



Recreational Fee Demonstration Program

Why Fees? – Investment in Mesa Verde

Welcome! The national park you are entering is being cared for today and preserved for future generations by the American people. This dual objective—use and preservation—comes at a price. Protecting our natural and cultural heritage while ensuring that everyone visiting these areas has a safe, enjoyable and educational experience costs money.

Even as the number of visitors continues to climb due to the popularity of these national treasures, government funding available for necessities such as road and building repairs, campground maintenance, visitor protection and other services has not kept pace with demand. In 1996, to address these needs, Congress allowed the following agencies to collect fees—the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service. The program helps spread some of the cost for managing these lands among those who use them.

Why the emphasis on recreational use fees?

Managing our public lands is a major financial investment. While most of that investment comes from the general tax base, those who use these areas for recreation derive a greater benefit from and place a greater burden on resources than the public at large. These fees redistribute that burden so that users pay an increased share of the costs.

The Recreational Fee Demonstration Program:

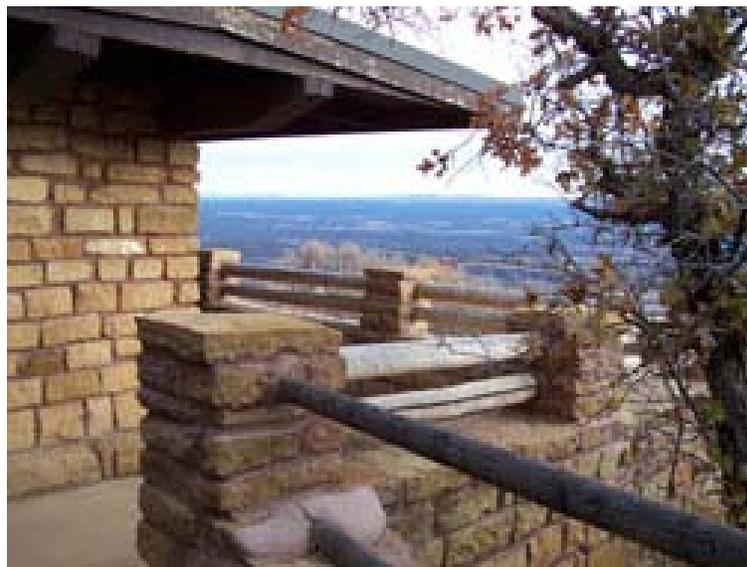
- Allows a significant portion of the fees collected at a public area to be spent directly on behalf of that area.
- Encourages each agency to develop fair and equitable fee collection programs, whether the public areas are large or small, urban or wilderness, natural or historical.
- Promotes the collection of fees where efficient and when it is determined to be able to cover the cost of a new activity with a fee. In some cases, visitors will have to pay for activities that have never had an associated fee.

This successful experiment has been extended three times and with the current extension through December 31, 2005, at which point the program will be evaluated.

Recreation Use Fees

The fees have been used for:

- Repairs and improvements to trails, roads, buildings, campgrounds, and other assets used by the visitor.
- Stabilization and restoration of historic structures, cultural landscapes and archeological sites that enhance the visitor experience.
- Repair and replacement of signs and exhibits for a safe, enjoyable visit.
- Educational programs, guided walks and hikes, and other visitor activities.
- Natural resource protection and understanding to preserve the very things visitors come to our parks to experience.



Rehabilitated Mancos Overlook

America's Public Lands

The future of these public lands rests with all American citizens. The actions we take today will reflect on the price we are willing to pay to pass these lands on to future generations, protected and in better health. We need and welcome your support.

Thank you for supporting the National Park Service.

Mesa Verde National Park is a participant in the Interagency Recreational Fee Demonstration Program. The program authorizes participating parks to keep 80% of the fees collected. These funds have been and will continue to be used for backlogged maintenance, repair projects, interpretation and education, signage, and natural and historical resource preservation. The remaining 20% is distributed to parks that are not part of the program but have similar needs, and other service-wide initiatives.

Examples of Approved Projects

- Create new trails to link Far View Lodge to Far View Archeological Sites
- Repair and upgrade Park Point overlooks
- Replace park radio and phone systems
- Spotted owl survey
- Improve Wetherill Mesa trails
- Make Chapin Mesa Museum and Far View Visitor Center accessible.

Examples of Future Projects

- Audio tour to Wetherill Mesa
- Repaint Morefield Ranger Station
- Develop an enhanced Junior Ranger program.

Examples of Completed Projects

- Road improvements
- Completed upgrade of park road signs
- Rehabilitation of trails on the Mesa Top Loop
- New offices for Resource Management.



Rehabilitation of Geologic Overlook after Chapin #5 Fire



Constructed composting toilets at Balcony House and Cliff Palace



Upgraded storage of the museum collection

The protection and enhancement of these public lands is everyone's responsibility. Our management of this program can only succeed with your participation and support. For additional information or comments, please contact:

Superintendent Larry T. Wiese
Mesa Verde National Park
P.O. Box 8,
Mesa Verde, CO 81330

