



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
National Capital Region
Rock Creek Park
3545 Williamsburg Lane, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008-1207

IN REPLY REFER TO:

10.A. (NCR-ROCR)

SEP 08 2016

The Honorable Jack Evans
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 106
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Councilmember Evans,

Since 1949, the National Park Service had an agreement with the District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to manage the group picnic area reservations on National Park Service property at Rock Creek Park and Fort Dupont Park. DPR asked the National Park Service to manage the reservation process for these National Park Service sites. Earlier this year, the National Park Service moved the reservation process to Recreation.gov, a convenient website used by many national parks and thousands of park visitors across the country. The transition to Recreation.gov became effective March 1, 2014. We worked with DPR to ensure that the transition was smooth for all park visitors and Washington Area residents.

The reservation fee for a group picnic area had not changed since the early 1990's. In 2013, the National Service solicited public engagement and comment regarding the need to bring its fee in line with the price for similar group picnic areas in the Washington Metropolitan Area, and providing options for full-day and half-day rentals. As proposed to the public in 2013, we began phasing in this increase over 3 years starting in the summer of 2014 with an increase to \$25/half day and in 2015 with an increase to \$45/half day. Anticipating an increase in park visitation resulting from the NPS Centennial, the NPS decided to delay implementation of the third phase, originally planned for 2016, until 2017. We are now preparing to implement the third phase of the increase to \$65/half day beginning January 1, 2017. The additional revenue will improve the condition of the picnic areas and the level of service provided to visitors.

The National Park Service hosted two opportunities in late 2013 for the public to learn more about the new permitting system and the proposed fee increase. This letter serves as a reminder of the planned implementation of phase three of the proposal in 2017. The National Park Service is inviting comments during a 21-day public comment period through September 29, 2016, via the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website:
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/picnic>.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, or would like to further discuss this proposal, please contact me at 202-895-6004 or via email at tara_morrison@nps.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tara', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tara D. Morrison
Superintendent