



Annual Recreation Fee Rate Change:

Entrance Fee Changes Scheduled for January, 2008

Park entrance fees provide tremendous financial support for projects in Yosemite National Park as well as in other parks nationwide. Since 1996, when the **Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act** (formerly Fee Demonstration Program) was enacted by law, an estimated \$1.3 billion dollars has been retained by the National Park Service (NPS) to accomplish projects nationwide.

Yosemite National Park has maintained the current entrance fee of \$20 per vehicle since March, 1997. As of January 1, 2008, entrance gate fees are proposed to increase to \$12 per person, (individuals/ walking/ bicycling, and commercial tours carrying passengers entering under the per-person fee structure) \$25 per vehicle, and \$20 per motorcycle. These fees are valid for up to seven days. The annual Yosemite pass would increase to \$50 per year.

How are entrance fees calculated?

Prior to 2004 there was no standard method for adjusting entrance fees at NPS sites. In 2001, the National Park Foundation funded a study to evaluate the Fee Program. Their completed study included recommendations to strengthen and enhance revenue programs by:

- Simplifying and standardizing entrance fees across parks of similar types
- Grouping parks into categories and setting fees based on those categories

In 2004, a steering committee outlined a proposed strategy and demonstrated several models for entrance fee prices. The committee used relevant academic studies, private and public sector benchmarks, existing NPS data, extensive interviews with NPS staff, and visits to NPS sites to determine fees that met NPS goals and objectives by being fair, equitable, and consistent yet flexible.

The fee structure that was ultimately proposed and approved was a tiered approach that classifies NPS sites by their enabling legislation (National Park, National Historic Site, National Seashore, etc). This provides the NPS with a rational approach to determining fees and contributes to public understanding of pricing policies.

Yosemite National Park was classified with parks of comparable size and visitation and given the corresponding fee schedule.

Why increase fees now?

The first new entrance fees based on this new system were implemented in 2006 (in parks including Grand Canyon and Yellowstone National Parks). In 2008 Yosemite, Olympic, and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are scheduled to implement the new fees. The goal is to have all parks in alignment with the new fee structure by 2009, pending successful public involvement.

The new entrance fee structure will continue to contribute to capital improvements and the cost of collection expenses. Additionally, it will contribute to reducing the maintenance backlog and enhancing visitor services.

What other passes are available?

The Federal Lands Recreation Act has improved the public's accessibility to federal lands through nationwide programs as well. *America the Beautiful- The National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass*, an interagency annual pass, replaced the National Parks Pass and the Golden Eagle Passport in January, 2007. The Interagency Annual Pass gives access to five federal agencies, including sites administered by the US Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Reclamation, as well as NPS sites. The cost of the pass is \$80/ year.

Other new interagency passes include:

Volunteer Pass: No charge; admits agency volunteers contributing 500 hours per year.
Senior Pass: \$10; admits pass holder and passengers in private, non-commercial vehicles. Also offers discounts on some facilities and services, including camping, boating, hook-ups, etc.
Access Pass: No charge and some discounted expanded amenities; admits those with permanent disabilities.

All Golden Age and Golden Access passes administered before January 1, 2007 will continue to be honored under the new pass program.

What projects do my fees fund in Yosemite?

Since 1998, fees collected at Yosemite's entrances have been used to help accomplish a diversity of projects. These include:

- **Lower Yosemite Fall** – Rehabilitated access trails to viewing area at Lower Yosemite Fall.
- **Visitor Center** – Renovated the Yosemite Valley Visitor Center and added new bookstore.
- **Utility System Repairs** – Conducted major repairs and rehabilitation to Valley utility systems (water, sewer, electrical).
- **Shuttle Bus Stops** – Constructed shelters and seating at various shuttle bus loading and unloading areas throughout Yosemite Valley.
- **Shuttle Buses** – Replaced fleet of older diesel shuttle buses with electric/diesel hybrid buses to reduce noise, exhaust pollution and fuel consumption, and to increase passenger capacity.
- **Accessibility Improvements** – Continued to correct accessibility deficiencies to many visitor use areas.



Who is affected by the 2008 rate change?

As of January 1, 2008 all private vehicles, visitors entering under the per-person rate (individuals/walking/bicycling, and commercial tours carrying passengers entering under the per-person fee structure), motorcycles, and commercial tour passenger carrying vehicles entering under the per person fee structure will be affected by the rate change. Only commercial entities entering under the flat fee structure and campsite fees will remain unchanged in 2008.

Where can I find more information about the rate increase?

Further information about Yosemite's entrance rate increase can be obtained by calling Yosemite National Park's Public Information Office at 209/372-0200 Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm. Information is also available on line at www.nps.gov/yose.

Comments about the entrance rate increase can be directed to:

- Mail: Superintendent
Attn: *Superintendent*
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389
- Fax: 209/372-0220
- Email: Yose_Superintendent@nps.gov