

# Proposal to Increase Great Falls Entrance and Drive In Campground Fees

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Chesapeake and Ohio Canal  
National Historical Park



Hancock, Maryland – February 9, 2015

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## Enabling Legislation

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In 1971, Congress established the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park:

“to preserve and interpret the historic and scenic features . . . and develop the potential of the canal for public recreation.”

- Public Law 91-664

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## Why is the National Park Service making this proposal?

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Part of agency-wide review to standardize fees for parks that offer similar visitor services and experiences

<b>Tier</b>	<b>Annual Pass</b>	<b>Per Vehicle</b>	<b>Per Person</b>	<b>Motorcycle</b>
<b>1</b>	\$30	\$15	\$7	\$10
<b>2</b>	\$40	\$20	\$10	\$15
<b>3</b>	\$50	\$25	\$12	\$20
<b>4</b>	\$60	\$30	\$15	\$25

### Other nearby Tier 1 Parks:

- Antietam
- Fort Washington
- Great Falls (Virginia)
- Harpers Ferry
- Manassas
- Prince William Forest

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Why is the C&O Canal making this proposal? *To Improve the Visitor Experience*

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Over the past five years:

- Visitation increased about 25 percent
- Budget decreased about 10 percent
- Staff decreased about 20 percent

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## Why is the C&O Canal making this proposal? *To Improve the Visitor Experience*

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Park-wide, over the past five years:

- Reduced mowing, tree removal, campground maintenance, and debris removal from boat ramps, aqueducts, and culverts
- Zero miles of Towpath resurfaced with Operational Funds
- Closing of Hancock, Ferry Hill, and Georgetown visitor centers
- Reduced hours at Great Falls and Williamsport visitor centers
- Fewer rangers patrolling the Towpath; fewer interpretive programs
- Decommissioning of *Georgetown* canal boat
- Millions of dollars of maintenance backlog on historic structures
- Visitor injuries on the Towpath

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## Existing and Proposed Fees

<b>Great Falls Entrance Fee</b>	<b>Annual Park Pass</b>	<b>Per Vehicle Pass</b>	<b>Per Person Pass</b>	<b>Buses With &gt; 15 Person Capacity</b>	<b>Motorcycle Pass</b>
Existing Great Falls Fees	\$20	\$5	\$3	≤ \$100	\$5
Proposed Great Falls Fees	\$30	\$15	\$7	≤ \$100	\$10

<b>Other Fees</b>	<b>Per Night</b>	<b>Per Day (M – Th)</b>	<b>Per Day (F – Sun, H)</b>
<b>Drive In Campground Fee</b>			
Existing Campground	\$10		
Proposed Campground	\$20		
<b>Group Campgrounds</b>			
Existing Group Campground	\$20		
Proposed Group Campground	\$40		
<b>Pavilion</b>			
Existing Carderock Pavilion		\$150	\$250
Proposed Carderock Pavilion		\$250	\$350

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## Great Falls Entrance Fee Options

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### Free Entrance

- Children age 15 and under
- Academic and Scientific Fee Waivers
- National Interagency Passes:
  - Annual Pass for U.S. Military
  - Access Pass – free for a lifetime
  - Volunteer Pass – free with 250 volunteer hours
- Fee-free Days
  - Nine in 2015

### Daily and Annual Pass Options

- Great Falls Daily or Annual Pass
- National Interagency Passes:
  - Annual Pass - \$80
  - Senior Pass - \$10/lifetime

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## What do Great Falls entrance fees support?

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- 184.5 Miles of Historic Towpath
- Access to 200 miles of Potomac River Shoreline and 15 Boat Ramps
- 37 Campgrounds with Potable Water and Toilets
- 17 Miles of Backcountry Trails
- 19,586 Acres of Land
- Four Visitor Centers and Numerous Interpretive Programs
- Curriculum-based Education Programs
- 3 Historic Districts listed on National Register of Historic Places
- Numerous park publications
- Canal launch boats

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## How has revenue from fees been used?

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- Provide better visitor experience, access, and safety
- Restore and maintain historic and canal structures
- Install interpretive and informational displays and signs

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How has revenue from fees been used? *Improvements to Great Falls Visitor Center*

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How has revenue from fees been used? *Construct Great Falls Restroom*

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How has revenue from fees been used? *Improve Great Falls Interpretive Exhibits*

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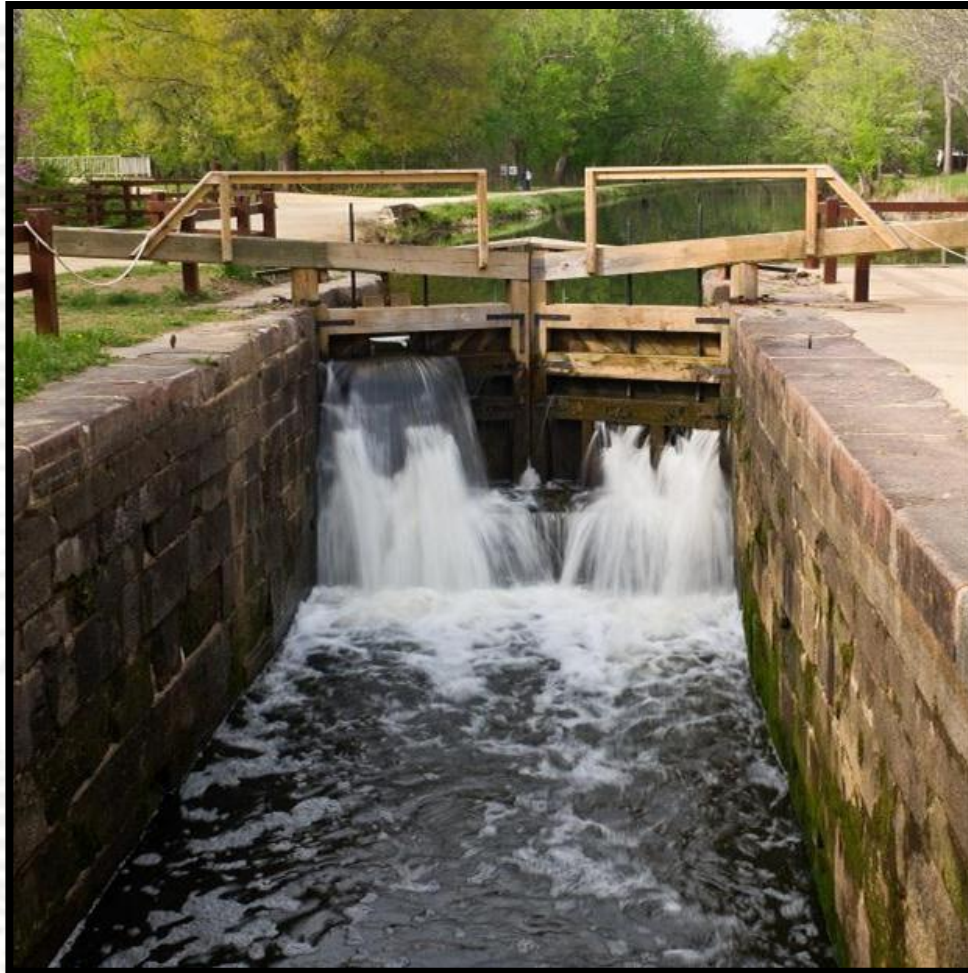
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How has revenue from fees been used? *Maintain Great Falls Watered Canal*

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How has revenue from fees been used? *Create Great Falls Bike Loaner Program*

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How has revenue from fees been used? – *Rehabilitate Bowles House Visitor Center*

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## How has revenue from fees been used? – *Hazard Tree Removal*

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How has revenue from fees been used? – *Create Canal Launch Program*

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## How has revenue from fees been used? – *Create Ferry Hill Exhibits*

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## How could revenue from fees been used?

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- Improve Towpath Condition
- Maintain Campground Amenities
- Clear Hazard Trees

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How could revenue from fees been used? – *Resurface Towpath*

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How could revenue from fees been used? – *Maintain Campground Amenities*

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How could revenue from fees been used? – *Maintain Campground Amenities*

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How could revenue from fees been used? – *Maintain Signage*

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## C&O Canal Local Economic Impact

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- 100% of fees collected at the C&O Canal are invested in park projects that improve facilities and experiences for park visitors
- C&O Canal is a strong economic engine for the area, hosting more than 5 million visitors a year, making this the 9<sup>th</sup> most visited unit of the National Park Service
- More than \$80 million is contributed to the local economy each year
- 1,000 jobs related to tourism

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