

**Sierra Vista Tourism Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
February 16, 2017
Oscar Yrun Community Center, 3020 E. Tacoma St.**

Call to Order: Ms. Tieman called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Roll Call:

Members present: Amanda Baillie, Becky Bjork, Bob Gent, Normajean Maryland, Mary Tieman and Associate Commissioner Sunhilt Gregory. Absent: Sabra Albritton and Vivek Patel. Also present: Council Liaison Kristine Wolfe, Staff Liaison Judy Hector and staff Patrice Graber.

Acceptance of the Agenda: Ms. Tieman offered the February 16, 2017 agenda for acceptance.

Mr. Gent made a motion to accept the agenda. Ms. Bjork seconded the motion.

The motion carried, the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Acceptance of the Minutes from the January 19, 2017 Regular Meeting: Ms. Tieman offered the minutes of the January 19, 2017 regular meeting for acceptance.

Ms. Maryland made a motion to accept the minutes. Mr. Gent seconded the motion.

The motion carried, the vote was unanimous (5-0).

Call to the Public: Frank Jackson from the Airport Commission and Rebecca Hodgeson Balderas from the Coronado National Forest, Sierra Vista Ranger District, were present.

Mr. Jackson invited members to hold the April Tourism Commission Regular Meeting at the Airport and suggested that the meeting could be held first, followed by a tour of the airport.

Council Liaison Update: Ms. Wolfe advised that restructuring priorities of how commissions work is being discussed and has not yet come to a conclusion. Currently the plan is to keep commissions as they are and discussion includes adding an economics commission.

She advised that commissions will be more task-oriented and that tasks will originate from the Council or the commissions. Commissions will be asked to bring up concerns to help Council make decisions.

Discussion included improving communications and members welcomed Ms. Wolfe.

Staff Liaison Update: Ms. Hector's update included:

Recent advertising has focused on tourism messaging and promoting local events and has resulted in an increase in visitor numbers.

The Seattle media mission was very successful, writers will be highlighting the Savor Sierra Vista event and will include Sierra Vista in an upcoming tour of southeast Arizona.

The new VisitSierraVista website is launching next week and drip-marketing and tracking visitor interests will be implemented.

Savor Sierra Vista will include Sunday activities scheduled by the Chamber, and a rack card about the event will be printed and distributed to Arizona visitor centers.

New Business:

1. Discuss Meeting Time and Day: Members discussed current schedule conflicts and agreed to schedule future regular meetings on the second Thursday.

Mr. Gent made a motion to schedule Tourism Commission Regular Meetings on the second Thursday of each month at 8 a.m., beginning March 9, 2017.

Ms. Bjork seconded the motion.

The motion carried, the vote was unanimous (5-0).

2. Tourism Commission Report to Council in March/April: Ms. Baillie advised she will prepare the presentation for members to discuss at the March 9 meeting.

3. Restructuring of Recreation Areas in Coronado National Forest: Ms. Hodgeson supplied members with printed copies of Restructuring Developed Recreation containing information on sites, revenues, maintenance costs, a market analysis, proposed strategies and how changes may be implemented.

She reviewed how the Coronado National Forest operates, financial challenges and proposed strategies for operating developed recreational sites.

Discussion included the importance of public awareness and input, opportunities to attend public meetings and how to submit letters, comments, concerns and suggestions.

Members thanked Ms. Hodgeson for her time and information.

Old Business:

1. Support for National Park Designation for Chiricahua National Monument: Mr. Gent updated that efforts continue, there is a lot of support and that it is important to continue efforts such as another letter-writing campaign.

2. Familiarization Trip: Members agreed to visit the Airport.

Requests of Commission: Members provided brief updates on various tourism activities.

Next Regular Meeting: March 9, 2017

Adjournment: 9:11 a.m.


Mary Tieman, Chairperson

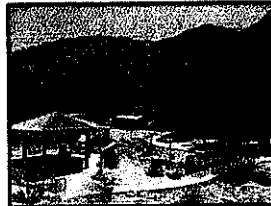
Restructuring Developed Recreation

What is Developed Recreation?

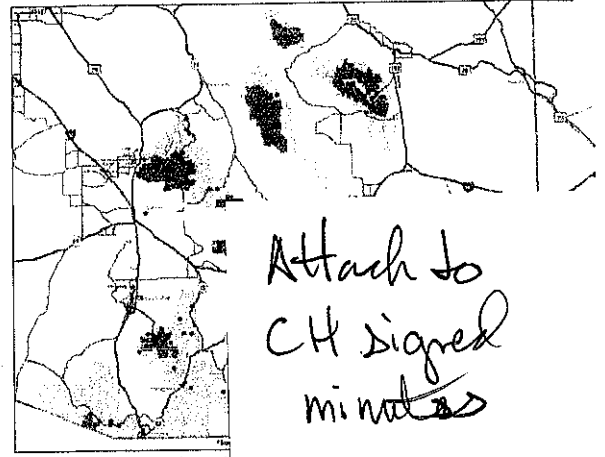
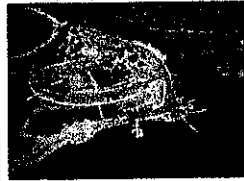
Developed recreation sites are places with facilities and infrastructure. There are 204 developed recreation sites across the Coronado National Forest.

Examples :

- Picnic Areas
- Campgrounds
- Trailheads
- Group Sites



Mt Wrightson Picnic Area, Parker Canyon Lake, and Soldado Creek Campground

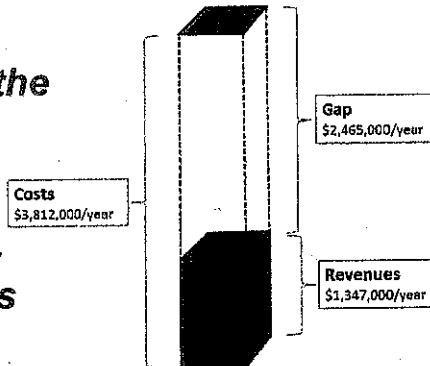


Locations of the 204 developed recreation sites

Attach to
CH signed
minutes

Why does anything need to change?

The costs of the Coronado's developed recreation program are much greater than revenues



Costs to maintain these sites

- Daily/weekly tasks like cleaning restrooms and removing trash
- Annual maintenance such as fixing roofs and painting
- Infrastructure work including road resurfacing and water system repairs
- Replacement of facilities as they reach the end of their useful life



Whitetail Group Site and replacement of restroom at Upper Thumb Picnic Area

PRICE
\$3.8 Million

A case study: Sunny Flat Campground

Sunny Flat Campground is located in the Chiricahua Mountains in Cave Creek Canyon. The site has 12 campsites, a campground host site, and a trailhead. Facilities include a loop road and parking areas, a restroom building, drinking water, trash bins, and campsites with picnic tables, grills, and food storage lockers. Two campsites also offer shade ramadas. The current value of this site is \$303,732.

Operation Costs	\$20,939
Maintenance Costs	\$5,034
Total Cost	\$25,973/year



Annual Fee Revenues at this site (2015) = \$5,395

What might change?

Some possibilities include

- Closing sites
- Transferring operation of sites to partners and/or concessionaires
- Increasing fees
- Begin charging fees at 31 developed sites that currently have no fees
- Increasing fee compliance
- Increasing the number of visitors

Note: There are no fees on 99.9% of Coronado National Forest lands and this will not change.

We need your comments!

- Comment cards are available at Coronado National Forest offices and visitor centers
- Restructuring Developed Recreation website: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/coronado/feereview>
- Send a letter to Coronado National Forest, 300 W Congress, Tucson AZ 85701



Why Consider Changes?

The Coronado National Forest (CNF) Developed Recreation Program is Not Sustainable

The combination of allocated dollars and fee revenues fail to cover costs of operating, maintaining, and replacing developed recreation sites. The condition of recreation facilities, roads, and water systems are deteriorating, and funds for replacement are not available. The annual costs are \$3,812,000 per year and the annual revenues \$1,347,000 per year. The gap in the budget is \$2,465,000 a year.

CNF Developed Recreation Program and Fees

- ▶ 204 developed recreation sites
- ▶ 78 fee sites - Most are campgrounds and picnic areas
- ▶ Fees generally \$5/day and \$10/night for camping
- ▶ Many passes (Coronado passes, Interagency passes, etc.)
- ▶ 95% of fees collected and passes sold remain on the forest for operations, maintenance, and facility replacement *remain in forests*
- ▶ Fees have not changed since 1997
- ▶ Fee sites (both existing and eligible) occupy well under 1% of Coronado National Forest lands

Recreation program efficiencies in recent years

- ▶ Recreation Facility Analysis eliminated 5 developed recreation sites and reduced facilities at 10 other sites.
- ▶ Reduced administration and field recreation workforce. *daily + weekly*
- ▶ Installed lower maintenance facilities.
- ▶ Continue to apply for grants and other funds.
- ▶ Working to increase fee compliance and strengthen volunteer partnerships.

Costs to Maintain Recreation Sites

- ▶ Daily/weekly tasks such as cleaning restrooms and removing trash
- ▶ Regular repairs of facilities (such as replacing roofs and water lines)
- ▶ Replacement of facilities as they reach the end of their useful life
- ▶ Many recreation sites have significant infrastructure and maintenance costs, but no fees

Market Analysis

The CNF researched fees for similar developed recreation sites on public lands (National Forests, National Parks, BLM, State Parks, etc.).

- ▶ Annual Pass price is very low. Currently \$20 for 2 passes.
- ▶ Day use fee is relatively low. Currently \$5.
- ▶ Camping fee is relatively low. Currently \$10.
- ▶ The majority of group sites in the market area, and our group site fees are low (and inconsistent).

Strategy A: Reduce Services (eliminate developed recreation sites)

Brown Canyon Trailhead	Arizona Trail Trailhead at	Lutz Trailhead
Carr House Visitor Info Station	Parker Lake	Miller Canyon Perimeter
Lakeview Campground	Canelo Trailhead	Trailhead
Parker Canyon Lake Boating and	Carr Peak Trailhead	Parker Canyon Lakeshore
Fishing Site	Carr Canyon Picnic Site and	Trail
Reef Townsite Campground and	Trailhead	Ramsey Vista Campground
Group Campground	Gardner and Cave Canyon	and Trailhead
	Trailhead	Reef Mining Interpretive
	Harshaw Trailhead	Trail

Strategy B: Transfer management of developed sites to concessionaires or partners

This strategy proposes that the CNF work to find partner organizations and concessioners to assume daily operation (or the daily operation cost) of many developed recreation sites, reducing the cost to the forest to operate the developed recreation program.

*under 10% usage close
increase fees*

Strategy C: Increase Fees

To Close the Gap

Fee Type	Current Price	Proposed Price	FY13 Sales	Revenue
CNF Day Pass/fee	\$5	\$20	20,153	\$403,060
CNF Week Pass	\$10	\$40	408	\$16,320
CNF Annual Pass	\$20	\$100	12,004	\$1,200,400
Camping Fee	\$10	\$40	37,125	\$1,485,000
Group Site Fees	\$0-148	\$300	405	\$121,500
Total				\$3,226,280
X10.95				\$3,064,966*

To Market Level

Fee Type	Current Price	Proposed Price and Notes	FY13 Sales	Revenue
CNF Day Pass/fee	\$5	\$10	20,153	\$201,530
CNF Week Pass	\$10	Drop this pass (very few are purchased)	NA	0
CNF Annual Pass	\$20	\$80, and include some "perks" such as 14 days of camping at FS campgrounds, discounts at local vendors, etc.	12,004	\$960,320
Camping Fee	\$10	\$20 (and eliminate the 1/2 price with Interagency Annual Pass)	37,125	\$742,500
Group Site Fees	\$0-148	Sliding scale: 1-25 people \$50, 26-50 people \$85, 51-75 people \$105, 76-150 people \$165, 151+ people \$200. Assume average = \$75.	405	\$30,375
31 New Fee Sites	\$0	\$10 for day use sites \$20 for camping	Assume 10% occupancy	\$148,596
Revenues				\$2,083,321
X10.95				\$1,979,154

Strategy D: Increase the Number of Fee Sites

Ramsey Vista	Brown Canyon Ranch Carr Canyon Picnic Area/Trailhead Parker Canyon Lake Fishing, Boating, and Nature Trail Reef Townsite Mining Interp Trail
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Possible Proposal 1: Blend (increased fees and reduced services) with "gap risk"
Fee Changes (raise to market level)

Fee Type	Current Price	Proposed Price and Notes	FY15 Sales	Revenue
GNF Day Pass/Fee	\$5	\$10	20,153	\$201,530
GNF Week Pass	\$10	Drop this pass (very few are purchased)	NA	0
GNF Annual Pass	\$20	\$80, and include some "perks" such as 14 days of camping at FS campgrounds, discounts at local vendors, etc.	12,004	\$960,320
Camping Fee	\$10	\$20 (and eliminate the 1/2 price with Interagency Annual Pass)	37,125	\$742,500
Group Site Fees	\$0-148	Sliding scale: 1-25 people \$50, 26-50 people \$85, 51-75 people \$105, 76-150 people \$165, 515+ people \$200. Assume average = \$75.	405	\$30,375
31 New Fee Sites	\$0	\$10 for day use sites \$20 for camping	Assume 10% occupancy	\$148,596
Revenues				\$2,083,321
20095				\$1,979,154

Sites to Close (those with <10% occupancy for 2 full years)

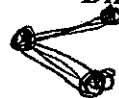
Ranger District	Sites	Occupancy FY14	Occupancy FY15	Annual Savings from Closing
Douglas	Camp Rucker Group Site	1.2%	2.6%	\$24,470
	Cypress Park Campground	3.1%	3.5%	\$11,167
	Rucker Forest Camp	3.6%	3.0%	\$15,911
Nogales	White Rock Campground	5.3%	5.4%	\$16,696
Sierra Vista	Ramsey Vista Campground	6.9%	9.4%	\$6,671
	Reef Townsite Campground	6.3%	9.0%	\$8,606
	Reef Townsite Group Site	6.1%	6.1%	\$5,755
Safford	Rock Bluff Group Site	5.8%	5.9%	\$7,553
	Arcadia Campground	5.2%	5.6%	\$19,440
	Hospital Flat Campground	8.7%	8.8%	\$12,358
Santa Catalina	Shannon Campground	6.7%	6.2%	\$10,764
	Cactus Ramada 1	2.5%	0.8%	\$22,794*
Savanne	Cactus Ramada 2	0.5%	0.0%	
	Peppersauce Campground	6.0%	5.5%	\$100,145
				\$262,330

Possible Proposal 2: Blend (increased fees and reduced services) with partnerships

Same as previous blend

- ▶ Fee changes
- ▶ New fee sites
- ▶ Sites to close

Different than previous blend



Partnerships/concessionaires to close the gap

Ranger District	Partnerships (donations and/or take over operation and maintenance of developed sites)
Douglas	\$75,852/year
Nogales	\$61,265/year
Sierra Vista	\$47,408/year
Safford	\$51,784/year
Santa Catalina	\$493,041/year
Total	\$729,350

What's Next?

- ▶ Feb 2017: Federal Register Fee Proposal
- ▶ Sept 2017: Coronado presents to Resource Advisory Council
- ▶ Fall 2017: Implementation

Big Questions

- ▶ Where should the Coronado National Forest focus its limited resources?
- ▶ How can we restructure developed recreation to provide visitors with desired amenities?
- ▶ What changes should the Coronado make to its fee program?
- ▶ What would YOU do to make the CNF developed recreation program sustainable?
- ▶ How would you close the gap?

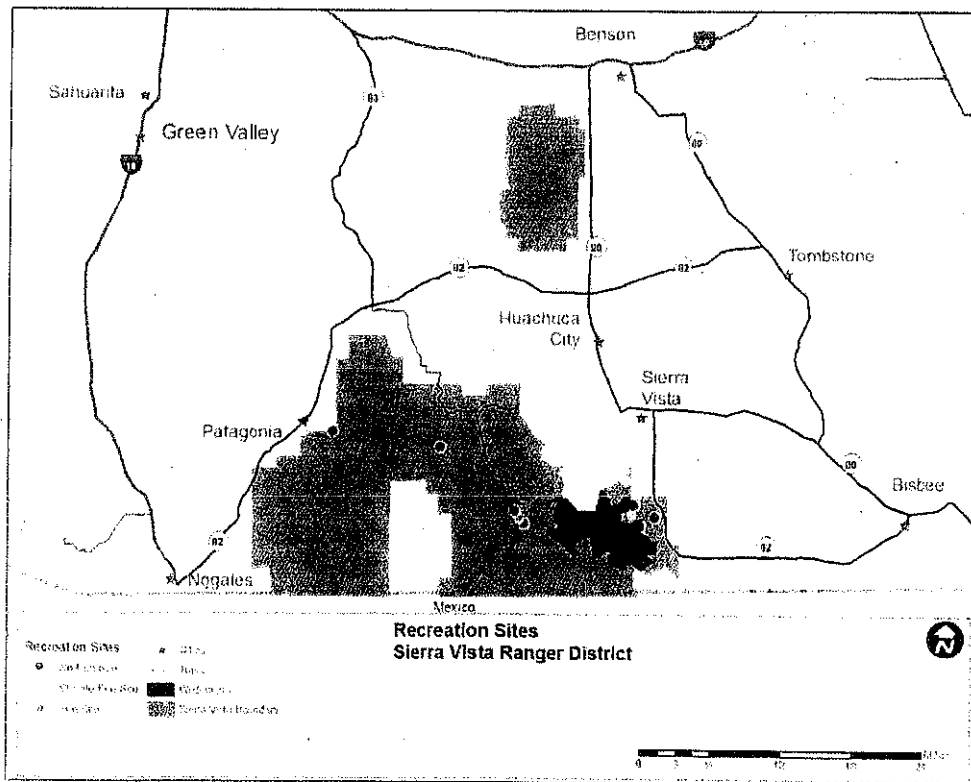
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- ▶ Send a letter to Coronado National Forest, 300 W Congress, Tucson AZ 85701



Comment Card

What you think counts! Give us your ideas for
Restructuring the CNF Developed Recreation Program:

Name (optional)

City and county of residence

Email: (optional)



Coronado National Forest

> Continue on back if needed

Comments, continued

Find Out More!

Visit the Restructuring Developed Recreation website at:



<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/coronado/feereview>

You can mail this card to:
CNF Supervisor's Office
300 West Congress Street
Tucson, AZ 85701

