



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Oregon Caves National Monument
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Oregon Caves National Monument (ORCA) staff is continuing to improve efficiency and accountability in the park fee management program that is governed by the Federal Lands Recreation and Enhancement Act (FLREA). We conducted a complete program review, examining our fee structure, program offerings, and comparison with other cave tour programs. The analysis showed that our tour rates were well below similar operations nationwide, that we lagged in offering the ability to reserve a tour with a credit card, and perhaps most important, that we would successfully reach a larger demographic of youth by dropping the age requirement to 15 years of age for the off-trail – Beginner Caving Exploration Tour.

ORCA is closely tied to the community, a source of local and regional pride, as many folks grew up working at the Chateau and giving Cave Tours, along with bringing 78,164 visitors into the area who spent \$5,036.4 million in communities near the park supporting 74 jobs in the local area (according to a 2012 peer reviewed study). We are reaching out to residents, stakeholders and elected officials for feedback on our proposed fee increases. ORCA has not requested a fee increase since 2006.

ORCA’s commitment to continual improvement and learning leads us to utilizing the website Recreation.gov for reserving the Off Trail Tours reaching out to visitors nationwide. Recreation.gov is a portal for all federal recreation campground and tour reservations where users search for recreation and learning opportunities across all public lands based on their interests. The cost for listing a tour, handling reservations, cancellations etc. is built into the fee itself (thus the need to increase the fee). Users admire the smooth interface on the website and “one stop shopping” for all public lands fee based reservations.

<i>(FROM-TO)</i>	<i>COMPELLING REASON (choose from those listed in memo)</i>	<i>How will funds be used?</i>
Cave Tours - Adult From \$8.50 to \$10.00	Comparability study (attached) supports a fee increase. Last fee increase was in 2006.	To provide cave tours; ensuring visitor safety and protecting cave resources.
Cave Tours - Child From \$6.00 to \$7.00	Comparability study (attached) supports a fee increase. Last fee increase was in 2006. Age range will change from 16 and younger to 15 and younger.	To provide cave tours; ensuring visitor safety and protecting cave resources.
Off-Trail Cave Tour From \$30 to \$45	Comparability Study (attached) supports a fee increase. Fee increase will also support cost of adding this activity to recreation.gov Tours will be for Adults 15+	To provide cave tours; ensuring visitor safety and protecting cave resources. Adding capacity for reservations by credit card
From Cave Tour Group Rate \$6 Adults \$4 Children to not offering a Group Rate.	Proposing eliminating the practice of offering a group rate for tours to align park fee program with national standard.	N/A

The cave tour fees go back into the program, pay for the Rangers giving the tours, education curricula for teachers, development of virtual visits, allowing mobility impaired individuals to see and learn about the cave resources, advancing stewardship and learning for more than traditional park visitors. The tour fees also ensure that there is a reasonably safe route through the cave, yet keeping the “adventure” in the tour. In addition, FLREA allows ORCA to compete for project money addressing deferred maintenance backlog. ORCA staff and the National Park Service value your input and perspective on our fee structure as we seek continual learning, improvement, and engagement as humble stewards of “America’s Best Idea”.

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COMPARABILITY REVIEW

**Park: Oregon Caves
National Monument**

Comparison of: Cave Tour (general)

Date of last fee change: 2006

(Complete form for each type of fee e.g., campground, cave tour, parking, special permit fee, and other use fees.)

	Name of NPS Facility, Service Provided		COMPARABLES						
	Oregon Caves, Cave Tour		Endless Caverns Virginia		Ohio Caverns Ohio		Onandaga Caverns Missouri State Parks		
Quality of facility as compared to NPS facility listed (S = Superior, A = Average, I = Inferior)	N/A		A		S		S		
Distance (miles from NPS Unit)	N/A		>1000		>1000		>1000		
Adult Fee	\$ 8.50		\$ 18.00		\$ 15.00		\$ 12.00		
Children	Age	Under 16		4-11		5-12		6-12	
	Fee	\$6.00		\$8.00		\$9.00		\$7.00	
IA Senior/ IA Access Eligible Age / Fee	62	\$4.25	None		None		65	\$10	
Group:	Size:	12 or more		20 or more		20 or more		10 or more	
	Fee:	\$6.00 A / \$4.00 C		\$ 16.00 A \$7.00 C		\$13.50 A / \$8.00 C		\$ 7.00 A / 4.50 C	
Group:	Size:								
	Fee:	\$		\$		\$		\$	
Other:									

Conclusion/Recommendation (Use back of form if necessary):

- Fee for this activity will **REMAIN** at \$
- Fee for this activity will **INCREASE** to \$10 for Adults, \$7.50 for Children (15 and under), and group rates would no longer be offered
- Fee for this activity will **DECREASE** to \$

COMMENTS: These properties were selected based on an extensive comparability study which considered numerous factors including length and duration of tour, quality of interpretive content, guide training and compensation, and other relevant factors. None of the few caves on the west coast were considered comparable. These comparables are the same as used when a rate increase was proposed in 2005. Since the National Park Service began collecting fees for tours in 2001, the fees for adults and children have only been raised \$1. A general cave tour is 90 minutes in length and considered moderately strenuous, participants do not need to wear special protective equipment

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COMPARABILITY REVIEW

**Park: Oregon Caves
National Monument**

Comparison of: Off Trail Cave Tour

Date of last fee change: 2006

(Complete form for each type of fee e.g., campground, cave tour, parking, special permit fee, and other use fees.)

	Name of NPS Facility, Service Provided		COMPARABLES			
	Oregon Caves, Off Trail Cave Tour		Moaning Cavern Park, Vallecito, CA	Rushmore Cave (SD) Xpedition Adventure Tour	Inner Space Cavern, TX	
Quality of facility as compared to NPS facility listed (S = Superior, A = Average, I = Inferior)	N/A		S	I	S	
Distance (miles from NPS Unit)	N/A		467	>1000	>1000	
Adult Fee	\$ 30		\$ 76	\$ 45	\$ 100	
Children	Age	Adults only (16+)	12 years and older	14 years and older	13 years and older	
	Fee					
IA Senior/ IA Access Eligible Age / Fee	62	\$15.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Group:	Size:	2-6	2-8	1-5	4 minimum	
	Fee:					
Group:	Size:					
	Fee:	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Other:						

Conclusion/Recommendation (Use back of form if necessary):

- Fee for this activity will **REMAIN** at \$
- Fee for this activity will **INCREASE** to \$45 for Adults (16+)
- Fee for this activity will **DECREASE** to \$

COMMENTS: These properties were selected based on numerous factors including locations that provide a comparable "off-trail" experience that includes teaching caving techniques and etiquette, length and duration of tour, protective gear provided (hard hat, caving lamp, coveralls, knee and shin pads, gloves, and other relevant factors. The tour is approximately three hours including safety information and gear assignment. The fee increase will also cover costs to take reservations for these tours via Recreation.gov.