

D. Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages the remainder of the original public domain, a total of 262 million acres of public lands. The BLM manages close to 3,200 recreation sites, however, most of the emphasis is on dispersed (non fee) recreation use. The BLM landscapes span rainforests to deserts to the arctic and include 749 wilderness and wilderness study areas (~24 million acres), 14 National Conservation and Protection Areas (~14.4 million acres), and 15 National Monuments (4.8 million acres). The BLM manages 37 Wild and Scenic Rivers (20 percent of the national system), 10 National Historic Trails (85 percent of the national system) and a host of other Federally designated conservation sensitive areas.

Visitation

There were approximately 53.4 million visits to the BLM's public lands in FY 2002, up from the 51.5 million visits in FY 2001. Visits to 100 Recreation Fee Demo sites accounted for 20.1 million visits in FY 2002, up from 19.6 million visits in FY 2001.

Seven of the eleven states (Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah) reported a decrease in their annual visitation to Fee Demo sites. New Mexico had the largest decrease over last year, over 50 percent. This was attributed to the fires, drought, and facility construction. Four states reported an increase in visitation (California, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming).

Numerous variables affect site visitation including publicity, marketing efforts, allocations of permits, water levels in rivers and lakes, snow levels, weather and road conditions, special designations, highway and facility construction projects, travel costs, the economy, site capacity, regional emphasis on a particular activity, and the availability of other recreation activities. In addition, reported visitation levels may significantly change or vary from year to year as sites alter or improve the way they collect and report visitor use data.

FY 2002 Revenue and Cost Data

Revenue

Revenues mirror visitation levels. In FY 2002, the areas with the highest levels of visitation collected the most revenues. This is particularly true in those areas that had limited access, such as Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, located just a short drive from Las Vegas, Nevada; Little Sahara Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area, Utah; Lake Havasu boat-in campsites and the Long Term Visitor Areas, Arizona; Imperial Sand Dunes, California; and Yaquina Head ONA, Oregon.

In FY 2002, BLM's Fee Demo projects generated approximately \$8.7 million in gross revenue. Non-Fee Demo sites generated an additional \$0.9 million. Since the inception of the program, total gross fee revenue (Fee Demo and non-Fee Demo) has increased from \$3.3 million in FY 1996 to \$9.5 million in FY 2002.

FY 2002 gross revenues include approximately \$191,160 from the sales of 9,730 Golden passports (Eagle, Age, Access). The BLM policy is that all fees collected are to be retained at the area of

collection. Each pilot project established a special fiscal account with a project code to ensure proper accounting of the revenue.

Cost of Collection

Cost of collection as a percent of revenue for the BLM Fee Demo sites decreased from 34.3 percent in FY 2001 to about 22 percent in FY 2002. The BLM had fewer new sites this year and start-up capital costs and annual operating costs were slightly less than the previous year. Much of the operational costs can be attributed to administering Special Recreation Permits (SRP).

Obligations

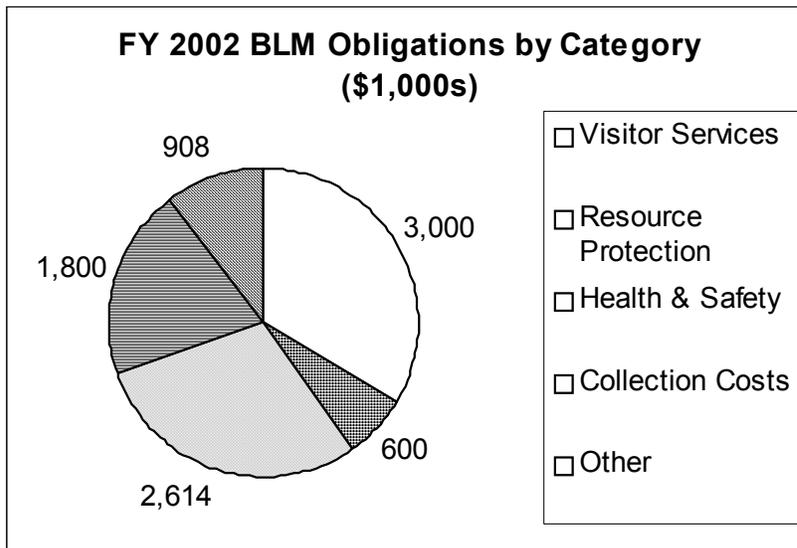
By the end of FY 2002, the BLM obligated \$27.5 million (or about 85 percent of all Fee Demo revenue generated between FY 1997 and FY 2002) to reduce deferred maintenance, improve the quality of recreational settings, enhance visitor services, and protect the resources. In FY 2002, this included \$3.0 million for Visitor Services, \$2.6 million for Health and Safety, \$0.6 million for Resource Protection, \$1.8 million for Collection Costs, and \$0.9 million for other activities. FY 2002 obligations exceeded revenues at some sites as they began to spend unobligated balances from previous years. About \$5.2 million in previous unobligated balances currently remains available for site improvements. Much of this revenue is being saved for larger scale, multi year projects. Some of the projects require spending approval from the State or National Offices. Figure 5, and Table 9 detail these obligations.

Projects accomplishments include the following:

Repair and Maintenance.

Recreation fee revenues have been used for: maintaining existing facilities; repairing roofs; paving and grading roads and bridges; repairing equipment and vehicles; adding communication systems; repairing gates, fences and flood damage; repairing, replacing, installing, and expanding water systems; and controlling weeds.

Improving Visitor Services. Recreation fee revenues have been used for: retrofitting restrooms and providing access to picnic areas for persons with disabilities; repairing existing restrooms or constructing new ones; landscaping recreation sites; expanding campgrounds; adding new grills and tables; constructing trails and additional tent pads; creating and adding directional signs; repairing, replacing, and constructing boat ramps; replacing and constructing boat and fishing docks; developing exhibits and other outreach materials; and designing and creating interpretive displays and brochures.



Use of Fees. Recreation fee revenues have been used for: constructing fee collection facilities; purchasing and installing lighting for exhibits and kiosks; adding seasonal positions; and expanding partnerships.

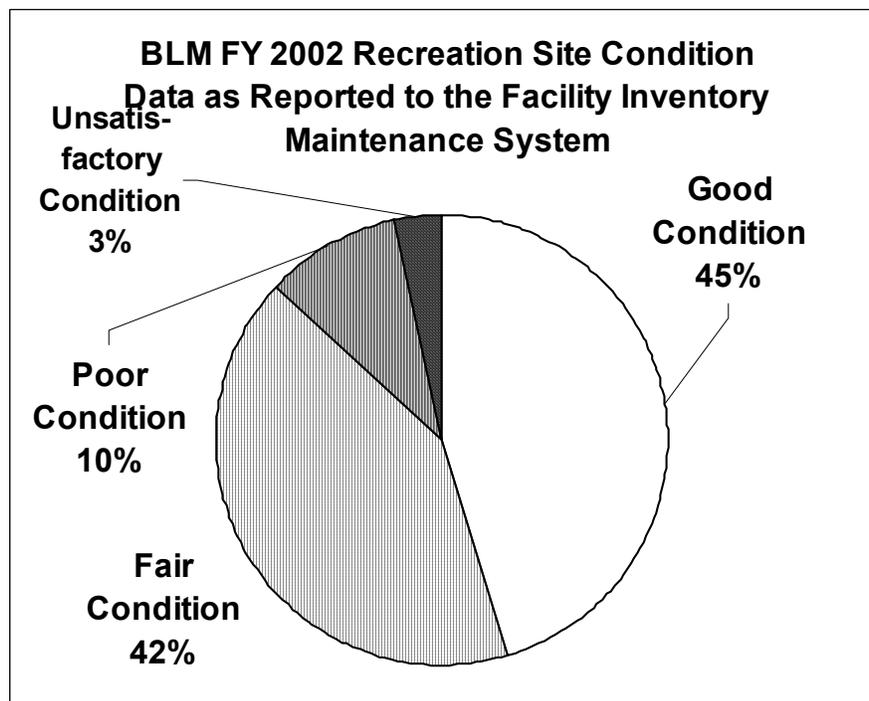


Figure 6

Deferred Maintenance

The BLM asked each fee demonstration area to provide the top five deferred maintenance or enhancement projects for FY 2001-2002. The top five deferred maintenance projects from each of the 100 Recreation Fee Demo projects in FY 2002 totaled approximately \$27.3 million. During FY 2002, approximately \$2 million from recreation fee collections were spent on recreation projects to reduce the number of deferred maintenance projects at Fee Demo sites. The Bureau spent approximately \$24.3 million from all sources on deferred maintenance, annual maintenance, and enhancement projects at Fee Demo sites during FY 2002.

BLM’s overall recreation deferred maintenance backlog for over 2,097 recreation sites and nearly 16,155 miles of trail currently is estimated to be \$61.3 million (FY 2002 Facilities Inventory Maintenance Management System). This figure does not include deferred maintenance needs associated with transportation infrastructure. The annual cost of maintaining the Bureau’s recreation sites is estimated to be about \$14.6 million.

Additional Accomplishments and Research Findings

Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) - BLM Strategic Plan Long Term Goal Provide Opportunities for Environmentally Responsible Recreation: Recreation and leisure activities are a major part of the lifestyle of millions of Americans as well as international visitors. BLM-administered public lands play an important role in providing these outdoor recreational

experiences. Over 4,136 communities with a combined population of 22 million people are located within a one-half-hour drive from BLM-managed public lands, while a combined population of 41 million people live within 200 miles of those same lands. Approximately 40 percent of BLM-managed public lands are located within a day's drive of 16 major urban areas in the West. Most recreational activity on public lands occurs in dispersed non-fee areas, with only an estimated 20 percent of the recorded visitor days associated with fee sites and areas.

The cumulative impact of recreation activities significantly benefits local economies. The BLM makes a significant contribution to western states' tourism and outdoor recreation-related industries. Preliminary estimates indicate that the direct economic value of recreation on the 262 million acres of BLM public land and water exceeds about \$5 billion annually. Tens of thousands of jobs in the western states directly depend on BLM-supplied recreation opportunities.

The BLM's focus is on providing quality recreation opportunities and adventures on the Nation's vast western landscapes. The public has the freedom to pursue unstructured recreation opportunities, but people are asked to respect other visitors and local cultures, and to practice stewardship principles and ethics, while using and enjoying the public lands. The BLM, in turn, focuses on preserving natural and cultural resources, resolving user conflicts, and providing for public health and safety.

Table 10 presents a summary of the BLM's significant recreation accomplishments as measured against fiscal year 2002 annual performance goals.

Table 10. Summary of BLM FY 2002 Recreation Accomplishments		
FY 2002 Annual Goal	Target	Actual
Percentage of physical facilities in Special Recreation Management Areas that are in good or fair condition	81%	87 %
Percentage of Recreation Fee Demonstration Project sites and other selected recreation sites that are universally accessible	5%	5.1 %
Percentage of recreation users satisfied with the quality of their recreation experience on the public lands	92%	93%*
Percentage of recreation users satisfied with the BLM's interpretation and environmental education efforts in Special Recreation Management Areas	70%	76%*
*Both goals are FY 2001 results. BLM will continue this survey in FY 2003.		

As shown above, the BLM exceeded all of its goals this past fiscal year. The percentages of physical facilities that are in good or fair condition continue to improve, and our visitors are very pleased with the quality of their recreation experience, and the BLM is continuing to provide additional Recreation Fee sites and other selected recreation sites that are universally accessible to people with disabilities. This figure will increase significantly as the BLM begins making corrections and retrofits for the deficiencies identified during current on going evaluations. Likewise, the percent of users satisfied with the BLM's interpretation and environmental education efforts also continues to improve. Details of the customer survey data appear in the next section.

Visitor Surveys

Over the last five years the BLM has collected customer satisfaction surveys from over 93 sites, of which 59 are Fee Demo sites (this represents data from about 9,000 respondents in total, of which 6,300 were Fee Demo sites visits). The surveys were aimed at a broader assessment of customer satisfaction with the agency's recreation sites. The goals of the survey were to determine the appropriateness of entrance or other recreation fees and the extent to which visitors were satisfied with the value of their recreational experiences at BLM sites.

Analysis of customer satisfaction surveys indicates that satisfaction levels appear to be higher at fee sites (93.3 percent) than other non fee sites (83.4 percent). The data also indicate that at Fee Demo sites:

- 93 percent reported favorably on the overall quality of their BLM recreation experience (with the highest level of user satisfaction associated with staff services, managing recreation use, and physical facilities (all three areas generated positive responses above 92 percent));
- 85 percent thought the amount charged was “about right;”
- 84.3 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the value of their recreation experience at least equaled the fees paid;
- The number of people who thought the fees were “too high” appears to be declining;
- The number of people who thought the fees were “about right” appears to be increasing; and
- Based on a five-point scale in which a score of 1 is "far too low," 3 is “about right,” and "5" is "far too high," the average response was 3.0, i.e. “about right.”

Examples of Fee Demo Projects by State

Alaska

• **Campbell Creek**

Fee Demo revenues have allowed the Campbell Creek site to develop a premier environmental education program in partnership with local schools. The programs developed include the Earth Ranger Academy (a 3-day program about ecosystems for 6th graders), Earth Science Day (about geologic time, gold mining, minerals, and glaciers), Outdoor Week (a major annual outdoor event with hands-on science activities for local 6th-grade students), and Project Wet (a major annual water education event for fourth-grade students). This year approximately 25,000 school children, teachers, and members of the public participated in these programs.

• **White Mountains**

Fee Demo revenue was used to complete a new public use cabin in the White Mountains National Recreation Area. The BLM collaborated with the Alaska Fire Service to develop the trail, the cabin site, and construction of the cabin. The new cabin is the twelfth in the White Mountain trail system and will serve to relieve some of the pressure on the other cabins in the system.



Environmental Education program offered through the Campbell Creek Science Center.

Arizona

- **Hot Well Dunes Recreation Area**

The BLM completed all backlog maintenance at the Hot Well Dunes Recreation Area and began focusing on some enhancements to the site. One example nearing completion is a watchable wildlife area that includes an interpretive trail, picnic sites, and interpretive signing.

Fee Demo revenues were also used to upgrade one of the host campsites and to fund small stipends for campsite hosts. The result has been an enhanced ability of the BLM to recruit and retain quality site hosts. The BLM maintains hosts on site during heavy use seasons, something that was not the case prior to the Fee Demo project. Campground hosts provide many benefits, including daily maintenance of the facilities, restroom upkeep, and providing visitor information and assistance. The presence of campground hosts has resulted in reduced vandalism and visitor conflicts. Many visitors report a shift to more family-oriented use.

- **Aravaipa Canyon Special Recreation Management Area**

Fees collected during FY 2002 were used to assist in the development of a web-based reservation system. This system enables visitors to make reservations and payments online that are processed, deposited to the appropriate accounts, and reported in the BLM's Management Information System automatically. This system has greatly enhanced BLM permitting (making it much more convenient and faster for the public). The BLM has also piloted an e-commerce portal for BLM transactions. Participants need only establish an account in the Collections and Billings System and an appropriate input page on BLM public websites.

California

- **Arcata Field Office**

Fee Demo revenue in FY 2002 funded heavy maintenance work on the rugged trail system in the King Range National Conservation Area. Extremely steep terrain, unstable geology, the heaviest rainfall in the lower 48 states, and rapid growth rates of the dense mixed-evergreen Douglas fir forests take an annual toll on the popular trail system in the area. Fee Demo revenue in FY 2002 allowed BLM to contract with the California Conservation Corps to perform heavy maintenance, such as trail re-routes away from overly-steep and slide-prone areas, reconstruction and installation of erosion prevention structures, removal of tree hazards, and widening stretches of trail where very fast-growing brush species crowd the trail corridor. These efforts have made the King Range trail system much more user-friendly, more resistant to storm damage thus easier to maintain and keep open. Employing the California Conservation Corps has provided meaningful work experience, a unique backcountry work environment, and communicated meaningful conservation messages to this successful program's diverse 18-25 year-old workforce.

- **Redding Field Office**

The BLM was able to keep a host at the Junction City campground by using Fee Demo revenue to repair the site's electrical service and provide cellular communications devices. Both of these amenities increased the site's comfort and safety. The result was a 40 percent increase in visitor fee collections despite the fact that there was no change in visits.

At the Douglas City Campground, Fee Demo funds allowed for the replacement of a flush toilet. Funding in future years will be used to complete the landscaping and finish the site's remaining work.

At the Bagdad Boat Launch, FY 2002 Fee Demo funds allowed for the replacement of a vault toilet with a new accessible toilet of enhanced capacity. Fee Demo funding allowed BLM to install portable toilets while the site was undergoing construction. This happened to coincide with the busy rafting season.

- **Hollister Field Office**

FY 2002 Fee Demo revenues were used to fund major and minor repairs on 26 trails. The repairs included brushing trails, adding drainage features and repairing trail tread damage. In addition to these repairs, the BLM also performed major overhauls to 6 trails. This work involved adding new recreation trails to the trail network, modifying wide uninteresting trails into more enjoyable single-track recreation trails, and improving signage. Fee Demo funds used for the major trail overhauls were leveraged with habitat restoration funds provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Colorado

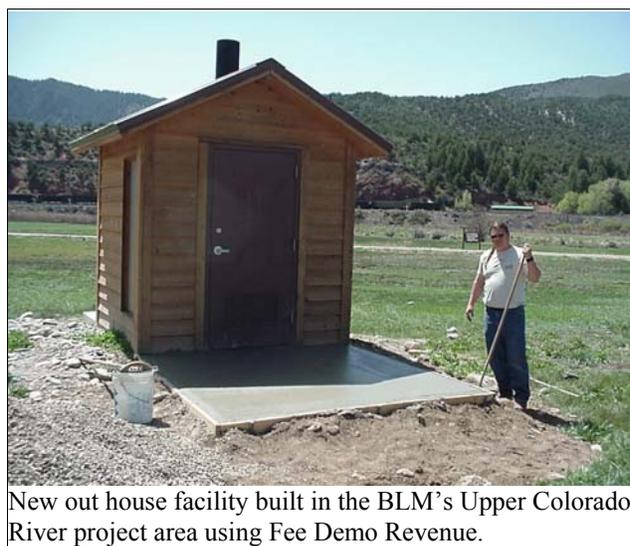
- **Gunnison Gorge**

Fee Demo revenues were used to pay for summer seasonal rangers to increase on-the-ground coverage and provide for week-long coverage in the Gunnison Gorge Wilderness. Increased coverage reduced the number of noncompliance incidents, such as illegal campfires and firewood cutting, improper disposal of human waste, etc. Fees were also used to pay for vehicles, training, as well as equipment and supplies. Other river ranger positions are funded by the NCA Recreation Program.

- **Upper Colorado River**

A major upgrade of the electrical system was completed using fee revenues at the Pumphouse Recreation Area. Two RV type electrical pedestals were installed at seasonal trailer sites to provide adequate power.

Fee revenues were also used to improve the access road to the Pumphouse Recreation Area. The road had a dust inhibitor applied in the spring of FY 2002, which reduced the wash boarding and is expected to also reduce the maintenance needs for the road due to better surface stability and less frequent gravel replacement. A new retaining wall was also installed to delineate and improve a parking area at the maintenance shed. Finally, a retaining wall was reconstructed at a campsite parking spot to prevent it from collapsing.



Idaho

- **Lower Salmon / Clearwater River**

The BLM used Fee Demo revenues to assist in providing year round campground hosts at the Pink House Recreation Site. The campground hosts engaged over 18,000 visitors during FY 2002, providing information about BLM, the local area, and the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. The site also hosted a series of Lewis and Clark and Nez Perce interpretive programs put on by the NPS at the Pink House site.



Campground hosts at the Pink House Recreation Site of the Lower Salmon River, Idaho, which Fee Demo made possible.

Fees were also used to assist in developing a Lower Salmon River web site to provide river information to Lower Salmon boaters. The site includes river maps, interpretive information, permit information, and general river information.

County commissioners and other local government officials are consulted on a regular basis as to the needs of their constituencies relative to Fee Demo projects. Additionally, an annual report on the use of Fee Demo revenues was prepared and made available to the public.

Montana

- **Upper Missouri**

Kipp Campground, within the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, receives heavy year-round use. It is used by spring anglers as an access point to fish the Missouri River, by campers and boaters during the summer, and by hunters in the fall. Because of the high use levels and the distance from the BLM Field Office, Fee Demo revenues were used to fund a cleaning and maintenance contract. In FY 2002, the BLM used funds from the Fee Demo Program to award a trash removal contract for Coal Banks and Judith Landing. The BLM also arranged for a contract to pump a number of vault toilets located along the river corridor. The BLM has received positive public feedback regarding the condition of our sites and the expansion of services.

- **Holter / Hauser Lake**

In FY 2002 BLM used Fee Demo revenues to address several priority needs identified by the public during the previous year. The BLM planted 340 potted cottonwood, ash, aspen, golden willow, chokecherry, ponderosa pine and spruce trees averaging about 15 to 20 feet tall at Devil's Elbow Campground to promote shade and ultimately enhance the visitor experience. A drip irrigation system was installed to ensure favorable growing conditions and protect the BLM's investments. Two additional toilets, 25 new picnic tables, 6 water faucets and additional access trails were added to the site to better meet accessibility standards. Much of the trail work was achieved through

partnership efforts with local youth groups such as the Boy Scouts and the Montana Conservation Corps. In addition, BLM entered into a contract for upgrading lighting facilities at three key sites in FY 2003. This project involves cost-sharing (50-50) between the BLM and the Pennsylvania Power and Light-Montana under a FERC re-licensing agreement.

Nevada

- **Carson City Field Office**

Fee revenues have allowed critical deferred maintenance and health/safety issues to be addressed at the Indian Creek Recreation Area. Projects undertaken with Fee Demo revenues include maintenance repairs and safety upgrades to the drinking water system, replacement of tent pads, fire rings, hydrants, repairs to the fence, upgrades to restrooms and reconditioning of the sanitary dump station.

- **Winnemucca Field Office**

In FY 2002, Fee Demo revenues were used to assist in a number of high visibility projects undertaken by volunteers (over 2,500 volunteer hours were spent this summer in the National Conservation Area). For example, a visitor contact station was operated with the assistance of volunteers at the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area. The contact station sold maps, advised visitors on recreational opportunities, interpreted the cultural and resource values of the area, and relayed safety and regulatory information to visitors. The BLM also: completed the first phase of a large signing project, which involved placing over 40 signs throughout the NCA; and, organized a volunteer workday that involved 65 people in the restoration of three routes in wilderness, two outside wilderness, and the removal of 3000 pounds of trash. Volunteers and staff also monitored and assisted with over 15 permitted events on the Black Rock Desert Playa this summer, assuring that regulatory stipulations were met and public safety maintained.

New Mexico

- **Rio Grande Gorge**

Fee revenues paid for volunteers from the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps who completed numerous projects within the gorge including: trail improvement on 5 miles of Horsethief Mesa Trail, restoration of Miners Trail, trailhead definition at Manby Springs, habitat improvement on Taos Plateau, and landscaping along the Racecourse segment of the Rio Grande. Fee revenues also helped fund 10 volunteers and four Student Conservation Association students. Volunteers provided visitor orientation, interpretation, and campground maintenance. Student Conservation Association students monitored visitor use, constructed trails, provided visitor orientation, and conducted avian surveys.

- **Kasha-Katuwe (Tent Rocks)**

The Cooperative Agreement between the BLM and the Pueblo de Cochiti was updated in FY 2002, and will continue to enhance resource management and land use planning. The Assistance Agreement signed between the BLM and the Sandoval County has been successful in maintaining the 5-mile access road. The county has provided the labor and equipment and the BLM has provided the materials. The University of New Mexico has provided comprehensive information

on the unique geology, and a portion of the fees will be used to design and install interpretive geologic panels at the monument. The fees were used to purchase an additional vault toilet located in the expanded parking area. Due to the increase in visitation, additional parking and picnic areas were designed and installed using fee revenues. Fees also purchased two new picnic tables, three benches, a second bear-proof trash receptacle and informational signs.

Oregon

- **Prineville District**

Most of the revenues from this Fee Demo project result from boating fees on the Deschutes River. This year over 70 percent of the revenue supported field operations for the river. This includes site maintenance, visitor contact and interpretation, fee collection, and law enforcement. Other uses of fee revenues during FY 2002 included the installation of 80 new campfire rings along the river corridor and upgrading and maintaining the boat permit website.

The John Day River Fee Demo site also completed numerous projects including new restrooms, a new boat launching site, and an expansion of the parking lot. Also, an education program was started at the boat launch site to help with trash problems. Volunteer and Eagle Scout projects were conducted along the John Day River with numerous youth participating.

- **Salem District**

The most successful accomplishment in the Salem District is the volunteer program. Fee Demo revenues have allowed for important maintenance activities to be undertaken, much of which is accomplished through volunteer hosts and organized volunteer groups. Projects include providing visitor services, weed eradication, and wildlife and fish projects. Projects completed at the Salem sites included: ADA improvements; restrooms replacements; and trail, campground and picnic site improvements. At Yaquina Head fee revenues helped fund: a series of environmental education programs for children and families; resource protection activities; and facility maintenance.

Utah

- **Little Sahara Recreation Area**

In FY 2002, Fee Demo revenues were used to: purchase and install a number of pre-cast concrete vault toilets at locations receiving heavy visitor use; install video surveillance cameras inside the visitor center and at the entrance station; and paint three potable water tanks. The State of Utah matching grant assisted in funding the purchase of the concrete vault toilets.



Before and after photos of the outhouse facilities available in Utah's, Little Sahara Recreation Area.

- **Colorado River Semi-developed Campsites**

Fee Demo revenues assisted in the development of a new campground at Ken's Lake. This site, which opened in March, 2002, contains 31 campsites with graveled parking spurs, picnic tables, and fire rings. The campground is served with a graveled road system, an information/fee station, two camp host sites, and three vault toilets. A system of trails for hiking and horse riding was developed providing access to Ken's Lake and Faux Falls. Adjacent to the campground, a day use area was developed with hiking trails, parking areas, swimming beach, and vault toilets. Shade shelters are planned for coming years.

Fee revenues are assisting in upgrading the Gold Bar Group camping area to provide four group areas with shade shelters, vault toilets, fire rings and grills. When completed this site is planned to accommodate up to 200 campers with parking for over 50 vehicles. Work in FY 2002 included site layout and construction of soil berms to define the parking and camping areas. Additionally, a graveled road system was constructed and soil was spread over the camping areas. Two double vault toilets were ordered for this site using Fee Demo funds. The new vault toilets are to be installed in FY 2003. A boat ramp and parking area was also constructed on site. Adjacent to the camping area, the Corona Arch Trailhead parking area was improved with a graveled surface and traffic barriers.

Fee revenues have allowed the BLM to maintain more frequent routine maintenance visits to the campgrounds and camping areas and maintain the facilities and services that benefit campers. These benefits include such things as dumpsters at key locations, improvements to nearby trail heads, and interpretive/ informational exhibits. Plans for FY 2002 included a new informational bulletin boards at the historic Dewey Bridge and the nearby Kokopelli Trail.

Wyoming

- **Cody Field Office**

At Five Springs Falls Campground, Fee Demo funds were used for the following: purchasing drinking water testing equipment; fee envelopes; volunteer campground host expenses; erosion control structures for the hiking trail; and toilet vault pumping. Fee Demo funds were also used to purchase supplies.

- **Rawlins Field Office**

Fee Demo Funds have made it possible to complete many of the details at recreation sites that were not included in the construction contracts. This includes the installation of cement boat ramp sections, an accessible fishing platform, raised log parking stops, additional shade trees, new fee tubes, message boards, picnic tables, and accessible surfacing. These enhancements have significantly improved visitor satisfaction with the sites. Fee Demo funding has also enabled the BLM to provide better equipment for site maintenance and to improve customer service with better staffing at the sites.

- **Lander Field Office**

FY 2002 Fee Demo funds made two noteworthy projects possible. The BLM is now able to support campground hosts at two campgrounds as a result of the Fee Demo Program. The hosts enhanced the BLM's ability to deliver quality services to campers. They are greatly appreciated by the campers, as indicated by the large number of positive comments received by the BLM. The hosts, provided by funding through the Fee Demo Program, are a key reason why the subject campgrounds have a reputation of being the best run facilities of their type in this part of Wyoming.

Fee Demo funds also allowed the BLM to improve water systems and to make major emergency repairs to the Atlantic City Campground water system. Neither of these important projects would have been possible without the Fee Demo Program.