

“(a) provide a unified and modern permitting process for nordic and alpine ski areas on national forest lands;

“(b) provide for ski area permits which more closely reflect the acreage and other physical requirements of modern ski area development; and

“(c) provide a permit system which will be more commensurate with the long-term construction, financing, and operation needs of ski areas on national forest lands.”

§ 497c. Ski area permit rental charge

(a) In general

The Secretary of Agriculture shall charge a rental charge for all ski area permits issued pursuant to section 3 of the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act of 1986 (16 U.S.C. 497b), the Act of March 4, 1915 (38 Stat. 1101, chapter 144; 16 U.S.C. 497), or the 9th through 20th paragraphs under the heading “SURVEYING THE PUBLIC LANDS” under the heading “UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR” in the Act of June 4, 1897 (30 Stat. 34, chapter 2), on National Forest System lands. Permit rental charges for permits issued pursuant to the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act of 1986 shall be calculated as set forth in subsection (b) of this section. Permit rental charges for existing ski area permits issued pursuant to the Act of March 4, 1915, and the Act of June 4, 1897, shall be calculated in accordance with those existing permits: *Provided*, That a permittee may, at the permittee’s option, use the calculation method set forth in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) Formula

(1) The ski area permit rental charge (SAPRC) shall be calculated by adding the permittee’s gross revenues from lift ticket/year-round ski area use pass sales plus revenue from ski school operations (LT+SS) and multiplying such total by the slope transport feet percentage (STFP) on National Forest System land. That amount shall be increased by the gross year-round revenue from ancillary facilities (GRAF) physically located on national forest land, including all permittee or subpermittee lodging, food service, rental shops, parking and other ancillary operations, to determine the adjusted gross revenue (AGR) subject to the permit rental charge. The final rental charge shall be calculated by multiplying the AGR by the following percentages for each revenue bracket and adding the total for each revenue bracket:

(A) 1.5 percent of all adjusted gross revenue below \$3,000,000;

(B) 2.5 percent for adjusted gross revenue between \$3,000,000 and \$15,000,000;

(C) 2.75 percent for adjusted gross revenue between \$15,000,000 and \$50,000,000; and

(D) 4.0 percent for the amount of adjusted gross revenue that exceeds \$50,000,000.

Utilizing the abbreviations indicated in this subsection the ski area permit fee (SAPF) formula can be simply illustrated as:

$$\text{SAPF} = ((\text{LT} + \text{SS}) \times \text{STFP}) + \text{GRAF} = \text{AGR}; \\ \text{AGR} \times \% \text{ BRACKETS}$$

(2) In cases where ski areas are only partially located on national forest lands, the slope transport feet percentage on national forest land referred to in this subsection shall be calculated

as generally described in the Forest Service Manual in effect as of January 1, 1992. Revenues from Nordic ski operations shall be included or excluded from the rental charge calculation according to the percentage of trails physically located on national forest land.

(3) In order to ensure that the rental charge remains fair and equitable to both the United States and the ski area permittees, the adjusted gross revenue figures for each revenue bracket in paragraph (1) shall be adjusted annually by the percent increase or decrease in the national Consumer Price Index for the preceding calendar year. No later than 3 years after November 12, 1996, and every 5 years thereafter the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate and the Committee on Resources of the United States House of Representatives a report analyzing whether the ski area permit rental charge required by this section is returning a fair market value rental to the United States together with any recommendations the Secretary may have for modifications of the system.

(c) Payment

The rental charge set forth in subsection (b) of this section shall be due on June 1 of each year and shall be paid or prepaid by the permittee on a monthly, quarterly, annual or other schedule as determined appropriate by the Secretary in consultation with the permittee. Unless mutually agreed otherwise by the Secretary and the permittee, the payment or prepayment schedule shall conform to the permittee’s schedule in effect prior to November 12, 1996. To reduce costs to the permittee and the Forest Service, the Secretary shall each year provide the permittee with a standardized form and worksheets (including annual rental charge calculation brackets and rates) to be used for rental charge calculation and submitted with the rental charge payment. Information provided on such forms shall be compiled by the Secretary annually and kept in the Office of the Chief, United States Forest Service.

(d) Effective date

The ski area permit rental charge set forth in this section shall become effective on June 1, 1996 and cover receipts retroactive to June 1, 1995: *Provided*, That if a permittee has paid rental charges for the period June 1, 1995, to June 1, 1996, under the graduated rate rental charge system formula in effect prior to November 12, 1996, such rental charges shall be credited toward the new rental charge due on June 1, 1996. In order to ensure increasing rental charge receipt levels to the United States during transition from the graduated rate rental charge system formula to the formula of this section, the rental charge paid by any individual permittee shall be—

(1) for the 1995–1996 permit year, either the rental charge paid for the preceding 1994–1995 base year or the rental charge calculated pursuant to this section, whichever is higher;

(2) for the 1996–1997 permit year, either the rental charge paid for the 1994–1995 base year or the rental charge calculated pursuant to this section, whichever is higher; and

(3) for the 1997–1998 permit year, either the rental charge for the 1994–1995 base year or the