



Forest Service News Release

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Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests to implement developed recreation site fee changes

Public input contributed to the final fee package, with multiple changes made to the original proposal.

(LARAMIE, Wyo.) May 23, 2024 – After two years of development, review, and public input, the Medicine Bow and Routt National Forests have finalized new and increased fees at 89 developed recreation sites.

The adjusted fee structure will allow the Forests to sustainably operate, maintain, and improve local developed recreation sites. The full fee package in southeast Wyoming and north central Colorado, includes 52 campgrounds, 17 cabins/lookouts, seven group camp sites, and 13 day-use sites.

A complete list of the impacted sites is available [online](#). Most fee changes at sites will be implemented in 2024.

There are no fee changes for the Thunder Basin National Grassland. As part of this fee process, the extra-vehicle charge at developed campgrounds on the Forests was eliminated. Additionally, because of public feedback from the initial proposal, four day-use sites were removed from the fee package, and lesser fee increases were implemented at nine campgrounds and three rental cabins.

The process to compose this fee package began in 2022 and included: Forest-level information gathering, initial USFS national and regional review, extensive public outreach, feedback analysis, final review/approval, and now implementation.

“These fee changes are key to providing quality developed recreation sites and I’d like to thank all those who contributed to this process” said Russ Bacon, Forest Supervisor for the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland. “With this fee package we are trying to keep our sites operational, while giving the public recreation opportunities and a user experience they desire.”

The Forests offer a wide range of affordable recreation opportunities to the public. Across the units there are 155 non-fee sites not included in the final fee package, as well as nearly 2,000 dispersed campsites. In addition to the non-fee sites, 32 existing day-use sites across the forest will not see a fee increase. The Annual Forest Day-Use Pass will remain at \$30/year, and the full suite of Interagency Passes will continue to be accepted. The forests currently waive fees at all Forest Service managed day-use sites six days throughout the year: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President’s Day, National Get Outdoors Day, Juneteenth, National Public Lands Day, Veterans Day.

The Medicine Bow and Routt National Forests have operated recreation fee programs since 1965. Previous fee changes occurred in 1970, 1973, 1993, 1994, and most recently 2002.

In 2004, Congress passed the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) which allows the Forest Service to retain 95% of funds collected at certain recreation sites and use these funds locally to operate, maintain, and improve these sites. Raising the revenue collected through recreation fees will help the Medicine Bow and Routt National Forests improve operations, maintenance, and infrastructure

at campgrounds, cabins, and day-use sites. The funding derived through collection of fees helps provide quality recreation opportunities that meet the modern expectations of visitors and creates a more financially sustainable developed recreation program for the benefit of future generations.

Significant improvements are planned for recreation facilities in the final package. These improvements include replacing vault restrooms, replacing picnic tables and fire rings at campgrounds, installing trash receptacles at trailheads, and completing deferred maintenance at facilities and parking areas. A full list of planned improvements can be found in the [detailed site report](#).

For more information on the Forests and the fee changes visit our [website](#). Additional information sharing occurs on social media: [@FS_MBRTB](#) on X or [@FSMBRTB](#) on Facebook.

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