

**COLORADO RECREATION RESOURCE ADVISORY  
FEDERAL LANDS RECREATION ENHANCEMENT ACT  
NEW FEE OR FEE CHANGE  
PROPOSAL FORM**

**1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Name of Project Area/Site: STONE CELLAR GUARD STATION.

Project Contact Person: Kristi Murphy

Position Title Recreation Specialist

Phone #: 719-655-2547

Forest: Rio Grande NF

County: Saguache

Ranger District: Saguache

Congressional District: 3rd

BLM Field Office\_\_

Site Type (Cabin, Campground, Area, etc): Cabin

Capacity: 12 Season of Use: Year-Round

Fee Type: Standard Amenity\_\_ Expanded Amenity X Special Rec. Permit\_\_

Proposed Action: New fee X Change of fee\_\_

Existing Fee: \$  
Proposed Fee: \$50.00  
Date of last fee increase: \_

Summary of **benefits** the public receives or will receive:

- Nostalgia of staying in a rustic cabin.
- Escaping physical and social pressures.
- Improved health maintenance.
- Greater respect for cultural heritage.
- A secluded site for family and friends to gather.
- Positive contribution to local economy.
- Improve maintenance of physical facilities.

Facilities/Amenities Checklist (check all that apply, list each site separately):

Site Name: Stone Cellar Guard Station

1.    Designated developed parking
2. X Permanent toilet facility:    Flush X Vault
3.    Permanent trash receptacle
4.    Interpretive sign, exhibit or kiosk
5. X Picnic tables
6. X Security services

Other Amenities:    Garbage Removal,    Paved Access Road, X Drinking Water, X Information/Directional signs,    Shower/Bath House,    Tent Pads,    Electricity,    RV Hookups, X Fire Rings/Grills, X Other: Propane Heat, Propane Stove, Propane Lights and Propane Refrigerator, Bunk Beds, Kitchen Table, etc

Photo(s):



Map (HIRA's show boundaries and ID amenities):

Setting & General Description (include description of the site, natural resources/features, scenic values, recreational attractions, amenities, current/projected visitation, etc.):

**Stone Cellar Guard Station** is a remote cabin located just outside the boundary to the La Garita Wilderness area in Saguache Park, an enormous and breathtaking intermountain grassland. Located close to the Continental Divide, this cabin affords visitors seeking solitude and seclusion an opportunity for a real Wilderness experience. The cabin is located in a meadow with Saguache Creek flowing through it, affording visitors excellent fishing right out the back door. In the fall, this cabin would also make a great big game hunting camp. With the addition of a corral, visitors are welcome to bring horses and explore even more of the area's incredible sights. With or without horses, the area offers several nearby trails for hiking or riding.

NRHP Eligibility (Cabins/Structures): NO Archeologist's concurrence: X Y \_\_\_N  
Comments: There are no concerns pertaining to the sites historic significance and SHPO concurrence is not needed prior to inclusion into the recreation rental program or when any work is done on the building.

**2. CURRENT AND PROJECTED REVENUES and ANNUAL OPERATION & MAINTENANCE COSTS**

Currently, there are no significant revenues associated with this facility. It typically serves as an administrative site and remote bunk-housing for employees working in the Saguache Park/La Garita Wilderness area, though this is rare. Projected revenues and occupancy are based on a comparison of our other rental cabins on the District, scheduled improvements to the facility and future marketability. Because of its remote location, reduced access during seasonal road closures and elevation, this facility is expected to be utilized for at least 6 months out of the year, though it will likely be offered for year-round access to those who could snowmobile, ski or snowshoe into the area.

See Attachment A: Revenue/Cost projection spreadsheet.

**3. COST OF BACKLOG WORK NEEDS:**

Roads/Parking Areas:	\$_
Building/Facilities:	\$ <u>16,780</u>
Water/Waste water Systems:	\$_
Associated Trails:	\$_
Signs:	\$_
Other (list):	\$_
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ <u>16,780</u></b>

**4. FEE COLLECTION METHOD AND ESTIMATED FEE COLLECTION COSTS**

**Method: NRRS Reservations (Required)**

**Costs: \$0, there are no costs to the Forest for reservations under NRRS**

Note: No collection costs are incurred for sites under the National Recreation Reservation Service (NRRS).

## 5. FEE DETERMINATION PROCESS SUMMARY

Fair Market Value Comparison (compare similar fees at other FS, state, federal, or private recreation sites in the area with similar facilities & services):

**Facility type(s):** Cabins, Motel, Ranch

**Number of facilities compared:** 13

**Proximity to project area:** within 200 miles

**Price range:** \$55 - \$450

**Selected fee and method:** \$50.00 nightly

Based on a Fair Market Value comparison of government and privately owned cabin rental operations, the Rio Grande National Forest proposes the following rates for its 8 new cabin rental opportunities and 3 existing cabin rentals (Brewery, Carnero, Ellwood).

Operator	Location	Amenities	Proposed Nightly Fee
Brewery Creek Guard Station	vic. Bonanza, CO	Rustic, Propane Appliances/Hand Pumped Water	\$50 (Proposed) \$35 (Current)
Carnero Guard Station	vic. Carnero Pass	Rustic, Propane Appliances/Hand Pumped Water	\$50 (Proposed) \$35 (Current)
Ellwood Cabin	vic. Summitville, CO	Rustic, Propane Lights/Wood Stove/No Water	\$50 (Proposed) \$20 (Current)
Upper Crossing Guard Station	vic. Saguache, CO	Standard Municipal	\$75
Stone Cellar Guard Station	vic. Saguache Park	Rustic, Propane Appliances/Hand Pumped Water	\$50
Saguache Bunkhouse	Saguache, CO	Standard Municipal	\$50
Alder Creek Guard Station	South Fork, CO	Standard Municipal	\$50
Fitton Cabin	vic. Bennett Peak	Rustic, Wood Stove	\$50
River Springs Guard Station	vic. Antonito, CO	Standard Municipal	\$75
Platoro Cabin #1	Platoro, CO	Standard Municipal	\$75
Platoro Cabin #2	Platoro, CO	Standard Municipal	\$75

Special economic considerations were made in developing this price structure relative to fair market value, impacts to private operators (competition, capacity, demand, and market segmentation) and impact to local Forest visitors, especially as it relates to the depressed economy of the San Luis Valley. Although the market could easily bear higher rental rates, proposed rental prices have intentionally been set within reason for Valley residents.

**Comments:** A Fair Market Value comparison of numerous cabin rental operators was conducted in order to determine appropriate fees for current and proposed rental cabins on the Rio Grande National Forest. The only government agency that offers rental cabins within our market segment area (within 200 miles of the Forest) is the U.S. Forest Service. Cabins with little or no amenities (i.e. no drinking water) rent at an average of \$50/night. Cabins with significant amenities (i.e. electricity) rent for as much as \$150/night. In the private sector, there are relatively few cabin rental operators located in the San Luis Valley; the exception being South Fork. Private rental cabins differ significantly from Forest Service cabins in several ways, most notably that they tend to be resort-like with a number of cabins located within that private property and are almost all located along major highways and offer most standard amenities to highway travelers and vacationers. By comparison, Forest Service Guard Stations tend to be individual cabins located in remote areas of the National Forest well away from many standard services.

6. PLANNED USE OF FEES RETURNED TO SITE (list by priority; include daily O&M if appropriate; add to list if appropriate)

1. Repair tack shed and storage sheds.
2. Replace access ramp on porch.
3. Build an equestrian corral.
4. Install solar lighting.

7. CUSTOMER/PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MECHANISM TYPES

- Site Monitoring
- Customer Survey Card
- Comment Log / Cabin Guest Book
- Newspaper Articles
- Website Listing
- E-mails
- Direct Mail
- Personal Contacts
- On-site Posting
- Other (list): County Commissioner Meetings, Congressional Briefings, Fed. Register Notice

See Attachment B: Summary of Public Involvement for details.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RESULTS

See Attachment B: Summary of Public Involvement for details.

9. ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENTS

List and reference additional information (documents) that can be provided upon request to document this project proposal and the public response.

INFRA Deferred Maintenance  
News Releases  
Recreation Facility Analysis  
Federal Register Notice  
Public Comments  
Fair Market Value Study  
Archaeologist's Report

## 10. PROJECT SUBMITTAL & CERTIFICATION

### **Project Submittal:**

This recreation site is already, or being submitted for inclusion as, a fee site under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA). This proposal has been reviewed by representatives on the unit. I understand that any reservations must be made through the NRRS system. I also fully understand and agree to comply with the accounting and reporting requirements necessary to participate in the fee program.

/s/ Dan Dallas  
Forest Supervisor/ BLM Field Manager

5/9/2008  
Date

### **Project Certification:**

This recreation site is already, or is now forwarded as, a fee site and the proposed fee schedule is forwarded to the RRAC for their review under REA.

/s/ Paul E. Cruz  
Recreation Fee Board Chair

May 12, 2008  
Date

BLM Washington Office Review  Y  N

### **RRAC Project Recommendation:**

This site and proposed fee schedule is  / is not  recommended as a fee site.  
This recreation site is already a fee site and the proposed fee schedule is  / is not  recommended to the Secretary for acceptance under REA.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Colorado Recreation RAC Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### **Project Acceptance:**

This site and proposed fee schedule is  / is not  accepted as, a fee site.  
This recreation site is already a fee site and the proposed fee schedule is  / is not  accepted by the Secretary under REA.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Regional Forester/BLM State Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date