



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

Glennallen Field Office

Final Recreation Fee Site Business Plan

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**Business Plan for
BLM Glennallen Field Office Recreation Fee Sites**

PREPARATION, RECOMMENDATIONS, REVIEWS, and APPROVAL

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This business plan was prepared pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, 2004 (P.L. 108-447) and the BLM recreation fee program policy. It establishes future management goals and priorities for the Recreation Use Program in the Glennallen Field Office.

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Business Plan for BLM Glennallen Field Office Recreation Fee Sites

Executive Summary

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) amenity fee program was established in 1996, first as the Fee Demo Program then later after Congressional delegation the program became known as the Amenity Fee Recreation Program through the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) of 2004 as amended. Fees collected are reinvested back into the sites while enabling managers to continue developing additional amenities, additional sites, perform needed maintenance, and retain staff necessary for the operation of the program and sites. This business plan outlines changes to a portion of the Glennallen Field Office's (GFO) 2022 Recreation Business Plan.

The GFO manages developed campground use through issuance of Recreation Use Permits (RUP) for short-term recreation use of sites, facilities, and/or services which meet the fee collection criteria established by FLREA. Under FLREA, the GFO is authorized to collect fees for the development and operation of recreation facilities and services that provide significant public benefits. This business plan describes the recreation fee sites, site fee changes, associated operation costs, planned fee revenue expenditures, a financial analysis of fee charges at similar recreation facilities, and impacts of the fee changes.

After careful consideration of the current fee program, the anticipated revenues and expenditures, and comparison with other regional recreation providers, the GFO will implement the following fee modifications:

- Increase the expanded amenity fees for all site types at Sourdough Creek Campground, Paxson Lake Campground, Tangle Lakes Campground, and Brushkana Creek Campground with the following rates:
 - Drive in sites from \$15 per night to \$20 per night.
 - Walk in sites from \$6 per night to \$20 per night.
- To account for inflation, the GFO is also proposing to adopt a model to increase fees by 20%, whenever the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases by 20%, tying to the [Western U.S. CPI](#).
- Add an expanded amenity fee for reservation services across the field office.

The fee modifications are necessary to meet the growing expenses of the campground program, increased costs for staff travel and maintenance duties, deferred maintenance costs stemming from the growing popularity of the GFO campgrounds as travel destinations, the increase in use, the increasing age of the campgrounds, and the need to upgrade facilities. Developed fee

campgrounds are a management tool used to prevent further resource damage and to provide better visitor services.

1. Introduction

a. Background and Authorities

The authorities and regulations for this business plan are:

- **The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended,** [Public Law 94-579] contains BLM’s general land use management authority over the public lands and establishes outdoor recreation as one principal use of those lands. Section 302 (b) of FLPMA directs the Secretary of the Interior to regulate through permits or other instruments the use of the public lands. The BLM originally began collecting recreational fees for the use of public lands under this authority. Section 303 of FLPMA contains the BLM’s authority to enforce the regulations and impose penalties.
- **The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) 2004** [Public Law 108-447] repealed applicable portions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and replaced the BLM’s authority to collect recreational fees. The FLREA provides the BLM the authority to establish, modify, charge, and collect recreation fees at federal recreation lands and waters that meet certain requirements. The FLREA also allows the BLM to keep the fee revenues at the local offices where they are collected and directs how the BLM will manage and utilize these revenues, including for expenses such as facility repair, maintenance and enhancement, interpretation, visitor information, services and needs assessments, signage, law enforcement directly related to public use and recreation, and operating or capital costs associated with the Recreation and Visitor Services program. The FLREA also established the America the Beautiful–The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass program. The FLREA is codified in the U.S. Code in Title 16 (Conservation), Chapter 87 (Sections 6801-6814).
- **Title 43 CFR 2930: Permits for Recreation on Public Land.** The Code of Federal Regulations is an annual codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the federal government. Title 43 covers public lands administered by the Department of the Interior. Sections 1000 – 9999 cover the Bureau of Land Management.

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

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

b. Fees and Business Plan Requirement

The BLM strives to manage recreation and visitor services to serve outdoor recreation demands while maintaining the sustainable resource conditions needed so recreation opportunities remain available. The BLM's goals for delivering recreation benefits from BLM-administered public lands and waters to the American public and their communities are:

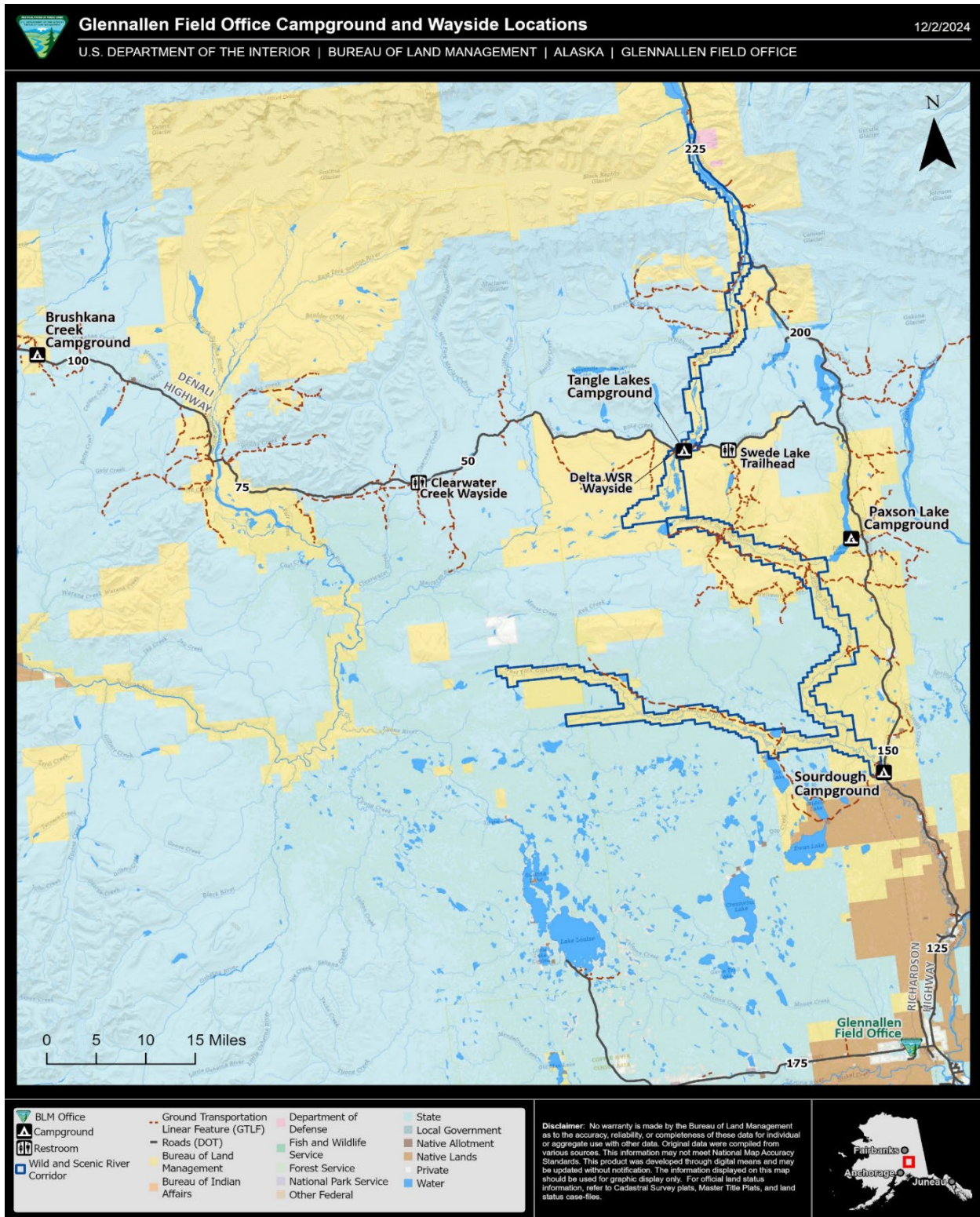
- Improve access to appropriate recreation opportunities.
- Ensure a quality experience and enjoyment of natural and cultural resources.
- Provide for and receive fair value in recreation.

The business plan will assist GFO in meeting these recreation and visitor service goals.

According to BLM Handbook 2930-1, Recreation Permits and Fee (Rel. 2-300, dated November 17, 2014), each recreation fee program must have an approved business plan which comprehensively explains fees and illustrates how they are consistent with the FLREA fee criteria. Business plans assist management in the determination of the appropriateness and level of fees, the cost of administering a fee program per fiscal year (FY), the expected benefits provided for the public, and to produce a structured communication and marketing plan. This plan primarily serves as public notification of the objectives for the use of the recreation fee revenues and offered the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed changes. Recreation permit revenues for the GFO are deposited in the GFO recreation fee account (LVRDAK050000). Spending plans for recreation fees are published annually for all offices which collect recreation fees and are available for public review by visiting <https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/permits-and-fees/flrea-revenue>.

This business plan encompasses descriptions of the fee sites, fee changes, associated operating costs, financial analysis, and the impacts of the fee changes. This report utilized data from internal BLM tracking and accounting mechanisms such as the Recreation Management Information System (RMIS), Collections and Billings Systems, Recreation.gov, Federal Business Management System, and other locally generated recreation and visitor use tracking spreadsheets. Some data contained in these systems may be subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974.

Image 1. Map of GFO campground and wayside locations



2. Background

a. Area Description

In the southern portion of Alaska, approximately 4.8 million acres of scenic outdoor recreation can be found within the boundaries of the GFO. Extending from the southern slopes of the Alaska Range to Ketchikan, facilities of four campgrounds, two waysides, and four boat launches giving access to the Delta and Gulkana Wild and Scenic River (WSR) provide an unparalleled outdoor experience. Included within the larger domain of Copper River Census Area, GFO's facilities are bisected by the Glenn, Richardson, and Denali Highways. The Denali Highway spans 135 miles from Paxson to Cantwell, connecting the Richardson and Parks highways and providing easy access for motorists to engage with the landscapes.

Image 2. Gulkana WSR boater



Managing both the Delta and Gulkana WSRs, the GFO offers facilities which cater year-round to campers, sightseers, hunters, and watersport enthusiasts alike. Paxson Lake Campground and Sourdough Creek Campground are access points for trips within the Gulkana WSR, while Tangle Lakes Campground provides guests entry to the Delta WSR. Visitors have their pick of a once in a lifetime activity without significant crowds. The GFO is an area where many Alaskans come to recreate due to its natural character and remote attributes, combined with considerable road accessible locations.

b. Visitor Demographics

The GFO boundaries are centered between two of the most populated regions in Alaska. Local visitors travel to GFO's recreation sites from their homes in Anchorage, Fairbanks, or the Matanuska-Susitna Boroughs. Due to the easy accessibility of the developed sites on the highway system, the GFO also sees a significant amount of visitation from travelers from the lower 48 states, in addition to international guests (BLM 2024. RMIS. Internal database. National Operations Center, Division of Resource Services, Anchorage, AK. Accessed on November 26, 2024).

The following information was compiled from United States Census Bureau data and State of Alaska Labor Department and Workforce Development – Research and Analysis data.

The state of Alaska has a population 733,406 people with 286,075 living in the Municipality of Anchorage and 115,239 in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. Anchorage is the most populous city in Alaska. Fairbanks North Star Borough has a population of 94,840, the third highest in the state. Glennallen, the location of the field office, is a census-designated place within the Copper River Census Area in the state of Alaska. The population of Copper River Census Area is 2,674.

Alaska is the twelfth most diverse state in the United States. Anchorage Municipality has a diversity index of 66.7% and was ranked 74 out of 3,143 in the Diversity Index – 2020 Rank Within United States according to 2018-2022 census data.

The median household income for the state of Alaska is \$86,370 (2018-2022) with 10.4% of the population living below the poverty level. The state's median age is 36.5 with 47.5% of the population being female. Alaska is racially composed of 64.2% Whites (non-Hispanic), 15.6% American Indians or Alaska Natives, 7.5% Hispanics or Latinos, 6.8% Asians, 3.7% Blacks or African Americans, 1.7% Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and 8.1% two or more races.

The median household income for Anchorage is \$95,731 (2018-2022) with 9.6% of the population living below the poverty level. The median age is 34.5; 23.9% are persons under the age of eighteen and 48.7% of the population is female. Anchorage is racially composed of 55.2% Whites (non-Hispanic), 9.8% Asians, 9.7% Hispanics or Latinos, 7.4% American Indians or Alaska Natives, 5.3% Blacks or African Americans, 2.9% Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and 12.7% two or more races.

The median household income for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough is \$86,435 (2018-2022) with 9.8% of the population living below the poverty level. The median age is 36.3; 23.3% are persons under the age of eighteen and 47.5% of the population is female. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough is racially composed of 77.3% Whites (non-Hispanic), 7.0% American Indians or Alaska Natives, 5.5% Hispanics or Latinos, 1.8% Asians, 1.4% Blacks or African Americans, 0.5% Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and 8.1% two or more races.

The median household income for Fairbanks North Star Borough is \$81,655 (2018-2022) with 7.8% of the population living below the poverty level. The median age is 32.1; 23.8% are persons under the age of eighteen and 46.1% of the population is female. Fairbanks North Star

Borough is racially composed of 68.1% Whites (non-Hispanic), 8.8% Hispanics or Latinos, 8.2% American Indians or Alaska Natives, 5.3% Blacks or African Americans, 3.4% Asians, 0.7% Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and 7.5% two or more races.

The median household income for Copper River Census Area is \$70,606 (2018-2022) with 13.9% of the population living below the poverty level. The median age is 43.1; 25.4% are persons under the age of eighteen and 46.1% of the population is female. Copper River Census Area is racially composed of 65.7% Whites (non-Hispanic), 19.0% American Indians or Alaska Natives, 3.0% Asians, 2.7% Hispanics or Latinos, 0.9% Blacks or African Americans, 0.4% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders, and 9.3% two or more races.

c. Recreation Site Descriptions

Of note to the reader, the variability within the data of visitation and revenue generated for Sourdough Creek Campground, Paxson Lake Campground, Tangle Lakes Campground, and Brushkana Creek Campground can be explained through a recalculation of visitation data beginning in 2023. This was done across BLM Alaska which resulted in an appearance of overall lower visitation numbers compared to previous years.

Visitation has slightly increased to all BLM Alaska locations consistently in the last several years. Additionally, the decline in visitation seen at GFO sites, specifically from 2021 to 2024 are associated with several events including bridge closures, fee compliance issues during peak visitation period of 2021, and lack of campground hosts. This is indicated in data tables 1 through 4 (BLM 2024. RMIS. Internal database. National Operations Center, Division of Resource Services, Anchorage, AK. Accessed on November 26, 2024).

i. Sourdough Creek Campground

Sourdough Creek Campground is located at milepost (MP) 147.5 of Richardson Highway near the shores of the Gulkana River. The campground has 42 camp sites, including 4 accessible and 2 walk-in sites. The facility is equipped with outhouses, water, picnic tables, boat launch, and fire rings, and includes the collection of fees by an employee or agent of the BLM. In addition to recreational vehicle (RV) and tent recreational camping opportunities, the campground provides access to the Gulkana WSR. Visitors embarking on float trips use the boat launch as a put-in and take-out point, as well as jet boat users in the river corridor. This campsite supports activities such as recreational fishing from the bank, subsistence hunting access, berry picking, and trapping. Information and interpretive materials enhance the hiking trails available at the site, and accessible fishing ramps and trails provide a worthwhile experience for all. Peak visitation for the campground and boat launch begins Memorial Day and generally slows down as the salmon fishing subsides in late July. Current fees for the campground are \$15 for drive-in sites and \$6 for walk-in sites.

Image 3. Sourdough Creek Campground entrance



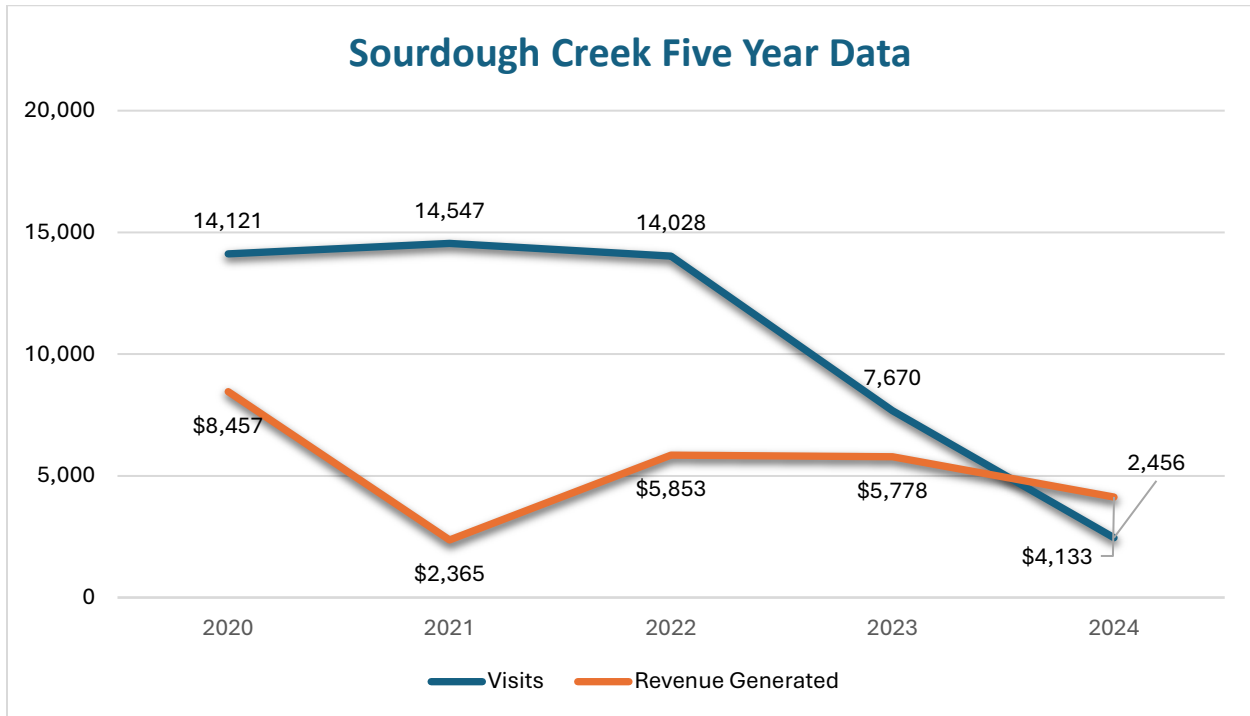
Table 1. Sourdough Creek Campground revenue

FY	Visits	Revenue Generated
2020	14,121	\$8,457
2021	14,547	\$2,365*
2022	14,028	\$5,853
2023	7,670**	\$5,778
2024	2,456	\$4,133
Average	10,564	\$5,317

*Revenue drop due to bridge closure and fee compliance issues during peak visitation period of 2021.

**Visitation numbers were recalculated in 2023 across BLM Alaska to correctly account for RUPs by fee envelopes versus individual days which resulted in lower overall visitation numbers.

Graph 1. Sourdough Creek Campground visitation compared to revenue



ii. Paxson Lake Campground

Paxson Lake Campground is located at MP 175 of Richardson Highway near the shore of Paxson Lake. The site has 50 campsites, including 2 accessible sites and 10 walk-in sites. Other amenities provided by the facility include access to potable water, picnic tables, boat launch, fire rings, trash facilities, an RV dump station, and outhouses. Interpretive panels can be found dispersed throughout the facility, encouraging visitors to take part in activities such as berry picking and recreational fishing. Paxson Lake Campground's boat launch is the starting point for those floating the main branch of the Gulkana WSR and allows for access to more remote campsites around the lake. Current fees for the campground are \$15 for drive-in sites and \$6 for walk-in sites, and \$10 for use of the RV dump station by non-campers.

Image 4. Paxson Lake

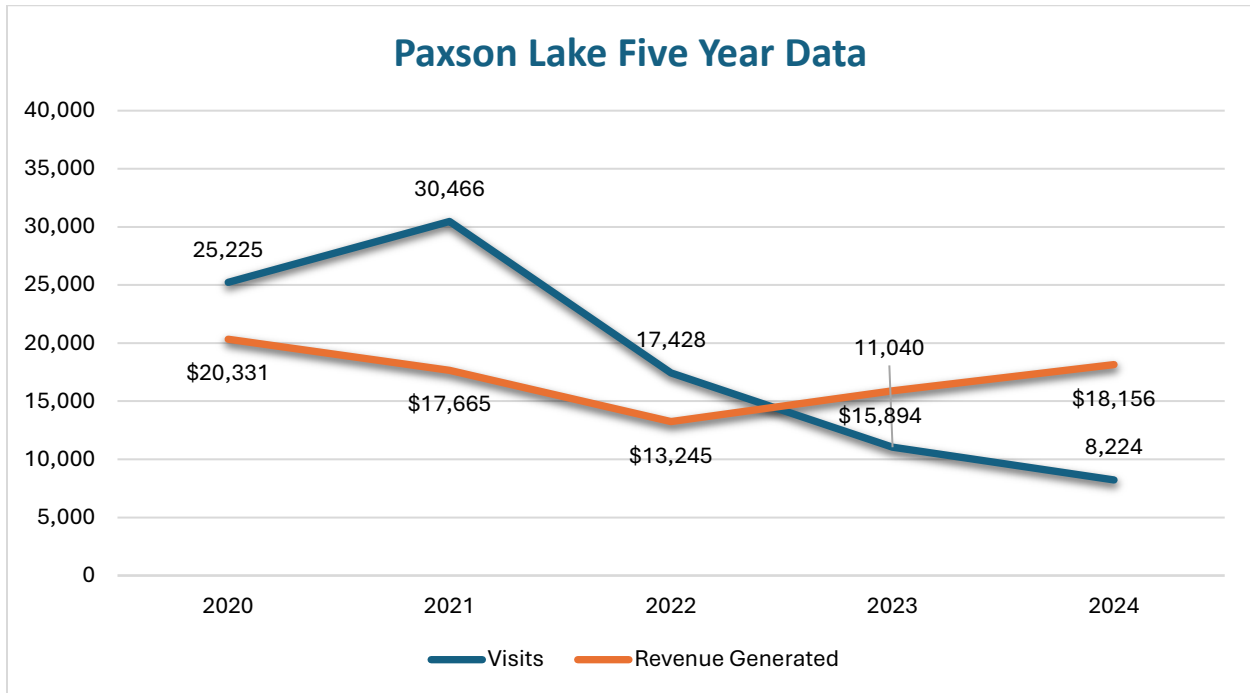


Table 2. Paxson Lake Campground revenue

FY	Visits	Revenue Generated
2020	25,225	\$20,331
2021	30,466	\$17,665
2022	17,428	\$13,245
2023	11,040*	\$15,894
2024	8,224	\$18,156
Average	18,476	\$17,058

*Visitation numbers were recalculated in 2023 across BLM Alaska to correctly account for RUPs by fee envelopes versus individual days which resulted in lower overall visitation numbers.

Graph 2. Paxson Lake Campground visitation compared to revenue



iii. Tangle Lakes Campground

Tangle Lakes Campground is located at MP 21.5 of the north side of the Denali Highway. It is situated within the Delta WSR corridor and the Tangle Lakes Archaeological District boundary. The campground has 45 accessible campsites and 4 walk-in sites. The facility is equipped with potable water, picnic tables, fire rings, outhouses, a boat launch, and trash facilities. The campground rests amid a series of long, narrow lakes known as the Tangle Lakes that are connected by the Tangle River and form the headwaters of the Delta River. The boat launch provides access to the lakes and is also the designated put-in for the popular 30-mile Delta WSR float trip. Ample recreational opportunities for boating, fishing, berry picking, and hiking can be found at the campground. Additionally, during the fall season, this area provides substantial resources for subsistence and sport hunting. Current fees for the campground are \$15 for drive-in sites (including group sites) and \$6 for walk-in sites.

Image 5. Tangle Lakes Campground

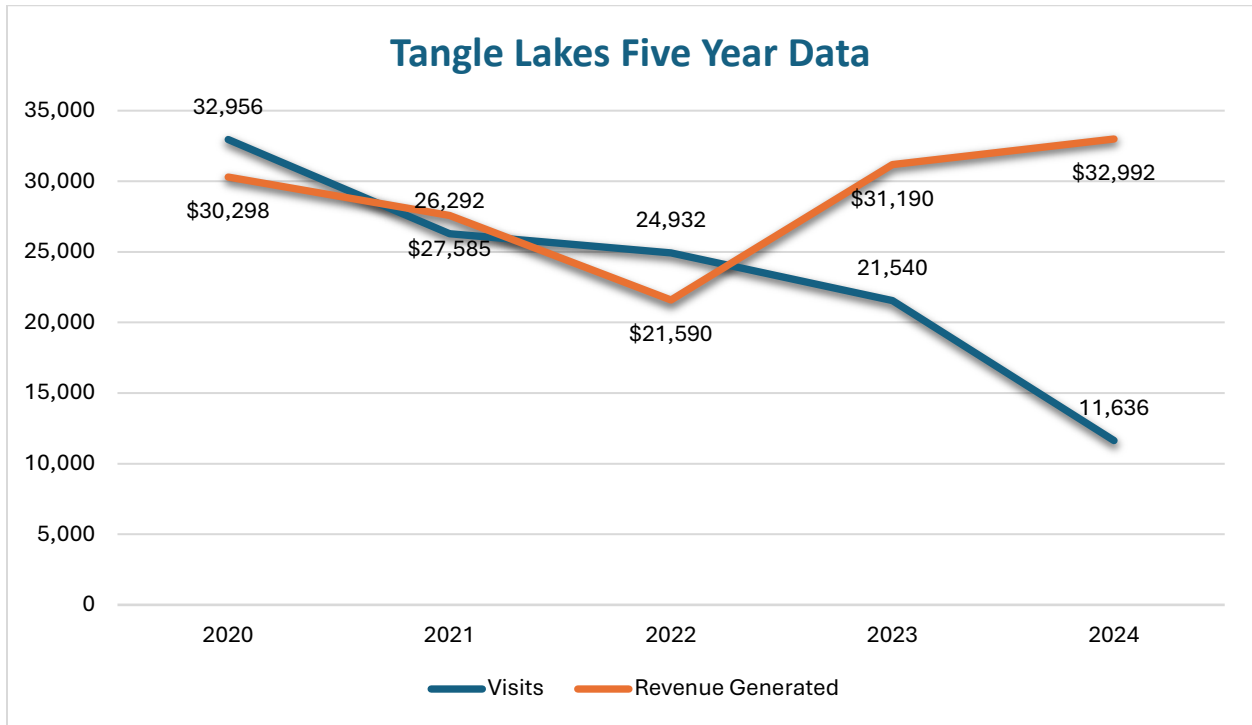


Table 3. Tangle Lakes Campground revenue

FY	Visits	Revenue Generated
2020	32,956	\$30,298
2021	26,292	\$27,585
2022	24,932	\$21,590
2023	21,540*	\$31,190
2024	11,636	\$32,992
Average	23,471	\$28,731

*Visitation numbers were recalculated in 2023 across BLM Alaska to correctly account for RUPs by fee envelopes versus individual days which resulted in lower overall visitation numbers.

Graph 3. Tangle Lakes Campground visitation compared to revenue



iv. Brushkana Creek Campground

Brushkana Creek Campground is located at MP 104.5 along the Denali Highway. This developed campground has 22 sites with potable water, fire rings, picnic tables, outhouses, and trash facilities. The location of this site along the Denali Highway has made it a destination for travelers along the gravel road connecting Paxson to Cantwell. Brushkana Creek and Tangle Lakes are the only two developed, public campground facilities along the 135-mile road. Current fees for the campground are \$15 per night.

Image 6. Brushkana Creek Campground



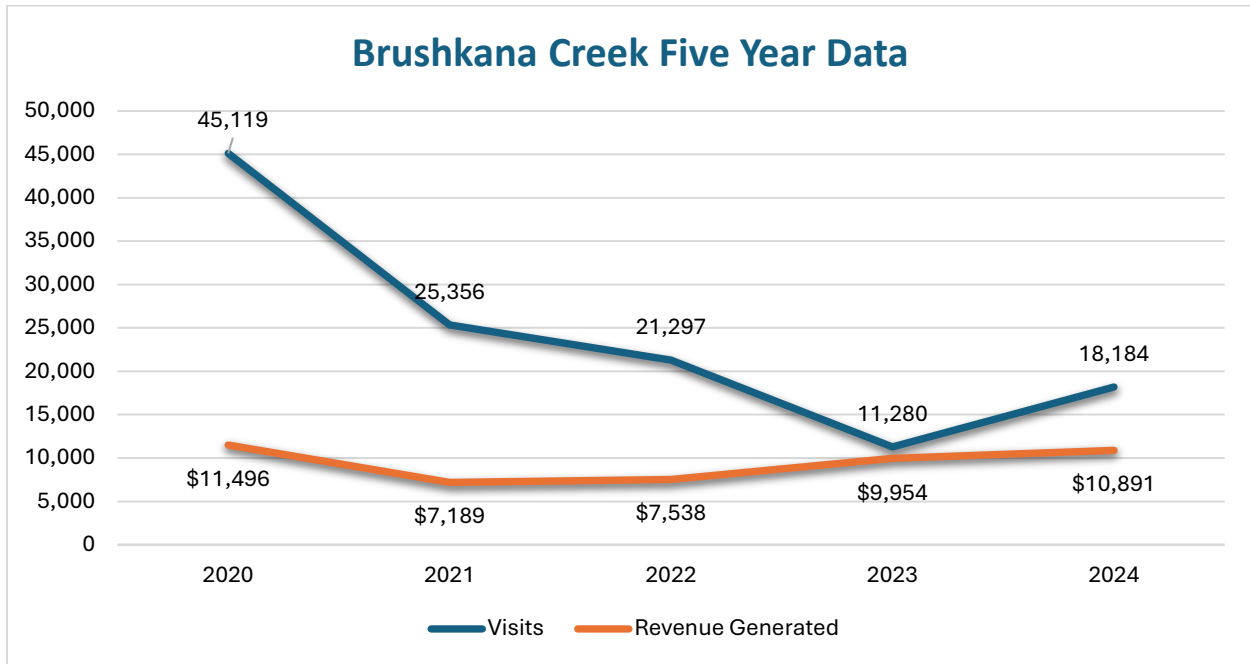
Table 4. Brushkana Creek Campground revenue

FY	Visits	Revenue Generated
2020	45,119	\$11,496
2021	25,356	\$7,189*
2022	21,297	\$7,538
2023	11,280**	\$9,954
2024	18,184	\$10,891
Average	24,247	\$9,969

*Revenue drop due to bridge closure and fee compliance issues during peak visitation period of 2021.

**Visitation numbers were recalculated in 2023 across BLM Alaska to correctly account for RUPs by fee envelopes versus individual days which resulted in lower overall visitation numbers.

Graph 4. Brushkana Creek Campground visitation compared to revenue



d. Operating Costs

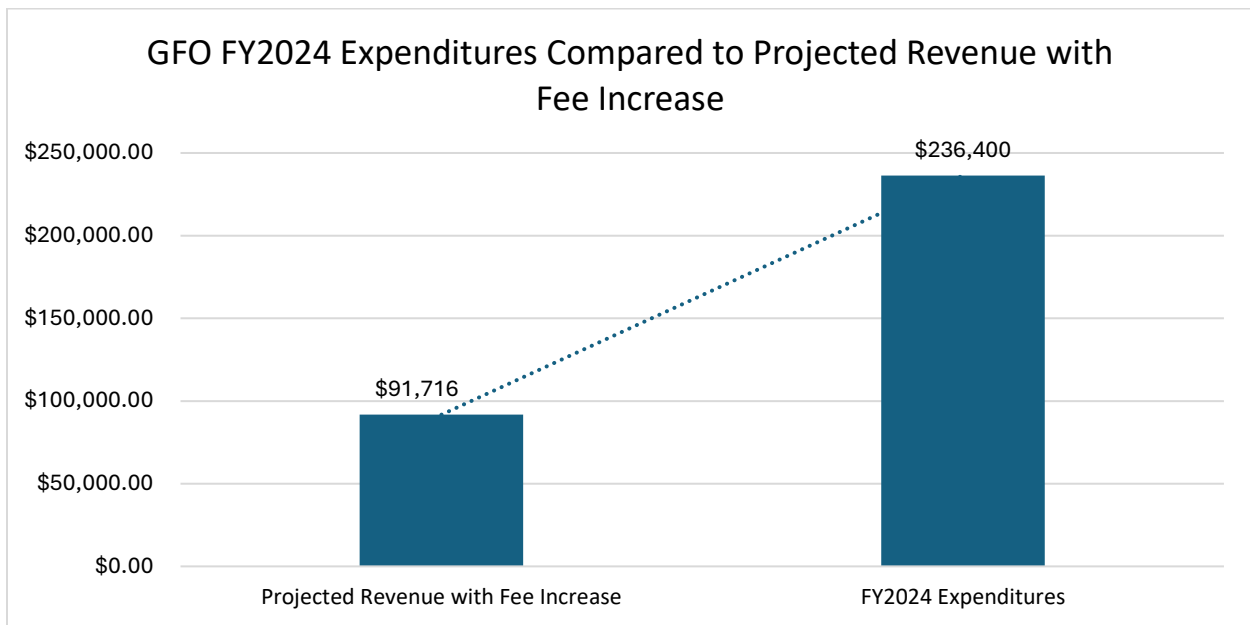
GFO expends considerable resources managing the remote areas along the Richardson and Denali Highways. The current system of trails and remote campgrounds requires substantial levels of trail maintenance, facility maintenance, as well as recreation and law enforcement law enforcement staff to maintain an enjoyable and safe experience for visitors to BLM managed lands in GFO.

Direct costs for recreation management and responsibilities of the GFO area include BLM and intern labor, services such as restroom pumping, garbage collection, firewood, hazard tree mitigation, potable water testing, vehicles and vehicle maintenance, law enforcement, signage, maintenance and interpretive materials and supplies. The field office operates a fleet of vehicles for recreation management which include two service trucks, several UTVs, two snow machines, and one river boat.

Table 5. FY2024 recreation fee site expenditures

FY2024 Expenditures	Amount
Labor – Outdoor Recreation Planner (3 work months)	\$42,000
Contracts – Janitorial and Vault Toilet Pumping	\$68,000
Seasonal Park Ranger GS-7 (3 work months)	\$21,000
Maintenance Worker WG-7 (3 work months)	\$30,400
Campground Hosts	\$24,000
Materials and Supplies	\$30,000
Vehicles	\$21,000
Total FY2024 Expenditures	\$236,400

Graph 5. Expenditures for FY2024 compared to future projected revenue



e. Recreation Use Fees and Revenues

The four campgrounds operated by the GFO currently collect fees in a manner consistent with the criteria listed in section 803 (b) of FLREA. From 2020-2024, GFO saw an estimated yearly visitation average of 76,759 visitors and generated an average of \$60,521.12 in revenue annually at the fee campgrounds (Table 6). Clients of several tour companies now complement the growing numbers of independent travelers. Visitation trends are highly variable and influenced by several factors, including the state of the economy, fuel prices, weather, and the overall conditions of the Denali and Richardson Highways (BLM. 2024. RMIS. Internal database).

National Operations Center, Division of Resource Services, Anchorage, AK. Accessed on November 26, 2024).

Several reasonable explanations could account for the variability in fee revenue versus visitation numbers. When the BLM collected similar fees irrespective of the visitation, there was a consistent campground host presence throughout the summer, leading to more thorough encouragement of payment. Visitation numbers were recalculated in 2023 across BLM Alaska which resulted in lower overall visitation numbers compared with previous years. This recalculation could appear to demonstrate a significant drop in use or visitation, however; the reduction is only due to the process BLM began using to capture visitation numbers respective to the permits issued at campgrounds. In some seasons, campground hosts have intermittent presence due to unforeseen circumstances such as weather, vehicle problems, lack of recruitment, or medical issues.

Table 6. GFO 5-year visitation and revenue

FY	Visitation	Revenue
2020	117,421	\$70,582
2021	96,661	\$54,804
2022	77,685	\$48,228
2023	51,530	\$62,817
2024	40,500	\$66,173
5 Year Average	76,759	\$60,520

3. Fee Proposal

a. Summary of Fee Proposal

This fee proposal includes increasing camping fees at all four GFO campgrounds. Table 7 below shows the proposed changes to the fee structure.

Table 7. Existing and proposed fee structure

Recreation Site	Existing Fee	Proposed Fee	Percent Increase
Sourdough Creek Campground Drive-In Site	\$15	\$20	33%
Sourdough Creek Walk-In Site	\$6	\$20	233%
Paxson Lake Campground Site Drive-In Site	\$15	\$20	33%
Paxson Lake Campground Walk-In Site	\$6	\$20	233%
Paxson RV Dump Station Use Fee	\$10	\$10	0%
Tangle Lakes Campground Drive-In Site	\$15	\$20	33%
Tangle Lakes Campground Walk-In Site	\$6	\$20	233%
Brushkana Creek Campground Drive-In Site	\$15	\$20	33%
Brushkana Creek Campground Walk-In	\$6	\$20	233%

b. Expanded Amenity-Reservation Services

GFO will use various e-commerce technologies, as instructed in BLM Instruction Memorandum 2022-019, to provide recreation visitors opportunities to find, reserve, and pay for campsites and day use within the field office. Most of these options are provided through the interagency reservation service Recreation.gov.

If the GFO decides to make reservation services or other types of e-commerce options available in the future, an expanded amenity fee for reservation services would be charged in addition to any other standard or expanded amenity fees in accordance with 16 U.S.C. 6802(g)(2)(G). Reservation services fees could range from \$0.50 to \$10.00 depending on the type of service provided. This range is approximate and may be adjusted based on contractual requirements or with future updates to the business plan. For visitors who wish not to pay the expanded amenity fee of reservation services, the traditional iron ranger with RUP envelopes will exist until the field office moves the fee area completely to e-commerce options and/or the RUP envelope is no longer available for payment.

c. Financial Analysis

In FY2024, GFO collected \$76,306 in recreation fees from the four campgrounds. Of those collected fees, approximately 5% came from walk-in sites, or approximately \$3,815. With the proposed increase based on FY2024 revenue collected, the BLM estimates that GFO could collect an additional \$8,889 annually for the walk-in sites, an increase of 233% for the walk-in sites. GFO could also collect an additional \$23,922 annually for the drive-in sites, an increase of 33% for the drive-in sites. This number assumes all visitors to the first-come, first-served campground pay the full or correct amount. Walk-in sites and drive-in sites have the same amenities, which includes a leveled spot for tents, fire rings, and picnic tables. Both site types also have access to restrooms, trash facilities, potable water, interpretive signs, trails, camp hosts, boat launch, and use of the RV dump station at Paxson Lake Campground for no additional charge, if a paid camper.

Table 8 illustrates the projected revenue if the fee increases are implemented and are based on the actual number of RUPs sold, averaged over a 5-year period. Revenue projections are based on the implementation of the proposed fee increases and by looking at three factors used to determine revenue: 1) total number of RUPs, 2) percentage of discounted RUPs, and 3) average length of stay.

Table 8. Campground fee projected revenue

Recreation Fee Site	*RUPs	*Average Length of Stay	*Site Occupancy (Nights)	Proposed Fees	Estimated Revenue from Proposed Fees
Brushkana Creek Campground	626	1.2	751	\$20	\$12,394
Paxson Lake Campground	1,132	1.2	1358	\$20	\$22,413
Tangle Lakes Campground	2,033	1.5	3050	\$20	\$50,316
Sourdough Creek Campground	333	1.2	400	\$20	\$6,593
Total:					\$91,716

*Figures are based on a five-year average (FY20-FY24)

Figures are derived by multiplying the total number of RUPs by 65%, the estimated percentage of full-priced RUPs purchased. The remaining RUPs (35% of the total) involve Senior or Access passes that reduce fees by half. The GFO multiplied the number of full-priced and discounted RUPs by the average length of stay and then by the appropriate proposed fees (full-price or discounted) to determine projected revenue.

Using Brushkana Creek Campground as the example:

626 RUPs x .65= 406.9 full-priced RUPs. 406.9 x 1.2 days average stay = 488.28 days. 488.28 days x \$20/day = \$9,765

626 RUPs x .35 = 219.1 half-priced RUPs. 219.1 x 1.2 days average stay = 262.92 days. 262.92 days x \$10 per day = \$2,629

\$9,765 + \$2,629= \$12,394 projected revenue

The projected revenue figures assume all visitors to the first-come, first-served campground pay the full or correct amount. Unfortunately, collections demonstrate that this is not always the case, so actual revenue will likely be lower than the estimates.

Current and Potential Reservation Fees. Currently, all four GFO recreation sites are utilizing the Recreation.gov online scan and pay system. If visitors make reservations for additional sites through Recreation.gov, they will be charged a reservation service fee according to current contract for online services. This is common practice for other local, state, and federal agencies. This fee goes to Recreation.gov for their reservation services and is not obtained by the BLM. Currently, visitors have the option to pay via Recreation.gov scan and pay or deposit fees by cash or check into the iron ranger.

d. Fee Calculation

The GFO developed the new expanded amenity fees for existing and proposed recreation fee sites by comparing its facilities to park facilities offering similar recreation activities, access,

services, and amenities in Alaska. These include facilities managed by adjacent BLM field offices as well as those managed by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), United States Forest Service (USFS), and private facilities. The surrounding area, in addition to the GFO campgrounds, includes a variety of nearby sites which allows for fee comparison.

All developed campgrounds within the market comparison area charge an overnight fee, which is applied per site per night. Fees at campgrounds range from \$6 per night for walk-in and \$15 per night at more rustic and remote BLM campgrounds to \$23 (individual) and \$33 (double occupancy) per night at highly developed, urban interface USFS campgrounds. Private facilities vary in price points. Some offer basic campground amenities starting at \$20 and range up to \$70 per night for full RV hookups.

The average price for all campgrounds in the market research analysis was \$20 per night. Fees were calculated based on information provided on Recreation.gov for federal and some state campgrounds, ReserveAmerica.com for other state campgrounds, and websites for state and private campgrounds.

The GFO determined the proposed fee increase directly from this analysis. The proposed fees lie within the range of other service providers' and are based on what these locations currently charge for similar visitor facilities, access, and amenities. Although comparison to facilities with similar services and amenities was the main determining factor, the GFO also took into consideration the length of time since GFO last raised fees, the length of time since other agencies last raised fees at their sites, the number of discounted RUPs sold, and the increased cost of maintaining and operating the recreation sites.

Appendix A shows the Alaska campground amenity and fee list.

e. Use of Fees

The GFO's key goal for recreation fee sites is to provide high-quality recreation opportunities and experiences for visitors. While BLM labor continues to be the highest operating cost, only a minimum of recreation site fee revenue is available to cover the overall cost. BLM staffing provides visitor information, conducts field patrols, provides interpretive programming, maintains facilities, collects and reconciles fees, and rehabilitates natural resource damage. Authorizing a modification in fees is a mechanism to help defray costs, ensure quality recreation capacity, and serve to increase funds for future development and improvement of sites.

Recreation fee revenue will continue to give instrumental support to the operation of the sites. The following is an initial list of priority expenditures that recreation fee site revenue will be used for:

- Supplies including but not limited to cleaning supplies, toilet paper, hand soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, fuel for motorized equipment, paint, lumber, upkeep of mechanical equipment, etc.;
- Service contracts for garbage collection, septic pumping, water testing, wildland fire mitigation through fuel reduction, and hazard tree mitigation;

- Vehicles and trailers;
- Maintain, improve, and replace recreation site infrastructure such as trails, information, and interpretive signage, fire rings, picnic tables, restroom buildings, etc.;
- Maps, brochure development and reprints, and interpretive materials;
- Development of additional or new recreational sites

Recreation.gov – Recreation.gov is a federal government service that serves as a one-stop visitor service resource for recreation facilities and activities offered by a multitude of federal agencies, including the BLM.

f. Impacts of Fees

i. Effects of the Fees and Future Adjustments

To account for inflation or other economic changes, this business plan also proposes tying the new fee structure to the [Western U.S. CPI](#). Fees would be reviewed annually against this index. The GFO would institute an automatic commensurate increase, rounded to the nearest whole dollar, if CPI rises by 20% from the date of approval of this plan. This process would be repeated further based on a 20% increase of the CPI from the date of the last GFO price increase.

GFO would implement the above fee structure as proposed and then would reference the CPI through the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, specifically targeting the CPI closer to rural southcentral Alaska by using the monthly Western US CPI. 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 southcentral Alaska, it does target the rural west and is the closest CPI that would represent the region.

A yearly average of this CPI is published every January. 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. Fees could be adjusted without resubmitting a business plan.

If the proposed fee increase were implemented, current services would continue. Some of the maintenance revenue would be used to incrementally reduce the maintenance backlog.

The visitor experience is the main priority at these sites. Facility infrastructure, cleanliness, and visitor services and information would also benefit. New projects identified in the priorities for future expenditures would be implemented, cultivating an overall improvement for future guests at these campgrounds.

ii. Effects to the Environment

Increased fees additionally benefit the natural environment. The supply and upkeep of trailheads, waysides, campgrounds, and day-use areas for visitors would allow for the GFO to consolidate resource impacts to a much smaller portion of the facility. Human waste and garbage can be dealt with in an appropriate manner in areas where sufficient infrastructure is provided. If these services were not available, the impact could be felt across a wide area.

Increased fee revenue could also allow more purchasing power to acquire items that help reduce resource damage. An example of this could be new and updated signs and interpretive materials to be installed to educate visitors about responsible recreation and leave no trace practices.

A lack of fee revenue could eventually lead to a reduction, or elimination of services. Negative resource impacts could also be seen as services decline. Accumulation of human waste, garbage, and vandalism issues could intensify significantly. Reduced recreational staff presence and public contact could further negative behaviors and reduce trust between the public and land management agencies.

iii. Effects to Recreational Users

Due to the remote nature of many sites provided by GFO, high-quality campgrounds and lodging opportunities are a limited resource. With increase in visitation and recreation demand, it is vitally important for the GFO to continue providing and improving recreational offerings for the public.

Increased fee revenue would allow the GFO to continue to provide safe, well-maintained, high-quality recreation experiences. Additional resources could also provide opportunities to expand recreational offerings and modernize current amenities. Some options already being explored include non-cash payment options, additional campground hosts, new picnic tables and fire rings, improved information kiosks, and public firewood offerings.

It is worth noting that rises in fuel prices and the remote nature of these fee sites means travel to those sites already represents significant cost, especially when many visitors are traveling from outside the local commuting area (and in some cases, from other states).

The campground facilities provided by GFO represent a substantial public investment, and visitors could expect to see a loss of functionality and use of these facilities as maintenance efforts may be reduced. As costs continue to increase, maintenance may not happen as quickly or as often as needed, and some services may be reduced. Deferred maintenance costs would increase as facilities age, and some facilities may not be reopened due to a lack of funds. Maintenance that is deferred because of insufficient funding may result in increased safety hazards, reduced services to the public, higher costs in the future, and inefficient operations.

Recreation demands will continue to increase as visitation increases. Resources which are already constrained will be allocated to simply keep up with the increased demand rather than improving recreation assets. The opportunities for future planned developments would be limited and likely suspended.

iv. Effects to the Local Economy

Benefits to the local economy could also be realized. Providing high-quality recreation sites helps ensure continued visitation. Recreation and tourism contribute significantly to the local economy. Visitors to the GFO spend locally on lodging, fuel, food, supplies, etc. Visitors coming from outside the local area typically stay longer and spend more.

A study from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis found that the outdoor recreation industry accounted for 2.3% (\$639.5 billion) in gross domestic product (GDP) for the United States in 2023 ([Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, U.S. and States, 2023](#)). Outdoor recreation in Alaska alone generated \$3.1 billion in GDP and provided 21,242 jobs. It is imperative to the local economy to keep recreation site infrastructure in good condition, clean, and serviced to high standards. Maintaining these high standards and creating new opportunities improve the overall recreational experience for current and future visitors alike.

v. Negative Impacts of Not Adopting Proposed Fees

New and existing facilities represent a substantial public investment. Without a fee increase, visitors could expect to see a loss of functionality and use of these facilities as maintenance capacity will be reduced due to insufficient funding or staffing.

As costs are anticipated to increase, maintenance may not happen as quickly or as often as needed, and some services might be reduced. Deferred maintenance costs would increase as facilities age, and some facilities might not be operated at full capacity. Maintenance that is deferred because of insufficient funding might result in increased safety hazards, reduced service to the public, higher costs in the future, and inefficient operations.

Recreation demands would continue to increase if visitation increased, thus the costs to operate the fee sites and those proposed in this analysis would become more dependent on fluctuating appropriated funding. The opportunities for future planned developments would be constrained and likely set aside. The field office might have challenges implementing the BLM's recreation strategy. As mentioned previously, not raising or establishing these proposed sites could lead to the erosion of services such as cleaning and maintaining the sites. If sites are not appealing to visitors, they might stop recreating in this region, thereby affecting the local economy.

Negative impacts to the environment could also occur. Fewer trash pickups and pumping of toilets could occur, creating human waste and garbage impacts. These garbage impacts could also attract wildlife such as bears, leading to negative impacts on visitors and the environment. Less frequent patrols from recreation staff to maintain trails, signage, and education materials might allow some visitors to act inappropriately by creating new trails and vandalizing facilities. If visitors began to view these sites as non-maintained, it could lead to a belief that these sites are not frequented at all and could exacerbate problems with dumping and vandalism.

vi. Fee Discounts

Section 5 of FLREA provided for the establishment of a single interagency national pass known as the America the Beautiful Pass—the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass. This pass provides the bearer full coverage of standard amenity fees. No sites within the GFO charge a standard amenity fee (these are typically day use fee areas, high visitation picnic areas, etc.); the one current fee charged is for an expanded amenity. Holders of the Interagency Senior and Access passes may receive half-off of expanded amenity fees at individual sites only. This includes overnight camping at GFO campgrounds. No other fee discounts, passes, or waivers are allowed.

4. Outreach

a. Public and Stakeholder Participation

The BLM developed a “Blueprint for 21st Century Outdoor Recreation” (Blueprint) intended to guide investments, partnerships, outreach, and program development to respond to current demand and chart a course to meet future needs. Providing recreational opportunities is central to the BLM’s mission to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The BLM is committed to durable change, which means it must work closely with communities and partners to respond to varying recreation opportunities and pressures and seek continuous program improvements.

As part of this Blueprint, GFO seeks engagement and partnerships with local stakeholders to accomplish mutual public access and recreation objectives. The GFO also seeks relationships with youth groups, like Wrangell Institute for Science and the Environment based in Kenny Lake and the Copper River Watershed Project Stewardship Program out of Cordova, in helping to promote a positive experience for youth, to inspire them to take a greater interest in public lands.

The BLM will continue the development of existing partnerships and pursuing new ones that complement the agency’s mission. In a fiscal environment that cannot sustain wasteful spending and program inefficiency, the agency continues to act on opportunities that will support a healthy, robust, relevant, and accountable recreation program for the public. Future priorities include increasing the number and scope of such partnerships and agreements associated with the GFO recreation program.

Business plans must be made available for public review and comment for a minimum of 30 days. Prior to implementing new fee structures, the GFO conducted outreach efforts to notify the public of its opportunity to review and comment on the draft business plan. The BLM issued a press release and implemented other outreach efforts regarding the increased fees at GFO campgrounds. This included release to media outlets on January 7, 2025, when the 30-day public comment period was announced.

b. Visitor Feedback Mechanisms

The BLM provided for a 30-day public review period from January 7, 2025, through February 7, 2025, during which the public had the opportunity to learn about the proposal and to submit comments for consideration. The public had the opportunity to submit comments on the proposed Recreation Use Fee changes utilizing the following methods:

- Website: <https://www.blm.gov/office/anchorage-district-office>
- E-mail: GlennallenFieldOffice@blm.gov
- Fax: 907-822-7335
- Mail: BLM Glennallen Field Office, Box 147, Glennallen, AK 99588

During the 30-day comment period, no comments or responses were received from the public.

5. Appendices

Appendix A – Alaska Campground Fee Comparison Table

Agency	Campgrounds	Sites	RV Pull-through	Host	Picnic Area	Boat Launch	Existing Fees	Other Fees	Proposed Fees
AK DNR	Big Delta State Historical Park	25	X	X	X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Bird Creek Campground	24	X	X	X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Bird Creek Overflow	40	X	X	X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Eagle River Campground	57	X		X		\$20	\$150 Group	-
AK DNR	Eklutna Lake Campground	50	X		X		\$20	\$250 Group	-
AK DNR	Fielding Lake State Recreation Site	17	X		X	X	\$15		-
AK DNR	Anchor River State Recreation Area	46			X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Blueberry Lake State Recreation Site	25	X		X		\$25		-
AK DNR	Discovery Campground	53	X	X	X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Clam Gulch State Recreation Area	120	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Crooked Creek State Recreation Site	79	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Deep Creek State Recreation Area	100	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Deep Creek Beach and Campground	100				X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Deep Creek South Campground	15			X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Deep Creek North Campground	15			X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Johnson Lake State Recreation Area	51	X		X	X	\$20	\$120 Group	-
AK DNR	Bing's Landing Campground	36			X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Funny River Campground	10	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Izaak Walton Campground	31	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Morgan's Landing Campground	51	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Ninilchik River Campground	39	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Ninilchik View Campground	14					\$20		-
AK DNR	Ninilchik Scenic Overlook	9	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Stariski State Recreation Site	13	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Buskin River State Recreation Site	15	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Fort Abercrombie State Historical Park	8	X		X		\$20	\$125 Group (>50) \$200 Group (<50)	-

Agency	Campgrounds	Sites	RV Pull-through	Host	Picnic Area	Boat Launch	Existing Fees	Other Fees	Proposed Fees
AK DNR	Pasagshak State Recreation Site	6	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Big Lake North State Recreation Site	60	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Big Lake South State Recreation Site	20			X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	K'esugi Ken Campground	42	X		X		\$20	\$100 Group	-
AK DNR	Gold Mint Parking Area and Trailhead	10	X		X		\$15		-
AK DNR	Government Peak Campground	8			X		\$15		-
AK DNR	King Mountain State Recreation Site	22	X		X		\$25		-
AK DNR	Lake Louise State Recreation Area	67	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Liberty Falls State Recreation Site	10	X		X		\$25		-
AK DNR	Matanuska Glacier State Recreation Area	6			X		\$20	\$25 RV Camping	-
AK DNR	Matanuska Lakes State Recreation Area	8	X		X		\$25		-
AK DNR	Montana Creek State Recreation Site	36	X		X		\$25		-
AK DNR	South Rolly Campground	98	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Nancy Lake State Recreation Site	30	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Porcupine Creek State Recreation Site	12	X		X		\$25		-
AK DNR	Rocky Lake State Recreation Site	10	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Squirrel Creek State Recreation Site	25	X				\$25		-
AK DNR	Willow Creek State Recreation Area	140	X				\$20		-
AK DNR	Chilkat State Park	35	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Chilkoot Lake State Recreation Site	32	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Eagle Beach State Recreation Area	16	X		X	X	\$20	\$100 Group (>50) \$200 Group (<50)	-
AK DNR	Mosquito Lake State Recreation Site	5					\$15		-
AK DNR	Settlers Cove State Recreation Site	13	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Byers Lake Campground	73	X		X	X	\$20	\$100 Group	-
AK DNR	Denali View North Campground	20	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Denali View South Campground	9	X		X		\$20		-

Agency	Campgrounds	Sites	RV Pull-through	Host	Picnic Area	Boat Launch	Existing Fees	Other Fees	Proposed Fees
AK DNR	Lower Troublesome Creek Campground	20	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Dry Creek State Recreation Site	50	X		X		\$25		-
AK DNR	Finger Lake State Recreation Site	24	X		X	X	\$25	\$100 Group	-
AK DNR	Birch Lake State Recreation Site	19	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Harding Lake State Recreation Area	90	X	X	X	X	\$20	\$100 Group	-
AK DNR	Quartz Lake Campground	103	X		X	X	\$15		-
AK DNR	Red Squirrel Campground	5	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Rosehip Campground	37	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Granite Tors Trail Campground	24	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Salcha River State Recreation Site	6	X	X	X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Upper Chatanika River State Recreation Site	24			X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Whitefish Campground and Boat Launch	25	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Olnes Pond	15	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Delta State Recreation Site	25	X	X	X		\$15		-
AK DNR	Lost Lake Trail Campground	12	X		X	X	\$15		-
AK DNR	Donnelly Creek State Recreation Site	12	X		X		\$15		-
AK DNR	Clearwater State Recreation Site	17	X		X	X	\$15		-
AK DNR	Eagle Trail State Recreation Site	35	X		X		\$20		-
AK DNR	Moon Lake State Recreation Site	15	X		X	X	\$20		-
AK DNR	Tok River State Recreation Site	27	X		X		\$20		-
BLM	Marion Creek Campground	27	X	X	X		\$12		-
BLM	Brushkana Creek Campground	22			X		\$15		\$20 all sites
BLM	Tangle Lakes Campground	45	X	X		X	\$15	\$6 walk-in	\$20 all sites
BLM	Paxson Lake Campground	50	X	X	X	X	\$15	\$6 walk-in	\$20 all sites
BLM	Sourdough Creek Campground	42	X		X	X	\$15	\$6 walk-in	\$20 all sites
BLM	Cripple Creek Campground	19			X		\$12	\$6 walk-in	-
BLM	Mount Prindle Campground	13			X		\$12	\$24 group	-
BLM	Ophir Creek Campground	19	X		X		\$12	\$24 group	-
BLM	Eagle Campground	18	X				\$12		-
BLM	Walker Fork	18	X	X			\$12		-

Agency	Campgrounds	Sites	RV Pull-through	Host	Picnic Area	Boat Launch	Existing Fees	Other Fees	Proposed Fees
BLM	Galbraith Lake Campground	12			X		-		-
BLM	Arctic Circle Campground	19			X		\$12		-
BLM	Five Mile Campground	7	X	X	X		-		-
BLM	West Fork Campground	25	X				\$12		-
Private	Nenana RV Park & Campground	45	X	X			\$15	\$42 RV hookup & water	-
Private	Tok Sourdough Campground	77	X	X			\$28	\$65 RV hookup	-
Private	Valdez RV Park	77	X	X	X		\$45	\$70 RV hookup	-
Private	Valdez Glacier Campground	87	X	X	X		\$30		-
Private	Valdez KOA Journey	100	X	X	X		\$55		-
Private	Allison Point Campground	49	X	X			\$20		-
Private	Bear Paw II Adults-Only Park: RV and Tents	30	X	X			\$30		-
Private	Eagle's Rest RV Park & Cabins	194	X	X			\$47		-
USFS	Bertha Creek Campground	12	X		X		\$19		-
USFS	Black Bear Campground	12			X		\$19		-
USFS	Coeur d'Alene Campground	6			X		-		-
USFS	Cooper Creek Campground	26			X		\$23	\$33 double	-
USFS	Crescent Creek Campground	9	X			X	\$19	\$33 double	-
USFS	Granite Creek Campground	19			X		\$19		-
USFS	Porcupine Campground	34	X		X		\$23		-
USFS	Primrose Campground	8			X	X	\$19		-
USFS	Ptarmigan Campground	16			X		\$19		-
USFS	Eagles Nest Campground	12			X		\$8		-
USFS	Harris River Campground	14	X		X		\$8		-
USFS	Auk Village Campground	11			X		\$20		-
USFS	Signal Creek Campground	24	X		X		\$10		-
USFS	Three C's Group Use Campground	4	X		X		\$40		-
USFS	Spencer Glacier Whistle Stop Group Campground	2			X		\$35	\$65 double	-
USFS	Childs Glacier Recreation Area and Campground		X	X	X		\$10		-
USFS	Starrigavan Rec Area Campsites	34	X		X		\$12	\$30 group	-
USFS	Trail River Campground	91	X	X	X		\$23	\$200 group	-
USFS	Russian River Campground	83	X		X		\$23	\$33 double	-
USFS	Tenderfoot Creek Campground	35			X	X	\$23		-

Agency	Campgrounds	Sites	RV Pull-through	Host	Picnic Area	Boat Launch	Existing Fees	Other Fees	Proposed Fees
USFS	Williwaw Campground	60	X	X	X		\$23	\$33 double	-
USFS	Quartz Creek Campground	45	X	X	X	X	\$23	\$33 double	-
USFWS	Upper Skilak Lake Campground	25			X	X	\$15	\$10 walk-in	-
USFWS	Hidden Lake Campground	44	X		X	X	\$15		-

-All campgrounds excluding Fielding Lake State Recreation Site, Ninilchik View Campground, Government Peak Campground, Galbraith Lake Campground, Arctic Circle Campground, Valdez KOA Journey, Couer d'Alene Campground offer drinking water. West Fork Campground only offers water during the summer season. Only private campgrounds offer shower facilities. All campgrounds offer toilet facilities.

Appendix B – Acronyms and Abbreviations

BLM – Bureau of Land Management

CPI – Consumer Price Index

DNR – Alaska Department of Natural Resources

GFO – Glennallen Field Office

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

FLPMA – Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976

FLREA – Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act

FY – Fiscal Year

MP – Milepost

RMIS – Recreation Management Information System

RUP – Recreation Use Permit

RV – recreational vehicle

USFS – United States Forest Service

USFWS – United States Fish and Wildlife Service

WSR – Wild and Scenic River

<50 – Greater Than 50

>50 – Less Than 50