



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Sequoia and Kings Canyon
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Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks News Release

For Immediate Release: November 10, 2014

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Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks Seek Public Input About Proposed Fee Increases

SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS, CA– Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are seeking public input to gauge support for proposed entrance, wilderness permit, and certain campsite fee increases. The public is invited to comment from November 10, 2014, through December 9, 2014. The fee program is critical, as 80% of fees collected stay within the two parks to maintain and improve facilities and services that benefit park visitors.

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are strong economic engines for the region and local communities. In 2013, nearly 1.48 million park visitors contributed \$111.7 million in communities and supported nearly 1,400 jobs in the local area. Previous fee increases have not impacted visitation levels in a negative way. This proposed fee increase is part of a larger National Park Service initiative to standardize fees in similar national parks across the country.

Entrance Fees

The proposed single vehicle entrance fee would increase from \$20 to \$30 for a seven-day vehicle pass to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The parks' annual pass would increase from \$30 to \$50. The current rate of \$10 per individual (walk-in, bicycle) would increase to \$15. Currently the charge of \$10 per individual traveling on motorcycle would change to \$25 per motorcycle for a seven-day pass. There would be no changes to flat-rate fees for commercial groups. The Interagency Annual Pass, which is honored at U.S. national parks and federal recreation lands, will not be affected by the proposed fee increase and will remain at \$80. The Interagency Senior Pass will remain at \$10 (one lifetime fee), and the Annual Military Pass and the Senior Pass will remain free.

The National Park Service will continue to offer entrance fee-free opportunities to enjoy the parks. In 2015, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks will offer twelve fee-free days. For more information, visit <http://www.nps.gov/seki/parknews/seki2015feefreeentrancedates.htm>.

“We are committed to providing a quality experience at a good value for our visitors.” said Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks’ Superintendent Woody Smeck. “The additional revenue will help us improve access to popular destinations like Giant Forest, Crystal Cave, and the High Sierra.” added Smeck.

Sequoia and Kings Canyon have been collecting fees for over 100 years. The current park entrance fees have been in place since 2006 when a seven-day pass for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks was increased from \$10 to \$20 per vehicle. In 1913, Sequoia National Park was collecting a \$1.00 entrance fee and General Grant National Park (now part of Kings Canyon National Park) collected a \$.50 fee. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, \$1.50 in 1913 is equivalent to \$36.07 in 2014.

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Wilderness Fees

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are proposing modifying wilderness fees from the current \$15 per permit to \$10 per permit plus \$5 per person. Single hikers will continue to pay \$15. Parties of two will only experience a price increase of \$5. Permit fees for maximum size parties of 15 would be \$85. The proposed fee structure is more equitable, because it is based primarily on party size, rather than a flat rate. The proposed fee increase would allow the park to maintain current staffing levels and continue to provide both a wilderness reservation service and face-to-face permit issuance at park trailheads.

Camping Fees

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are proposing to raise camping fees at the Sunset Campground from \$18 to \$22 per night per campsite, increase fees for mid-size group campsites from \$35 to \$40 a night per site, and increase fees for large group campsites \$10 a night, to range between \$40 to \$70 per night per site. The proposed increase to the campsite fees for Sunset Campground and the mid-size group campsites are needed to cover the costs of using the www.recreation.gov reservation system and additional projects to benefit park users. These campsites are underutilized and not well-marketed as available before campers' arrival. In addition, by placing mid-size group campsites on the reservation system, the sites will be utilized by groups of the appropriate size.

Two other campgrounds with a 19-year track record on the reservation system—Lodgepole and Dorst Creek—serve as successful models for how the reservation system is expected to work in the new locations. Over 42,000 people benefit from reservations at Lodgepole and Dorst Creek campgrounds each summer. *(This statistic is based upon a three-year average of reserved campsites from 2010 through 2012 for Lodgepole Campground from late May through late September and for Dorst Creek Campground from the end of June through early September.)*

An online web briefing on the proposed fee increases will be held on November 20, 2014, at 12 noon PST. A link to the live webinar and a recording will be posted on <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/seki>. *Click on: Proposal to Increase Fees at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.*

We invite the public to submit comments electronically via the National Park Service's Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/seki>. *Click on: Proposal to Increase Fees at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.*

Comment will also be accepted in writing (hand-delivery, by mail, or fax). To submit written comments, you may mail or hand-deliver your comments to Superintendent, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Attn: Proposal to Increase Fees, 47050 Generals Highway, Three Rivers, CA 93271. In addition, faxed comments will be accepted at (559) 565-4202.

Comments submitted by e-mail and anonymous comments will not be accepted. Bulk comments in any format submitted on behalf of others will not be accepted. All public comments must be received by December 9, 2014.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask the National Park Service in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

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