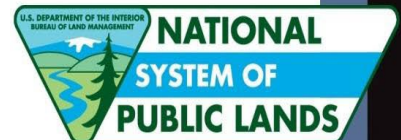


# Business Plan for Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Areas



United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Kremmling Field Office  
Colorado River Valley Field Office  
October 2024



# Business Plan for Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Areas

## RECOMMENDATIONS and REVIEWS

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Date

This business plan was prepared pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (Public Law 108-447) and SLM recreation fee program policy. It establishes future management goals and priorities for the recreation fee program for the Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area.

Dear Reader,

This is your opportunity to review and comment on the Business Plan for the *Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Areas*. The plan includes a proposal to implement a Standard Amenity Fee at select developed day use sites, an Expanded Amenity Fee at existing and proposed developed campgrounds, Individual Special Recreation Permit fees along the Colorado River, and a season pass within the Kremmling Field Office (KFO) and the Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) as permitted by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA). These fees will enable the KFO and CRVFO to provide sufficient resources to effectively manage the sites.

The KFO and CRVFO do not currently have a fee structure in place that would allow the generation of revenue necessary to meet increasing visitor demand and provide needed recreation amenities. These amenities and services include providing clean and sanitary facilities, installing appropriate structures and sites for campfires, and providing agency operation, management, and enforcement. Four fee structures are being proposed to cover current operational costs now and into the future.

The BLM is proposing to assess the following fees:

The Standard Amenity fee structure for public users is proposed as:

\$5.00 per motorcycle/bike/walk-in

\$10.00 per car (up to 15 passengers)

\$20.00 per high-capacity vehicle (more than 15 passengers)

\$50.00 for the UCR SRMAs Season Pass

These Standard Amenity day use fees will be implemented at the following day use sites:

Confluence Recreation Area, Pumphouse Recreation Area (fee adjustment), Gore Canyon Ranch Access, Inspiration Flats Recreation Area, Radium Warm Springs Recreation Area, Radium Recreation Area (fee adjustment), State Bridge Recreation Area/ Piney Peak Access, Two Bridges River Access, Catamount Recreation Site, Pinball Recreation Site, Cottonwood Island Recreation Site, Lyon's Gulch Recreation Site, and Dotsero Landing River Access.

An Expanded Amenity recreation fee of \$25 for Single Campsites (up to 10 visitors and the first two (2) vehicles are included in the campsite fee). Additional vehicles will pay a day use fee, and \$75 for Group Campsites (up to 30 visitors and the first two (2) vehicles are included in the campsite fee) would be charged at the following campground sites: Pumphouse Recreation Area Campground, Radium Recreation Area Campground, Warm Springs Recreation Area Campground, Catamount Campground, Pinball Campground and Lyon's Gulch Campground.

An On-River Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) Camping fee (float-in only) is proposed to charge \$5 per participant (including pets)/night for 36 designated campsites in the UCR SRMAs.

The Upper Colorado River SRMA Season Pass will apply to each field office and will be adjusted from \$20 per season to \$50 per season.

All three of these rates would be tied to the Consumer Price Index. Fees would be implemented at future campgrounds and day-use areas as they are developed. The proposed fees are based on fair-market analysis of fees charged at comparable public and private sites in the local geographic area, including U.S. Forest Service sites.

The intent of establishing fees is to help protect natural resources, provide for public health and safety, and facilitate access to public lands and related waters. Fees are a way of ensuring that those who actively use recreation opportunities make a reasonable contribution toward protecting and enhancing these opportunities.

Please submit comments on the draft business plan by November 6, 2024. Comments may be sent by email to [BLM\\_CO\\_SI\\_CRVFO\\_Webmail@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_CO_SI_CRVFO_Webmail@blm.gov) (Subject: Proposed Business Plan). Comments may also be submitted by U.S. Mail to: BLM Colorado River Valley Field Office, Attn: Proposed Business Plan, 2300 River Frontage Road, Silt, CO 81652. For questions about the draft plan, contact BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner John Monkouski at (970) 274-3040 [jmonkous@blm.gov](mailto:jmonkous@blm.gov) or BLM Planning and Environmental Specialist Jacob Casey at (970) 876-9040 [jcasey@blm.gov](mailto:jcasey@blm.gov).

Thank you for your interest in helping manage and protect America's public lands.

Sincerely,

James Roberts  
Acting Colorado River Valley Field Manager  
Upper Colorado River District

and

Stephen Leonard  
Kremmling Field Manager  
Northwest District

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## Executive Summary

This business plan was prepared pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) 2021, [16 USC Ch 87] last revised June 20, 2021, and the BLM recreation fee program policy. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is authorized to collect Standard and Expanded Amenity Fees for the recreational use of certain areas where improvements have been made to maintain and improve the quality of visitor services and amenities. BLM's Northwest District's Kremmling Field Office (KFO) and Upper Colorado River District's Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) are jointly proposing to modify the recreation fee schedule for the Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Areas (UCR SRMAs) to meet the current and future funding needs for managing developed day use sites and campgrounds. Additionally, new day use sites, campgrounds and an on-river permit and camping fee system are proposed to meet increasing demands, visitor service needs, operating costs, maintenance of developed facilities, and to protect resources along the Colorado River corridor within the UCR SRMAs. BLM's fee collection.

This business plan covers all existing and proposed fee sites within the UCR SRMAs at existing day-use sites and campgrounds, the establishment of new fees for existing recreation sites that are currently fee-free, and the establishment of new fees for recreation sites that are under development. The business plan will also modify the current Kremmling Upper Colorado River SRMA Season Pass and make it valid for use at all fee sites within the combined UCR SRMAs. All proposed fees are based on a comparative review of fees charged by other public agencies and private providers for similar services within the respective geographic area of each recreation site. Fee increases are necessary to better meet the expenses of the recreation program, including maintenance and operations to prevent resource damage and provide better visitor services.

To provide consistency across the UCR SRMAs under different BLM management jurisdictions as well as provide a more streamlined approach to administering specialized facilities, equipment, and services related to outdoor recreation within the UCR SRMAs, this business plan will create common fee structures for standard amenity fees, expended amenity fees, and Individual Special Recreation Permits for all users. The changes in fee structure compared to existing fees are described below in general terms below and site-specifically in Table 7.

Both field offices are proposing to charge a Standard Amenity (day use) fee within the UCR SRMAs. The fee does not apply to existing permit holders. The Standard Amenity fee structure for public users is proposed as:

- \$5.00 per motorcycle/bike/walk-in
- \$10.00 per car (up to 15 passengers)
- \$20.00 per high-capacity vehicle (more than 15 passengers)
- \$50.00 for the UCR SRMAs Season Pass

These Standard Amenity day use fees will be implemented at the following day use sites: Confluence Recreation Area, Pumphouse Recreation Area (fee adjustment), Gore Canyon Ranch Access, Inspiration Flats Recreation Area, Radium Warm Springs Recreation Area, Radium

Recreation Area (fee adjustment), State Bridge Recreation Area/ Piney Peak Access, Two Bridges River Access, Catamount Recreation Site, Pinball Recreation Site, Cottonwood Island Recreation Site, Lyon's Gulch Recreation Site, and Dotsero Landing River Access. In the future, these sites will have the minimum standard amenities such as picnic tables, trash, toilets, parking interpretations and security services.

An Expanded Amenity recreation fee of \$25 for Single Campsites (up to 10 visitors and the first two (2) vehicles are included in the campsite fee) additional vehicles will pay a day use fee, and \$75 for Group Campsites (up to 30 visitors and the first two (2) vehicles are included in the campsite fee) would be charged at the following campground sites: Pumphouse Recreation Area Campground, Radium Recreation Area Campground, Warm Springs Recreation Area Campground, Catamount Campground, Pinball Campground and Lyon's Gulch Campground.

An On-River Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) Camping fee (float-in only) is proposed to charge \$5 per participant (including pets)/night for 36 designated campsites in the UCR SRMAs.

The Upper Colorado River SRMA Season Pass will apply to each field office and will be adjusted from \$20 per season to \$50 per season.

## **Introduction**

### **Purpose of Document**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Northwest District's Kremmling Field Office (KFO) and Upper Colorado River District's Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) are modifying the recreation fee schedule for the Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Areas (UCR SRMAs) to meet increasing demands, operating costs, and maintenance of developed facilities and services provided to the public. In addition to the modification of the fee schedule, more fee sites are proposed where improvements and enhanced visitor services are required due to increased visitation and use. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) authorizes and provides guidance for the BLM and other agencies to charge and collect recreational fees on federal recreation lands and waters. FLREA allows agencies to utilize collected recreation fees to supplement appropriated funds and provide a funding source for deferred maintenance, site enhancements, operations, facility repair, interpretation and visitor services, visitor needs assessments, signs, habitat restoration, law enforcement related to public use and recreation, and direct operating or capital costs associated with the Recreation and Visitor Services programs. FLREA requires the BLM to prepare business plans for fees associated with facility and recreational use of public lands. At the KFO and CRVFO, the recreational use of campgrounds and recreation areas within the field offices is managed through the Recreation and Visitor Services Programs.

## Background

The Upper Colorado River is a unique and beautiful recreation area, known for its diverse water features, wildlife, and cultural landscapes accessible along the Colorado River Headwaters Scenic Byway. The UCR SRMAs provide a range of recreational opportunities: rafting, boating, camping, hiking and picnic areas. Notable segments of the Upper Colorado River (UCR) include Reeder Creek to Blue River, Gore Canyon, Pumphouse to State Bridge, and State Bridge to Dotsero. Many segments along the river offer camping facilities. The area combines placid boating waters through pastoral heritage ranchlands with more challenging Class II and III rapids in the intervening canyons. Extreme Class IV and V whitewater rafting and kayaking are available in Gore Canyon (not recommended without a commercial outfitter).

The UCR SRMAs are popular sections of river for float boating, fishing, camping and scenic driving and are located within Grand and Eagle Counties (Map 1) with a combined acreage of 30,300 acres encompassing 51 BLM river miles through the combined Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs). The SRMAs for both KFO and CRVFO are both named 'Upper Colorado River SRMA' and have similar recreation management objectives and types of uses. The two adjacent SRMAs in the field offices will be described in this document as the UCR SRMAs.

The UCR SRMA within KFO, located in Grand County, begins west of Parshall, continuing down river to State Bridge within the KFO management area. The SRMA encompasses 14,600 acres adjacent to the communities of Kremmling and Radium ending at State Bridge. The Colorado River within the KFO-managed UCR SRMA runs 20 river miles on BLM and 17 river miles including private and state lands for a total of 37 river miles through the SRMA. An estimated 168,278 (averaged from 2019-2022) people visit the area each year. The SRMA includes rural undeveloped areas, agricultural lands, and important wildlife habitat. The nationally designated Colorado Headwaters National Scenic and Historic Byway on US Highway 40 and the Trough Road bisects the SRMA. Additional areas with designations include the Junction Butte Watchable Wildlife Area, and two segments of the Colorado River found to be eligible for Wild and Scenic designation. Multiple locations along the SRMA provide ample access for both structured and dispersed recreational uses, and both developed and undeveloped areas.

The UCR SRMA for CRVFO is in Eagle County and begins downstream of State Bridge in North Central Colorado encompassing 15,700 acres. The Colorado River within the CRVFO-managed UCR SRMA runs 31 river miles on BLM and 20 river miles including private and state lands with a total 51 river miles from State Bridge to Dotsero. The SRMA is managed for river-related recreation opportunities, primarily rafting, camping, and fishing. An estimated 69,756 (averaged from 2019-2022) people visit the area each year. There are currently 32 commercial outfitters permitted to offer services to visitors (e.g. guided rafting, guided fishing, shuttle services). Historically, approximately 50% of the use has been commercial, however, trends suggest an increase in private use. Overall use (i.e. private and commercial use combined) has doubled since 2000 and is projected to continue to increase.



The Kremmling Field Office Resource Management Plan (RMP) signed in June 2015 identified the SRMA as a Special Area with five distinct Recreation Management Zones (RMZ) that identify objectives and Recreation Setting Characteristics (RSC) for each RMZ. Due to growing visitation and need for increased management for recreational use and natural resources within the SRMA the 2015 RMP identified developing a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) that provides additional guidance for BLM actions for the next ten to fifteen years. The Upper Colorado River SRMA RAMP was signed in June 2019 and identifies developing an updated permit system initiating an Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) system. ISRPs are a classification of Special Recreation Permit to manage for individual recreation use (BLM H-2930-1, Chapt.1, I.D.) which allows for fees to be charged per vehicle or entry under the existing Business Plan for the SRMA. The RAMP also identified developing an updated Business Plan to maintain, enhance and expand visitor services and facilities to meet increasing demand, and for management of the areas unique and significant natural resources. KFO will be posting the establishment of a Special Area for the UCR SRMA in the *Federal Register*.

Management in the CRVFO is guided by the Colorado River Valley Field Office Resource Management Plan (RMP), finalized in 2015. Specific decisions were made concerning the campground program and can be found in the 2015 RMP under decision REC-MA-10. In summary, this decision shows what areas in the office were closed to camping or restricted to designated sites to protect any one of several different resources. This plan applies to three (3) existing campgrounds and boat ramps within the Upper Colorado River SRMA (Catamount, Lyon's Gulch, and Pinball Campgrounds), a group site (Lyon's Gulch), three river access sites (Two Bridges, Cottonwood Island, and Dotsero), and eleven designated river access only campsites (Windy Point [four sites] Before Bond, Cottonwood Bend, Jack Flats #1, Jack Flats #2, and Cottonwood Island [three sites]). CRVFO will post the establishment of a Special Area for CRVFO's UCR SRMA to allow for on-river campsite designation and to implement a fee structure for ISRPs associated with river use.

Notification for this assessment and potential for establishment of a Special Area as well as the associated ISRP fee structure will be posted in the *Federal Register*.

Fees are a way of ensuring that those who actively use recreational facilities and opportunities within the area make a greater, but reasonable, contribution toward protecting and enhancing those opportunities than those who do not. The BLM originally began collecting recreational fees for the use of public lands under the authority of the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) provides the BLM with its current authority to collect fees for short-term use of recreation facilities. The act authorizes the BLM to locally retain collected recreation fees and outlines how revenues may be used, for such things as facility repair, facility maintenance, facility enhancement, interpretation, visitor information, visitor services, visitor needs assessments, signs, habitat restoration, and law enforcement related to public use and recreation, and supplement appropriated revenue funded operating and capital costs directly associated with the Recreation and Visitor Services Program.

To implement and charge fees the BLM requires that each recreation fee program have a business plan which outlines fee amounts and explains how such fees are consistent with the criteria set within FLREA and agency guidance. The business plan provides a guideline for

determining appropriate fee rates, outlining the cost of administering a fee program and identifying priorities for future fee program expenditures. The plan also is utilized for public notification of fee proposals and use of fee revenues to the public. The public is provided an opportunity to review the business plan and provide comments that will be taken into consideration prior to implementation.

In KFO, the UCR SRMA initially implemented a fee program in 1998 for day use and camping at the Pumphouse and Radium Recreation Areas. The Business Plan and fee schedule was adjusted and approved in 2012 to meet increased visitation, operation costs, maintenance, and improvements of area facilities. Fees were also collected at the State Bridge Recreation Area when purchased by Eagle County under a Management Agreement. The State Bridge Recreation Area was then purchased by the BLM through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. At the time of BLM acquisition of the area, it was not part of the existing SRMA Business Plan and fees have not been charged because under the FLREA regulations a fee structure must be proposed and included in a Business Plan. The proposed Business plan for the Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Areas identifies necessary fee adjustments which are tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), additional sites and objectives to meet existing and future visitor service needs, management of the area's natural resources, and to implement the Upper Colorado River SRMA RAMP.

CRVFO has an approved fee plan for overnight campgrounds through the 2019 Business Plan for BLM Colorado River Valley Field Office Campgrounds and Wolcott Day Use Site (Catamount Campground/boat ramp, Lyons Gulch, Pinball Recreation Site). Approved fees within that business plan can be found in Tables 6 and 7, with implementation beginning with this plan implementation in 2024. The proposed Business plan for the Upper Colorado River SRMAs identifies necessary fee adjustments which are tied to the CPI, additional sites, and objectives to meet existing and future visitor service needs and management of the area's natural resources from the Colorado River Valley Field Office RMP, 2015.

The BLM permits commercial entities under Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) along the SRMAs for the purpose of providing and enhancing recreation opportunities on public lands and to achieve management goals and objectives. SRPs are authorizations that allow for commercial, competitive, and group recreation uses of the public lands and related waters. They are issued as a tool to control visitor use, protect recreational and natural resources, and provide for the health and safety of visitors. The BLM usually issues noncommercial group permits and SRPs in high-use areas or where recreation use requires special BLM management.

### **Authorities, Policies and Applicable Plans**

This business plan has been prepared to meet the criteria defined in the "Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act 2004" (P.L.108-447). The authorities and regulations for this business plan are:

*The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) 1976, [Public Law 94-579] contains BLM's general land management authority over the public lands and establishes outdoor recreation as one of the principal uses of those lands. Section 302 (b) of FLPMA authorizes the*

BLM to manage the use of the public lands through permits. Section 303 of FLPMA contains BLM's authority to enforce the regulations and impose penalties.

*The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) 2021, [16 USC Ch 87] last revised June 20, 2021.* This law authorizes the BLM to collect recreation fees at sites that meet certain requirements, allows the BLM to retain the fee revenues at the local offices where they are collected, and directs how the BLM will manage and utilize these revenues. Section 803 contains BLM's authority to issue recreation use permits and charge a permit fee.

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
- BLM Recreation Permit and Fee Administration Handbook (H-2930-1)
- BLM Colorado Instruction Memorandum CO 2012-001: BLM Colorado Recreation Fee Proposals
- 43 CFR 2930 Permits for Recreation on Public Lands

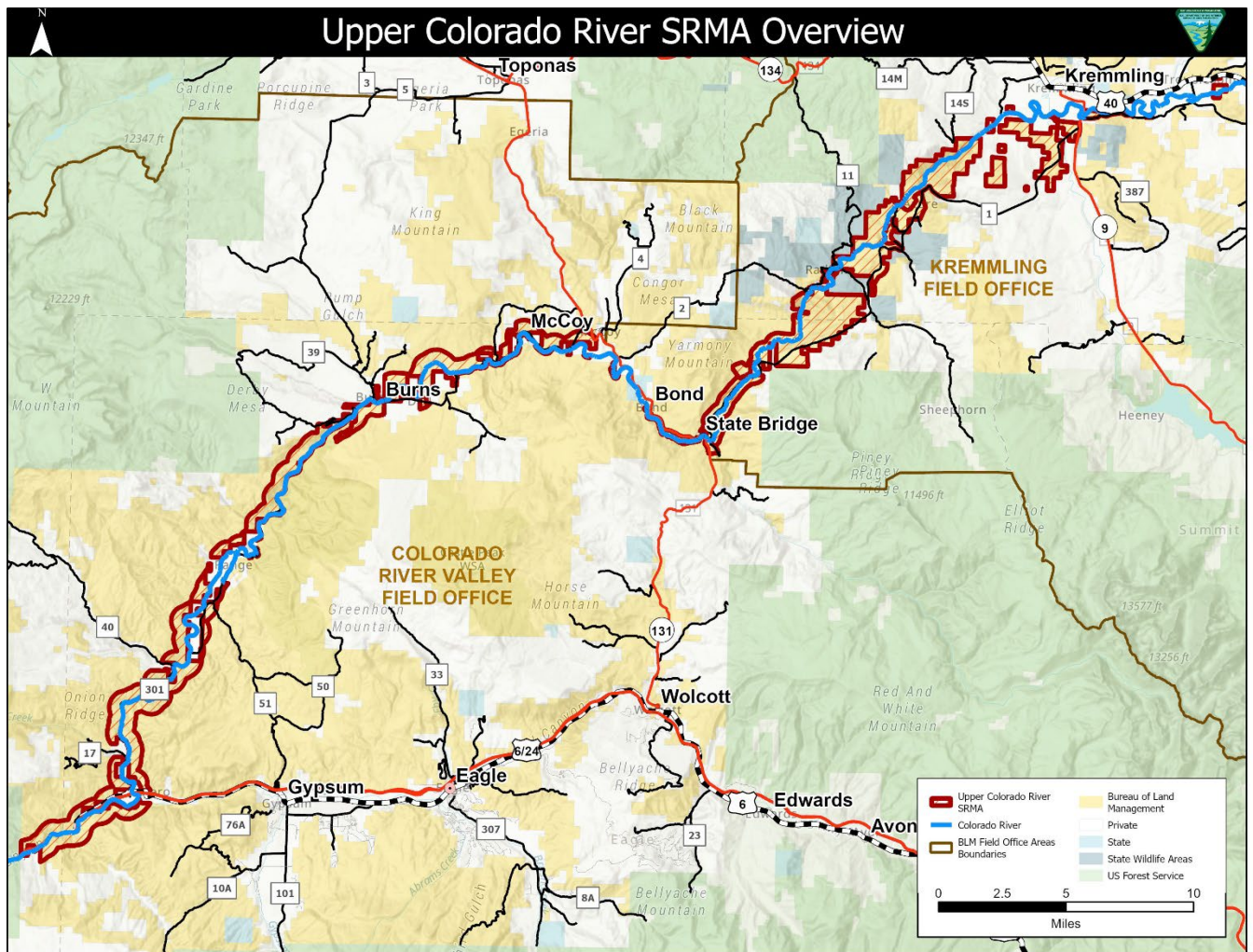
Applicable plans for management of the area and development of business plan:

- Kremmling Field Office Resource Management Plan (KFO RMP) 2015
- Upper Colorado River Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) 2019
- Colorado River Valley Field Office Resource Management Plan (CRVFO RMP) 2015

The BLM strives to manage recreation and visitor services to serve diverse outdoor recreation demands while also conserving public lands, so the visitor's desired recreation choices remain available. The BLM's goals for delivering recreation benefits from BLM-administered lands to the American people and their communities are:

Maintain public access and provide needed public services; recreation opportunities; and enjoyment of natural resources while maintaining sustainable healthy ecosystems.  
Enhance public lands to ensure a quality experience while satisfying recreation demand within allowable use levels and minimizing user conflicts; and  
Use best business practices to provide for and receive fair value in recreation.

This business plan will assist the Kremmling Field Office and the Colorado River Valley Field Office in meeting these recreation and visitor service goals within the Upper Colorado River SRMAs. Map 1 shows the overview of the two adjacent UCR SRMAs with field office boundaries (in brown), shows the Colorado River (in blue), and the UCR SRMA boundaries (in red). The business plan will promote consistency in management across administrative boundaries for recreational visitors and interested publics.



Map 1. UCR SRMAs Overview Map for both KFO and CRVFO

## Recreation Overview and Program Results

Outdoor recreation is a major contributor to Colorado’s economy, its local communities, and public lands. Recreation on BLM-administered lands supported \$1.4 billion in economic output and 11,000 jobs in Colorado in fiscal year (FY) 2021. In 2018, Colorado Parks and Wildlife had surveys conducted as part of their Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Surveys were used to identify recreation participation in Colorado regionally and statewide for residents of the state. Studies found that 90% of all adult residents engaged in outdoor recreational activities in 2017. Of those residents, 49% identified that they recreated within the Northwest Region of Colorado.

The goal of the campground and recreation area management programs in KFO and CRVFO is to meet demand for campground services as well as protect resources from camping impacts in inappropriate areas. To maintain high quality facilities, the field offices are seeking to increase campground and day use site revenues. Visitors at BLM campgrounds and recreation sites

contribute to a business base for many local business owners and entrepreneurs, as the campgrounds and related public-land based activities bring customers directly to the local community.

The recreation visitors benefit by having:

- (1) a campsite or group campsite available for their use.
- (2) a reservation system to ensure campsite availability.
- (3) improved public lands facilities (i.e. clean toilets).
- (4) outstanding facility-based recreation opportunities.
- (5) focused opportunity to enhance outdoor skills, build group and family relationships, and introduce youth to the natural world; and
- (6) venues at which to enjoy their public lands.

The local community benefits by:

- (1) the development of business opportunities in the outdoor recreation sector e.g. river running companies, guide services, mountain bike rental companies).
- (2) the development of business opportunities in the general retail sector (e.g. grocery stores, outdoor gear stores).
- (3) the development of business opportunities in the hospitality sector (e.g. restaurants).
- (4) the provision of local jobs and tax revenues for communities; and
- (5) improved services and quality of life through facility development and resource protection.

The BLM benefits by:

- (1) meeting its land management goals, including protection of cultural and natural resources.
- (2) partnering with campers as stewards of the public lands through fees for service; options to provide a more stable and knowledgeable permanent BLM work force as opposed to a revolving door of seasonal workers.
- (3) lowering costs by developing improved business management systems (for example investing in double locking pipe safes to reduce collection costs); and
- (4) obtaining revenues to use for program management and facilities enhancement.

The positive results summarized above allow recreationists to visit BLM lands in a responsible manner. As public lands outdoors enthusiasts, visitors have a vested interest in durable, sustainable camping facilities and recreation areas. The local community benefits economically, and outdoor recreation participants and the public benefit by enhanced opportunities to enjoy public lands.

## **Business Plan Update Overview**

The field offices identified the need of additional services and sites which are included into the business plan fee schedule. Each standard amenity fee site must contain at least the following six "amenities" or facilities such as picnic tables, trash receptacle, toilet facility, parking, interpretive signing, and security services. Expanded amenity site fees provide direct benefits to individuals or groups from specific or specialized facilities, equipment or services. ISRPs would be used on-

river for development and maintenance of designated activities at float-in campsites, boat ramps, and parking. Sites which have development and additional services planned would have proposed fees deferred until such improvements, development and services are provided.

Currently KFO has two (2) developed recreation areas that are approved fee sites which charge day use for all entry and camping fees. KFO proposes to update fees at its two (2) existing fee areas, include three (3) additional existing developed recreation areas, and two (2) additional areas of which fees will be deferred until improvements and development are completed. CRVFO currently has three (3) developed recreation sites which charge overnight camping fees and are proposing an update in those fees. The three (3) sites are also in the proposal to add new day use fees in addition to four (4) other developed recreation sites. Campsite fees currently include the first vehicle, motorcycle or bicycle in KFO. In CRVFO, the campsite fees currently include the first two (2) vehicles. To be consistent across the UCR SRMAs the KFO and CRVFO will establish the same fee structure which will include the first two (2) vehicles/ motorcycles with each campsite fee. Paid day use fees are valid at all sites regardless of where the fee is purchased.

Both field offices are proposing to charge day use within the UCR SRMAs. The standard amenity day use fee structure for all users is proposed as:

- \$5.00 per motorcycle/bike/walk-in
- \$10.00 per car (up to 15 passengers)
- \$20.00 per high-capacity vehicle (more than 15 passengers)
- \$50.00 for the UCR SRMAs Season Pass

These standard amenity day use fees will be implemented at the following day use sites: Confluence Recreation Area, Pumphouse Recreation Area (fee adjustment), Gore Canyon Ranch Access, Inspiration Flats Recreation Area, Radium Warm Springs Recreation Area, Radium Recreation Area (fee adjustment), State Bridge Recreation Area/ Piney Peak Access, Two Bridges River Access, Catamount Recreation Site, Pinball Recreation Site, Cottonwood Island Recreation Site, Lyon's Gulch Recreation Site, Dotsero Landing River Access. In the future, these sites will have the minimum standard amenities such as picnic tables, trash, toilets, parking interpretations and security services.

An expanded amenity recreation fee of \$25 for Single Campsites (up to 10 visitors), and \$75 for Group Campsites (up to 30 visitors) would be charged at the following campground sites: Pumphouse Recreation Area Campground, Radium Recreation Area Campground, Warm Springs Recreation Area Campground, Catamount Campground, Pinball Campground and Lyon's Gulch Campground. The changes in fee structure compared to existing fees are described in Table 7.

An On-River Individual Special Recreation Permit Camping fee (float-in only) is proposed to charge \$5 per participant (including pets)/night for 36 designated campsites in the UCR SRMAs.

If a standard amenity day use fee site is utilized for boat launch or take-out, both the ISRP fee and a day use fee would be necessary and rules would apply for these uses.

The Northwest Resource Advisory Council (RAC) identified at the June 22, 2023, RAC meeting that the offices will have the discretion to raise the fees adjusting for the current Consumer Price Index (CPI) without returning to the RAC for recommendation. Following an approved business plan, this concurrence provides the BLM the discretion to raise their fees without returning to the RAC for recommendation within the following ranges: \$10 to \$15 for a normal vehicle, \$5 to \$10 per motorcycle, bicycle or walk-in, and \$20 to \$30 for a high-capacity vehicle. For example, when an increase of 10% in the CPI is met the \$10 fee for a normal vehicle would lead to a one dollar increase in fees to \$11.00. Campsite fees could also be increased from \$25 per campsite to \$30, and from \$75 to \$85 for group sites.

Initial implementation of the proposed fees would be at the lower fee range. Increasing fees above the initial implementation would be based on the 2025 Consumer Price Index (CPI) but could be increased to the higher fee range if needed to provide for essential services, maintenance, and area staffing. If an increase in the CPI would identify adjusting fees greater than the identified thresholds the BLM would return to the RAC for concurrence.

KFO will maintain no-fee recreation sites in the following fishing access and river access sites: Sunset Fishing Access, Powers Fishing Access, Reeder Creek Fishing Access, Barger Gulch Fishing Access, Highway 9 Fishing Access, Junction Butte Wetlands, Last Chance Rapid River Access, and Yarmony Bridge River Access. A fee-free ISRP with special stipulations described in the 2019 Upper Colorado River RAMP would be required for use of those sites once a Special Area is established for KFO through a *Federal Register* notice.

For CRVFO, all river-based recreation sites within UCR SRMA will be a part of the proposed fee structure (no non-fee recreation sites).

This updated plan will create consistency in the management of the adjoined SRMAs by having the same campsite and day use fees schedule. In addition to campsite and day use fees, an ISRP permit system for on-river designated campsites would be implemented and charge a per participant fee after posting in the *Federal Register*. Any new or additional sites added within the UCR SRMAs shall become part of the permit system.

ISRPs require terms and conditions to address Special Area management. KFO has established a Special Area within the KFO-managed UCR SRMA that will be posted in the *Federal Register*. CRVFO is analyzing the need for a Special Area in the CRVFO-managed UCR SRMA that will allow for ISRPs along the Colorado River and at recreation sites through the proposed permitting system. CRVFO will be posting the proposed Special Area in the *Federal Register*. The ISRPs for both UCR SRMAs will provide consistency in terms and conditions and incorporate stipulations described in Supplementary Rules for recreation users as well as provide consistency in management of Special Areas in both SRMAs.

## Fee Season

Currently, for KFO, approved fee sites within the SRMA charge fees between May 1 and October 31 annually. CRVFO currently has an approved business plan, was implemented in the summer of 2024. It currently allows fees to be charged from April 16 through November 30 coinciding with the winter wildlife closure dates for the field office and would be updated under this proposal. As visitation has increased so has the length of seasons that visitors utilize the recreation areas and sites and associated facilities. The SRMAs have become more accessible in the winter months and visitors are float boating and fishing the river earlier than in the past utilizing area facilities and campgrounds. Facilities have become popular for hunters in the late season beyond October 31, often with all campgrounds filled to capacity. The Proposed Business Plan would extend the fee season throughout both SRMAs with fees being charged consistently between April 1 and November 30 annually. Seasonal closures may be adjusted as needed by the Authorized Officer. While a fee would not be charged for on-river camping between December 1 and March 31, visitors would still be required to obtain a permit at no charge other than the e-commerce administrative fee.

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## Upper Colorado River SRMA Areas and Sites

Descriptions of the current conditions and standard and expanded amenities that are proposed for future development by field office for the UCR SRMAs are summarized in this section. The following tables describe the fee schedule per fee area and site for both KFO (Table 6) and CRVFO (Table 7) and the category of amenity planned for each area or site.

### Fee Schedule Tables

Table 6. Existing Fees and Proposed Changes for Kremmling Field Office (Fee Schedule per Fee Area or Site)

KEY: (X) – Currently Provided; (DU) – Designated Undeveloped Camping; (I) – Improved; (P) – Planned

Notes:

- Day Use Day Use Fees are valid at all sites and area within the Kremmling Field Office Upper Colorado River SRMA for the period purchased regardless of location purchased.
- Developed Single Campsites allow for up to 10 people per site; Developed Group Campsites allow for up to 30 people per site.
- High-capacity vehicles are those designed to carry more than 15 passengers. Pumphouse and Radium Recreation Area Improved Campsites currently includes first vehicle as part of the current fee schedule, this would adjust to 2 vehicles as part of the fee schedule under the proposed fee schedule for both UCR SRMAs.

Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
Sunset Fishing Access	X	X	X				X	No	None	No	Would remain free use	
Powers Fishing Access	X	X	X				X	No	None	No	Would remain free use	
Reeder Creek Fishing Access	X	X	X				X	No	None	No	Would remain free use	

Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/ Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
Barger Gulch Fishing Access	X	X	X					No	None	No	Would remain free use	
Highway 9 Fishing Access	X	X	X					No	None	No	Would remain free use	
Junction Butte Wetlands	X	X	X				X	No	None	No	Would remain free use	
Confluence Recreation Area	X	X	X	X	X		X	No	Not BLM property	Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle, or Walk-in per day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), and \$20 per High-Capacity vehicle (more than 15 passengers).	Standard Amenity: Proposed improvements include restroom, improved parking area, improved boat ramp, restroom, improved parking area, and interpretation improvements for Blue River.
Inspiration Flats Recreation Area	X	X	X	(P)		(P, DU)	X	No	None	Future	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per	Standard Amenity for Day Use site: Used as Walk-in Access to Colorado River and hiking on

Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/ Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
											vehicle (up to 15 passengers), and \$20 per High-Capacity Vehicle (more than 15 passengers). Fees implemented, once improvements are completed. No fee for designated undeveloped camping.	Gore Canyon Trail. Proposed improvements include restroom, maintained access, improved trailhead parking area, restroom, improved trail access and interpretation improvements. Current dispersed camping would become designated sites only. Restroom to be provided at trailhead parking area.
Pumphouse Recreation Area	X	X	X	X	X	X (I)	X	Yes	\$5 per Entry, \$10 Single Campsite, and \$30 Group Site.	Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in Per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), \$20 per High-Capacity	Standard Amenity for Day Use Site within Recreation Area. Expanded Amenity for Campground: Proposed improvements include additional RV/Trailer

Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/ Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
											Vehicle (more than 15 passengers), \$25 Single Campsite, and \$75 Group Campsite.	campsites and additional single sites and loop trail development linking to Gore Canyon Ranch.
Gore Canyon Ranch Access	(P)	X	X	(P)	(P)		X	No	None	Future	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), and \$20 per High-Capacity Vehicle (more than 15 passengers). Fees implemented once improvements are completed.	Standard Amenity: Proposed Improvements include restroom, maintained access, improved trailhead parking area, restroom and additional loop trail and interpretation.
Radium Warm	X	X	X	(P)	(P)	(P,I)	X	No		Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle,	Standard Amenity for Day Use Site

Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/ Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
Springs											Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), \$20 per High-Capacity Vehicle (more than 15 passengers), \$25 Single Campsite, and \$75 Group Campsite.	within Recreation Area. Expanded Amenity for Campground. Proposed improvements include restrooms, maintained access, additional parking, developed camping and camp host site. Camping will become designated undeveloped with no fee until designated developed sites are completed.
Radium Recreation Area	X	X	X	X	X	X (I)	(P)	Yes	\$5 per Entry, \$6 Single Campsite, and \$30 Group Site.	Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), \$20 per High-Capacity	Standard Amenity for Day Use Site within Recreation Area. Expanded Amenity for Campground. Proposed improvements include additional parking and trail

Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/ Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
											Vehicle (more than 15 passengers), \$25 Single Campsite, and \$75 Group Campsite.	connecting to Radium Warm Springs. Two single campsites may be added.
Last Chance Rapid River Access	X		X				X	No	None	No		
Yarmony Bridge River Access	X		X				X	No	None	No		
State Bridge Recreation Area/ Piney Peak Access	X	X	X	X	X	X (P, DU)	X	No		Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), and \$20 per High-Capacity Vehicle (more than 15 passengers)	Standard Amenity for Day Use Site within Recreation Area. Proposed improvements include improving small craft ramp and interpretation.

Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/ Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
Designated On-River Campsites						X (DU)	X	No	None	Yes	\$5 per participant (pets count as participant – currently no limit on numbers of pets but is included as part of maximum group size).	ISRP. Currently 24 designated sites with one additional to be designated once approved through NEPA. Increased staffing for monitoring and compliance checks at ramps and campsites.
Upper Colorado River BLM Season Pass								Yes	\$20 per Season Pass	Yes	\$50 per Season Pass	Standard Amenity. Valid for all Day Use Fee Areas/Sites between Confluence Recreation Area and State Bridge Recreation Area

Table 7. Existing Fees and Proposed Changes for Colorado River Valley Field Office (Fee Schedule per Fee Area or Site)

KEY: (X) – Currently Provided; (DU) – Designated Undeveloped Camping; (I) – Improved; (P) – Planned

Notes:

- Day Use Fees are valid at all sites and areas within the Colorado River Valley Field Office Upper Colorado River SRMA for the period purchased regardless of location purchased.
- Developed Single Campsites allow for up to 10 people per site; Developed Group Campsites allow for up to 30 people per site.
- Recreation Area Improved Campsites currently includes first two vehicles as part of fee under current fee schedule. Proposed fee schedule for Improved Campsites includes two (2) vehicles in the camping fee.
- High-capacity vehicles are those designed to carry more than 15 passengers.

Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
Two Bridges River Access	X	X	X	X				No	None	Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), and \$20 per High-Capacity Vehicle (more than 15 passengers). Once improvements are completed.	Standard Amenity
Catamount Campground and Recreation Site	X (P)	X	X	X		X (I)		No	\$0 for day use site and \$20 per camp site	Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), \$20 per High-Capacity Vehicle (more than 15 passengers), and \$25	Expanded Amenity fees for campsite and Standard Amenity for day use: Proposed improvements



Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
											Single Campsite.	include designated parking area separate from campground, campground improvements, improved day use area, and improved boat ramp.
Pinball Campground and Recreation Site	X	X	X	X		X		No	\$0 for day use; campground fee is currently \$20	Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), \$20 per High-Capacity Vehicle (more than passengers), and \$25 Single Campsite	Standard Amenity for Day Use Site within Recreation Site. Expanded Amenity for Campground: Proposed improvements include adding campsites (up to 4), relocation of boat ramp.
Cottonwood Island Recreation Site	X	X	X	X				No	None	Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), and \$20 per High-	Standard Amenity

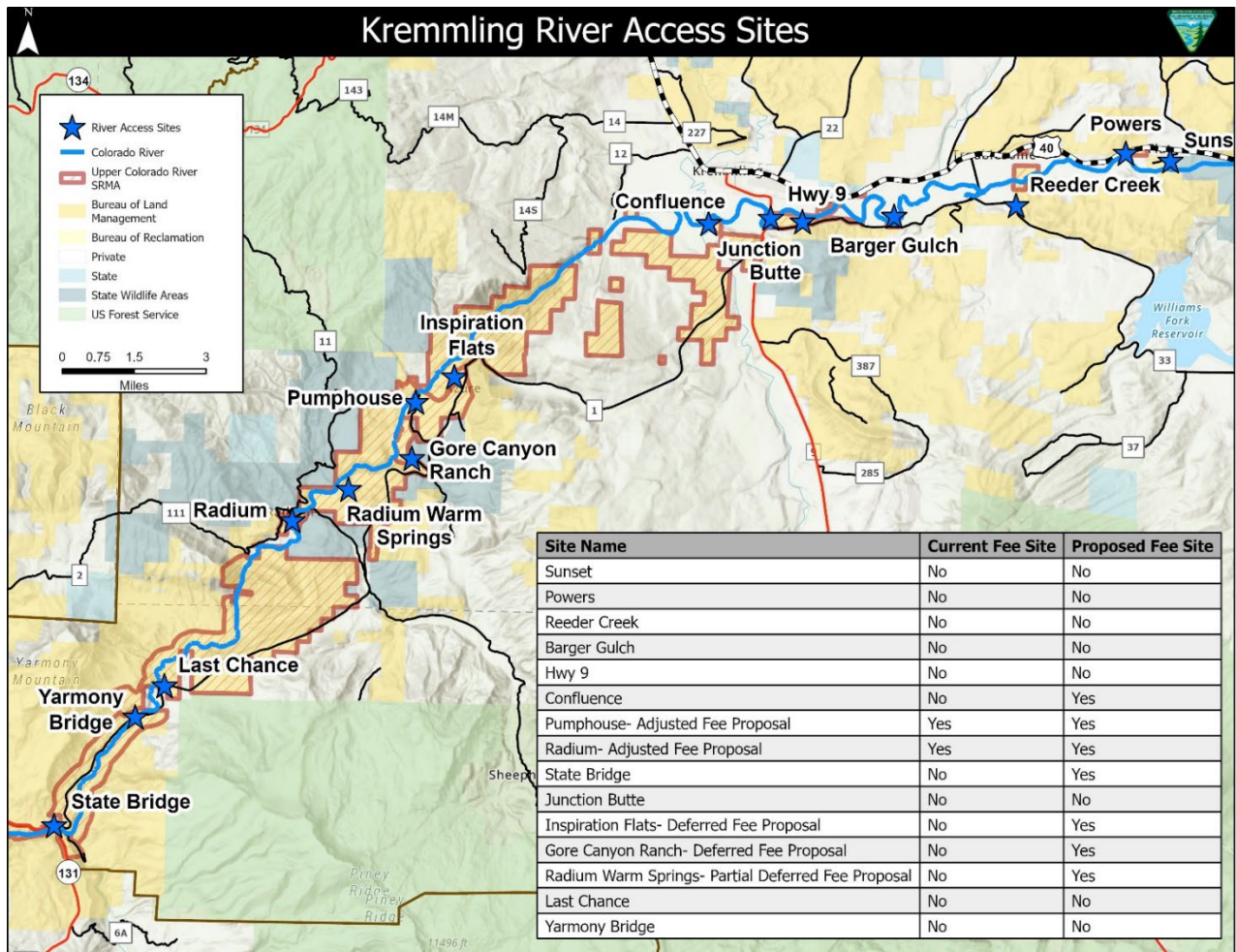
Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
											Capacity Vehicle (more than 15 passengers).	
Lyon's Gulch Campground and Recreation Site	X	X	X	X		X		No	None	Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), \$20 per High-Capacity Vehicle (more than 15 passengers), and \$25 Single Campsite.	Standard Amenity for Day Use Site within Recreation Site. Expanded Amenity for Campground.
Dotsero Landing River Access	X	X	X	X				No	None	Yes	\$5 per Motorcycle, Bicycle or Walk-in per Day, \$10 per vehicle (up to 15 passengers), and \$20 per High-Capacity Vehicle (more than 15 passengers). Once improvements are completed.	Standard Amenity for Day Use Site
Designated On-River Campsites						(DU)		No	None	Yes	\$5 per participant (pets count as participant – currently no limit on numbers of pets but is included	ISRP. Currently 6 designated sites. Increased staffing for monitoring and compliance checks at ramps

Area/Site Name	Parking	Maintained Road	Information/Security	Restrooms	Trash	Camping	Trails	Current Fee	Current Fee Schedule	Proposed Fee	Proposed Fee Schedule	Comments
											as part of maximum group size).	and campsites.
Upper Colorado River BLM Season Pass								Yes	\$20 per Season Pass	Yes	\$50 per Season Pass	Standard Amenity. Valid for all Day Use Fee Areas/Sites between State Bridge Recreation Area and Dotsero Landing Recreation Area.

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## Kremmling Field Office Areas and Sites

Map 2. depicts River Access sites within the UCR SRMA managed by the Kremmling Field Office. The proposed fee sites and fee areas are described in detail to include boat launches, campgrounds and available visitor services and associated photos in this section.



Map 2. Kremmling Field Office River Access Sites within the UCR SRMA

### Confluence Recreation Area

**Confluence Recreation Area** (Proposed Fee Site – Standard Amenity Recreation Fee)

The Confluence Recreation Area provides access to the lowest section of the Blue River and to the confluence of the Blue and Colorado Rivers. This day use area is accessed by the improved and maintained BLM Confluence Road which begins at Grand County Road 1. BLM administered lands accessed from the Confluence Road run along the Blue River to the confluence of the Colorado River and are utilized by wade fisherman. A limited-developed take-out for float boating the Blue River is available approximately 0.5 miles from County Road One (1) which has been identified for additional improvements. To ensure for resource protection and reduce potential impacts to an irrigation ditch the current location may be relocated to a more



sustainable location. Proposed improvements include a hardened boat ramp, interpretation, parking and restroom facilities that are needed for increased use of the site and resource protection. The end of the Confluence Road currently has the greatest development and is the public access point for those rafting or kayaking Gore Canyon. The site has developed parking facilities, interpretation, a restroom and a steal pipe boat slide and steps for launching of larger watercraft.



Existing Confluence Parking Area and Facilities



Confluence Boat Slide (existing facilities)

## **Pumphouse Recreation Area**

***Pumphouse Recreation Area Day Use Site*** (Current Fee Site – Standard Amenity Recreation Fee; proposed fee adjustment)

The Pumphouse Recreation Area is the main river access for both private float boaters and commercial rafting and fishing companies on the Upper Colorado River. The Pumphouse Recreation Area includes the Boat Launch Sites and the Pumphouse Services that provides services for all users. An existing fee site, the area has significant developments that provide direct access to the Colorado River, area trails and developed camping opportunities. The recreation area is accessed by the improved and maintained Pumphouse Road which also begins at Grand County Road 1. Pumphouse Road accesses improved and maintained spur roads that lead to the river Launch sites, trailheads and camping areas. The area is also utilized to access the Gore Canyon Whitewater Park, Gore Canyon Trail, Gore Ranch Trail and Argentine Trail. These trails provide hiking opportunities and access for wade and bank fishing along several miles of the Colorado River.

The area has three main boat launches, all that have additional facilities utilized by the public. The upstream Launch #1 has three concrete boat ramps and two carry down launch sites that for launching of watercraft. The site has four vault toilets, parking for vehicles including an ADA compliant parking location and a small parking and trailhead for the Gore Canyon Trail. The Launch #1 area also provides 110-volt power receptacles for powering blowers to inflate rafts quickly. Interpretation panels providing area information and signage directing shared use of the facilities are located throughout the site. Garbage and recycling services are also provided here. Several picnic tables are provided in the island. Potable water is also provided at this launch site once seasonal conditions and temperatures allow.

The Launch #2 area provides a pipe slide for larger watercraft and steps to carry down small watercraft. This is also a main access point for the Gore Canyon Whitewater Park which has a wave feature for surfing and playing with watercraft. An improved ADA compliant viewing platform provides visitors with a above the river view of river recreation. The Launch #2 has a staging area, has 110-volt power receptacles, two vault restrooms and ADA compliant parking that was improved in 2021. An ADA compliant concrete path is being installed in 2022 that will link the ADA parking, restrooms and viewing platform. Additional parking is provided across the road that has designated vehicle with trailers and single vehicle parking sites.

The Launch #3 area provides a large hardened and graveled ramp with two lanes divided by a steel delineator. An ADA compliant concrete path runs along this ramp and connects to four vault restrooms and to a large gazebo providing shade with concrete picnic tables as with the other launches, this site provides 110-volt power receptacles for public and commercial use to quickly inflate rafts and other inflatable watercraft. The area adjacent and upstream of the ramp was graded to provide ample space for visitors to stage and setup smaller craft and equipment utilized during float boating trips. A new ADA compliant staging area on the adjacent to the ramp and ADA concrete path on the downstream side is being installed in 2022. This new improvement will be graded and provide improved staging access for those with disabilities. The site is also utilized by commercial raft and fishing companies as a location to provide safety talks and orientation. The Launch #3 area has ample designated parking for vehicles with trailers and

single vehicles. This parking area is large enough to provide overflow parking from the other launch sites as well.

As the main and most popular recreation area along the Colorado River for river access and camping, several services are provided to enhance and maintain facilities and the visitor experience. BLM seasonal staffing and site hosts ensure for public health and safety by cleaning and maintain on-site facilities. Restrooms require cleaning stocking of toilet paper and hand sanitizer most days during peak season. While the recreation area provides large dumpsters for visitors, garbage and recycling containers require to be emptied and almost daily as well. The Pumphouse Road and spur roads access the river launch sites, campgrounds and trailheads require annual maintenance by heavy equipment. Vault restrooms typically require contracted pumping twice per year. As part of BLM's recreation management objectives and visitor services staff also provides key information for the public and works to ensure the safety of its visitors by monitoring, visitor contacts and patrols of its sites and on the river itself. Information and signage, both permanent and temporary (ie. information regarding resource concerns such as fire restrictions, temporary restrictions on fishing due to high water temperature, etc.) require labor and materials.

***Pumphouse Campground*** (Current Campground Fee Site –Expanded Amenity Recreation Fee; proposed fee adjustment)

The Pumphouse Recreation Area has a campground that has 18 individual campsites and 2 group sites that provides services directly benefiting the overnight users, defining it as an expanded amenity site. The individual campsites provide camping for up to 10 people and include a tent pad, concrete picnic table, steel fire-pit ring with grate and parking. Parking size for each site varies on location but typically allows for up to two vehicles with trailers or three vehicles within, in-front of or adjacent to each site. The two-group sites provide camping for up to 30 people and parking for several vehicles and trailers. Each site has several tent sites and provides a large group steel fire ring with grate and concrete picnic tables. All campsites have access to vault restrooms at various locations and two additional vault toilets are provided in the area downriver from Launch #3.





Pumphouse Recreation Area Ramp #1 Area



Pumphouse Recreation Area - Gore Canyon Whitewater Playpark and Viewing Platform Area





Pumphouse Recreation Area – Group Campsite

### **Gore Canyon Ranch Access**

***Gore Canyon Ranch Access Day Use Site*** (Proposed Fee Site – Standard Amenity Recreation Fee; Implemented once trailhead improvements occur)

The Gore Canyon Ranch was acquired by the BLM in 2003 as part of a land exchange to improve public access and recreational opportunities within the SRMA. The site is accessed by hikers from the Pumphouse Recreation Area and BLM Road 2704. The site once acquired became popular as an additional access to the river and trails for day use recreation. Gore Canyon Ranch was identified within the 2015 RMP to be dedicated for river access, interpretation and educational trails and the re-establishment of wildlife habitat. As more visitors recreate within the SRMA it has been determined that the access requires improvements to protect resources and meet visitor needs. The BLM access road has had improvements completed in 2022 and is part of the road maintenance schedule having maintenance occur throughout the future. A developed parking area is required to meet visitor demand, installation of a vault restroom for managing human waste and providing 3–4-day use sites. A kiosk was approved for the site and was installed in 2023. Once the trailhead is developed, garbage services will also be provided at the site. This site is proposed to become a day use fee site once full development has been completed.



Gore Canyon Ranch Access – Current Trailhead requiring improvements and facilities

### **Inspiration Flats Recreation Site**

***Inspiration Flats Recreation Day Use Site*** (Proposed Fee Site –Standard Amenity Recreation Fee; Implemented once improvements occur)

The Inspiration Flats Recreation Site is located east of the Pumphouse Recreation Area and is popular for undeveloped camping and provides non-motorized access to the Colorado River from a designated parking area. Due to the popularity and increased use of the area additional facilities and improvements are needed to protect resources and manage use. The area access roads were improved in 2022 and are part of road maintenance schedules. Proposed improvements include improved and maintained access, improved trailhead parking area, restroom, improved trail access and interpretation developments and toilet facilities. Current undeveloped and dispersed camping would become designated sites only. The fee proposal is for a day use fee only and would not have additional campsite fees unless those sites were developed and improved in the future which would lead to an expanded amenity fee for the designated campsites.



Inspiration Flats Recreation Site – View of access roads and undeveloped camping

## **Radium Warm Springs Recreation Area**

### ***Radium Warm Springs Recreation Area*** (Proposed Fee Site)

The Radium Warm Springs Recreation Area has had a priority implementation due to its popularity as visitors access the Radium Warm Spring pool along the Colorado River. To protect and enhance wildlife habitat the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Murgage Area was closed in 2020. The Murgage Area was a primary access point for the public to access the Warm Springs. Even when closed the public continued to access the Warm Springs from this area but were parking along the roadway impeding ingress and egress along the heavily used roadway.

### ***Radium Warm Springs Day Use Site*** (Standard Amenity Recreation Fee; Implemented once improvements occur)

To provide for public health and safety, ensure emergency services could access the Radium area and residents were able to safely access their homes the BLM developed a new parking area and trailhead with an interpretive kiosk. Additional improvements and maintenance of the Warm Springs Road are occurred in 2023 and 2024. A new foot access trail was also constructed from the parking area and trailhead allowing for foot travel while still allowing for all non-motorized uses on the old roadway beyond the trailhead.

### ***Radium Warm Springs Campground*** (Expanded Amenity Recreation Fee; Implemented once improvements occur)

The BLM has funding for and is in the planning phase of developing a site plan for designated campsites and a campground restroom, a host site, additional parking and a restroom at the trailhead. A secondary parking area will also be developed near the entrance of Warm Springs



Road providing for overflow parking and will also provide parking during winter months when the main road is not passable.



Radium Warm Springs Recreation Area – Current Parking Area and Trailhead

## **Radium Recreation Area**

***Radium Recreation Area Day Use*** (Current Fee Site – Standard Amenity Recreation Fee; fee adjustment)

The Radium Recreation Area is the second main river access point for both private float boaters and commercial rafting and fishing companies as this is utilized as a launch site for the Colorado River and as the main take-out location for those launching from the Pumphouse Recreation Area. The recreation area is accessed from Radium Road (Grand County Road 11) as it approaches the small town of Radium.

The area has two main boat launches, all that have additional facilities utilized by the public. The upstream Launch #1 has a wide concrete boat ramp. The site has four vault toilets, parking for vehicles including an ADA compliant parking location and a shade structure. The Launch #1 area also provides 110-volt power receptacles for powering blowers to inflate rafts quickly. Garbage and recycling services are also provided here. Launch #2 area was improved in 2021 to provide new facilities, greater parking capacity and ramp improvements. The Launch #2 area now provides 4 new vault restrooms, trailer and vehicle parking. Additional improvements include two shade structures, new changing room areas and an ADA compliant concrete pathway linking the restrooms, shade structures, boat ramp and changing room facilities.

As the second most popular recreation area along the Colorado River for river access and camping, several services are provided to enhance and maintain facilities and the visitor experience. BLM seasonal staffing and site hosts ensure for public health and safety by cleaning and maintain on-site facilities. Restrooms require cleaning stocking of toilet paper and hand sanitizer most days during peak season. While the recreation area provides large dumpsters for visitors, garbage and recycling containers require to be emptied and almost daily as well. The Vault restrooms typically require contracted pumping twice per year. As part of BLM's recreation management objectives and visitor services staff also provides key information for the public and works to ensure the safety of its visitors by monitoring, visitor contacts and patrols of its sites and on the river itself. Information and signage, both permanent and temporary (ie. information regarding resource concerns such as fire restrictions, temporary restrictions on fishing due to high water temperature, etc.) require labor and materials.

***Radium Campgrounds*** (Expanded Amenity fee site; fee adjustment)

The Radium Recreation Area has 16 individual campsites and 2 group sites. Similar to the Pumphouse Campground, Radium's individual campsites provide camping for up to 10 people and include a tent pad, concrete picnic table, steel fire-pit ring with grate and parking. Parking size for each site varies on location but typically allows for up to two vehicles with trailers or three vehicles within, in-front of or adjacent to each site. The two-group sites provide camping for up to 30 people and parking for several vehicles. Each site has tent sites and provides a large group steel fire ring with grate and concrete picnic tables. All campsites have access to vault restrooms at various locations.



Radium Recreation Area – Ramp #2 Facilities and Day Use Site





Radium Recreation Area – Single Campsites and Restroom Facilities



Radium Recreation Area – Day Use and Changing Area Facilities

## State Bridge Recreation Area/ Piney Peak Access Site

### *State Bridge Recreation Area/ Piney Peak Access Day Use Site* (Proposed Fee Site - Standard Amenity Recreation Fee)

The State Bridge Recreation Area is the most down river access point within the Kremmling Field Office. This area is utilized as a take-out for those that have launched upriver and is also used as a launching point for those recreating on the river below State Bridge. Both private float boaters and commercial rafting and fishing companies utilize this site for accessing the river. The site is already developed and a new storage building for supplies and information window will be replacing the existing storage building in 2024. Additionally, this is the access point to BLM Managed Lands along Piney Creek and accessing the Piney Peak Area. The BLM has invested significant funding for road improvements and a bridge over Piney Creek for public access for multi recreational use including camping, hiking, hunting and recreational riding of designated primitive roads. This access no longer continues onto USFS lands as connecting routes have been closed on USFS, essentially making this an in and out area for recreating. The public accessing the area beyond State Bridge also stops and utilizes BLM garbage and recycling, developed parking areas, vault-toilet restrooms, trash receptacles, interpretive kiosks, picnic tables, courtesy phone and as staging area for trailered vehicles or bicycles. All visitors entering the State Bridge Recreation Area/Piney Peak Access would be required to pay the day use fee.



State Bridge Picnic Area





State Bridge Restrooms and Changing Areas



State Bridge Improved Ramp #1





State Bridge Improved Ramp #1 Access and Area Turn-around



State Bridge Ramp #2

## On-River Camping

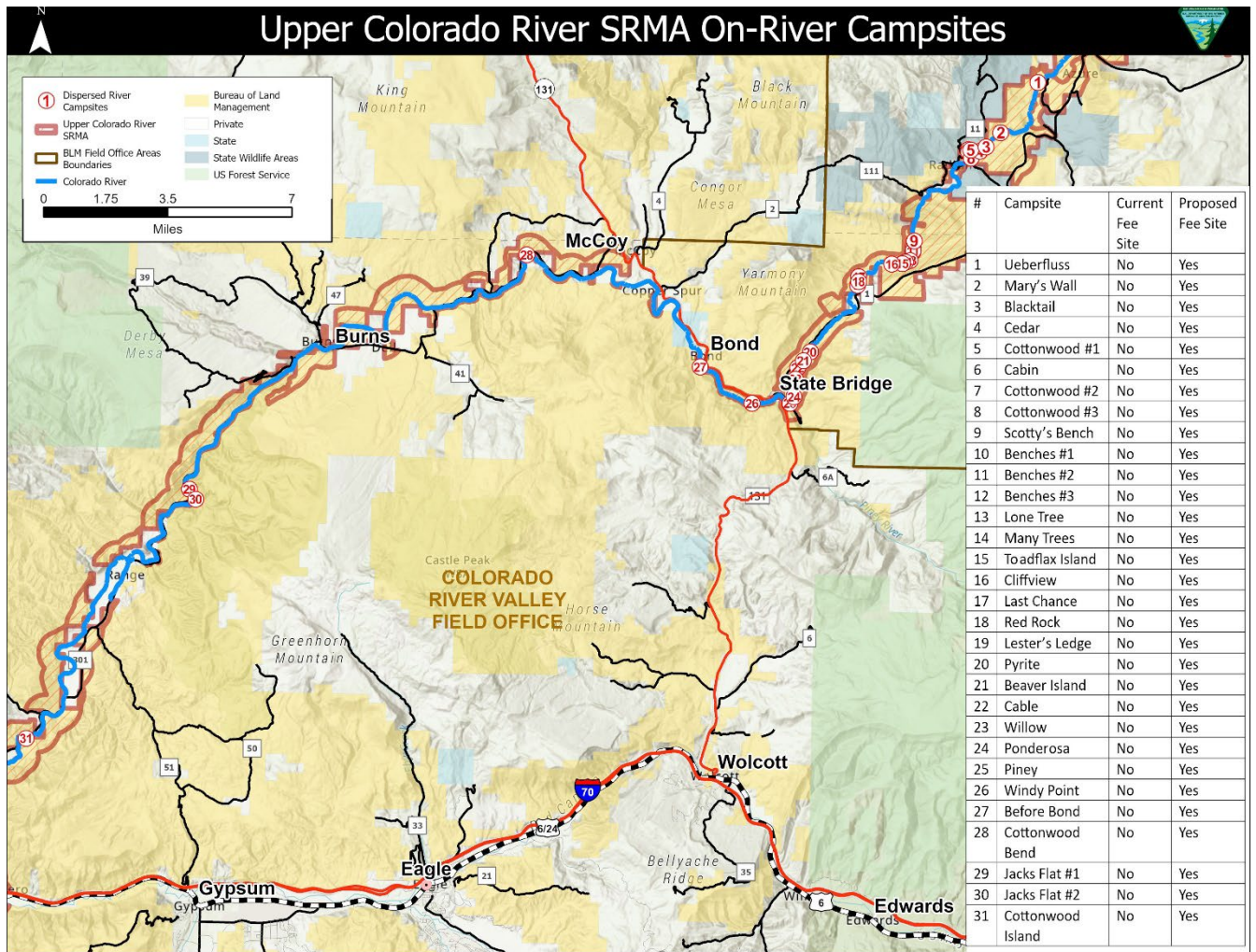
***On-River Camping*** (Proposed Fee – Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP); Implemented with completion of *Federal Register* Notice)

The SRMAs had historically allowed for dispersed camping. As visitation to the area increased impacts to resources, development of unsustainable campsites and associated damage to riverbanks, vegetation and habitat brought additional management concerns. The 2015 Kremmling Field Office Resource Management Plan identified the Kremmling UCR SRMA as a Special Area. The 2019 RAMP for KFO identified limiting camping to designated sites for on-river camping for the protection of resources and enhanced float-in camping opportunities in a natural setting. Currently 25 sites have been designated. The 25<sup>th</sup> site (Piney Site) will be closed due to erosion and replaced by a different on-river site in 2025 after environmental review.

Camping on river is proposed to be float-in only and will require a ISRP with stipulations requiring the protection of resources that include mandatory portable toilets or approved waste bags with chemical compounds for the removal of human solid waste, approved fire pans and the requirement to pack out all ash, and limited group size dependent on the size of camp and what it can sustainably accommodate. Map 3 depicts On-River Campsites for UCR SRMAs combined. The KFO on-river campsites are depicted from Ueberfluss to Piney (numbers 1 through 25 as the river flows from right (upriver) to left (downriver)). Campsites to be designated for CRVFO are depicted from Windy Point 1 through Cottonwood 3 (numbers 25-36). See Appendix B for Specific Designated On-River Campsites.

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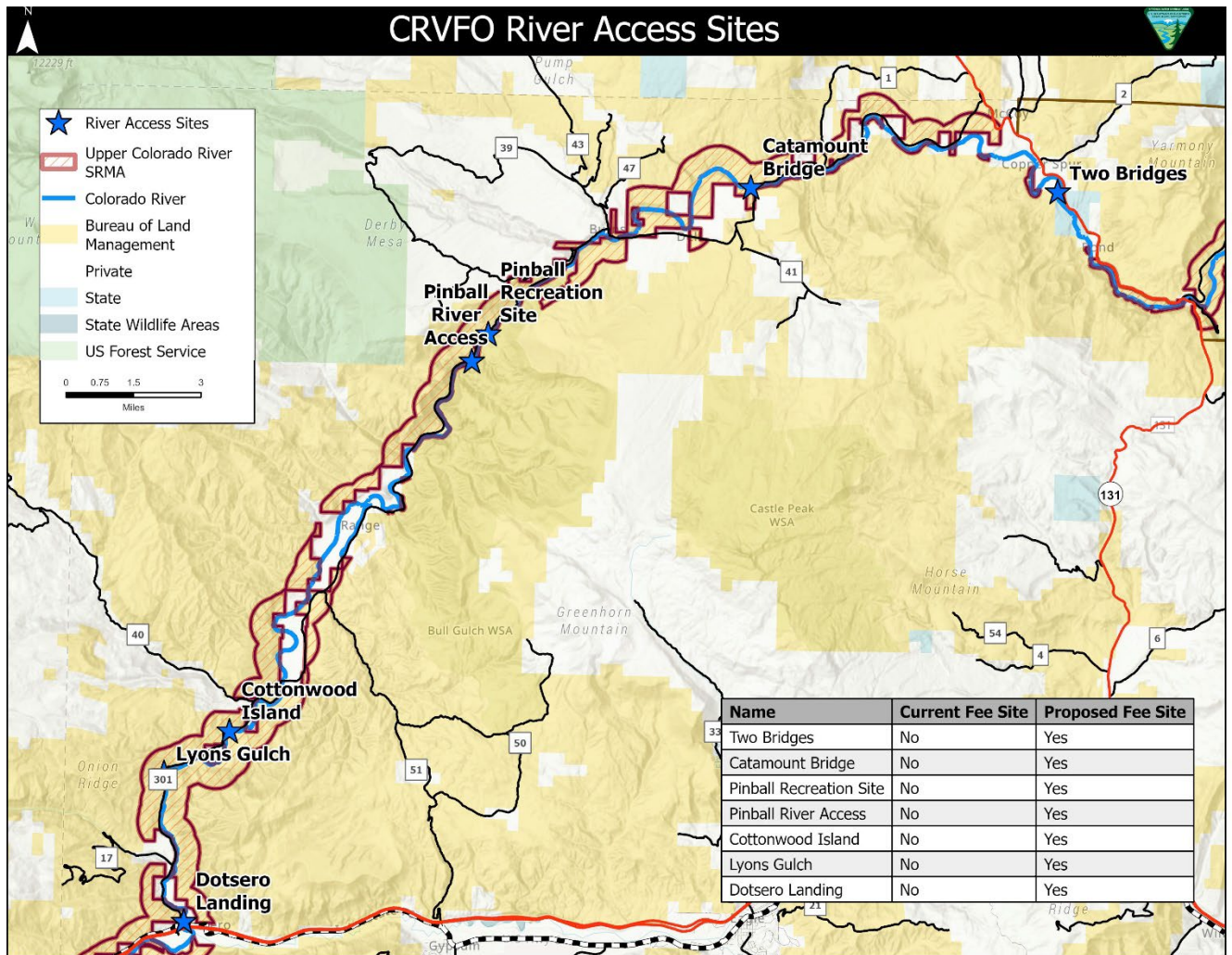




Map 3. On-River Campsites within the UCR SRMAs for KFO and CRVFO

### Colorado River Valley Field Office Areas and Sites

Map 4. depicts River Access sites within the UCR SRMA managed by the Colorado River Valley Field Office. The proposed fee sites and fee areas are described in detail to include boat launches, campgrounds and available visitor services and associated photos in this section.



Map 4. Colorado River Valley Field Office River Access Sites within the UCR SRMA

## Two Bridges River Access Site

***Two Bridges River Access Day Use Site*** (Proposed Fee Site - Standard Amenity Recreation Fee)  
 Two Bridges River Access has a paved concrete boat ramp, parking, and vault toilets. The bottom of the ramp may get covered with river sediment. No camping is allowed here. This site was developed by Eagle County Open Space and transferred to the BLM. A standard amenity day-use fee is proposed.





Two Bridges Site – Improved Boat Ramp

## **Catamount Recreation Site**

### ***Catamount Day Use Site*** (Proposed Fee – Day Use: Standard Amenity Recreation Fee)

On the south side of the river, just downriver from the bridge, there is a gravel boat ramp with free parking and pit toilets. The proposal to charge standard amenity day use fees at this site will help fund much needed improvements to the day use area, boat launch, and parking. Historically, Catamount has been used for some camping and for launching boats to run the stretch of river downstream from the site.

### ***Catamount Campground*** (Proposed Fee Increase - Expanded Amenity Recreation Fee)

The Catamount Campground is a popular campground with eight (8) sites (three (3) of which are RV sites) within the Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area. Fees for this campground have been approved through the business plan for BLM Colorado River Valley Field Office Campgrounds and Wolcott Day Use Site business plan from December 2019 and implementation began in summer 2024. Many users camp at this location for either river trips or hunting trips. With campground user fees, the BLM could create a designated campground separate from the day use site. The campsites include picnic tables and metal fire rings. The Upper Colorado River SRMA Business Plan updates the 2019 proposal to provide consistency with KFO river management on the adjacent Upper Colorado River SRMA. The proposed fees for the campground would meet the FLREA requirements for expanded amenity fees.



Catamount Campground and Parking Area



Catamount Parking Area and Boat Ramp



## Pinball Recreation Site

***Pinball Recreation Day Use Site*** (Proposed Fee Site – Standard Amenity Recreation Fee)  
Pinball Recreation Site provides river access with a boat launch, parking, and picnic tables. Although it is located 0.7 miles downriver from the campground, it is associated with the amenities in the upriver site. The site is on a scenic section of the Colorado River which has fewer rapids than the stretch above State Bridge. The stretch between State Bridge and Pinball is prized for trout fishing. The lower sections are popular for float boating, canoeing, stand-up paddle boarding and tubing. Visitor numbers for 2022 were recorded at 4,625 recreation users, this number is expected to increase with expanded amenities and facilities development.

***Pinball Campground*** (Proposed Fee Increase Site – Expanded Amenity Recreation Fee)  
The Pinball Campground is a one-site campground within the CRVFO's Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area. The site includes a picnic table, metal fire ring, and a vault toilet. There is a large amount of parking, which allows for RVs to dry camp in the parking lot. The campground is underutilized because the boat ramp is 0.7 miles downstream. With the ability to collect fees, the CRVFO hopes to improve the campground area to include more campsites (up to 4 sites), relocate the boat ramp, and maintain the existing facilities. With expanded amenities, a nearby boat ramp, and separated parking, public use would likely increase. Fees for this campground have been approved through the Business Plan for BLM Colorado River Valley Field Office Campgrounds and Wolcott Day Use Site (2019) and began implementation in summer of 2024.



Pinball Parking Area

## Cottonwood Island Recreation Site

***Cottonwood Island Recreation Day Use Site*** (Proposed Fee Site - Standard Amenity Recreation Fee)

Cottonwood Island is located on the Colorado River and has a gravel boat ramp, vault toilet, and picnic site. This scenic section has fewer rapids than the stretch above State Bridge. The stretch between Pinball and Dotsero, where this site is located, is popular for float boating, canoeing, stand-up paddle boarding, and tubing. A standard amenity day use fee is proposed.



Cottonwood Island Parking Area





Cottonwood Island Boat Ramp

### **Lyon's Gulch Recreation Site**

***Lyon's Gulch Day Use Site*** (Proposed Fee Site - Standard Amenity Recreation Fee)

Lyon's Gulch Recreation Site is a day use site with an improved concrete boat ramp, vault toilet, and is accessible from the loop drive at the ramp or the Colorado River Road. The proposed day use fee will enable BLM to further develop and maintain the day use amenities. The visitor use was recorded as 16,096 users in 2022. It provides for a shorter float from Cottonwood Island, or a put-in for a quick float down to Dotsero. The lower sections are popular for float boating, canoeing, stand-up paddle boarding, and tubing.

***Lyon's Gulch Campground*** (Proposed Fee Increase Site - Expanded Amenity Recreation Fee)

The Lyon's Gulch Campground is a popular campground with five (5) sites within the Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area. The sites include picnic tables, metal fire rings, and a vault toilet. A campground fee increase will allow for the users to contribute to the costs of maintenance and improvements. Fees for this campground have been approved through the Business Plan for BLM Colorado River Valley Field Office Campgrounds and Wolcott Day Use Site (2019) and implementation began in summer of 2024.



Lyons Gulch Boat Ramp



Campsite at Lyons Gulch



## Dotsero Landing Recreation Site

***Dotsero Landing Recreation Day Use Site*** (Proposed Fee Site – Standard Amenity Recreation Fee)

Dotsero Recreation Site is located just upriver from the confluence of Colorado and Eagle Rivers, Dotsero is located along the Colorado River Road, County Road 30. There is trailer parking for 20 trucks/trailers, a boat ramp with turnaround and vault toilets and picnic tables, with routines patrols and interpretation kiosks, that make it a standard amenity. The site is very popular for day trips and takeouts of the Upper Colorado or put in for Bair Ranch downstream located on National Forest. No camping is available at this site and a day use fee is proposed.



Dotsero Parking Area



Dotsero Boat Ramp and Parking Area

## **On-River Camping**

***On-River Camping*** (Proposed Fee – Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP); Implemented with completion NEPA and issuance of Federal Register Notice)

The SRMA had historically allowed for dispersed camping. As visitation to the area increased, impacts to resources, development of unsustainable campsites and associated damage to riverbanks, vegetation and habitat brought additional management concerns. Eleven(11) access sites are to be designated for camping. Camping on river is proposed to be float-in only and will include stipulations requiring the protection of resources that include mandatory portable toilets or approved waste bags with chemical compounds for the removal of human solid waste, approved fire pans and the requirement to pack out all ash, and limited group size dependent on the size of camp and what it can sustainably accommodate. Map 3 depicts 36 On-River Campsites for UCR SRMAs combined. The eleven (11) CRVFO on-river campsites are depicted from Windy Point 1 to Cottonwood 3 (numbers 26 through 36 as the river flows from right (upriver) to left (downriver)). See Appendix B for Specific Designated On-River Campsites.



Cottonwood Bend Dispersed River Campsite

## **Non-Fee Recreation Sites**

This section describes access sites and recreation sites that are not part of the fee structure proposed within the UCR SRMA for KFO. For CRVFO, all recreation sites within the UCR SRMA will be part of the proposed fee structure (no non-fee recreation sites). BLM's goal within the UCR SRMAs is to charge fees at appropriate sites/areas while still allowing for fee free access within the SRMAs.

### **Sunset Fishing Access**

The Sunset Fishing Access includes improved parking area, informational kiosk and developed trail accessing the banks of the Colorado River in Parshall. The fishing site is adjacent to the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Jack Kemp and Breeze units for over 1.5 miles of fishing access.

### **Powers Fishing Access**

The Powers Fishing Access includes improved parking area and an informational kiosk. IT provides access to  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of the Colorado River for fishing opportunities.

### **Reeder Creek Fishing Access**

The Reeder Creek Fishing Access includes improved parking area and an informational kiosk. A  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile improved trail provides hiking opportunities accessing a public  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile stretch of the Colorado River.

### **Barger Gulch Fishing Access**

The Barger Gulch Fishing Access includes a improved parking area and an informational kiosk accessing a  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of the Colorado River.

### **Highway 9 Fishing Access**

The Highway 9 Fishing Access provides improved parking area and an informational kiosk accessing a ¼ mile of public waters along the Colorado River.

### **Junction Butte Wetlands**

The Junction Butte Wetlands provides a parking area and an informational kiosk. This site provides access to ¾ of a mile of the Colorado River for fishing, waterfowl viewing and hunting opportunities.

### **Last Chance Rapid River Access**

This site provides parking and a planned informational kiosk. The ½ mile trail leads visitors to the Colorado River for fishing or day use recreational opportunities.

### **Yarmony Bridge River Access**

The Yarmony Bridge River Access provides parking and river access opportunities. It is also used as a staging area for designated Extreme 4-wheel drive trails and a trailhead for the Yarmony Fishing Access Trail.

## **Current Visitation, Fee Revenue, and Operating Costs**

### **Current Visitation**

Visitation to KFO and CRVFO recreation sites and areas is recorded annually in the BLM’s Recreation Management Information Systems (RMIS) database. The use at a specific site is captured as “visits” which equates to one person entering onto lands or waters managed by the BLM for the purposes of recreation. A “visitor day” is defined as a visitor spending 12 hours in an area. A family of four (4) camping for three (3) days would count as 12 visitor days. These visitation numbers are derived from multiple methods including records from recreation permits, such as campground fee envelopes, data from traffic counters, and simple observation. While technically open year-round, visitation to the campgrounds is concentrated in the summer season, generally May through September. The estimated annual visitation across the UCR SRMAs is 238,034 visitors averaged across three (3) years.

Table 1. Estimated Annual Visitation to UCR SRMAs in Visitor Days

<b>SRMA</b>	<b>FY20</b>	<b>FY21</b>	<b>FY22</b>	<b>Average</b>
KFO UCR SRMA	149,173	175,203	180,459	168,278
CRVFO UCR SRMA	65,244	67,476	76,548	69,756
Total Annual Visitation for SRMAs	214,417	242,679	257,007	238,034



## **Current Fee Revenue**

The BLM uses Recreational Use Permit (RUP) envelopes to collect campground fees at the two (2) fee campgrounds (Pumphouse and Radium) in the Kremmling Field Office.

The BLM manages its recreation program on the UCR through its use of allocated funds received from Congress, fees it collected from recreational users (both commercial and casual), and its use of volunteers and partnerships. BLM offices also submit requests for funds through entities such as the Federal Highway Administration, Colorado State Parks and Wildlife and the US Department of Labor (specifically for meeting requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act) that supplement operational funds. Available fund amounts and sources vary annually so the Field Offices try to maintain a certain amount of fee income each year for emergencies and strategic uses such as improvements and a carrying capacity study to better understand and meet user expectations and preferences.

For the last 5 years, the Kremmling Field Office has been able to obligate between \$135,000 and \$145,000 of the funds it has collected from the commercial operators (SRPs) for projects along the course of the river segment they manage to directly benefit those users and operators. For the same time period, the Kremmling Field Office has also obligated between \$80,000 and \$105,000 annually of the fees collected from the two (2) on-river fee sites it manages towards projects that have directly benefited those users.

On the river segment managed by the Colorado River Valley Field Office, only between \$46,000 and \$67,000 has been able to be obligated annually from fees it collects from its commercial river operators and without any developed fee site revenue. It has used these funds all along the course of the river segment it manages to benefit those users and operators, which also includes such projects as the carrying capacity study being conducted at the time of this writing. Maintenance for its developed river destination sites has been funded with whatever other sources it can find on a yearly basis, if at all.

## **Current Operating Costs**

Using funds from a variety of sources – Fee site collection, SRP income from Commercial operators, grants and allocated funds, the KFO spends, on average, approximately \$240,000 each year to operate and maintain KFO's portion of the Upper Colorado SRMA. This includes maintenance of two (2) campgrounds, staff salaries, vehicles, supplies, law enforcement, and operations costs, such as water testing and toilet pumping.

Using funds from a variety of sources (but without any fee income from developed fee sites) using RP income from Commercial operators, allocated funds, grants, , and providing for the same services as KFO provides, CRVFO spends an average of approximately \$52,000 to operate and maintain the three (3) river access campgrounds, river access only campsites, and the other day use sites within the SRMA.

The field offices expect that campground operations and maintenance costs will continue to increase. Additional staff time, services, and supplies will increase as visitation increases and campgrounds require more frequent cleaning, fee collection, and maintenance. While the

Kremmling Field Office already has more sites than Colorado River Valley Field Office does, existing and additional facilities must be constructed and hardened in both Field Offices all along the SRMA in order to provide long-term, sustainable sites and uses. These needs have been documented above.

Table 4. Estimated Annual Expenditures by Expense Category for KFO UCR SRMA

<b>Cost Type</b> (averages, including benefits)	<b>FY22 *</b>	<b>FY23</b>
Park Rangers	\$64,445	\$100,000
Vehicles (2)	\$16,000	\$16,000
Equipment & Supplies	\$8,000	\$8,500
Services (water testing, toilet pumping, trash pickup, etc.)	\$11,000	\$13,000
Camp Host stipends (3)	\$7,000	\$13,700
Law Enforcement	\$12,818	\$13,000
Other (labor, staffing, overhead, visitor services)	\$74,714	\$81,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$193,977</b>	<b>\$245,200</b>

\*Costs are estimated due to incomplete reports

Table 5. Estimated Annual Expenditures by Expense Category for CRVFO UCR SRMA.

<b>Cost Type</b> (averages, including benefits)	<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>
Park Rangers (1)	\$14,873	\$15,000
Vehicles (1)	\$1,600	\$2,000
Equipment & Supplies	\$4,000	\$4,500
Services (water testing, toilet pumping, trash pickup, etc.)	\$3,000	\$3,500
Camp Host stipends	N/A	N/A
Law Enforcement	\$16,644	\$17,000
Other (labor, staffing, overhead, visitor services)	\$12,000	\$12,500
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$52,117</b>	<b>\$54,500</b>



## Anticipated Future Costs

BLM anticipates future renovation and replacement of campground facilities as they become unserviceable (e.g. pit toilets, bear boxes, fire rings, etc). Additional future costs Additional facilities must be constructed and hardened in order to provide long-term sustainable site include facilities and maintenance personnel including hiring of River Rangers to ensure compliance and visitor services information. Future projects would be funded to aid with repair, maintenance, and enhancement of recreation fee site projects. Funding would aid with interpretation, visitor information, visitor services, and signs that directly benefit fee sites and areas where SRP holders operate. Habitat restoration directly related to wildlife-dependent recreation that is limited to hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, or photography can also be funded. Law enforcement directly related to public use and recreation that benefits fee sites and the SRP program is critical and would also be funded. Funding also includes direct, operating or capital, costs associated with collecting and processing recreation fees. Support of volunteer and partnership projects and similar partnership authorities related to recreation in fee areas or where SRP holders operate is an important addition to these future anticipated costs where additional funding would prove beneficial.

### Fee Proposal

The fee analysis portion of this business plan was based on a comparative review of fees at existing private and public facilities within the service area that provide similar services, including USFS and privately owned campgrounds. See Appendix A for the full comparison of area campground amenities and fees.

The analysis of the value of the BLM campground fee shows that the proposed \$25.00 rate for individual sites would be somewhere in the middle range of fees charged for the use of other public campground areas and recreation areas nearby and substantially lower than private campgrounds and recreation areas (Appendix A: Rates and Service Comparison (Table 10)). The proposed fee structure for parking is very similar to other federal and county recreational parking fees. The proposed fee structure for the group camping and recreation site is substantially lower than both other public and privately owned group campgrounds in the area. The average fee for private campgrounds and recreation sites is \$40. By comparison, the average free for public group camping and recreation sites is \$35. BLM fee proposals are lower than private resources because BLM provides slightly different facilities and services (such as the lack of flush toilets, showers, RV hookups). The proposed addition of a Consumer Price Index (CPI) to help keep pace with rising costs in labor and supplies would both support continued good management of the campground fee program and would decrease the administrative burden of securing additional supplemental funding from other sources, thus reducing cost. The number of *Federal Register* notices would be reduced and RAC time spent on small fee increases would be decreased.

### Planned Fee Adjustments Methodology with Consumer Price Index Target

None of the costs associated with the campground program are fixed. As inflation increases, the costs of labor, materials, contractors, and supplies all increase at a commensurate rate. The BLM

uses the Implicit Price Deflator Index from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis to calculate periodic fee adjustments in the Special Recreation Permit Program and CPW uses a targeted CPI from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for the Denver-Metro area in calculating fees for their out of state hunting licenses.

To keep up with rising costs, the KFO and CRVFO proposes the following system to calculate fees for our fee sites outlined above. BLM would implement the above fee structure as proposed and then would reference the CPI through the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. However, we would target the CPI closer to rural Western Colorado by using the monthly Western US CPI published at the following website: <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/regional-resources.htm>. This CPI targets the entire western US outside of the large metro areas that have their own CPIs calculated separately. While this is not a CPI for only Western Colorado, it does target the rural west and is the closest CPI that would represent the UCR SRMAs region. A yearly average of this CPI is published every January. BLM would take a base line CPI from the first published CPI after fees are implemented. Then every January after the yearly average would be added to the fees for the campground and day use site and when the increase or decrease reached a one-dollar increment for per person fees and a two-dollar increment for campsite fees, the fees would be changed accordingly. For example, with a \$20.00 fee for individual campsites, a 10% increase in the CPI would lead to a two-dollar increase in fees to \$22.00. Typically, the CPI increases approximately 3% a year. Thus, it would likely take 3-4 years to increase the fees by two dollars. For group sites, a 25% increase in the CPI would lead to a one-dollar increase. This would mean that if the CPI continued at 3% per year, groups sites would likely see a price increase from \$4 to \$5 per person per night in 6-7 years. This would create a more sustainable and consistent funding source that would increase assurances for users that the program could continue to provide regular maintenance and necessary capital improvements into the future. The RAC voted to accept the proposed business plan, giving the BLM the discretion to raise their fees without returning to the RAC for approval within the following ranges: \$10 to \$15 for a normal vehicle, \$5 to \$10 for a bike or motorcycle, and \$20 to \$30 for a high-capacity vehicle, based on the 2023 Consumer Price Index (CPI). Fees would be initially implemented at the lower proposed fee schedule. The CPI would be utilized in outlying years to increase fees as needed, with CPI escalation allowed above any inflationary adjustment above “2023 dollars”. See fee schedule outlines and the existing and proposed changes for recreation fees within the KFO (Table 6) and CRVFO (Table 7).

KFO and CRVFO will use various e-commerce technologies, as directed in Instruction Memorandum 2022-019, to provide recreation visitors opportunities to find, reserve, and pay for a campsite and day use within the field office. Most of these options are provided through the interagency reservation service (currently Recreation.gov).

If the KFO and CRVFO decide to make available the “scan and pay” or any other type of e-commerce solution option 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). The amount of the reservation fee is set by the contractor. Current reservation fees can range from \$0.50 to \$10.00. The reservation fee is subject to contracting requirements on Recreation.gov (currently) and will be adjusted as that contract changes or with future updates to the Business Plan. For visitors who wish not to pay the expanded amenity fee

for reservation services, the traditional iron ranger with Recreation Use Permit (RUP) envelope will exist until the field office moves the fee area completely to e-commerce and/or the RUP envelope is no longer available for payment.

To account for inflation or other economic changes, this business plan also proposes tying the new fee structure to the CPI. Fees would be reviewed annually against this index. Fees could be increased or decreased if supported by the index.

## **Fee Calculation**

The fees at each of the campgrounds are far below comparable campgrounds in the area. Fees at the Pumphouse and Radium campgrounds, for example, have not adjusted since 2012, yet the costs of goods, services, and labor have steadily increased. Further, improvements to the campgrounds, including new vault toilets have improved the quality of the campgrounds. This section reviews the amenities at each campground and the justification to collect fees.

## **Projected Fee Revenue**

The total fee season is from April 1 to November 30 which covers 243 days. No fees will be required within the UCR SRMAs outside of this time, however fee-free on-river camp permits will be required during the non-fee season. Currently the field offices do not separate fees, therefore it is not possible to show type income by use for comparison. All fees are deposited into a single fee account.

## **Proposed Use of Additional Fee Revenue**

KFO and CRVFO strive to provide high-quality recreation opportunities and experiences for all visitors. Labor will continue to be the highest operating cost for the recreation areas and sites. BLM staff provide visitor information, conduct field patrols, maintain facilities, install signage, collect and reconcile fees, and rehabilitate any damage to natural resources. Recreation fee revenue is vital to operation and maintenance of these developed recreation sites.

The following is an initial list of how the proposed recreation fee revenue would be used:

- Increased park ranger patrols and restroom cleaning in all campgrounds;
- Graveling of sites and roads;
- Development and graveling of parking areas, trailheads, access sites and other facilities;
- Boat ramp improvements;
- Development/ acquisition of access, easements, and Rights of Ways;
- Restroom maintenance and supplies;
- Automated fee machines with credit card or cash option to reduce cost of employee fee collection, or alternately QR Codes (Scan and Pay option);

- Trash services at specific fee locations;
- Annual maintenance of areas and sites (boat ramps, fencing, signage, kiosks, road maintenance, campsites, parking areas); and
- Additional staffing will include a career seasonal River Ranger and temporary seasonal River Ranger at KFO.

## **Fee Collection and Enforcement**

All vehicles entering these campgrounds are required to pay for a recreation use permit for overnight camping and a separate day use permit for day use across the UCR SRMAs. Visitors can purchase the recreation use permits at self-service fee stations located near the entrances. Permits must be displayed and presented to staff upon request. For KFO, Pumphouse and Radium campgrounds are already on the National Recreation Reservation System (Recreation.gov) or the like. CRVFO currently does not have campsites within e-commerce but proposes to add 20 sites to the reservation system. The benefits of e-commerce are numerous, including increased fee compliance and decreased cost of collections because it reduces staff time accounting for fee collections.

Campground fee payment is encouraged by onsite hosts and by the BLM employees who regularly patrol campgrounds. If problems arise requiring the need for enforcement, the host or employee contacts BLM law enforcement in the applicable field offices, or other appropriate law enforcement depending on availability and response time.

## **Impacts of Implementing or Not Implementing Fee Changes**

This section analyzes the impacts of increasing camping fees within the SRMAs and the impacts of not changing the fee system.

High quality recreation opportunities along the Upper Colorado River are valued by local communities, regional, state, national, and international visitors. River-related recreational opportunities, including camping on public lands along the Upper Colorado River are a reason many individuals choose to visit and enjoy their public lands. The BLM expects that demand for camping, and associated recreation on public lands will only increase in the future based on existing visitation trends.

## **Impacts of Increasing Campground Fees**

### **Impacts to Recreation Visitors**

It is expected that the visitor experience will improve if proposed fee increases are adopted, as current services would continue to be offered and additional services (improvements to campsites, increased cleaning frequency, kiosks, signage, etc...) may be available. Additional fee revenue would allow for an increased staffing for visitor outreach/visitor services including law enforcement presence. Recreation fees can serve as an effective visitor management strategy

leading to environmental benefits by providing opportunities for education and interpretation of the resources. Additionally, as facilities age, the replacement of some of the infrastructure is necessary to maintain health and human safety. By paying a fee, users may place more value on the area, leading to less environmental degradation. These benefits would positively impact visitor experience.

### **Impacts to the Environment**

The KFO and CRVFO recreation programs serve to reduce negative impacts to sites and resources by containing camping into developed sites. By limiting camping activities to developed campgrounds, human waste generated by campers will be contained and processed properly at approved facilities. Campfires will be contained in metal rings, enhancing fire and visitor safety, and reducing visual impacts of rock fire rings throughout the landscape. Vegetation will be preserved as camping activities are contained to sites that are designed for camping. Fee revenue from increased camping fees may be used for projects that improve natural resource conditions in and around the sites, including restoration and revegetation of degraded areas. Increasing fees would positively impact environmental conditions.

### **Socioeconomic Impacts, Including Low-Income Populations and Environmental Justice Communities**

The local economy is heavily dependent upon tourism and recreation. Visitor spending in Eagle and Grand Counties combined totaled \$1.8 billion in 2021, supporting nearly 12,000 jobs earning \$467.7 million in payroll and generating \$129.5 million in tax receipts (Longwoods International and Dean Runyon Associates, 2022). Additionally, recreation and tourism-related industries account for 33 percent of Grand and Eagle Counties combined total employment in 2021, compared with 14 percent in Colorado (Headwaters Economics BLM Socioeconomic Profiles). Recreation has been an important economic activity in the area and continues to be an economic contributor locally. Outdoor recreation on BLM-administered lands in the combined KFO and CRVFO contributes \$145.7 million and over 1,100 jobs annually paying \$50.4 million in labor income to Colorado's economy. Public lands play an important role in stimulating the local economy by providing opportunities for recreation. Communities adjacent to public lands can benefit economically from visitors who spend money in hotels, restaurants, gas stations, gift shops, and elsewhere.

BLM monitoring indicates that many visitors are participating in a variety of recreation activities that require outdoor gear including river and water-related activities, float boating, fishing, and camping with vans, RVs, and trailers. The impact of an increased camping fee on these recreational groups is expected to be minimal.

The socioeconomic data on BLM recreation users is unknown; however, the U.S. Forest Service's National Visitor Use Monitoring Program (NVUM) 2019 data provides detailed visitation socioeconomic data for nearby forests including the Routt, Arapaho-Roosevelt, and White River National Forests adjacent to BLM- managed public lands. Over 86% of visitors traveled to these forests to recreate and most visitors traveled from outside the area. Specifically,

over one-third of visitation is from the area within 50 miles, however two-thirds of visitation is from over 51 miles indicating that travel to the area was economically discretionary.

The NVUM study further asked visitors to report their household incomes by category. The following data was gathered:

Table 8: Annual Household Income of Visitors Traveling to Routt, Arapaho-Roosevelt, and White River National Forests

<b>Annual Household Income Category</b>	<b>National Forest Visits (%)</b>
Under \$25,000	6.2
\$25,000 to \$49,999	13.9
\$50,000 to \$74,999	17.7
\$75,000 to \$99,999	15.9
\$100,000 to \$149,999	18.4
More than \$150,000	28.0

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source: National Visitor Use Monitoring Program, U.S. Forest Service

Many tourists prefer to camp at public campgrounds; capacity at adjacent National Forest campgrounds is exceeded for most of the camping season. These campers rely on BLM and private campgrounds as many cannot afford the high cost of hotel accommodations in the area or would prefer developed camping to dispersed camping. Those who vacation away from home are more likely to be above average in income. As indicated in Table 8 above, over 62% of household incomes exceed \$75,000 that are visiting nearby forests. Furthermore, BLM campgrounds offer a very low-cost alternative to staying in a hotel in the area (where prices range from \$120 to well over \$500 per room per night during the season). This low-cost alternative is particularly important at the group sites, where groups can enjoy the amenities of the area at a very low cost.

Impacts to low-income, minority, or Tribal populations are not expected to be significant, as there are other free dispersed camping areas managed by the BLM and the US Forest Service’s Routt, Arapaho-Roosevelt, and White River National Forests adjacent to BLM- managed public lands. Furthermore, there are discounted rates for camping for seniors and those with disabilities. An environmental justice screening was completed for Eagle and Grand Counties and based on U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) data as used by EPA’s EJScreen tool (U.S. EPA 2023; U.S. Census Bureau 2021), neither Eagle nor Grand Counties have low-income, minority, or Tribal populations that meet the criteria for being identified as environmental justice populations compared with the state reference.

Table 9: Eagle and Grand Counties Environmental Justice Baseline Data

<b>Geography</b>	<b>Low Income *#</b>	<b>Minority *</b>	<b>Tribal #</b>
Eagle County	23.9 percent	33.6 percent	0.4 percent
Grand County	22.6 percent	14.1 percent	1.3 percent
Colorado (Reference area) ^#	24.5 percent	32.5 percent 35.7 percent (MGA)	2.2 percent

<http://www.epa.gov/ejscreen><https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table> • \* EPA EJScreen: <http://www.epa.gov/ejscreen> (accessed 06/09/2023); BLM EJ Mapping Tool: <https://blm-egis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4b35b1e0a8e14dc884526c4b4fcd65>  
 • ^ Headwaters Economics BLM EPS and SEP: <https://headwaterseconomics.org/tools/blm-profiles/> (accessed 06/09/2023)  
 • # American Community Survey, 5-Year 2016-2020 Estimates: <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table> (accessed 06/09/2023)

As with the other fee campgrounds, the addition of these five (5) sites to the fee program and the increase in existing fees would limit any negative impacts to campers because the fees would be kept comparable to other public camping opportunities in the area. Impacts to low-income populations are minimal as the proposed increase for fees at these campgrounds still provides a less expensive alternative to private campgrounds or hotels for lodging.

## **Impacts of NOT Increasing Campground Fees**

### **Impacts to Recreation Visitors**

If proposed fees are not adopted, recreation areas could see a loss of functionality as operation and maintenance efforts may not be able to keep pace with current and increased use. As costs continue to increase, maintenance may not happen as quickly or as often as needed and some services may be even more reduced. Deferred maintenance costs would increase as facilities age and deteriorate without proper annual maintenance. Maintenance which is deferred because of insufficient funding may result in increased safety hazards, reduced service to the public, higher costs in the future and inefficient operations. A reduction in recreation and maintenance staff would occur as those positions may not be filled if vacated due to lack of funds. Law enforcement patrols are expected to be affected. Public messaging and information through all media sources would be reduced. This is of particular concern as river-based recreation has many high-risk activities such as white-water rafting. Ultimately, the visitor experience would be negatively impacted if fees are not increased.

### **Impacts to the Environment**

Colorado is experiencing an increasing population and increasing participation in outdoor recreation activities. Social media has brought attention to previously seldom-known locations, and draws new visitors to beautiful places. Increasing visitation to recreation sites on public lands can lead to negative environmental impacts, including litter, human waste, and resource damage (e.g. trampling, off road vehicle use, and loss of vegetation).

If campground fees remain the same, the BLM will have less funding to address increased needs for trash services including toilet pumping, visitor education, facility maintenance, and law enforcement presence. This could lead to increased human waste and garbage impacts and other resource damage including route proliferation. Less-frequent patrols from staff to maintain infrastructure. If area fees are not collected, there would be additional negative impacts to the environment over time.

Failure to maintain the campground program would result in the reestablishment of many of the negative impacts to the environment that provided the impetus to the campground program. For example, should the BLM be unable to regularly service toilets along the river, people would be less likely to utilize toilets. Additionally, recreation maintenance staff conduct site cleanup and weed control; a fee decrease would mean that such work would be reduced and could lead to negative impacts to the environment, vegetation and soils resources, and wildlife habitat.

### **Socioeconomic Impacts, Including Low-Income Populations and Environmental Justice Communities**

Public camping provides a low-cost lodging alternative for users visiting the area. Were fees to erode such that the group sites could not be maintained or serviced, the group site opportunity might have to be curtailed. Failure to offer these low-cost group sites to youth groups, scout groups and other such assemblages could have negative impacts on lower-income populations.

### **Public Outreach**

As part of the proposal to increase campground fees, the Kremmling and Colorado River Valley Field Offices will conduct the following outreach efforts to notify the public of its opportunity to review and provide comments:

- Post Business Plan on the BLM Colorado website
- Issue a news release to local print and broadcast media
- Post the fee proposal notice within the recreation area
- Publishing a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register*
- Posting the published *Federal Register* notice at each of the proposed fee sites
- Contacting local Special Recreation Permit holders who might be affected.

The Northwest Resource Advisory Council (NW RAC) is a 15- member citizen advisory panel that provides advice and recommendations to the BLM on resource and land management issues for public lands in Northwest Colorado. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act mandates that a RAC review all BLM recreation fee proposals. The CRVFO presented the campground/ site fee increase proposal to the BLM Northwest Resource Advisory Council (NW RAC) for its formal review. The KFO initially requested input from the RAC for a new fee schedule on September 15, 2022 that led to the development of this business plan. During the June 2023 RAC meeting both Field Offices described their combined recreation fee business plan that developed from these previous discussions. The RAC voted to accept the proposed



business plan, giving the BLM the discretion to raise their fees without returning to the RAC for approval within the following ranges: \$10 to \$15 for a normal vehicle, \$5 to \$10 for a bike or motorcycle, and \$20 to \$30 for a high-capacity vehicle, based on the 2023 Consumer Price Index (CPI). Fees would be initially implemented at the lower proposed fee schedule. The CPI would be utilized in outlying years to increase fees as needed, with CPI escalation allowed above any inflationary adjustment above “2023 dollars”.

A *Federal Register* Notice is required for only the establishment of new fee areas and BLM will develop one for the new fees. The BLM collects fee expenditure information annually and will post information on how FLREA fee revenue is spent in each recreation area. This information will be posted annually on the BLM websites and at recreation sites within the SRMA’s.

## Recommendations

After careful consideration of the fee program and the anticipated revenues and expenditures outlined in the *Business Plan for the Upper Colorado Special Recreation Management Areas* the BLM KFO and the BLM CRVFO believe the proposed business plan promotes and describes the need to manage for resources, public health and safety, and enhance recreation opportunities. Fees would be charged as outlined as proposed in Tables 6 and 7 above with the addition of using the CPI to calculate increases based on inflation. The combined business plan for BLM across field office jurisdictional boundaries allows for consistent administration in management of the two adjacent Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Areas for the improvement of visitor services, reduction of impacts to resources, reduction of user conflicts, and improvement and enhancement of recreational experiences and opportunities. BLM would notify the RAC after any CPI increases when implemented (approximately every 3-4 years).

This proposal directly implements the BLM Colorado Recreation Strategy “Backyard to Backcountry” Goals of identifying recreation areas/sites connected with gateway communities to prioritize funding, partnerships and management (Goal 1, Strategic Focus 2); and prioritize recreation proposals that are mutually beneficial to public land resources and the surrounding community. This proposal corresponds to common visions and objectives and sustains the distinctive desired recreational settings of the surrounding landscape (Goal 2, Strategic Focus 2); and sets an annual program of work priorities that will allow fiscal and human capital resources to be placed where most needed (Goal 4, Strategic Focus 1).

This proposal directly implements the BLM National Recreation Strategy “Connecting with Communities”. The proposal aligns with the Goal of repositioning the recreation program within community service provider networks to better serve mutually shared customers with a strategic focus to plan and manage recreation efforts to achieve specific and desired benefits to the community.

This proposal would also be consistent with the main features of BLM’s new 21<sup>st</sup> Century Recreation Strategy. Specific concepts are to use collected fees to their maximum potential to develop recreation benefits and to establish secure and reliable funding sources.

## Appendix A: Rates and Service Comparison

Table 10. Rates and Service Comparison in UCR SRMA (KFO and CRVFO) Comparable to similar campgrounds and fee sites. (Compiled in 2023) - Average Fee (Private) = \$40; Average Fee (Public) = \$35

Campground Name	Public/Private	No. of Sites	Fee (\$)	Picnic Table	Fire Ring/Grate	Potable Water	Toilet	Electrical	Notes
<b>Redstone Campground</b>	White River National Forest	35	\$37 - \$92/ site	X	X	X	X	X (17 sites)	Redstone has parking bays, host services, picnic shelter, showers, flush toilets, playground, and horseshoes
<b>Sweetwater Lake Campground</b>	White River National Forest	9	\$8/ site	X	X	X	X		Sweetwater Lake has parking bays, food lockers, trails, fishing, lake access, and patrols.
<b>Trappers Lake Campgrounds</b>	White River National Forest	10, 14, 5, 16, 13	\$20 per site plus \$6 per site for each additional vehicle past one.	X	X	X	X		Trappers Lake has parking bays and host services.
<b>Fulford Cave Campground</b>	White River National Forest	7	\$8/ site	X	X	X	X		
<b>Meadow Lake Campground</b>	White River National Forest	10	\$20 per site, \$5 day use fee	X	X	X	X		
<b>Meadow Ridge Campground</b>	White River National Forest	20	\$20 per site, \$5 day use fee						
<b>Difficult Group Site</b>	White River National Forest	1	\$108/ night up to 30 people	X	X	X	X		
<b>Bogan Flats Group Site</b>	White River National Forest	1	\$151/ night up to 50 people	X	X	X	X		
<b>Chapman Reservoir (day use site)</b>	White River National Forest		\$6/ vehicle			X			This day use site includes developed parking and boat ramp.

<b>River Dance RV Park</b>	Private	40	\$70 for RV (2 people), \$25-\$45 for tent (2 people), \$5 each additional person	X	X	X	X	X	River Dance has flush toilets, showers, and parking bays.
<b>KOA Silt</b>	Private		\$77 for RV (4 people) \$42 for tent (4 people) \$5 each additional person	X	X	X	X	X	KOA has flush toilets, showers, and parking bays.
<b>Ami's Acres</b>	Private		Tent sites \$28 per vehicle and two people, \$3 per each additional person	X	X	X	X	X	Ami's Acres has flush toilets, showers, and parking bays.
<b>Glenwood Canyon Resort</b>	Private		\$67/ night, 3 night minimum, (4 people) for tent; \$89/ night, 3 night minimum (4 people) for RV	X	X	X	X	X	Glenwood Canyon has flush toilets, showers, parking bays, and a swimming pool.
<b>Kampa Lampa</b>	Private		\$40- \$50/ site or \$10/ person						A river side campground accessible only by boat between parachute and De Beque that will initially offer no amenities but is planning by summer '24 to offer groovers, fire pans, picnic tables and tent sites.
<b>Railroad Bridge</b>	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	14	\$28 per site + Vehicle pass for any	X	X		X		Tent Pads, River Access and Changing areas.

			motor vehicle (\$10 daily, \$80-\$120 annual)						
<b>Ruby Mountain</b>	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	22	\$28 per site + Vehicle pass for any motor vehicle (\$10 daily, \$80-\$120 annual)	X	X		X		Tent Pads, Trail Access, River Access and Changing areas.
<b>Hecla Junction</b>	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	23	\$28 per site + Vehicle pass for any motor vehicle (\$10 daily, \$80-\$120 annual)	X	X		X		Tent Pads, Trail Access, River Access and Changing areas.
<b>Salida East</b>	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	25	\$28 per site + Vehicle pass for any motor vehicle (\$10 daily, \$80-\$120 annual)	X	X		X		Tent Pads, Trail Access, River Access and Changing areas.
<b>Point Barr</b>	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	12	\$28 per site + Vehicle pass for any motor vehicle (\$10 daily, \$80-\$120 annual)	X	X		X		Tent Pads
<b>Rincon</b>	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	8	\$28 per site + Vehicle pass for any motor vehicle (\$10 daily, \$80-\$120 annual)	X	X		X		Tent Pads, Trail Access, River Access and Changing areas.
<b>Vallie Bridge</b>	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	16	\$28 per site + Vehicle pass for any	X	X		X		Tent Pads, Trail Access, River Access and Changing areas.

			motor vehicle (\$10 daily, \$80-\$120 annual)						
<b>Five Point</b>	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	20	\$28 per site + Vehicle pass for any motor vehicle (\$10 daily, \$80-\$120 annual)	X	X		X		Access to day use area and tent pads.

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## Appendix B: Index of Approved and Designated river-only accessible Campsites in the Upper Colorado River SRMAs (ISRP fee sites)

Table 11. Approved and Designated river-only access Campsites in the Upper Colorado River SRMA that will be charging fees.

Identifier	Campsite	Current Fee Site	Proposed Fee Site
1	Ueberfuss	No	Yes
2	Mary's Well	No	Yes
3	Blacktail	No	Yes
4	Cedar	No	Yes
5	Cottonwood #1	No	Yes
6	Cabin	No	Yes
7	Cottonwood #2	No	Yes
8	Cottonwood #3	No	Yes
9	Scotty's Ranch	No	Yes
10	Benches #1	No	Yes
11	Benches #2	No	Yes
12	Benches #3	No	Yes
13	Lone Tree	No	Yes
14	Many Trees	No	Yes
15	Toadflax Island	No	Yes
16	Cliffview	No	Yes
17	Last Chance	No	Yes
18	Red Rock	No	Yes
19	Lester's Ledge	No	Yes
20	Pyrite	No	Yes
21	Beaver Island	No	Yes
22	Cable	No	Yes
23	Willow	No	Yes
24	Ponderosa	No	Yes
25	Piney	No	Yes
26	Windy Point 1	No	Yes
27	Windy Point 2	No	Yes
28	Windy Point 3	No	Yes
29	Windy Point 4	No	Yes
30	Before Bond	No	Yes
31	Cottonwood Bend	No	Yes
32	Jacks Flat #1	No	Yes
33	Jacks Flat #2	No	Yes
34	Cottonwood 1	No	Yes
35	Cottonwood 2	No	Yes
36	Cottonwood 3	No	Yes