



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

BLM Coeur d'Alene Field Office Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Recreation Sites Business Plan



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Recommendations, Reviews, and Approvals

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Date

This business plan was prepared by the Bureau of Land Management's Coeur d'Alene Field Office pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004 (16 U.S.C. 6801-6814) and BLM recreation fee program policies. It establishes future management goals and priorities for the Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Recreation Sites within the Coeur d'Alene Field Office.



United States Department of the Interior

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In Reply Refer to:
2932 (IDC01000)

Dear Reader,

The Coeur d'Alene Field Office (CDAFO) would like to present for your review and comment this Draft Business Plan for the Blackwell Island Recreation Site and Mineral Ridge Public Boat Launch. The Draft Business Plan outlines the rationale for a fee increase at both Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge boat launches. More than 93% of Coeur d'Alene Lake shoreline is designated as private property. The CDAFO boat launches, campgrounds and hiking trails serve a critical role in providing public access for recreational opportunities. The CDAFO believes fee increases are necessary to continue to provide a high-quality recreational experience to the community.

Currently, day-use is priced at \$6 while the CDAFO Access Pass (unlimited day-use access from Memorial Day to Columbus Day) are priced at \$40. The updated business plan calls for a cost increase to \$12 for day-use and \$80 for the CDAFO Access Pass. The CDAFO is also proposing a fee increase from \$30 to \$100 for reserving the group pavilion at Blackwell Island. Additionally, the CDAFO Access Pass would be recognized at all CDAFO recreation sites to cover day-use related fees.

The CDAFO is requesting fee increases to help mitigate the growing expenses of facilitating quality lake access, accommodating group activities, performing site maintenance, and addressing regular/deferred maintenance needs. Funds generated at these site support expenses; however, with rising operating and maintenance costs little is left over to address significant improvements or large maintenance projects.

Several steps remain before this Business Plan can be implemented and the new fee structure goes into effect. The steps include gathering and assessing public comment; getting a recommendation to move forward from Idaho's Resource Advisory Council (RAC); and publishing a Notice in the Federal Register outlining the plan and noting RAC approval.

The release of this Draft Business Plan provides you with the opportunity to comment on this plan and its proposed fee increases. Comments may be mailed to the Bureau of Land Management's Coeur d'Alene Field Office or emailed to this address: BLM_ID_CD_CDAREcreationFees@blm.gov. Please put "Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Comments" in the subject line. Comments are most useful by July 11, 2024.

Thank you for your interest in public lands.

J. Raymond Pease
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Table of Contents

1	Executive Summary	5
2	Background and Authorities	5
3	Introduction to the Coeur d'Alene Field Office Recreation Program	6
4	Description of Each Existing or Proposed Fee Site/Area	7
5	Proposed Modifications to Recreation Fee Rates	11
6	Operating Costs.....	13
7	Revenues	15
8	Priorities for Future Expenditures.....	16
9	Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates	18
10	Impacts from Changing and Non-Changing Recreation Fee Rates	21
11	Public Outreach.....	21

Tables

Table 1: History of the Fee Structure at Blackwell.....	9
Table 2: History of the Fee Structure at Mineral Ridge Boat Launch	10
Table 3: Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Boat Launch Recreation Use Permit Numbers 2012-23.....	11
Table 4: Current and Proposed Fees.....	12
Table 5: Blackwell and Mineral Ridge Operating Costs 2016-2023.....	14
Table 6: Mineral Ridge Revenue 2015-2023.....	15
Table 7: Blackwell Island Revenue 2012-2023.....	16
Table 8: Analysis of Comparable Boat Launch Rates.....	18-20

Figures

Figure 1: Aerial View of Blackwell Island	7
Figure 2: Boaters waiting to launch at Blackwell Island	7
Figure 3: Canal at Blackwell Island.....	8
Figure 4: Children on the Blackwell Boardwalk	9
Figure 5: Mineral Ridge Boat Launch	10
Figure 6: Mineral Ridge Boat Launch	11
Figure 7: Riprap creating a launch hazard at Mineral Ridge Boat Ramp	15
Figure 8: Damage to Fence and Native Plant Garden from runaway vehicle.....	17
Figure 9: Dislodge dock float tub at Mineral Ridge Boat Launch.....	18

1 Executive Summary

The Blackwell Island Recreation Site and Mineral Ridge Boat Launch are Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-administered sites on the north side of Lake Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Visitation at the two sites reaches over 30,000 people annually and accounts for around 30 percent of all launching on Lake Coeur d'Alene. The primary activity taking place at the sites is boat launching and retrieving. Visitors also have access to a variety of BLM-provided amenities including interpretive signage, hiking, vault toilets, restrooms trash receptacles, wheelchair loading/unloading ramps, self-service pay stations and more. The BLM maintains both sites.

Operation and maintenance of the sites has become increasingly expensive since fees were adjusted in 2012. Neither site generates enough income to fund long-term or deferred maintenance needs. As the region's population continues to grow, use at the sites has also greatly increased. Population growth has a direct impact on these CDAFO sites such as monitoring, increased janitorial services, and higher costs of services such as lawn mowing. With current appropriated funding unreliable and BLM directing that its recreation sites become increasingly self-sufficient, an increase in fees is needed to cover the increased costs.

Current site fees, for both sites, are \$6 for day-use per vehicle, \$40 for an annual pass and \$30 for the rental of the pavilion at Blackwell Island. This business plan includes a proposed fee increase to \$12 day-use, \$80 for an annual pass (now called the CDAFO Access Pass) and \$80 for the pavilion reservation. This proposed fee increase was determined through a fair market value calculation method which compared the proposed fee rates to those charged by other outdoor recreation providers for similar opportunities. Fees collected will be used to operate, maintain, and improve the facilities with any excess dollars being carried over annually for improving infrastructure, addition of amenities, and improving visitor experience.

Public outreach for this proposed business plan may include posting of proposed fee increases at impacted recreation sites, posting in the Federal Register Notice, emails to interested parties, social media postings, local newspaper notices and communications with Idaho Resource Advisory Council.

2 Background and Authorities

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

- **The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976** (Public Law 94-579; 43 U.S.C. 1701–1787), contains BLM's general land use management authority over the public lands, and establishes outdoor recreation as one of the principal uses of those lands. Section 302 (b) of FLPMA directs the Secretary of the Interior to regulate through permits or other instruments the use of the public lands. Section 303 of FLPMA contains BLM's authority to enforce the regulations and impose penalties.
- **The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) of 2004** repealed applicable portions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and replaced BLM's authority to collect recreation fees. This current law authorizes BLM to collect recreation fees at sites that meet certain requirements, allows BLM to keep the fee revenues at the local offices where they were

collected, and directs how BLM will manage and utilize these revenues. FLREA also established the America the Beautiful – The National Parks and Federal Recreational Pass Program.

- **Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 2930 (43 CFR 2930) Permits for Recreation on Public Lands** contains the regulations governing BLM’s recreation permitting program.

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

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

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

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

Land Use Plan Guidance

The CDAFO’s recreation program is guided by the 2007 Coeur d’Alene Resource Management Plan (RMP). It provides a framework that includes objectives and actions for designated Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA) within the Field Office. This Business Plan will assist the CDAFO in meeting objectives and action items.

3 Introduction to the Coeur d’Alene Field Office Recreation Program

The CDAFO is part of the Coeur d’Alene District, which manages BLM lands in the five northern counties of Idaho: Kootenai, Boundary, Bonner, Shoshone and Benawa counties. The CDAFO is a part of Idaho’s 1st Congressional District.

The CDAFO has several Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs), including Lake CDA, Killarney, Gamlin, Silver Valley, and Widow Mountain/ Grandmother Mountains SRMAs. The Field Office also has one Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA), lake access, trail systems, and many other scenic destinations. CDAFO lands border National Forest, state, city and private lands.

Visitation throughout the summer months is high. Over the last five years over 710,331 people on average accessed BLM lands managed by the CDAFO annually. Popular recreation activities include lake access and camping, river access, boating, hiking, biking, OHV, ATV, and motorcycle recreation opportunities. The BLM maintains two popular boat launches on Coeur d’Alene Lake. People from across the region are drawn to Lake Coeur d’Alene as a tourist and vacation destination.

The area’s economy is based in a rich history mining and logging activities, with tourism and residential living most of the regional economic activity today. According to U.S. Census Bureau statistics, in 2010 Spokane and Kootenai County populations were about 609,715 combined. In 2022, the combined counties population grew to 733,268. In that time, the average growth rate for Spokane was 1.3% and Kootenai’s grew at 2.5%. The largest growth rate for Kootenai occurred between 2020 and 2022, at 7.1%.

Kootenai County is one of the fastest growing counties in Idaho. Ada, Canyon, and Kootenai Counties' represent 50% of Idaho's total population. Some predictions estimate 277,000 people will be living in Kootenai County by the year 2023. Experts expect 227,000 people will be living in Kootenai County by the year 2030. As of 2023, Idaho remained one of the nation's fastest growing states at 1.6% population growth rate.



Figure 1: Aerial View of Blackwell Island

The 2007 CDAFO Resource Management Plan (RMP) is the guiding land use plan for this BLM office. The current recreation sites and areas listed in the RMP for the Lake Coeur d'Alene Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) are Beauty Bay, Blackwell Island Recreation Site, Blue Creek Bay, John C. Pointner Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary Trail, Mica Bay Boater Park, Mineral Ridge Boat Launch, Mineral Ridge Scenic Area, Ross Point Recreation Site, and Wind Bay Boater Park.

4 Description of Each Existing or Proposed Fee Site/Area

Blackwell Island Boat Launch is located along the shores of the Spokane River, immediately adjacent to Coeur d'Alene Lake and the City of Coeur d'Alene. The site is within Kootenai County and administered by the CDAFO. The site can accommodate parking up to 135 vehicles with trailers and another 40 single vehicles. It is annually open to the public from Memorial Day through Columbus Day. Several other city, county, and state-managed boat launches provide boat access to the lake within 20 miles of the City of Coeur d'Alene. Blackwell Island is one of the most heavily utilized boat launches on the lake within Coeur d'Alene city limits.



Figure 2: Boaters waiting to launch at Blackwell Island

Currently the primary recreational activity occurring at the site is the launching and retrieving of personal watercraft. Other commonly observed activities include dog walking, photography, kayaking and paddleboarding. Within Blackwell Island several day-use picnic sites provide access to a shallow, slow-moving canal that is an ideal

swimming area. Demand for this type of day-use recreational activity around the lake is high and increasing. The CDAFO is currently re-designing the parking lot so that the high demand to access the day-use picnic canal sites has less of an impact to launching of personal watercraft.



Figure 3: Canal at Blackwell Island

Facilities at Blackwell Island include:

- A climate-controlled flush toilet building
- Vault toilet restrooms
- Picnic areas with tables, benches, trash cans, smooth ADA surfaces, and BBQ grills
- Native Plant garden with educational signage
- Paved parking lot
- Three dumpsters
- Two self-service payment and automated fee machines
- Large boat rinsing station
- Wheelchair loading and unloading ramps
- Four concrete watercraft launch lanes
- Reservable picnic pavilion able to accommodate large groups and
- ½ Mile elevated boardwalk nature trail with interpretive and historical information about the site and the Spokane River

Maintenance of Blackwell Island involves BLM recreation staff, a janitorial contractor, septic pumping contractor and a grounds maintenance contractor. The CDAFO has expressed the desire to add a security contractor to the site as well.

Recreation fees were first established when Blackwell Island opened to the public in 2003 and set at \$3 as an expanded amenity fee (day-use fee). In 2005 day-use fees were increased to \$4 with an annual pass available for \$30. The fee to rent the group pavilion was established at \$30 per day. Prices remained fixed until 2012 when the RAC approved an increase to \$6 for day-use and \$40 for the season pass. The current fee structure has been in place since 2012.



Figure 4: Children on the Blackwell Boardwalk

Table 1: History of the Fee Structure at Blackwell

Federal Fiscal Year	Day-Use Fee	Annual Pass Fee	Pavilion Reservation Fee
2003	\$3	N/A	N/A
2005	\$4	\$30	\$30
2012	\$6	\$40	\$30
Proposed	\$12	\$80	\$80

The Mineral Ridge Boat Launch

is located on the South shore of Wolf Lodge Bay on the Northeast end Lake Coeur d’Alene. The site is easily accessible via paved Highway 97 and is approximately one mile from the Interstate 90 interchange east of the City of Coeur d’Alene. Recreation opportunities include both motorized and non-motorized boating, fishing, personal watercraft use, and wildlife viewing. Site amenities include paved parking for 24 vehicles with



Figure 5: Mineral Ridge Boat Launch

boat trailers, fully accessible facilities, concrete boat launch, two docks, informational kiosk, self-serve payment station, trash cans, and a vault toilet restroom. A janitorial service contractor and BLM recreation staff perform maintenance of the vault toilet. BLM staff performs the remainder of maintenance to the site amenities. Contracted septic pumping service performs vault sewage pumping. The site is open year-round but low lake levels can limit boat launching during certain times of the year.

For a two-week period during the month of December the BLM hosts “Eagle Watch” at the site. This occurs when migrating bald eagles congregate in nearby Wolf Lodge Bay and Beauty Bay to feed on spawning kokanee. BLM resource and recreation staff conduct interpretive talks and provide education materials to the public. High power viewing spotting scopes are also provided for the public to view resting or feeding Bald Eagles. This event has become increasingly popular in recent years and thousands of people from across the country, as well as international visitors, come to the area to view the eagles. December of 2023 provided record numbers of eagles counted with more than 400 eagles viewed. During “Eagle Watch” BLM waives fees at Mineral Ridge Boat Launch.

Table 2: History of the Fee Structure at Mineral Ridge Boat Launch

Federal Fiscal Year	Day-Use Fee	Annual Pass Fee
2003	\$3	N/A
2005	\$4	\$30
2012	\$6	\$40
Proposed	\$12	\$80



Figure 6: Mineral Ridge Boat Launch

Fees at Mineral Ridge Boat Launch are similar to those at Blackwell Island due to the availability of the annual boat launch pass.

The proposed fee increases at Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Boat Launch are on par in both the timing and amount of previously established fee increases. The history of fees at the sites generally demonstrates a 100% increase in fees approximately every decade. The proposed increases in this business plan continue that trend.

Table 3: Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Boat Launch Recreation Use Permit Numbers 2012-2023

Federal Fiscal Year	Blackwell Island RUP	Mineral Ridge Boat Launch RUP
2012	5,712	1,829
2013	6,624	1,585
2014	6,636	458
2015	6,310	1,655
2016	6,109	1,607
2017	6,765	1,600
2018	6,265	1,831
2019	15,120	1,369
2020	7,853	1,700
2021	7,705	1,390
2022	22,575	1,184
2023	8,190	1,375

Recreational Use Permits (RUP) are issued for short term recreational use of specialized sites, facilities, equipment, or services furnished at the federal expense. Most often, RUPs are fee envelopes collected at campgrounds and day-use areas or boat launches. RUP data can be helpful in determining the number of visitors to a site. CDAFO collects, analyzes, and reports RUP data on an annual basis.

Both Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Boat Launch can be utilized by Special Recreation Permit holders and those with legal Rights of Way. To allow the sites to continue to be utilized for their intended recreational usages, we will be limiting any issued permits to utilize no more than 10% of available parking spaces in total.

5 Proposed Modifications to Recreation Fee Rates

Coeur d'Alene Field Office 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 Coeur d'Alene Field Office decides to add additional reservation services of 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 \$.50 to \$10.00 depending on the type of service provided. The reservation service 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 until or unless the office moves the fee site/area entirely to e-commerce. Other payment options may also be considered in the future as technology and software develops, such as onsite credit card payment systems or scan and pay.

The CDAFO is proposing a fee increase for both day-use activities and pavilion reservations as well as an increase in price for the annual Access Pass, valid at both Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge.

Table 4: Current and Proposed Fees

Site	Current Day-Use Fee	Current Annual Pass Fee	Current Pavilion Reservation Fee
Blackwell Island Boat Launch	\$6 Proposed increase to \$12	\$40 Proposed Increase to \$80	\$30 Proposed Increase to \$100 (starting at \$80)
Mineral Ridge Boat Launch	\$6 Proposed Increase to \$12	\$40 Proposed Increase to \$80	N/A

Proposed Fee Increases

The CDAFO is also proposing to modify how fees are managed at the Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge recreation sites. The CDAFO intends to stop accepting the *America the Beautiful Pass* at the two sites to comply more closely with the internal regulations prescribed in the BLM Handbook and FLREA. The *America the Beautiful Pass* is a different pass system than the annual pass sold by the CDAFO.

Section H-2930-1 of the Handbook separates standard amenity fees from expanded amenity fees. The *America the Beautiful Pass* offers discounted entrance fees on some lands managed by the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service as well as discounted standard amenity fees (day-use fees) on lands managed by the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation and US Army Corps of Engineers. *America the Beautiful* passes have historically been accepted at both sites allowing for a 50 percent reduction in day-use fees.

Per the Handbook, **standard amenity fees** are appropriate in nationally designated areas and destination visitor or interpretive centers providing a broad range of interpretive services. Standard amenity fees may also be charged at developed day-use sites that provide significant opportunities for outdoor recreation; entail substantial federal investment; and require intensive management to enhance visitor experiences, address environmental needs, and manage conflicting uses. However, the Handbook states that **expanded amenity fees** are appropriate at places such as developed campgrounds and highly developed boat launches with specialized facilities or services, such as mechanical or hydraulic boatlifts or facilities,

multilane paved ramps, paved parking, refuse containers, restrooms, and other improvements. Highly developed boat launches may feature ramp or parking lighting, security services, changing rooms, mooring floats, picnic areas or playground areas.

Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge boat launch facilities meet the threshold for being expanded amenity recreation sites. Chapter 3 section 1 of H-2930-1 BLM Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook states that *America the Beautiful Passes* or other similar interagency passes may not be used to waive expanded amenity fees except in limited circumstances where such a waiver is warranted to improve customer service or to meet other needs established through planning. Because highly developed boat launches are specifically mentioned in the Handbook as areas where expanded amenity rates should be charged, the CDAFO shall no longer accept the *America the Beautiful* pass at Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge boat launches. The *America the Beautiful Pass* or other similar interagency passes would still be honored at CDAFO developed campgrounds and boater parks where discounts to standard amenity fee rates are applicable.

The CDAFO currently offers the annual boat launch pass to accommodate access to Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Boat Launch. This annual pass costs \$40.00. Pass holders are exempt from the daily fee at both sites. This system has proven beneficial for both the public and BLM. With increased day-use occurring at established fee sites, the CDAFO proposes to enhance this annual pass system with a new version, called the Coeur d'Alene Field Office Access Pass (Access Pass), which combines the privileges of the old pass system with the proposed new day-use fees at several established fee sites, that include Mica Bay Boater Park, Killarney Lake Campground, and Huckleberry Campground. This proposed pass would help accommodate the growing demand for day-use activities while supporting management, maintenance, and operations at established fee sites and other developed recreation sites within the CDAFO.

Currently, the annual boat launch pass only covers Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Boat Launch use fees. The proposed Access Pass will continue to cover day-use fees at both locations, while additionally covering the new proposed day-use fee of \$10.00 at Mica Bay Boaters Park, Killarney Lake Campground, and Huckleberry Campground. The Access Pass is proposed to be priced at \$80.00 annually, while the alternative option would be the proposed daily fee of \$12.00 at Blackwell and Mineral Ridge or \$10.00 at Mica Bay, Killarney Lake, and Huckleberry. The new Access Pass would have two components, one hang tag for vehicles and another sticker for marine vessels. Purchasers would receive both a hang tag and sticker with their \$80 Access Pass purchase. Fee payment compliance would be enforced by BLM recreation personnel and BLM Law Enforcement.

The proposed introductory group day-use rental fee for the Blackwell Island pavilion will be established at \$80 per day with two phased fee increases up occurring to finalize the fee at \$100 per day. The two phased increases will be spread out at two-year increments with each increasing the fee by \$10. Current market research supports charging a group day-use rental fee up to a \$100 threshold.

6 Operating Costs

Operating costs at Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Boat Launch include daily cleaning and maintenance of the site facilities and amenities. This includes cleaning six flushing toilets, two urinals, four sinks, and three vault toilet restrooms. The restroom facilities are typically cleaned by a janitorial contractor with supplemental cleanings conducted by BLM staff. In addition to cleaning the vault toilets restrooms, both sites have bi-daily (in the summer months) or weekly cleanings that includes emptying 22 trash cans, cleaning 18 pedestal grills, weed trimming, mowing, maintaining drinking and irrigated watering systems, and replacing fee envelopes.

Table 5: Blackwell and Mineral Ridge Operating Costs 2016-2023

Federal Fiscal Year	Blackwell Operating Costs	Mineral Ridge Operating Costs
2016	\$43,327	\$11,137
2017	\$79,347	\$11,981
2018	\$61,130	\$12,357
2019	\$81,320	\$15,548
2020	\$71,496	\$13,982
2021	\$77,324	\$16,868
2022	\$79,624	\$18,123
2023	\$84,393	\$19,385

The costs associated with cleaning are paying maintenance workers, maintaining, and replacing specially equipped cleaning equipment, including vehicles, buying toilet paper, garbage bags and cleaning supplies, as well as paying for janitorial, site security, garbage, and sewage contractors. The vault toilets are pumped out as needed and at the end of the summer season to minimize contamination should flooding occur. This practice is especially important at Mineral Ridge Boat Launch as snow runoff often melts and drains into the holding tank.

Depending on frequency of use, amount of snow melt and degree of flooding, this can result in a significant jump in cost of operations for the sites. For example, in 2019 the vault toilet at Mineral Ridge Boat Launch had to be pumped a total of seven times at a cost of more than \$4,000. Two automated fee machines were installed at Blackwell in 2019, the cost for the machines and annual services totaled \$25,000. The elevated boardwalk decking, and bull rails were replaced in 2017 for \$30,000. In addition, the docks at Blackwell docks were refurbished in 2015 for \$55,000.



Figure 7: Riprap creating a launch hazard at Mineral Ridge Boat Ramp

7 Revenues

Blackwell Island Public Boat Launch and Mineral Ridge Boat Launch receive revenue from day-use visitor parking, purchases of annual passes, pavilion reservation and recreationists utilizing the sites. This revenue is mainly used to maintain the boat launches, docks, restroom facilities and contractual obligations for maintenance of the site. This revenue may also be used to fund permanent and seasonal staff supporting projects, maintenance and compliance needs at the sites.

Table 6: Mineral Ridge Revenue 2015-2023

Federal Fiscal Year	Mineral Ridge Revenue
2015	\$7,221
2016	\$9,522
2017	\$9,729
2018	\$10,559
2019	\$8,723
2020	\$10,037
2021	\$8,719
2022	\$7,845
2023	\$11,251

Table 7: Blackwell Island Revenue 2012-2023

Federal Fiscal Year	Daily Shelter/Pavilion Revenue	Daily Vehicle Revenue	Annual Pass Revenue	Blackwell Island Total Revenue
2012	\$0	\$34,272	\$80	\$34,352
2013	\$0	\$39,475	\$11,592	\$51,067
2014	\$90	\$39,435	\$8,562	\$48,087
2015	\$6	\$40,569	\$11,330	\$51,905
2016	\$30	\$36,305	\$10,060	\$46,395
2017	\$5,001	\$35,241	\$9,986	\$50,229
2018	\$66	\$37,285	\$10,534	\$47,885
2019	\$120	\$44,890	\$9,724	\$54,734
2020	\$10,231	\$47,864	\$6,142	\$64,237
2021	\$5,009	\$49,383	\$3,540	\$57,932
2022	\$1,003	\$50,128	\$4,810	\$55,941
2023	\$1,585	\$55,959	\$7,903	\$63,862

8 Priorities for Future Expenditures

Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge Boat Launch are reaching an age where infrastructure replacement is becoming necessary, and costs are increasing. Recreation staff are experiencing problems with water, electricity, and general infrastructure deterioration. The current funding and revenue collected only augments operating costs and does not account for necessary infrastructure replacement costs. CDAFO's priorities for future expenditures vary between the two sites.

Future expenditures at **Blackwell Island** could include but are not limited to:

- Replacement of all panel style kiosks. Kiosks are experiencing wood rot on structural posts.
- Level sidewalk up-heaving in places. Up-heaving is greater than ½-inch in certain places. Repairing the sidewalks up-heaving allows for the site to be 100% ADA accessible.
- Replace canal piling with 10" diameter steel. Currently the pilings are wooden. Over the years wood pilings have begun to rot and break off at the summer pool water level. Broken pilings create a boating hazard. The pilings serve as a navigation aid in identifying the channel between the main river and the launching ramps and docks.
- Replace elevated boardwalk and three viewing platforms. Boardwalk is a half-mile in length, six feet wide, with 4x4 treated railings. Three viewing platforms are roughly 15x10 with four-foot hand railings wrapping the platform.
- Replace three drinking fountains with frost-free ADA paddle hydrants.
- Replace two frost-free hydrants and their wooded posts next to the boat prep lanes. Install one hydrant next to the native garden area.
- Docks: Replace all concrete decking with concrete pavers. Replace all edge bumpers. Replace all side cleats with collapsible side cleats. Replace internal piling pocket bumpers and rollers. Replace broken or missing poly float tubs. Replace side whaler boards. All three docks together are 240 feet long by six feet wide. Powder coat 12 steel pilings.
- Cap/cover boat sewage dump ports. Or install sewage dump stations that do not clog-up.
- Replace vault toilet restrooms.
- Flush toilet building repairs: Replace damaged exterior hardy board siding. Replace all interior and exterior lighting fixtures. Completely paint inside and outside of flush building. Replace all

internal plumbing components that supply and service automatic toilets, urinals, and sinks for both men's and women's restrooms. Replace 30-gallon hot water tank. Install foam hand soap dispensers for men's and women's restrooms.



Figure 8: Damage to Fence and Native Plant Garden from runaway vehicle

Future expenditures at **Mineral Ridge Boat Launch** could include but are not limited to:

- Redesign and improve parking lot run-off drainage around the vault toilet restroom. During winter months with compacted snow and ice melting conditions, run-off events fill the holding tank almost daily.
- Replace vault toilet restroom. The building is old and starting to deteriorate.
- Replace broken solar light system next to vault restrooms. This system was originally installed in the mid-2000s. Since the site has no over-head or underground power, solar lighting is needed to provide public lighting security from dusk to dawn.
- Replace the self-service fee station area. Investigate installing solar powered automated fee machine for fee payment and collections.
- Powder-coat boat launch sidewalk handrail. There is well over 150 liner feet of two-inch diameter welded pipe handrail that lines the side of the boat launch sidewalk.
- Construct concrete retaining wall adjacent to boat ramp on highway side to retain the bank and debris from falling into boat launch ramp.
- Docks: Replace all decking with concrete pavers. Replace all edge bumpers. Replace all side cleats with collapsible side cleats. Replace internal piling pocket bumpers and rollers. Replace broken or missing poly float tubs. Replace side whaler boards.



Figure 9: Dislodge dock float tub at Mineral Ridge Boat Launch

9 Analysis of Recreation Fee Rates

The analysis used to determine the proposed fee rates is based on a Fair Market Value Fee calculation method. CDAFO's proposed fee increases are comparable to those charged by local providers or in many cases less than the fee charged by similar providers.

Table 8: Analysis of Comparable Boat Launch Rates

Site Name	Management Agency	Fee(s)	Amenities Offered
State & County Recreation Sites			
Valid to access Washington State managed parks and facilities.	Washington State Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$10.00 per day \$30.00 annual pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies by location
Higgins Point, Farragut State Park	District 1 Idaho State Parks and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$10.00 per day resident. \$14.00 per day non-resident at premium parks, \$7.00 per day non-resident at others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paved Parking Vault toilets Temp mooring docks Access from I-90 and the Cities of CDA/Spokane. Access to CDA Lake and Lake Pend Oreille.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$80.00 Annual Motor Vehicle Entry Fee Annual Sticker 	
Sun Up Bay, Carlin Bay	Kootenai County Parks and Waterways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$10.00 per day resident • \$20.00 per day non-resident • \$40.00 annual resident pass • \$100.00 non-resident annual pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paved Parking • Vault Toilets • Primitive dirt to concrete launches • Temp mooring docks • Access from I-90, Highway 95 and the cities of CDA/Spokane. • Access to CDA Lake and Spokane River.
City Recreation Sites			
Honeysuckle Park	City of Hayden Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5.00 per day resident • \$10.00 per day non-resident • \$40.00 annual resident pass • \$60.00 non-resident annual pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paved parking • Concrete launch • Day-use recreation sites • Temp mooring docks • Vault toilets • Access from Highway 95 • Access to Hayden Lake
3 rd Street Boat Launch	City of Coeur d'Alene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5.00 resident launch • \$10.00 non-resident launch • \$45.00 annual resident pass • 85.00 annual non-resident pass • \$2 per hour parking • \$25 per month parking pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paved Parking • Concrete launch • Day-use recreation sites • Restroom facilities • Access from I-90 • Access to downtown CDA and CDA Lake
Q'emilin Park	City of Post Falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$8.00 per day parking • \$15.00 annual resident pass • \$30.00 annual non-resident pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paved Parking • Concrete launch • Day-use recreation sites • Restroom facilities • Access from I-90 and city of Post Falls
All Pavilion/Shelters	City of Spokane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$50.00 for 50 individuals or less per day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenities vary by location

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100.00 for 51 individuals or more per day 	
All Pavilion/Shelters	City of Post Falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100 for PF resident week day-use • \$150.00 for PF resident weekend use • \$175 Non-resident use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenities vary by location
All Pavilion/Shelters	City of Hayden Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$65 per day • 25.00 Amusement Fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenities vary by location
Bureau of Land Management Sites			
Blackwell Island, Mineral Ridge Boat Launch	Bureau of Land Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$12 per day (proposed) • \$80 annual pass (proposed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paved Parking • 4 Concrete Launch • Day-use recreation sites with tables, benches, trashcans and BBQ grills • Self Service pay stations • Vault toilet • Temp mooring docks • Restroom Facilities • Native Plant Garden • Educational signage • Two dedicated dumpsters • Boat wash station • Wheelchair loading and unloading ramps • Pavilion • One-half mile elevated boardwalk nature trail with educational/interpretive signage • Access from I-90 and city of CDA • Access to CDA Lake and Spokane River

The CDAFO sites, in comparison to nearby boat launches and recreation sites, still provide relatively inexpensive water access and recreation opportunities. Although the BLM typically provides more

amenities at our sites, our costs are equal to or lower than other sites. This is especially true for non-Idaho residents, as the BLM does not make any kind of resident/non-resident distinction when assessing site fees. Due to this lack-of-residency distinction, most visitors at Blackwell Island and Mineral Ridge boat launches come from out-of-state. In cases where proposed fee increases surpass local fees, amenities provided at BLM sites outweigh the number amenities provided by lower cost sites.

10 Impacts from Changing and Non-Changing Recreation Fee Rates

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

- 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.

Recreation fees have not been adjusted in the CDAFO since 2012. Recreation trends have shifted greatly since 2012, mainly due to a tremendous increase in the use of BLM public recreation facilities. The frequency of necessary repair, maintenance, and deferred maintenance costs has increased, and at the same time the costs of materials and labor has also risen. Failure to implement the proposed fee increases could force the reduction of the frequency of cleaning and routine facility and grounds maintenance. The reductions would further degrade the overall recreational experience at BLM managed sites.

11 Public Outreach

The CDAFO has made the following public outreach efforts to notify the public of its opportunity to review and provide comments:

- Posting of fee increase proposals at impacted recreation sites.
- Email to interested parties
- Social media postings
- Local newspaper notices

In addition to the above list, the CDA Field Office presented the recreation fee proposal to the Idaho Resource Advisory Council (RAC) for its informal review during the May 2024 meeting, and final proposal to the Council at the formal recommendation during the summer business meeting in July 2024. The RAC is a 15-member advisory panel which provides advice and recommendations to the BLM on resource and land management issues for nearly 12 million acres of public lands in Idaho. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act mandates that the RAC reviews all BLM recreation fee proposals prior to enactment. Comments from both the public at large and the RAC will be considered prior to approval of the fee increases for Mineral Ridge and Blackwell Island.

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