EXHIBIT 16
DATE 2.10.05
HB HJ 13

Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA)
February 2005

- The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act was enacted as part of the 2005 Omnibus Appropriations bill, which President Bush signed into law on December 8, 2004. It is a 10 year, multi-agency authorization.
- The Act specifically prohibits BLM and the FS from charging fees for general access to federal lands: this means for activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, sightseeing, camping in undeveloped areas, and driving through federal lands.
- In addition, the Act prohibits BLM and the FS from charging fees for parking, picnicking, overlooks, and dispersed areas with few or any developed recreation sites or areas. The bill prohibits charging fees for individuals under 16 years of age.
- Perhaps most importantly, in these times of dwindling dollars and inflating costs, the ability to charge fees and use the fee money to maintain facilities may be the difference between keeping the campgrounds and boat launches open or having to close them.
- The Act extends the fee demonstration program in which most of the fees collected at certain fee sites, such as developed campgrounds, are returned to the site to enhance visitor services. Each fee project that was previously authorized under the Fee Demonstration Program begun in 1996 will be evaluated to ensure that it meets the criteria defined in the Act. Where fee programs are determined to not meet the provisions of the Act, changes will be made.
- The Act encourages public participation in establishing fees. Recreation Resource Advisory Committees (RRACs) for national forest and BLM sites and areas could be established or existing Resource Advisory Councils (RACs) could be used to give the public opportunities to provide input on the implementation of a fee or the establishment of a specific recreation fee site.
- The Act requires the Departments to establish a new "America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass" that will cover entrance fees and standard amenity recreation fees for all federal recreation lands where a fee is charged. This multi-agency fee program is intended to reduce confusion over differing fee programs and passes. Existing National Park passes, Golden Eagle, Golden Age, and Golden Access passes will continue to be valid until they expire. These passes will continue to be sold until the new pass is available. The cost of the new pass has not yet been determined.
- During the transition period from the old to the new program, new fee areas will not be created nor will fees be increased in existing fee areas.
- The Act applies to the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the USDA Forest Service.
- The text of the Act may be found at www.thomas.loc.gov.

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