



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 8, 2021

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Shenandoah National Park News Release

Shenandoah National Park Announces Changes to Fees Following Public Comment Reviews

Luray, VA: Shenandoah National Park will implement changes to the Park's fees after reviewing public comments on its proposal to increase or establish new fees for three recreational activities: 1) camping in established campgrounds, 2) hiking Old Rag, and 3) backcountry camping. The proposal does not include an increase in entrance fees and focuses only on specific user fees.

The proposal was presented to the public in August and public comments were accepted for 30 days (August 15 through September 16). Almost 400 comments were received. Feedback on the three components of the proposal were overall supportive.

Under the approved changes, the nightly fee for campgrounds will increase to \$30 at all campgrounds with group sites increasing to \$75 as presented in the August proposal. This is the first increase to campground fees since 2007. The new fee structure will take effect immediately with reservations for the upcoming season opening December 16 on www.recreation.gov.

"Shenandoah National Park will use the increased revenue to fund projects and services that will benefit the visitor and contribute to the protection of Shenandoah's natural and cultural resources," explained Superintendent Patrick Kenney. "As a result, visitors can expect improvements in the campgrounds over the next few years, such as new picnic tables and fire grates."

The Park will also move forward with implementing a pilot for a day-hiking ticket for the Old Rag area. The pilot is on track for implementation in March 2022 as was proposed. The Park is working on the specifics of the implementation of the pilot and will be providing additional information this winter. "The pilot project will allow the Park to evaluate a strategy for managing this highly popular hike in Shenandoah, with a goal of providing a high-quality visitor experience in an area of the Park that continues to see high visitation," said Kenney.

The third component of the proposal is the establishment of a fee on the existing backcountry camping permit and the establishment of an online permit system. Shenandoah has one of the largest backcountry permitting programs in the national park system, and most of these programs require fees. Park managers continue to evaluate the public comments and develop implementation details for the backcountry camping proposal. As was presented in August, the earliest this fee would be enacted is in 2023, and additional details will be provided as the Park moves forward.

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