

Voyageurs National Park

2021 Civic Engagement for Recreation Fee Rate Changes

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Voyageurs National Park



Recreation Fee Background:

- 2001: Voyageurs National Park's (VOYA) General Management Plan (GMP) called for the implementation of a reservation system for camping and houseboating when the competition and resource impacts reached certain levels.
- 2004: Congress passed the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), which authorizes the National Park Service to collect amenity fees.
- 2010-2013: VOYA's first Civic Engagement for fees.
- 2010: VOYA's tour boat fees were approved.
- 2013: Camping and houseboat permit fees were approved.
- 2014: Camping permits and backcountry boat rentals were added to the recreation.gov online reservation system.
- 2017: Houseboat permits were added to the reservation system.
- 2021: VOYA's second Civic Engagement held to propose an increase in existing fees and the addition of four new fees.
- 2022: If approved, rate changes would go into effect for boat tours, camping amenities, and houseboat permits.
- 2023: If approved, new fees would be in effect for winter equipment rentals and specialized interpretive programs.



Photos: campsite (top), houseboat site (bottom).

Why is VOYA proposing rate changes?

Rate changes are proposed to invest in improvements that will enhance visitor facilities and services, to provide the best possible park experience. VOYA has a network of developed sites only accessible by boat dispersed across hundreds of miles of shoreline. Increased visitation places pressure on recreational infrastructure and creates additional needs for regular maintenance and resource protection. Amenities deteriorate over time, and the remoteness of park sites presents challenges and costs associated with maintaining, rehabilitating, and replacing amenities.

How do rec fees work with the park's budget?

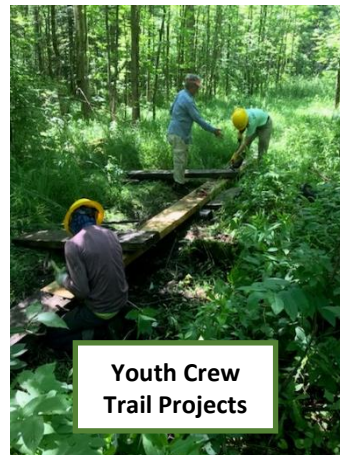
While the park's base budget has remained largely unchanged over the past several years, costs to operate and purchase materials necessary for the maintenance and improvement of the park's recreational infrastructure continue to increase. Recreation fee revenue is crucial in providing the necessary funding where the base budget falls short.

What happens with the revenue collected?

By law and National Park Service (NPS) policy, recreation fee revenue must be spent on projects that improve the visitor experience. Ninety-seven percent of the fee revenue collected stays at VOYA. These funds are allocated for seasonal staff to clean and maintain sites, purchase amenities like bear lockers and picnic tables, to fund youth crew projects that address deferred maintenance, to complete a variety of campsite and trail rehab projects, and to fund staff that manage the recreation fee program and assist visitors with trip planning.



Pine Point Campsite Rehab



Youth Crew Trail Projects

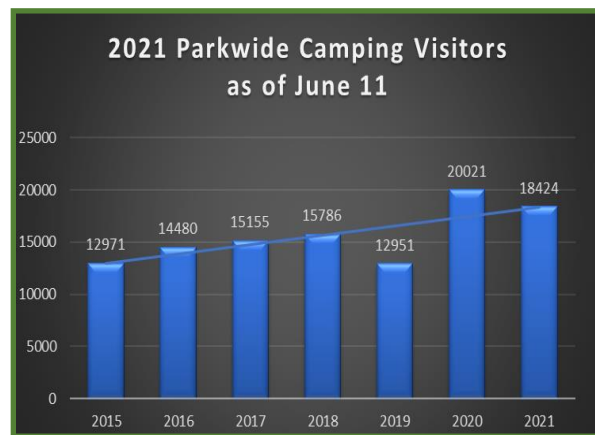


HB Site Shoreline Rehab



(Left) The number of reservations made on the day reservations go live for the season has increased significantly each year.

(Right) Since transitioning to online reservations, there has been a steady overall increase in yearly camping visitation. Graph includes 2021 camping visitor numbers for all reservations made through June 11.



Proposed Increases to Existing Camping Amenities and Houseboat Permits:

Amenity	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
Small campsite without dock	\$20/night	\$22/night
Small campsite with dock	\$20/night	\$26/night
Large campsite without dock	\$24/night	\$28/night
Large campsite with dock	\$24/night	\$32/night
Group campsite	\$35/night	\$60/night
Backcountry boat rental	\$12/day	\$14/day
Houseboat permit	\$10/night	\$15/night

****A \$10 service fee is charged per reservation to cover online reservation service contractor costs****

Proposed Increases to Existing Tour Fees:

Tour Name & Location	Adult		Child (Ages 4-16)		Toddler (Up to 3yr)	
	From	To	From	To	From	To
Grand Tour (Rainy Lake)	\$30	\$50	\$15	\$25	\$3	\$5
Life on the Lake (Rainy Lake)	\$25	\$40	\$15	\$20	\$3	\$5
Kettle Falls (Rainy Lake)	\$50	\$85	\$25	\$40	\$3	\$5
Kettle Falls (Kabetogama Lake)	\$40	\$60	\$20	\$30	\$3	\$5
Ellsworth Rock Gardens (Kabetogama Lake)	\$25	\$40	\$15	\$20	\$3	\$5

****Tour ticket prices include a \$1 service fee to cover online reservation service contractor costs****

****Discount of 50% is honored for Interagency Senior Pass card holders****

Proposed New Fees for 2022 & 2023:

Amenity or Service	Proposed Rate	Effective Year
Low-Use Season Camping at Designated Sites (October 1 – April 30, annually)	\$10 reservation system fee + \$10/night	2022
Primitive Campsites on Kab-Ash Trail	\$10 reservation system fee + \$15/night	2022
Specialized Ranger-Led Interpretive Programs	\$15 per adult \$7.50 for ages 16 and under	2023
Winter Equipment Rentals (Snowshoes & Cross Country Skis/Boots/Poles)	\$10/day for adults \$5/day for ages 16 and under	2023

****Service fee for programs and rentals TBD depending on how fee is implemented on recreation.gov**

How do I provide feedback?	PEPC Open for Comment tab (from June 28 th – July 25 th): https://parkplanning.nps.gov/RecFeeProposal	Mail: Voya Rec Fee Comments 360 Highway 11 East International Falls, MN 56649
	Email: voya_rec_fee_comments@nps.gov Leave a voice message: (218) 283-6708	