From: Kazmierski, Jon- FS
To: dave.stawicki@gmail.com
Cc: Pope, Michael - FS
Subject: RE: [External Email]EA-FONSI for RRG
Date: Friday, July 16, 2021 11:34:56 AM
Attachments: image001.png
image002.png
image003.png
image004.png

Mr. Stawicki,

Thank you for your questions and I apologize for the slight delay in reply. The current fee system in the Red River Gorge is for overnight use and is a "special recreation permit" under the Federal Land Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA). Should the proposed actions under analysis be adopted, the administration of the fee program in the RRG will continue to managed under FLREA for the short term. It is possible that we will take a look at bringing the front-country designated campsites into a new fee structure, either through FLREA or through the issuance of a special use permit (similar to how campgrounds are managed). The laws and policies that apply to our agency's authority to collect fees and administer special use authorizations will be applied if such a transition were to occur.

In 2019, the USFS solicited comments on proposed changes to the Daniel Boone NF's rec fee program and those changes are still under consideration and awaiting approval from a Recreation Advisory Committee, as required by FLREA. If approved, the overnight special recreation permit fee in the RRG will change from a per vehicle fee to a per person fee. During the comment period, we heard from many forest visitors who want to see passes/permits move to an electronic format, as most public land management agencies have or are moving to. "Recreation.Gov" is the primary platform used by the USFS and the platform is increasing the options/delivery methods of how the public can obtain electronic permits. I intend to identify an electronic permit system that delivers upon the public's expectations for convenience and ease of use and minimizes the administration "fee" charged by Recreation.gov. We are continuing to work with Recreation.gov to explore the mechanics of how a "hybrid" permit sale system may work, where electronic and analog permits can be sold.

Should we adopt a system of designated campsites and prohibit camping outside of designated campsites, as proposed, the law will be strictly enforced.

I do expect that our peak visitation weekends will necessitate utilization of a reservation system, at least for front-country campsites and likely for some of the backcountry campsites.

Implementation of these proposed actions, if adopted, will take several years. The evolution of our tools and technology to manage visitor use is happening very rapidly right now and I expect that there will be tools available to us soon that we have not yet considered. Therefore, the specifics of how the designated camping system will be implemented were not discussed in the proposed action or analysis, as those administrative decisions can change as our tools evolve and the laws and policies that govern our agency's ability to administer and collect fees adapt.

I hope I have addressed your questions, but please let me know if there's additional information that might help you comment on this project. Thank you for taking time to engage and provide feedback, Jon Kazmierski

Jonathan Kazmierski
District Ranger

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Caring for the land and serving people

From: Pope, Michael - FS <Michael.Pope@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 9:37 AM
To: Kazmierski, Jon- FS <Jonathan.Kazmierski@usda.gov>
Subject: Fw: [External Email]EA-FONSI for RRG

Hi Jon,

Along with Mr. Stawicki's first question that I sent you yesterday, could you tackle this one as well?

Thanks,

From: Dave Stawicki <dave.stawicki@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 9:12 AM
To: Pope, Michael - FS <Michael.Pope@usda.gov>
Subject: [External Email]EA-FONSI for RRG

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Mr. Pope-

I have been reading the EZ-FONSI of management actions proposed in the RRG and would like to know if there is more detail regarding the designated camping in the Gorge.

When sites are designated, how will enforcement be accomplished?

Will this be "honor system" where campers will just follow the rules?

Will there be a permit system" How/where will permits be acquired?

Will there be a reservation system used? what will be the time frame of getting reservations? what fees will be involved?

If these are questions that will be applied after campsites have been designated, will the public have input into the proposed process?

These details have been omitted from the EA, though use of recreation.gov as a means was mentioned in the public meetings. I do have some concern about this as recreation.gov imposes a processing fee to their transactions, which, I assume, would be added to the current overnight fee charged for Gorge use. t his could present a barrier to several user demographics for utilizing the RG attributes.

Your response to this would be appreciated.
Thnx

From: Dave Stawicki <davestawicki@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 12:30 PM
To: Pope, Michael - FS <Michael.Pope@usda.gov>
Subject: [External Email]question regarding EA_FONSI for RRG

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I am trying to get better handle on the designated campsites section of this document. can you shed some light on the "…manage these designated sites as part of the larger Red River Gorge campsite management and reservation system." phrase in the document?? There was mention of possibly using Recreation.gov for this, or is there a different permit system? Or will there be a permit system? What about fees? (Recreation.gov charges a fee for its service.) Will there indeed be reservations of designated campsites?

None of these questions have been posed or addressed in the EA_FONSI and I am wondering what the proposed process will be and if it will be presented to the public before adoption. Any additional information will be appreciated.

Dave Stawicki
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