

Climbing Program Cost Analysis Addendum  
October 11, 2012

The entire budget of the climbing program in 2011 was approximately \$485,000 dollars; about \$375,000 was collected through the climbing cost recovery program (climbing fee).

The entire budget of the climbing program in 2012 was approximately \$475,000 dollars; about \$365,000 was collected through the climbing cost recovery program.

The proposed minimum program in the 2010 program analysis was \$512,000 dollars. This means that we are still approximately \$30,000-\$40,000 short of our essential program goal. This does not include increasing the \$512,000 with the rate of inflation since 2010. The non-fee based funding has remained stable the last two years at about \$110,000.

Although in **far** better shape than we were before the \$30 to \$43 dollar fee increase, we have still had trouble realizing some of the basic program necessities with staffing, training, equipment, and operations that we have identified as part of our basic operation. Specifically, the 30-40K deficiency has prohibited us from hiring a permanent lead climbing ranger to supervisor the Climbing Information Center.

As a part of our program analysis for a new fee system in 2010, we established a plan that allows our budget to adjust for inflation, though not to exceed the rate of inflation for the period since the new fee was established. This allows us to adjust the fee over the years so that we are not cutting essential program components consistently each year. This helps our climbing program maintain a steady funding level (if climbing numbers remain stable) as costs are driven up due to inflation. The new fee was implemented on March 15, 2011. The rate of inflation for the period March 15, 2011 to March 15, 2012 was 2.4% according to Bureau of Labor statistics.

It is important to remember that the fee amount is driven by the identified cost of the program divided by the number of people who buy passes. The number of people who climb the mountain each season varies. And within that, the ratio of people who pay to those who do not pay varies. People who don't pay are guides and rangers when they summit on their own time. Pass holders who summit the mountain more than once, essentially aren't paying for that second, third, or fourth summit. Those ratios also vary each year. And now, another factor that makes the budget more unpredictable is the ratio of youth passes to adult passes, which also will vary from year to year.

The number of people who climbed Mt. Rainier decreased by about 300 people in 2012. This had a small but tangible effect on our budget as well.

It is for all these factors that we will raise the fee by one dollar for both adults and youth to \$44 and \$31 dollars, respectively. This increase will go into effect on December 1, 2012. All purchasers after this point will be given 2013 passes.

This one dollar increase is expected to make up about \$9,000 dollars in increased costs due to inflation and help bolster the 30-40K deficiency in the current funding scheme. To reference the 2010 program analysis, please visit:

[http://www.nps.gov/mora/parkmgmt/planning.htm#CP\\_JUMP\\_108779](http://www.nps.gov/mora/parkmgmt/planning.htm#CP_JUMP_108779)

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