



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Zion National Park
Springdale, UT 84767



C38 (ZION)

November 16, 2019

Dear Commercial Use Authorization Applicants:

We appreciate your continued efforts to connect park visitors to the natural and cultural resources of Zion National Park. Please review the information provided below pertaining to the park's Visitor Use Management Plan and 2019 Commercial Use Authorization Application Package.

Current Planning Efforts:

Zion National Park is in the process of completing a Visitor Use Management Plan. The purpose of the plan is to address a wide range of issues associated with rapidly growing visitation and changing use patterns which include visitor health and safety concerns, diminished quality of visitor experiences, natural and cultural resource impacts, heavy strain on park facilities and park operations, and effects to and from adjacent communities. The plan will evaluate the need to directly manage visitor use levels in the park through the establishment of visitor capacities (for private and commercial use). Visitor capacities define the maximum amounts and types of use that an area can accommodate while achieving and maintaining desired conditions. Please visit <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/zion> for more information.

To provide guidance on how the park will manage commercial services in the future, a Commercial Services Strategy is being completed as a component of the Visitor Use Management Plan. Zion's Commercial Use Authorization Program (CUA) is undergoing a review as part of this process. Elements of this strategy have included public outreach on current and prospective commercial services, a market analysis focusing on the economic environment in and around Zion National Park, and an evaluation of services in relation to existing park management plans and future management objectives. If this review finds any currently authorized commercial service or level of service to be inappropriate, a recommendation to modify and/or discontinue the service will be provided for public comment during a review of the draft Visitor Use Management Plan / Environmental Assessment. The potential for modifying and/or raising CUA program fees will also be evaluated by this plan anticipated for release in 2019.

The legislation authorizing CUA's (54 USC 101925 (C)(2)) states "the incidental use of resources of the unit by commercial operations which provide services originating and terminating outside of the boundaries of the unit;" As a reminder, Commercial Use Authorizations are not concession contracts, have no preferential right of renewal, and do not provide a guaranteed business opportunity. Services administered under this commercial management tool were not intended to act as an organization's primary business model or revenue stream.

Implementation of a Road Based Tour CUA:

The National Park Service (NPS) is standardizing road-based commercial tour CUA requirements and fees agency-wide. Beginning October 1, 2019, all road-based commercial tour operators are required to:

- Obtain a CUA for each NPS unit in which they operate;
- Pay a required CUA application fee of \$300.00 per application and;
- Submit mandatory annual CUA reports after each CUA operating season.

Zion National Park anticipates releasing a Road-based Tour (RBT) application package in April of 2019. In preparation, you may find additional information regarding 2019 Road-based Tour requirements at <https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/commercial-use-authorizations.htm>

Future Entrance Fee Changes:

Beginning October 1, 2019, Annual and Lifetime passes will no longer be valid for commercial entry into the park. The per person fee of \$20.00 will be charged for each participant in your CUA group (including road-based tours). This change applies to all CUA permits.

2019 Application Package:

Zion National Park is now accepting applications for 2019 CUAs. Important information on the 2019 application process can be found below:

- The 2019 application package is now available at: <https://www.nps.gov/zion/getinvolved/commercial-use-authorization.htm>
- The 2019 application window will close on April 1, 2019. ***Applications received or postmarked after April 1, 2019, will not be accepted*** and the applicant will not be eligible to operate in Zion National Park in 2019. In order to have a permit by January 1, 2019, completed application materials and payments must be received no later than Friday, December 7, 2018.
- Applications must be submitted ***at least three weeks*** in advance to receive consideration. Additional processing time will be added for incomplete applications. A checklist has been included with the application.
- All application materials should be submitted electronically to zion_commercialservices@nps.gov. All other electronic correspondence or inquiries should also be sent to this email address. Phone inquiries should be directed to (435) 772-0231.
- Returning applicants must ensure that 2018 annual reports are submitted to zion_commercialservices@nps.gov no later than February 28, 2019. Annual reports must be submitted for each CUA held (organizations holding multiple CUAs must submit a separate annual report for each). If a CUA was issued, but no business occurred, an annual report must still be submitted documenting zero trips and zero revenue.
- Permittees are required to carry General Liability Insurance. 'Professional Liability Insurance' or other alternatives to 'General Liability Insurance' will not be accepted. Insurance requirements are specified in the Attachment B Form (General Authorization Provisions) under condition #4. Applications not meeting insurance requirements may be denied or receive delayed processing.

- National Park Service policy states that commercial permit operators cannot require clients to sign a waiver of liability statement, insurance disclaimer, or indemnification agreement. The 2019 Zion CUA Application checklist contains important information about Visitor Acknowledgement of Risk (VAR) requirements. Applicants are encouraged to carefully review VAR requirements before submitting applications. Applications not meeting VAR requirements may be denied or receive delayed processing.
- All applicants are encouraged to carefully read the Activity/Service specific Operating Plan as program updates occur annually.

On Wednesday, February 20, 2019, from 8:00 - 4:00 p.m. Zion National park will be holding its second annual "All CUA Holders Meeting" at the Zion Nature Center located adjacent to the South Campground. We strongly encourage permit administrators and guides to attend. CUA program updates, park updates, and important guide resources will be discussed.

For new applicants, welcome and thank you for joining in our efforts to provide meaningful visitor experiences in Zion National Park. For those of you returning, welcome back and thank you for your continued contributions to that effort. If you have any questions about this correspondence, please contact Doug Dawson, Concessions Management Specialist at (435) 772-0231 or at zion_commercialservices@nps.gov.

Sincerely,



 Jeff Bradybaugh
Superintendent