



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Guadalupe Mountains  
National Park  
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## Guadalupe Mountains National Park News Release

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### Guadalupe Mountains National Park Seeks Public Input Regarding Proposed Changes for Wilderness Use Permits

**Salt Flat, Texas** — Guadalupe Mountains National Park is seeking public input on a new proposed fee for overnight Wilderness Use Permits (also referred to as backcountry camping permits). The park is also proposing to make Wilderness Use Permits available for reservation on Recreation.gov. The park has seen a significant increase in visitation and Wilderness use over the past decade, especially along the Guadalupe Peak trail and at the Guadalupe Peak campground. As visitation and use continue to increase, the proposed changes will allow visitors to secure their Wilderness Use Permit in advance and provide critical funding to improve the 80-plus miles of trails and 59 Wilderness campsites that offer hikers multiple ways to recreate and enjoy the park.

The park is proposing the following Wilderness Use Permit fee for all Wilderness overnight camping: \$6 reservation fee (one per permit) to cover the costs of using Recreation.gov plus a \$6 per-person-per-night recreation fee for each individual listed on the permit. The authority to charge this expanded amenity fee stems from the 2004 Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act. The proposed fee structure is based on party size and trip duration, rather than a flat rate, to reflect better the level of impact each backpacker has on the Wilderness and park resources. Day-use permits for stock and Williams Ranch Road will remain free and be issued in person at the Pine Springs Visitor Center. Reservations for the Frijole and Dog Canyon Visitor Horse Corrals, currently available via email through the park website, will transition to Recreation.gov later in 2021-2022.

Hikers will be able to reserve their Wilderness Use Permit online several months in advance through Recreation.gov and then be required to pick up their permit at the Pine Springs Visitor Center **prior** to hiking. Visitors will be able to cancel their permit reservation five or more days before their arrival date and receive a full refund of their recreation fees; changes to party size or number of nights will be allowed (based on availability) and result in a refund or additional fees as applicable. The reservation fee is nonrefundable. Changes fewer than five days before arrival will depend on availability and may not be refunded. Hikers will be able to list one alternate trip leader authorized to receive the issued permit. Walk-up (day-of arrival) permits will also be available.

The park is committed to keeping rates affordable while also providing visitors the best possible experience. Over 96% of park fee revenue stays at Guadalupe Mountains National Park to maintain and improve trails, campsites, facilities, and services that directly enhance the visitor experience and support the operation of the recreation fee program. “The Guadalupe Mountains are the largest Wilderness area in Texas,” said Superintendent Eric Leonard. “The revenue from permit fees will aid us in improving Wilderness experiences and limit negative impacts on the Wilderness landscape through improvements to trails and the ten Wilderness Campgrounds.”

Guadalupe Mountains National Park is proposing that the new permit fee go into effect in January 2022, with the launch of online Wilderness Use Permit reservations planned for Fall 2022. The park invites the public to submit comments from July 30 to September 12 via the National Park Service's Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/GUMO2021>. Comments on the park's related social media posts will not be officially accepted. All public comments must be received through PEPC by September 12, 2021.

For more information on the park, park operations, and recreational opportunities visit the park website at [www.nps.gov/gumo](http://www.nps.gov/gumo).

[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

*About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 423 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov), and on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).*

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