

State Park and Reservoir Entrance Gate Fees

Beginning June 1, 2010, we are suspending the \$1.00 weekday (Mon-Thurs) discount at our entrance gates.

Why are you suspending this discount? State agencies have been asked to make a 15% adjustment in their budgets to ensure that we avoid a deficit during these difficult economic times. Suspending this discount in combination with several cost saving measures allows us to meet our required budget adjustment.

Are there other changes at this time to assist with the budget adjustments? In locations with swimming pools, you may see some changes in pool hours or days of operation. There may be some variation from property to property, so check at the park or reservoir office.

We have, over the last year, made some adjustments to winter hours in some nature centers. Our staff have reset thermostats, reduced travel and been extremely careful with the purchase of supplies and equipment. The YHCC program has provided us with significant savings in summer staffing costs.

I have a campground reservation saying entrance is \$4 Monday-Thursday. Will you honor that? Yes, if you arrive and enter the gate Monday through Thursday.

The printed Indiana Recreation Guide says that the weekday entrance fee is \$4. Why change now? Fees listed in the Indiana Recreation Guide are always subject to change. Changing now, at the beginning of our main recreation season, is the most practical and efficient way to make the change.

Are you planning to change other fees? No, not at this time.

My taxes support the DNR—why do I have to adjust to this change? Every tax dollar that you pay is divided many ways to support a wide variety of state services. A very small percentage of each tax dollar is appropriated to the DNR, and state parks and reservoirs receives only a portion of DNR funds. Operation of state parks and reservoirs costs each Hoosier approximately \$1.87 in tax dollars annually. This covers approximately one-third of our operating costs. User fees currently pay for about two-thirds of state park and reservoir services.

Where does the money actually go when I pay for services at state parks and reservoirs? All of the revenue collected from entrance fees, camping, programs and permits is placed in a dedicated account used only to fund the operations at state parks and reservoirs.

Doesn't this change have to be approved by the Natural Resources Commission? No. In 2005, the NRC approved a range of fees that can be managed by our DNR Director with upper limits established. The suspension of this weekday entrance discount is well within those limits.

When is the last time the gate fee changed? Entrance fees last changed in January, 2006. The daily entrance fee was \$2 from 1987 to 2000, \$3 in 2001, and \$4 from 2002-2005. In 2006 we initiated the weekday discount and increased weekend gate fees to \$5/day.

If you compare our fees to other items you purchase, you'll still find a bargain. A first class stamp cost 22 cents in 1987. It has doubled in price to the current 44 cents. A dozen eggs cost about 78 cents in 1987; today the same eggs cost \$2 or more. A gallon of gas cost about 95 cents in 1987. That cost has more than doubled or even tripled since then.

With a visit to a state park or reservoir, you find yourself wrapped in several thousand acres of forests, meadows, wetlands and prairies. A family of four can hike, swim and enjoy nature exhibits and programs for much less than the cost of dinner and a movie.

Thanks for asking about our operations, and thanks for supporting Indiana State Parks and Reservoirs!

State Parks and Reservoirs at a Glance

- We maintain approximately 2080 buildings.
- State Park Inns, with 612 rooms, is the 4th largest state park inn system in the country.
- We have more than 560 miles of hiking, biking and horseback riding trails.
- Reservoirs offer approximately 69,000 acres of public hunting land.
- We have over 39,000 acres of lakes, accessed by 75 boat ramps and 17 marinas.
- We have 7,452 campsites and 131 cabins.
- We have 17,000 picnic tables, 174 picnic shelters and 163 playgrounds.
- Reservoir properties maintain over 350 wood duck nesting boxes.
- We manage 15 year-round nature centers and 8 seasonal centers visited by a half-million people. Each year Educational programs are attended by a quarter of a million students, teachers and families.
- Approximately 15 million visitors use the 178,330 acres managed by the State Parks and Reservoirs each year.

