

## Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area Draft Business Plan

### Public Comment Summary

Pursuant to section four of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, the Southern Nevada District Office (SNDO) provided the public with opportunities to comment on proposed fee changes and the intended use of fees collected at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area (RRCNCA). The public comment period was open three months from August 14 through November 16, 2009. Written comments could be submitted by email or letter.

The SNDO hosted two public meetings to address concerns the public had regarding the business plan and the proposed fee increases. The attendance for the two meetings totaled 15 participants. During the public meetings there was only one person who was not supportive of the proposed fee increases.

The following table summarizes the current fees charged at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, and the proposed new fees:

Type of Fee	Current Fee	Proposed Fee	Change
Scenic Drive - Day Pass (car)	\$5	\$7	+ \$2
Scenic Drive - Day Pass (motorcycle)	\$2	\$3	+ \$1
Scenic Drive - Day Pass (bicycle)	\$0	\$3	+ \$3
Scenic Drive - Day Pass (pedestrian)	\$0	\$3	+ \$3
Scenic Drive - Commercial Tour Bus (per person)	\$2	\$5	+ \$3
Scenic Drive - Red Rock Annual Pass	\$20	\$30	+ \$10
Red Spring - Reserved Group Picnic Area with Permit	\$0	\$40	+ \$40
Red Rock Overlook on State Route 159	\$0	\$0	No change
Campground - Individual Campsite	\$10	\$15	+ \$5
Campground -Group Campsite	\$25	\$40	+ \$15

Here's a summary of the 141 written public comments that were received:

- 26% supported fee increases except for the fee increases for bicyclists and/or pedestrians
- 20% offered general support for the proposed fee changes
- 15% opposed fee increases of any type

- 9% supported the general idea of fee increases but recommended changes to the proposed fee increase plan
- 8% opposed increased camping fees
- 5% neither supported nor opposed the proposed fee changes but offered suggestions for the use of fee revenue

The remainder of the comments were either non-applicable to the proposed fee changes and/or were general questions regarding the business plan and proposed fee increases.

The supportive comments received demonstrate a public understanding for the need to increase fees and that the proposed increases are commensurate with similar sites in the local area. The majority of the public supports more law enforcement presence and keeping the fees at the RRCNCA. The SNDO response is stated that all fees collect at RRCNCA remain with the National Conservation Area (NCA).

It should also be noted that the majority of the 26% of the public comments that supported the proposed fee increases do not support fees for bicyclists and walk in visitation. The SNDO's response is that fees for bicyclist and walk in visitors are only charged when using they are accessing the scenic drive area of the NCA. Some members of the public commented that they would like to see more law enforcement on the scenic drive. Our response is that the ability to have increased law enforcement is directly connected to our fee collection.

There were additional public comments regarding the cost of collection of the fees, specifically that the \$7.00 fee would create a higher cost of collection because of the cost of making change and accounting (rather than having a fee in \$5 increments). The NCA will track the costs of collection and assess the cost of collecting fees for efficiencies. It is also recognized that it may be necessary to consider fee increases in the future. However, that need would also be evaluated through a similar public process.

There were also public comments that the proposed campground fees are based on an evaluation of comparable camping fees in the area, not based on facilities amenities. The SNDO evaluated comparable camping fees in the area and proposed fee increases are consistent. The SNDO is also in the process improving campground amenities, which could have potentially justified a higher proposed fee increase.

There were public comments regarding equestrian use of trails in the NCA , which were not addressed in the draft business plan. It should be noted that commercial use was addressed, but not casual use. SNDO is planning to monitor the casual use of trailheads and trails used for horseback riding and possibly incorporate an amenity fee, if warranted, sometime in the future.