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Zion News Release

Release Date: August 13, 2021

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Zion National Park Accepting Comments on Proposed Lava Point Campground and Day-use Permit Lottery Amenity Fees

Zion National Park is accepting comments starting August 13, 2021 on the cost of Lava Point Campground and a day-use permit lottery. Permits would be required for Angels Landing in 2022.

SPRINGDALE, UT – Zion National Park (ZION) is beginning civic engagement to seek comments on a possible change in amenity fees associated with the Lava Point Campground and a day-use permit lottery to hike the one-half mile (0.5-mile) chain section of Angels Landing. A twenty-dollar (\$20) nightly fee for campsites at Lava Point Campground is proposed. Additionally, a six-dollar (\$6) lottery application fee and a three-dollar (\$3) per person fee is proposed for visitors to access Angels Landing.

Lava Point Campground

Presently, the Lava Point Campground consists of 6 primitive campsites available on a first come, first serve basis at no cost. Following growth in visitation to this area of the park and improvements to the campsites, ZION would make Lava Point Campground reservable through recreation.gov starting in the 2022 season. This would align the Lava Point Campground with the management of frontcountry campgrounds, specifically South and Watchman, as well as provide certainty in securing a campsite prior to arriving in a remote area.

Amenities at the Lava Point Campground include fire rings, picnic tables, vault toilets, and trash cans. No water is available. A twenty-dollar (\$20) per night fee is proposed for all campsites at the Lava Point Campground to address costs associated with servicing this remote location including trash removal, vault toilet servicing, general site maintenance, and administrative processing.

Day-use Permit Lottery

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Angels Landing is a one-half mile (0.5-mile) chained trail beginning at Scout Lookout and is a highly sought-after hike at ZION with more than 300,000 visitors making the ascent in 2019. Growth has continued rapidly in 2021 and increasing park popularity has led to intense crowding and congestion along the Angels Landing trail. Crowding continues to raise safety and visitor experience concerns. In 2017, ZION initiated a trail use study to understand hiking patterns and visitor experience on Angels Landing and in The Narrows. In 2019 and 2021, results from the research were used to pilot an informal means of managing hiker flow along the chains section of Angels Landing on holiday weekends. This allowed the park to understand levels and rates of visitor use that alleviate congestion and safety concerns along the trail.

Building from these previous efforts and public input, ZION is proposing to implement a day-use permit lottery system in 2022. This means visitors would be required to obtain a permit prior to hiking Angels Landing. The pilot day-use permit lottery system would be housed on recreation.gov. Visitors would still be able to day-hike the West Rim Trail up to and beyond Scout Lookout without a permit.

A more formalized system on Angels Landing would provide an equitable process that prioritizes visitor safety along the chain section of Angel Landing while ensuring park resources are protected and desired visitor experiences are available. The system would be closely monitored and adjusted to allow park managers to learn and improve the application of the day-use permit lottery system. If successful, the day-use permit lottery system may be adopted permanently as part of a larger visitor use planning effort and may be considered for additional locations following additional public engagement.

To implement and staff the day-use permit lottery system, two new park-use fees would be introduced. First, a six-dollar (\$6) application fee would be used to cover the cost for recreation.gov to build and operate an online, lottery platform. Second, a three-dollar (\$3) per person fee would be charged to successful lottery applicants and would cover the cost to implement and manage the permit program in the field at ZION. Permits would allow for groups of up to six (6) people and would be connected to the email of one person from each group. Proof of identification would be required prior to accessing the permitted portion of the trail. Permits would be made available in an advanced lottery several months ahead of the visit date. The first lottery opening for Angels Landing would take place in January 2022 for permits during March through May 2022. A second opportunity to obtain an Angels Landing permit would also be available the day before the desired hike date. Additional information on the Angels Landing permit is available on the ZION website at www.nps.gov/zion.

Public comments on proposed changes to the amenity fees for the Lava Point Campground and day-use permit pilot on Angels Landing are being accepted from August 13, 2021 through September 12, 2021 on the NPS Planning, Environment, & Public Comment (PEPC) website at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/ZionFeeProposal>

You may also contact the ZION Visitor Use Manager, Susan McPartland by email at Zion_Visitor_Use@nps.gov.

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