full Board prior to the next scheduled meeting, the decision process may be conducted by telephone or e-mail. Electronic voting requires a simple majority of the full Board.

The meeting manager and/or facilitator will coach presenters of decision topics on the content, format and time limits of information presented. This may also involve the distribution of a brief decision topic background paper prior to the meeting.

**Minutes** - Minutes shall be taken at all meetings and are the responsibility of the Recreation Fee Program Coordinator.

**Input - Employee & Public** - The Board will, on an as needed basis, develop and implement procedures for obtaining input from employees, the public, cooperators and partners. These processes will likely vary depending on the situation.

## Committees

**Standing & Temporary** - The Board may establish standing or temporary committees to accomplish its work in support of the CNF's Fee Program.

**Executive Committee** - On occasion it may be necessary for Board action to be taken in a time frame that precludes waiting until the next scheduled meeting of the Board, or cannot be accomplished through electronic communications in a timely or effective manner. To facilitate situations under such circumstances, an Executive Committee shall be established which shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Board.

The Executive Committee shall be made up of the Chair(s) and participation by members of the board on issues when needed.



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***Committee Membership*** - The Chair(s) shall appoint committee members and chairpersons. The Committee Chairpersons shall be responsible for scheduling meetings, assigning specific tasks related to the mandate for the committee and reporting to the Board concerning the work of the committee.

## Exhibit 1

### CHARTER

#### Coronado National Forest Recreation Fee Program

##### Board of Directors

**BACKGROUND:** The Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act of 2004 (P.L. 104-134) authorizes the agency to charge recreation user fees through December 2014. The Arizona BLM Resource Advisory Committee will review and recommend all fee proposals from the Coronado National Forest.

A Board of Directors is formed to oversee program administration. Board membership represents interests from the supervisor's office and ranger districts. Representatives may include disciplines from the following areas:

- Recreation Management
- Public Affairs
- Fiscal Management
- Law Enforcement and Investigations
- Forest Line Officer
- Visitor Information Services

The Board addresses a variety of issues on a quarterly basis or "as needed", including but not limited to:

1. Sets and recommends policy, direction and guidelines for the fee program.
2. Reviews and recommends fee program proposals.
3. Emphasizes customer service across the CNF in order to increase overall broad-based support for resource protection, quality services and facilities.
4. Monitors and reviews projects after implementation.
5. Provides oversight on the fiscal management of revenues generated and allocated.

##### **ACTION REQUIRED**

This Board of Directors, in partnership with the Regional Office, District Rangers and the Arizona Recreation RAC, will act in an advisory capacity to the Forest Supervisor. This Charter establishes a framework for timely coordination, support, oversight, and recommendations by the Board to assure a high quality recreation fee program. The following are actions necessary to implement the program:

1. Support and guide the Recreation Fee Program Coordinator in management of the program with emphasis on:
  - (a) Forestwide consistency in sites included in the fee program, operations, fee collections, revenue processing, and investment priorities.
  - (b) Communications internally and externally.
  - (c) Recommending effective training methods for program participants using fee program technology.
  - (d) Evaluation the fee program and identifying needed changes at least annually.
2. Provide review of all recreation fee proposals that are proposed to the Arizona Recreation RAC.
3. Provide strategic recommendations for the Forest Leadership Team on national and regional issues affecting the recreation fee program.
4. Showcase successes both internally and externally and document changes needed that serve as lessons for other projects.
5. Facilitate and support the development and implementation of projects designed to assist, train or develop leadership skills.
6. Monitor program consistency, program quality and annual reporting.
7. Recommend use of reserve funds to assist the Forest’s overall Fee Program.
8. Assure an annual report is submitted to the Forest Supervisor, District Rangers and Regional Office presenting results of each fee program project.

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JIM UPCHURCH  
Forest Supervisor  
Coronado National Forest

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DATE

**Exhibit 2**

**Coronado National Forest Service  
Fee Program Organization & Board of Directors**

***Fee Program Board of Directors***

**Name**                                      **Position**                                      **Term Ends**

*Board of Directors Working Agreements*

1. Treat each other with respect and appreciate the other person's point of view.
2. Be honest with ourselves and with others.
3. Enter into discussion enthusiastically and allow others equal opportunity to participate.
4. Give freely of your experience.
5. Keep confidences and assume others will.
6. Confine your discussion to the topics.
7. Listen alertly and take accurate notes.
8. Provide constructive feedback and receive it appropriately.
9. Be prompt and regular in attendance.
10. Devote your attention to the board meetings.
11. Keep commitments.

Adhering to these few simple principles will increase the professionalism of the Recreation Fee Board of Directors and improve communication.

## Appendix B: Fee Sites

**Table B-1. Current Fee Sites.**

Note: Text in red is incorrect in Infra.

Cabin rentals (indicated by an asterisk \*) are not included in the financial analysis.

District	Site Name	Site Type	Development Scale	Total O&M	Total DM
Douglas	Camp Rucker	Group Campground	4	\$14,300	\$50,000
Douglas	Cochise Nature Trail	Interpretive Site	3	\$	\$
Douglas	Cochise Stronghold	Campground	5	\$20,991	\$2,750
Douglas	Cochise Stronghold Interpretive Trail	Interpretive Site	5	\$928	\$
Douglas	Cochise Stronghold Th	Trailhead	5	\$778	\$
Douglas	Cypress Park	Campground	4	\$7,294	\$4,983
Douglas	Half Moon Ranch Cabin Rental*	Lookout/cabin	5	\$27,770	\$43,385
Douglas	Idlewilde	Campground	4	\$6,441	\$
Douglas	Rockfellow Cabin Rental*	Lookout/cabin	5	\$2,658	\$
Douglas	Rucker Forest Camp	Campground	4	\$10,319	\$8,406
Douglas	Rustler Park	Campground	4	\$19,178	\$252,342
Douglas	Rustler Park Th	Trailhead	3	\$4,200	\$
Douglas	South Fork	Picnic Site	4	\$6,436	422
Douglas	South Fork Th	Trailhead	4	\$	\$
Douglas	Stewart	Campground	4	\$9,025	\$50,000
Douglas	Sunny Flat	Campground	5	\$18,417	\$
Douglas	Sunny Flat Th	Trailhead	5	\$	\$
Nogales	Bog Springs	Campground	4	\$	\$
Nogales	Bog Springs Th	Trailhead	4	\$	\$
Nogales	Calabasas	Group Campground	3	\$8,264	\$
Nogales	Kent Springs Center*	Organization Site	5	\$22,821	10,999
Nogales	Kentucky Camp*	Interpretive Site <b>Cabin Rental</b>	4	\$52,576	\$273,320

District	Site Name	Site Type	Development Scale	Total O&M	Total DM
Nogales	Madera Amphitheater	Interpretive Site	3	\$2,701	\$
Nogales	Madera Canyon	Picnic Site	3	\$8,777	\$
Nogales	Madera Nature Trail	Interpretive Site	4	\$4,133	\$
Nogales	Madera Th	Trailhead	4	\$	\$
Nogales	Madera Trailhead	Picnic Site	4	\$3,596	\$
Nogales	Mt Wrightson Th	Trailhead	4	\$	\$
Nogales	Mt. Wrightson	Picnic Site	4	\$43,757	\$
Nogales	Proctor Parking	Interpretive Site	4	\$27,432	\$6,266
Nogales	Sycamore Canyon	Trailhead	1	\$	\$
Nogales	White Rock	Campground	3	\$17,404	\$5,649
Nogales	Whitehouse	Picnic Site	4	\$21,215	\$4,107
Sierra Vista	Lakeview	Campground	4	\$50,185	\$14,478
Sierra Vista	Ramsey Vista	Campground	4	\$5,136	\$
Sierra Vista	Reef Townsite Campground	Group Campground	4	\$4,055	\$
Sierra Vista	Reef Townsite Cg	Campground	4	\$4,788	\$
Sierra Vista	Rock Bluff	Group Campground	4	\$4,435	\$12,123
Safford	Arcadia	Campground	4	\$17,243	\$
Safford	Columbine Corrals	Horse Camp	4	\$9,420	\$
Safford	Cunningham	Campground	4	\$9,054	\$
Safford	Hospital Flat	Campground	4	\$12,578	\$
Safford	Riggs Flat	Campground	4	\$31,460	\$7,240
Safford	Shannon	Campground	4	\$10,801	\$120,041
Safford	Soldier Creek	Campground	4	\$9,052	\$250
Santa Catalina	Alder	Picnic Site	4	\$4,910	\$
Santa Catalina	Bear Canyon Overlook	Picnic Site	4	\$10,232	\$
Santa Catalina	Bear Canyon Th	Trailhead	5	\$3,256	\$
Santa Catalina	Box Elder	Picnic Site	5	\$10,074	\$433

District	Site Name	Site Type	Development Scale	Total O&M	Total DM
Santa Catalina	Cactus Environmental Ed Center, Group Picnic	Group Picnic Site	4	\$16,949	\$3,342
Santa Catalina	Chihuahua Pine	Picnic Site	5	\$22,024	\$1,170
Santa Catalina	Cypress	Picnic Site	5	\$24,669	\$11,321
Santa Catalina	General Hitchcock	Campground	5	\$2,551	\$2,694
Santa Catalina	Gordon Hirabayashi Campground	Campground	4	\$16,234	\$2,095
Santa Catalina	Gordon Hirabayashi Intepretive Site	Interpretive Site	4	\$	\$
Santa Catalina	Gordon Hirabayashi Th	Trailhead	4	\$	\$
Santa Catalina	Inspiration Rock	Picnic Site	5	\$11,525	\$2,649
Santa Catalina	Loma Linda	Picnic Site	5	\$15,342	\$1,123
Santa Catalina	Lower Sabino	Picnic Site	4	\$57,139	\$431,788
Santa Catalina	Lower Sabino East Dam, Single Family Picnic	Picnic Site	4	\$16,455	\$
Santa Catalina	Marshall Gulch	Picnic Site	4	\$17,503	\$1,435
Santa Catalina	Marshall Gulch Th	Trailhead	4	\$	\$
Santa Catalina	Middle Bear Canyon	Picnic Site	5	\$23,092	\$13,606
Santa Catalina	Molino Basin	Picnic Site	5	\$1,552	\$
Santa Catalina	Molino Basin	Campground	5	\$43,024	\$10,238
Santa Catalina	Molino Basin Group	Group Campground	5	\$	\$
Santa Catalina	Mt. Lemmon/Aspen Mt. Lemmon	TRAILHEAD Picnic?	4	\$6,011	\$

District	Site Name	Site Type	Development Scale	Total O&M	Total DM
	<b>Recreation Site</b>				
Santa Catalina	Peppersauce	Campground	3	\$69,971	\$4,021
Santa Catalina	Peppersauce Group Site	Group Campground	3	\$	\$
Santa Catalina	Sabino Canyon Bajada Nature Trail	Interpretive Site	3	\$	\$
Santa Catalina	Sabino Canyon Vc	Interpretive Visitor Center (Major)	5	\$526,092	\$750
Santa Catalina	Sabino Dam Overlook	Picnic Site	4	\$8,593	\$
Santa Catalina	Shuttle Stop 9	Trailhead	2	\$6,907	\$
Santa Catalina	Upper Sabino Canyon, Family Picnic	Picnic Site	4	\$119,321	\$



## Appendix C: Fee Collection Standards

Each district will use the following protocols for fee collections from iron rangers/fee tubes.

1. Safety Issues during Collection of Iron Rangers.
  - a. PERSONAL SAFETY IS ALWAYS FIRST.
  - b. DO NOT collect if you are not comfortable and do not feel safe.
  - c. No unnecessary stops
    - i. Ex: coffee, lunch, snacks, gas.
  - d. Necessary stops:
    - i. Bathroom break, vehicle breakdown, accident.
  - e. Upon arrival at site be aware of your surroundings before the collection of the Iron Ranger.
2. On collection days, the **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will pick up the Outer Key, used to remove Iron Rangers from the outer housing at each collection site, from the **Designated Representative** at the District Office by 0830 hours.
  - a. At the beginning of each month, the **Field Collection Officer's (FCO)** Supervisor will provide the name of the **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** for the month to the designated representative. ***No Field Collection Officer (FCO) will be assigned two consecutive months by the supervisor.***
  - b. The Forest **Financial Technician (FT)** will email the assigned **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** at the beginning of each week the collection schedule for the purpose of maintaining security and confidentiality.
  - c. **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will be assigned a day or days of the week for collection of Iron Rangers from collection sites.
3. The **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will pick up the key to the Forest Service vehicle containing the Iron Ranger Tubes secured in the back of the Forest Service vehicle from the designated key box.
  - a. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will verify all Iron Ranger tubes are in the secured Forest Service vehicle.
    - i. Report any missing Iron Ranger tubes to the **Financial Technician (FT)** and the **Forest Service LEO**.
  - b. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will verify gas tank is sufficient to make the trip to fee collection sites and let the **Supervisor** and **Financial Technician (FT)** know if he/she will need to stop for gas while doing collections.
4. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will receive a signed, sealed envelope containing the Iron Ranger Outer Key and a continuous signature AD-107 from the **Designated Representative**.

- a. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will verify the name and signature of previous **FCO** listed on the AD-107 with the signed sealed dated envelope containing the Iron Ranger Outer Key.
  - b. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will open the sealed envelope containing the Outer Key to the Iron Rangers and print and sign (full signature), date of pick-up, and time of pick-up (military time) on the AD-107 as receiving the Outer Key and confirming that all Iron Ranger tubes are in the secured vehicle.
5. Upon arrival at each collection site the **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will fill the fee envelope boxes, next to the Iron Ranger, for customer use.
6. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will unlock and remove the Iron Ranger from tube housing and replace with the empty Iron Ranger from the back of the secured Forest Service vehicle.
  - a. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will unlock and remove the Iron Ranger from tube housing at the collection site and bring it back to the Forest Service vehicle.
  - b. Unlock the back of the vehicle and remove the empty Iron Ranger tube coinciding with the collection site.
  - c. Place the collected Iron Ranger in the back of Forest Service vehicle and lock vehicle.
  - d. Insert the empty Iron Ranger tube in housing, place outer lock on tube, and confirm it locked by turning base of lock, then pull up on tube handle ensuring it is secure in the housing.
7. The **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will return to the District Office immediately after all collection sites have been collected.
8. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will meet the designated **Collection Officer (CO)** or **Financial Technician (FT)** at the District Office with the Iron Rangers collected from each collection site.
9. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** and **Collection Officer (CO)** or **Financial Technician (FT)** will empty and bag the envelopes removed from the Iron Rangers for each collection site.
  - a. The **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will remove one Iron Ranger tube at a time from the back of the Forest Service vehicle.
  - b. The **Collection Officer (CO)** or **Financial Technician (FT)** will unlock the Inner Iron Ranger lock with the **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** observing.
  - c. The **Collection Officer (CO)** or **Financial Technician (FT)** will place envelopes removed from the tube into a numbered plastic bag, sealed with **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** as witness.
  - d. The **Collection Officer (CO)** or **Financial Technician (FT)** and **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will write on the plastic bag site name, current date, and full

signature of the **Collection Officer (CO) or Financial Technician** and **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** for all plastic bags containing collection envelopes.

- e. The **Collection Officer (CO) or Financial Technician (FT)** will transfer bag information to the Fee Collection Ledger, recording current date, site name, plastic bag number, and both The **Collection Officer (CO) or Financial Technician (FT)** and **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will print and sign (full signature) on the Fee Collection Ledger.
10. The **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** and **Collection Officer (CO) or Financial Technician (FT)** will enter the designated site where the **Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will return the Outer Key, receive copies of the signed AD-107 and Fee Collection Ledger.
- a. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will place the Outer Iron Ranger Key in a new envelope, seal the envelope, print and sign (full signature) and date across the sealed flap.
  - b. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will print and sign and date the continuous AD-107 and return the Outer Iron Ranger Key enclosed in envelope to the **Collection Officer (CO) or Financial Technician (FT)**.
  - c. The **Collection Officer (CO) or Financial Technician (FT)** will make copies of the Fee Collection Ledger and the signed AD-107 and give a copy to **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)**.
11. **The Field Collection Officer (FCO)** will take the empty Iron Rangers and replace them back in the Forest Service vehicle, complete mileage report, perform maintenance as necessary, secure Forest Service vehicle and return vehicle key to designated key box.

## Appendix D: Cost of Collections

### Current Collections

Assumptions:

- Always 2 people collecting except Mt. Lemmon
- Average G6-6 salary per district; collections once a week
- Sabino booth operated 365 days a year - 1 person collecting

**Table C-1. Current collections costs**

District		Daily rate	Days	Collection costs
Douglas		\$150	78	\$11,700
Nogales		\$150	104	\$15,600
Safford		\$150	78	\$11,700
Sierra Vista		\$150	78	\$11,700
Santa Catalina	Mt. Lemmon	\$150	104	\$15,600
	Sabino	\$150	522	\$78,300
	Processing	\$189	261	\$49,329
SO Processing		\$223	261	\$58,203
Total				\$252,132

**Table C-2. Collection costs as a percent of revenue.**

Year	Revenue	Collection costs	% of revenue
FY12	\$710,000	\$ 252,132.00	36%
Pre-2011	\$1,000,000	\$ 252,132.00	35%

**Transition Collections (FY13-14)**

Assumptions:

- Always 2 people collecting except Mt. Lemmon
- Average G6-6 salary per district; collections once a week
- Fee machines at Sabino and Madera
- Expand vendor network

**Table C-3. Transition collections costs.**

District	Daily rate	Days	Collection costs
Douglas	\$150	78	\$11,700
Nogales	\$150	52	\$7,800
Safford	\$150	78	\$11,700
Sierra Vista	\$150	78	\$11,700
Santa Catalina	\$150	52	\$7,800
SO: Vendor manager/CPR	\$223	130	\$28,990
Fee machine contract	Assumes 6 machines 4 @ Sabino 2 @ Madera		\$120,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$199,690</b>

**Table C-4. Collection costs as a percent of revenue.**

Year	Revenue	Collection costs	% of revenue
FY12	\$710,000	\$ 199,690.00	28%
Pre-2011	\$1,000,000	\$ 199,690.00	20%

***Future Collections (FY15+)***

Assumptions:

- Passes sold only through vendors and fee machines

**Table C-5. Future collections costs.**

Cost	Daily rate	Days	Collection costs
Vendor manager/COR	301	261	\$78,561
Fee Machine contract	Assumes 9 machines		\$170,000
Total			\$248,561

**Table C-6. Collection costs as a percent of revenue.**

Year	Revenue	Collection costs	% of revenue
FY12	\$710,000	\$248,561	35%
Pre-2011	\$1,000,000	\$248,561	25%