



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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## Sleeping Bear Dunes NL News Release

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### Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Requests Comments on Fee Increase

EMPIRE, MI - Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (National Lakeshore) is requesting public comment on increasing both entrance fees and camping fees beginning January 1, 2018.

The National Lakeshore is a “Group 2” park in the four-tier system established by the Department of Interior and is increasing entrance fees to its assigned structure of: Entrance Pass of \$20, Annual Entrance Pass of \$40, Motorcycle Entrance Pass of \$15, and Individual Entrance Pass of \$10 (\$20/40/15/10). Although the assigned fee structure was supposed to have been implemented back in 2009, the National Lakeshore received approval to delay the increase – and then phase it in over two increments. The first increment was put in place in 2016 – from \$10/20/5/5 to \$15/30/10/7. Now, all fee collecting parks (120 out of the 417 National Park Service units) have been instructed by the Secretary of the Interior to raise entrance fees to the full level of their assigned tier by January 1, 2018. Camping fees in Platte River and D. H. Day Campgrounds will increase by \$4 per night, as shown in the table below. Camping fees are derived through comparability reviews with similar camping facilities in the local area.

“The idea of increasing fees is always troubling,” said National Lakeshore Superintendent Scott Tucker. “But the fact of the matter is we depend on fee revenue to maintain the facilities and services that people expect. We are committed to keeping the park affordable, but we also want to provide visitors the best possible experience. These fee changes are still an incredible value when compared

to other family and recreation opportunities. Plus, 80% of those funds stay right here at the National Lakeshore to benefit our visitors.”

The National Lakeshore is seeking feedback about the proposed fee schedule. Please provide your comments online at [parkplanning.nps.gov/sleepingbearfees2017](http://parkplanning.nps.gov/sleepingbearfees2017). 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 July 31, 2017.

The proposed fee schedule is as follows:

| <b>Name of Fee</b>  | <b>Current Fee</b> | <b>Proposed Fee</b> |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Park Entrance Pass – Per Private Vehicle</b><br>Valid for 1-7 days from date of purchase   | \$15               | \$20                |
| <b>Park Entrance Pass – Motorcycle</b><br>Valid for 1-7 days from date of purchase  | \$10               | \$15                |
| <b>Sleeping Bear Dunes Annual Park Entrance Pass</b><br>Valid for one year from month of purchase   | \$30               | \$40                |
| <b>Per Person Entrance Pass</b><br>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 | \$7                | \$10                |
|   |                    |                     |
| <b>Camping – D. H. Day Campground</b><br>Up to 6 people or one family   | \$16               | \$20                |
| <b>Camping – D. H. Day Group Campground</b><br>Group size up to 25 people   | \$40               | \$40                |
| <b>Camping – Platte River Campground – Non-Electric</b><br>Up to 6 people or one family   | \$22               | \$26                |
| <b>Camping – Platte River Campground – Electric</b><br>Up to 6 people or one family   | \$27               | \$31                |
| <b>Camping – Platte River Campground – Walk-in</b><br>Up to 6 people or one family  | \$18               | \$22                |
| <b>Camping – Platte River Campground – Group</b><br>Group size up to 25 people  | \$50               | \$50                |
| <b>Camping – Backcountry Permit – Mainland &amp; Manitou Islands</b><br>First come – first served, Up to 4 people and 2 tents                                       | \$10               | \$10                |
| <b>Camping – Backcountry Group - South Manitou Island</b><br>Group size 9 to 20 people  | \$30               | \$30                |
| <b>Camping – Backcountry Group – North Manitou Island</b><br>First come – first served, Group size up to 10 people  | \$20               | \$20                |

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) is the legislation under which the National Lakeshore collects entrance and camping fees. This law allows parks to retain approximately 80% of the fees collected for use on projects that directly benefit visitors. The remaining 20% is distributed throughout the National Park System. The National Lakeshore has completed many projects with these revenues, including rehabilitating Glen Haven historic structures for visitor use, clearing and maintaining trails such as Alligator Hill, installing exhibits in the South Manitou Island Museum and at Glen Haven, and maintaining campground facilities. Planned projects include producing a new film for the visitor center, stabilizing the shoreline in front of the South Manitou Lighthouse, and improving the accessibility of campground facilities at Platte River, and to maintain historic structures and remove safety hazards.

In addition, the National Lakeshore plans to make its campsites available for reservation beginning in 2019. The demand for campsites in the National Lakeshore has increased considerably over the last five years and is very high during the busy summer months. The D. H. Day Campground during July and August 2012-16 averaged over 93% full occupancy with disappointed campers routinely turned away. During that same period, June and September full occupancy increased from 40% to over 55%. Because of the existing first come, first served system, campers routinely arrive the day before to wait overnight for a site, creating long lines, illegal camping, and associated safety hazards and resource damage. Although over half of the campsites at Platte River Campground are already available for reservation, we are experiencing many of the same problems there. To improve the overall camping experience, in 2019, the National Lakeshore is making all campsites at Platte River Campground and D. H. Day Campground available for reservation through Recreation.gov for arrival dates of May 1 through October 15 each year. In order to accommodate campers who decide last minute to come camping, the National Lakeshore will allow same-day reservations. This will allow campers to make last minute reservations or simply come to the campground office and register for a campsite (if available) without needing to make an advance reservation.

For more in-depth information about the National Lakeshore, please go to [www.nps.gov/slbe](http://www.nps.gov/slbe). Also, check out their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/sbdnl](http://www.facebook.com/sbdnl), Twitter site at [www.twitter.com/sleepingbearnps](http://www.twitter.com/sleepingbearnps), and Instagram at [www.instagram.com/sleepingbearnps](http://www.instagram.com/sleepingbearnps).

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*About the National Park Service: More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 417 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Visit the National Park Service at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/nationalparkservice](http://www.facebook.com/nationalparkservice), Twitter at [www.twitter.com/natlparkservice](http://www.twitter.com/natlparkservice), and YouTube at [www.youtube.com/nationalparkservice](http://www.youtube.com/nationalparkservice).*