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**Subject:** SBNF Cabin Coalition June 26 Update  
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Greetings –

As we approach the July 4 holiday weekend some tract organizations will be holding their annual meetings, so here are updates on several current issues.

Fee Retention is Coming -- Included in the Cabin Fee Act passed in 2014 was that the special use fees paid by recreation residence permit holders would be retained by the Forest Service beginning in FY 2025 to be used "...to administer the recreation residence program and other recreation on National Forests." FY 2025 begins on October 1, 2024, which is just over a year away, however, due to the federal budget process the Forest Service will be developing its budget to use the first year of retained fees between now and October. At the May 13 Cabin Coalition meeting, those attending identified the following four priority uses for these funds, which were communicated to our Forest Supervisor on May 23:

1. Adequately Fund Administration of the Recreation Residence Program: On a per cabin basis, budget an amount to be determined by the Forest Service\*, indexed annually, which represents the estimated cost to administer each cabin and the recreation residence program. (\*This amount was estimated in 2010 by the USFS to be \$600-700 per cabin. Indexed by the IPD, this amount will be nearly \$900 in 2025.)
2. With 735 Recreation Residence permits on the San Bernardino National Forest, we recommend that at least two (2) staff positions be established and maintained with dedicated responsibility for administering the Program.
3. Plan and carry out fuels reduction and removal of hazard trees within recreation residence tracts and along critical tract access roads.
4. Establish and fund training for special uses staff, including associated travel costs, specific to the administration of recreation residence special use permits.

Retained special use fees will amount to about \$1.5m on our forest. As of this update, no response has been received from the Forest Service to our communication of May 23.

Cabin Inspections – It presently appears that no formal cabin inspections will be done this year other than those required for cabin transfers. Although Forest management has an annual goal of inspecting 20% of all recreation residences, it has been 4 or 5 years since formal inspections were done and communicated to cabin owners. With permit renewal coming at the end of 2028 and major improvement requests taking up to several years to be approved, it is suggested that tract organizations consider implementing self-inspections or volunteer inspections using the Mountaintop Ranger District Recreation Residence Annual Inspection form, which can be found on the Cabin webpage.

Summer Cabin Coalition Meeting August 19 – The summer meeting of the Cabin Coalition will be held on August 19. Until the past three years this meeting has traditionally been followed by BBQ picnic. We're presently seeking a residence tract organization who is interested in hosting this meeting and picnic. Please contact me if your tract would be willing to host or if you have questions as to what this involves.

I hope you have a great July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend and that you're having a good cabin season.

Roy

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