

Sleeping Bear Dunes

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Sleeping Bear Dunes
National Lakeshore



Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (National Lakeshore) is seeking public comment on proposed entrance and camping fee increases. Revenues are used to fund projects that directly benefit park visitors by providing enhanced services including repair and maintenance of facilities, capital improvements, repair of historic buildings and landscapes, increased resource and visitor protection and additional public programs. The park is conducting public engagement on the proposed fee increases through December 8, 2014.

Frequently Asked Questions - Entrance and Camping Fees

What are the proposed entrance fees?

Name of Fee	Current Fee	Proposed Fee
Park Entrance Pass – Per Private Vehicle Valid for 1-7 days from date of purchase	\$10	\$15
Park Entrance Pass – Motorcycle Valid for 1-7 days from date of purchase	Per Person Fee	\$10
Sleeping Bear Dunes Annual Park Entrance Pass Valid for one year from month of purchase	\$20	\$30
Per-Person Entrance Pass Visitors 16 years of age or older who enter on foot, bicycle, or as part of an organized group not involved in a commercial tour	\$5	\$7
Camping – D.H. Day Campground First come – first served	\$12	\$16
Camping – D. H. Day Group Campground Group size up to 25 people	\$30 first come – first served \$33 reservation	\$40
Camping – Platte River Campground – Non-Electric Up to 6 people or one family	\$16 first come – first served \$19 reservation	\$22
Camping – Platte River Campground – Electric Up to 6 people or one family	\$21 first come – first served \$24 reservation	\$27
Camping – Platte River Campground – Walk-in Up to 6 people or one family	\$12 first come – first served \$15 reservation	\$18
Camping – Platte River Campground – Group Group size up to 25 people	\$40 first come – first served \$43 reservation	\$50
Camping – Backcountry Permit – Mainland & Manitou Islands First come – first served, Up to 4 people and 2 tents	\$5	\$10
Camping – Backcountry Group - South Manitou Island Group size 9 to 20 people	\$20 first come – first served \$23 reservation	\$30
Camping – Backcountry Group – North Manitou Island First come – first served, Group size up to 10 people	\$10	\$20

Camping fees shown are per campsite, per night. Under the new fee schedule hot showers are included in the price of camping at Platte River Campground. All Interagency Passes will remain at the current rates: Annual (\$80) Senior (\$10), Access (\$0), and Military (\$0), and benefits from the Interagency Passes will remain unchanged.

Why is Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore raising the entrance fee?

This fee increase is part of a larger National Park Service (NPS) initiative to standardize fees in similar parks across the country. Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore was classified with parks of comparable size and visitation and given the same fee schedule. However, at the present time, the National Lakeshore is requesting to implement lower fee rates that are based on a fee rate schedule that the park was due to implement back in 2009, but was postponed by the National Park Service due to the national economic downturn that occurred at about the same time. The camping fees are derived through comparability reviews conducted by the National Lakeshore looking at other camping facilities /opportunities in the local area. The current entrance fees and first come – first served camping fees have been in place since 2004, with only a slight increase in fees for reservable campsites which occurred in 2006.

How are entrance fees calculated?

The NPS fee structure is a tiered approach that classifies Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore with parks of comparable size and visitation. The NPS analysis of fees is based on relevant academic studies, private and public sector benchmarks, and existing NPS data, and seeks to provide fair, equitable and consistent fees to the public across the National Park System.

What do the current fees pay for?

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) of 2004 authorized 100% of the revenue generated by charging fees to be returned to the National Park Service. These funds are to be used in parks for projects that directly benefit visitors. Funds generated by the fees are used to accomplish projects the park has been unable to fund through annual Congressional allocations. Examples of recent park projects at the National Lakeshore that were funded with fee revenue include the following:

- Additional visitor programs throughout the year
- Maintenance and upkeep of Platte River and D.H. Day Campgrounds
- Renovate the visitor contact stations at Platte River and D.H. Day Campgrounds
- Provide visitor facilities and services at Glen Haven Historic District
- Dredge the docks on South Manitou and North Manitou Islands to assist with visitor access
- Renovate South Manitou Island Visitor Center and provide for accessibility
- Provide visitor use facilities in Port Oneida
- Improve visitor information provided at beaches and trailheads
- Evaluate forest pests and remove hazard trees
- Renovate the program area at the Dune Climb

What will the new fee revenues be used for?

Revenue from proposed fee increases will be used to provide enhanced visitor services including repair and maintenance of facilities, and capital improvements. All improvements will have a direct visitor connection. Specific project may include:

- Rehabilitation of the South Manitou Lighthouse, including the Keepers Quarters
- Work within the Port Oneida Rural Historic District
- Additional Seasonal Rangers to provide programs and services on the Manitou Islands
- Work to address beach and river accessibility
- Hazard tree assessment / removal and management of overview vistas
- Redesign of wayside exhibits
- Upgrade of electrical service at Platte River Campground to accommodate electric vehicles

How does this fee compare to other NPS sites?

The National Lakeshore is requesting to implement lower fee rates than prescribed by the current NPS fee structure. Instead the park proposes to raise fees based on a fee rate schedule due to implemented back in 2009, but postponed by the National Park Service due to the national economic downturn that occurred at about the same time.

When would these fee changes be implemented?

If approved, the new fee schedule will be implemented in January 2016.

How are camping fees determined?

The camping fees are derived through comparability reviews conducted by the National Lakeshore looking at other camping facilities /opportunities in the local area.

Will Commercial Tour Fees also be increasing?

No, except in the case of a commercial tour sedan (1 to 6 passenger capacity) where the fee is \$25.00 plus the per-person fee, which will increase from \$5.00 per-person to \$7.00 per-person (for anyone 16 years of age or older). The maximum fee of \$40.00 for a commercial sedan will remain unchanged. All other commercial tour fees will remain unchanged.

What are the next steps?

The National Park Service is soliciting public comment on the proposal to increase entrance and camping fees. A 39-day public engagement period will begin on October 31, 2014. Please provide your comments online at (parkplanning.nps.gov/sleepingbearfees). Comments may also be mailed to the National Lakeshore (Superintendent, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, 9922 Front Street, Empire, MI 49630). The National Lakeshore requests that you provide your comments by December 8, 2014.

Thank you