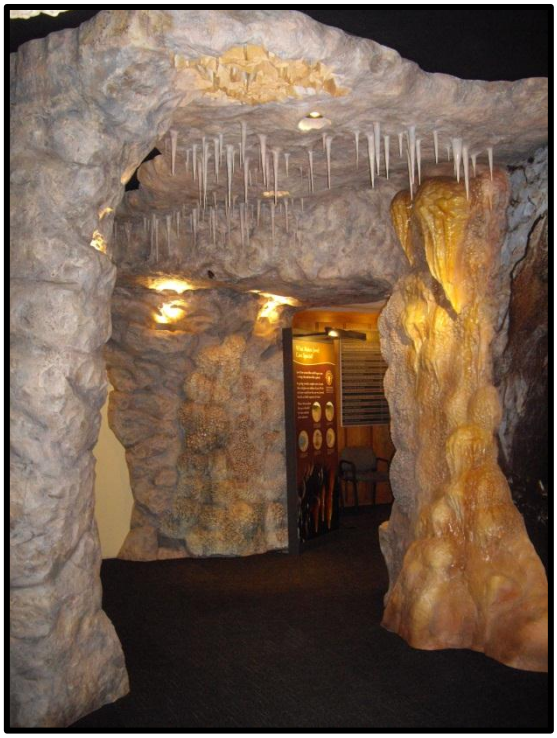
Your Fee Dollars At Work

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Jewel Cave National Monument

The National Park Service (NPS) Fee Program manages the collection, deposit, tracking, and expenditure of fees that visitors pay when they enter a national park, use park facilities and campgrounds, or participate in various park activities, including cave tours.

The fee program plays an important role in resource stewardship, interpretation and education, and visitor-use management by generating non-appropriated revenues, which supplement appropriated funds used directly to benefit visitors and protect park resources. Services funded by the fee program include park protection, resource management, information sharing, maintenance of park facilities, transportation system costs, and educational programs.



Interpretive exhibits and displays are excellent examples of fee dollars at work.

About the Recreational Fee Program

National park lands are not free. Protecting our natural and cultural heritage and providing a safe, enjoyable, and educational place to visit requires substantial funding. Although taxes help offset the costs of operating parks like Jewel Cave National Monument, they do not cover all the costs. As expenses continue to rise each year for utilities, maintenance, and staff, government funding is unable to keep pace with inflation.

In an attempt to address this shortfall, Congress passed the Federal Lands Recreational Enhancement Act, which helps spread some of the operating costs among the people who use the parks.

Jewel Cave National Monument is a fee park, and it keeps every dollar collected. Funds generated by cave tour fees and annual pass sales are used to accomplish projects that the park has been unable to fund through annual Congressional appropriations.

Cave tour fees are the most common fees that are collected at Jewel Cave. The park also gets to use all of the funds generated from the sale of various forms of annual passes.

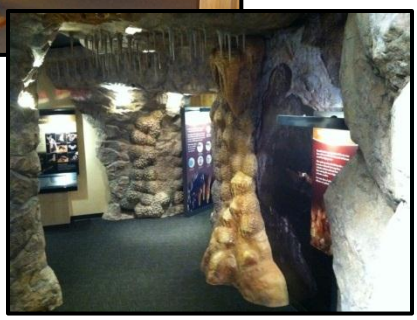
Recreation fees continue to provide a vital source of revenue for improving facilities and services for visitors at national parks, national forests, wildlife refuges, and other public lands throughout the nation.

Past Projects

Jewel Cave National Monument has used recreational fees for an assortment of projects. Since 1997, over $2.5 million in cave tour fees have been used to enhance visitor services, protect and preserve park resources, and improve visitor facilities. Without the fee revenue, many projects would not have been possible. In each instance, a direct visitor benefit is obtained by the use of fee dollars.

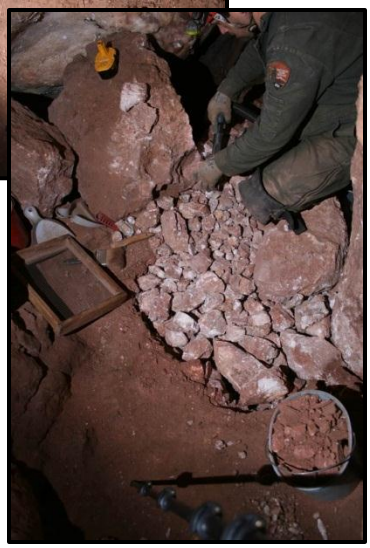
Examples of past projects include the following:

Visitor Center Before



Visitor Center After

Lint and Wax Removal Before



Lint and Wax Removal After

INTERPRETATION OF PARK RESOURCES

- Expand Junior Ranger Program to include younger children
- Sign fabrication for interpretive exhibits
- Fabricate replica 1936 NPS Uniforms for use in Historic Lantern Tours
- Develop proposal for waysides and way finding exhibit panels
- Plan, design, and build visitor center exhibits

MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF PARK RESOURCES

- Produce Cultural Landscape Report for Jewel Cave Historic Area
- Conduct museum collection conservation survey
- Replace existing cave door with air tight doors
- Remove lint and candle wax from Historic Lantern Tour route
- Transcribe oral history tapes to text

MAINTENANCE OF PARK FACILITIES

- Enhance cave elevator services and maintenance
- Install vault toilet in JewelCave Historic Area
- Replace water line from well to reservoir
- Replace visitor center carpet
- Replace well pump at visitor center
- Stain logs of Historic Cabin
- Repair Hell Canyon Road
- Replace patio roof on visitor center
- Replace sewage lagoon liner
- Install emergency back-up generator