

BANDELIER Press Release

For Immediate Release, January 14, 2015

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Bandelier National Monument

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Public Invited to Meetings on Bandelier National Monument's Proposed Fee Increases

Bandelier National Monument is seeking public comment on possible increases in the park's entry fees. Anyone wishing to learn more about the changes, or make comments on them, is invited to two meetings to be held on Wednesday, January 21. One will be in Los Alamos from 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM at the Chamber of Commerce on Central Avenue, across 15th Street from the Bradbury Science Museum. The other will be in White Rock from 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM at the Activity Center on Longview Drive near the library. Interested persons are welcome to come at any time during those hours.

In addition, public comment about the proposed increases can be sent to the park via email at band_visitor_center@nps.gov and the National Park Service Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>. We ask that all comments be submitted by February 15, 2015.

While basic park operations are funded by congressional appropriation, the revenue from fee dollars supports the high level of satisfaction that visitors have come to expect and enjoy. In the summer of 2014, National Park Service (NPS) areas that charge fees were authorized to consider increases. Of the 401 parks, monuments, recreation areas and other units of the National Park System, 131, or about a third, collect entrance fees. An increase to these fees can only be made after each park engages the public about the proposed changes and their effects. Feedback the park receives will help determine how and when a fee increase may be implemented, which could be as early as this year. The results are reported to and approved by the NPS Director before any fee increase can take effect.

Fees at Bandelier that are authorized for possible revision include visitor entry fees, expanded amenity fees (campgrounds, guided tours, etc.), and special recreation permits. At this time, increases are being proposed to park entrance fees. Current entrance fees, which allow re-entry into the monument for up to seven days, are \$12.00 per private vehicle or motorcycle and \$6.00 per person/bicycle. These fees date from 2006. Proposed fees are \$20.00 per private vehicle, \$10.00 per person or bicycle, and \$15.00 per motorcycle. The annual pass, presently \$30.00,

would change to \$40.00. Additional revenue generated will be used to enhance visitor services and facilities, especially important as the NPS approaches its centennial in 2016.

National park entrance fees are not charged to persons under 16 years of age. Holders of the Volunteer, Senior (\$10, lifetime for US residents 62 and over), Active Duty Military (free, one year, renewable), and Access (free, lifetime for US residents who are permanently disabled) passes are admitted free. These passes, as well as the annual America the Beautiful Interagency Pass (\$80 per year) are all available at the Bandelier Visitor Center.

“We are committed to providing all park visitors the best possible experience, while keeping costs reasonable and affordable” said Bandelier National Monument Superintendent Jason Lott. “Funds raised from entrance fees are used to maintain the parks and improve visitor services. This national fee review provides an opportunity for park managers to talk with our visitors about where and how fees can help with these needs.”

Bandelier National Monument provides strong economic benefits to the surrounding area. Even in 2012, when visitation was unusually low due to effects from the Las Conchas fire the previous year, the park had more than 150,289 park visitors; this contributed more than \$7.5 million to the local economy and supported 105 jobs related to tourism.