

FAQs

Q. Why is the Los Padres National Forest issuing a new Special Use Permit to a concessionaire for managing recreation sites?

A. A recreation site concessionaire operates under the authority of a Special Use Permit (SUP) which has a 10-year lifespan. The previous concessionaire permits on Los Padres expired in October 2016 and a new SUP needed to be issued.

Q. How is a concessionaire selected?

A. The Forest solicited proposals from interested parties for the new concession special use permit. The company with the strongest bid and business proposal is selected through an independent review, and is issued the new SUP.

Q: Why are Forest Service recreation sites managed by a private concessionaire under a Special Use Permit?

A: The concessionaire program and Special Use Permits are authorized by the Granger-Thye Act, 16 U.S.C. 580d. The purpose of the concession Special Use Permit is to provide high-quality public service in the operation and maintenance of government-owned recreation facilities located on the Forest. A concessionaire enables us to have a greater presence at campgrounds, trailheads, and day use or picnic areas, as well as providing the important maintenance and upgrades to these sites. Flat and declining budgets have reduced the number of Forest recreation employees, limiting the Forest's ability to effectively manage the 125 developed campgrounds, day-use and picnic areas, and trailheads.

Q. How many Los Padres recreation sites were managed by concessionaires under the previous SUP?

A: There were 34 recreation sites managed under the previous SUP. Under the new SUP, 18 additional recreation sites will be managed under a single SUP with PMC.

Q. When will the new concessionaire begin operating the campgrounds, picnic areas, and trailheads?

A: The new permit goes into effect November 1, 2016. Parks Management Company (PMC) is the company selected to operate the recreation facilities. PMC currently operates 14 recreation sites on the Monterey and Santa Lucia Ranger Districts under the previous SUP. They will now be responsible for managing the additional 39 sites under concession on the Forest.

Q. Is the Adventure Pass still valid at Los Padres recreation sites now managed by PMC?

A. No, the Adventure Pass is no longer valid at recreation sites that previously required a Recreation Pass and have been converted to concessionaire management.

Q. Is there still a need to purchase an Adventure Pass or other Recreation Pass?

A. There are 23 recreation fee sites on Los Padres that are not managed by PMC. An Adventure Pass or other Interagency Pass (Senior Pass, Access, and Interagency Annual Pass) are still needed at these 23 recreation sites.

Q. Are the fees changing or increasing at the concessionaire managed sites?

A. Yes. Visitor fees are increasing after remaining unchanged for nearly 20 years. Camping fees are \$20-\$35 for single family sites and group campsites range from \$100 to \$150 per night depending upon location. Picnic and day use fees are \$10 per day. A PMC annual day-use pass will be available for \$50 through Parks Management Company at www.campona.com or by calling (insert their phone number). Interagency Access and Senior Pass holders will receive a 50 percent discount on overnight camping.

Q. Why are recreation sites previously managed by the Forest Service being converted to concessionaire management?

A. Recreation budgets have fallen 50 percent in the past 10 years, significantly impacting our ability to provide maintenance, repair and customer service at recreation sites. By bringing additional recreation sites under a concession SUP, we are building the capacity for the concessionaire to better deliver the high-quality services the public has come to expect from their recreation experience on Los Padres.

Q. What Forest Service and National Recreation Passes are valid at concessionaire managed sites?

A: Interagency Senior and Interagency Annual pass holders will receive a 50 percent discount at family campsites from Parks Management Company. The passes are not valid for group campground or day use site discounts. Military Passes, Interagency Access Passes and 4th Grade Passes will also not be honored.

The following recreation sites are included in the SUP with Parks Management Company:

Monterey Range District: Arroyo Seco family and Group Campground, Arroyo Seco Day Use Area, Bottcher's Gap Campground, Kirk Creek Campground, Nacimiento Campground, Plaskett Creek Family and Group Campground, Ponderosa Campground, Mill Creek Day Use Area, Pfeiffer Beach Day Use Area, Sand Dollar Day Use Area, China Camp Campground, White Oaks Campground, Escondido Campground, and Memorial Park Campground.

Santa Lucia Ranger District: Cerro Alto Campground, Davy Brown Campground, Figueroa Campground, Nira Campground, La Panza Campground, Navajo Flat Campground/OHV Staging Area, and Turkey Flat OHV Staging Area/Day Use.

Santa Barbara Ranger District: Fremont Campground, Los Prietos Campground, Paradise Campground, Sage Hill Group Campground, Upper Oso Campground, Falls Day Use Area, First Crossing Day Use Area, Live Oak Day Use Area, Lower Oso Day Use Area, Red Rock Day Use Area, Sandstone Day Use Area, White Rock Day Use Area, and Red Rock Trailhead.

Ojai Ranger District: Wheeler Gorge Campground, Holiday Group Campground, Wheeler Gorge Campground, Pine Mountain Campground, Reyes Peak Campground, Middle Lion Campground, and Rose Valley Campground.

Mt. Pinos Ranger District: Ballinger Campground, McGill Family and Group Campground, Mt. Pinos Campground, Reyes Creek Campground, Campo Alto Campground, and Chuchupate Campground.