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Comments: Recreation Fees

In response to the Wilderness Use Permits, I am not opposed to the permitting system, nor the permit fees, BUT the reservation fees charged by Recreation.gov are the negative issue I have concerns with around this program. Though the fees seem reasonable now, How do we not expect those reservation fees to increase to what the campground reservation fees have reached?

For example, Reserving a campsite will easily cost you a (cheap) night's camping just to reserve a site, and if you don't reserve early, the campgrounds are filled by RV's that reserve everything. Personally, this has priced my family out of a lot of camping in recent years. It is too expensive to reserve campsites. Camping 5 times a summer will cost \$40 in reservation fees. Many campgrounds are \$20 to \$30 a night!! And Cancellation and Change fees are more costs that deter from making reservations the low income families that can't easily absorb those costs and ultimately deter them from using our public spaces, because they are too expensive. Many families camp because it can be a cost effective way to recreate. Young families camping are the way to get more kids to enjoy the outdoors, and then as the kids grow, they instill that love for camping and the outdoors. These fees are selecting for wealthier, OLDER users of campgrounds, that do not have time limitations due to school and work schedules and do not have financial stress of taking care of children when every dollar spent must be considered. Reserving a campsite 3 months ahead of time and then faced with the decision when the weekend comes of forcing your family to camp in terrible weather conditions or forfeit your reservation and all the costs that went with it, or pay more to change your reservation, it just gets to be too much. Once that older cohort of users are no longer using the campgrounds and the younger kids have grown up without the exposure to camping because their families couldn't afford it, who is left to care about public lands?

In short, the Reservation fee through recreation.gov seems like another slap in the face of those low income families trying to use our public lands.