



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Great Sand Dunes
National Park and
Preserve

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For immediate release

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Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve Seeks Public Input on Potential Entrance Fee Increase

Mosca, CO – Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve is proposing a change in its current entrance fees. Beginning in 2015, Great Sand Dunes, one of 131 National Park units that currently charges entrance fees, is authorized to change its fee rates to align with the new National Park Service rate schedule.

The current park entrance fees for Great Sand Dunes have been in effect for 17 years-- since 1997. Great Sand Dunes proposes to phase in the entrance fee increase over two years beginning no earlier than summer 2015. It also proposes new per vehicle and per motorcycle fees. The entrance fee changes and their implementation would be as follows:

	Current	2015	2016
Annual Great Sand Dunes Pass	\$15	\$30	\$40
Per Vehicle (private, non-commercial)	n/a	\$15	\$20
Motorcycle	n/a	\$10	\$15
Per Person	\$3	\$7	\$10

“Under the proposed entrance fee schedule, single, private, non-commercial vehicles and motorcycles would pay a “flat rate” entrance fee, regardless of the number of passengers,” said Park Superintendent Lisa Carrico. “This is a change from how Great Sand Dunes currently charges fees. At present, each passenger is charged individually. The park would still have a per person fee under the new schedule, but it would apply only to visitors entering the park by means other than private passenger vehicle or motorcycle.”

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) is the legislation under which Great Sand Dunes currently collects entrance and campground fees. This law allows parks to retain 80 percent of the fees collected for use on projects that directly benefit visitors. The remaining 20 percent is distributed throughout the National Park System. Since the beginning of FLREA and its predecessor program, Fee Demo, Great Sand Dunes has spent over \$7 million to enhance visitor services at the park, funding facility repair and maintenance, visitor amenities, and visitor programs and services. Some of the projects funded and/or planned for the future using fees dollars include:

- Hiking Trail Enhancements:** Park and Preserve trailhead sign panels have been replaced as well as maintenance of front country and backcountry trails such as the Mosca Pass Trail, Medano Lake Trail, and Sand Ramp Trail. Trail enhancement work has also afforded opportunities for a variety of Youth Corps groups such as the Southwest Conservation Corps, Student Conservation Association,

and others to assist with these trail enhancement projects.

- **Printing of publications and visitor guides:** Printing costs of the park map and visitor guide are supported through the fee program. Each year, Great Sand Dunes distributes these publications at the visitor center, entrance station, and Colorado welcome centers as orientation materials for visitors. These publications contain valuable information to ensure that visitors enjoy and experience Great Sand Dunes in a safe and fun way.
- **New exhibits in the park's Visitor Center:** Great Sand Dunes will receive funds from the Fee Program in 2016 for the planning, design and installation of new, interactive visitor center exhibits. Exhibits educate visitors on the resources at Great Sand Dunes and the significance of protecting this unique place. It helps visitors understand the unique geologic, hydrologic, and natural systems at Great Sand Dunes and the San Luis Valley.

“We are committed to keeping Great Sand Dunes affordable and we also want to provide visitors with the best possible experience,” said Carrico. “We feel that our proposed fee changes are still an incredible value when considering other family and recreational experiences one can enjoy. Plus, 80 percent of those funds stay right here in Great Sand Dunes to benefit visitors. In 2016, the National Park Service will celebrate the Centennial. Fee funds have been and will continue to be a critical source of funding for visitor services and facilities as we move forward into the next one hundred years.”

We want to hear from you! We value your input about the proposed entrance fee schedule and we encourage comments. The feedback the park receives will help determine how and when a fee increase may be implemented. You can email comments to grsa_feechanges@nps.gov; mail your comments to Park Superintendent, Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve, 11500 Hwy 150, Mosca, CO 81146; or stop by the park's Visitor center between the hours of 9 am and 4:30 pm to fill out a visitor comment form. Please remember that if you plan to stop by the Visitor Center, it will be closed on December 25 and again on January 1. **Comments will be accepted through January 2, 2015.**

For more information and a list of frequently asked questions, please visit the park's website at <http://www.nps.gov/grsa/parknews/index.htm>

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