



# United States Department of the Interior

## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Central Region


134 Union Blvd., Suite 510

Lakewood, Colorado 80228

August 28, 2008

### Memorandum

To: Assistant Secretary for Fish Wildlife and Parks  
Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management  
Assistant Secretary for Water and Science  
Director, Bureau of Land Management  
Director, Fish and Wildlife Service  
Director, National Park Service  
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation

From: Jack Rouch   
Regional Audit Manager

Subject: Survey of the Department of the Interior's Recreational Fees  
(Report No. C-IN-MOA-0005-2008)

We have completed our survey work on the Recreational Fees audit at the Department of the Interior (DOI). Specifically, we obtained information on (1) recreation fees collected in Fiscal Years (FY) 2006 and 2007, and through March 2008 and (2) the controls over those fees and the uses of those fees. Based on the results of our survey work, we have elected to terminate the audit.

In response to prior audits conducted by both our office and by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), DOI bureaus instituted new processes to improve the operation of its recreational fees program. In addition, FY 2007 was the first year for the new national interagency pass, the America the Beautiful Pass, authorized by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act. Therefore, we believe that it would be beneficial to allow these new processes some time to take effect, and give the pass program an opportunity to become more established, before beginning another audit. However, we thought it prudent to bring to your attention an issue we found during the course of our survey work.

In GAO Report No. GAO-06-1016, dated September 2006, a recommendation was made to the National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to:

“... promptly issue final regulations and implementation guidance on the fee program, including detailed policy and procedure guidance ...”

In addition, in our Report No. 2002-I-0045, dated August 2002, a recommendation was made to NPS (and found not to have been implemented in a later verification review, Report No. W-VS-MOA-0002-2006, dated September 2006) to:

“Require periodic regional monitoring of Fee Demo project expenditures, including charges to cost-of-collection accounts, to ensure that the expenditures are in accordance with NPS guidelines.”

As of July 2008, NPS’ and FWS’ regulations and implementation guidance to address GAO’s recommendation was still in draft form and had not been distributed to all sites. Included in that guidance is NPS’ revised internal review policy, which establishes provisions to address our recommendation. While we understand that the process for issuing policies and procedures can be lengthy, nearly two years have passed since the GAO audit report was issued.

We bring these matters to your attention so that you can take the necessary steps to address these issues and help ensure the recommendations are implemented in a timely manner. Because this report does not provide formal recommendations, a written response is not required.

We appreciate the cooperation and assistance provided by your staffs during our survey work. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Mr. Brooke Bebow, Team Leader, or myself at (303) 236-9243.

cc:    Audit Liaison Officer, Department of the Interior  
      Audit Liaison Officer, Assistant Secretary for Fish Wildlife and Parks  
      Audit Liaison Officer, Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management  
      Audit Liaison Officer, Assistant Secretary for Water and Science  
      Audit Liaison Officer, Bureau of Land Management  
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      Focus Leader for Management Control and Audit Follow-up