FINAL PROPOSED RULE # 26-P009.

Final Proposed Filing - Coversheet

Instructions:

In accordance with Title 3 Chapter 25 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated and the "Rule on Rulemaking" adopted by the Office of the Secretary of State, this filing will be considered complete upon filing and acceptance of these forms with the Office of the Secretary of State, and the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules.

All forms shall be submitted at the Office of the Secretary of State, no later than 3:30 pm on the last scheduled day of the work week.

The data provided in text areas of these forms will be used to generate a notice of rulemaking in the portal of "Proposed Rule Postings" online, and the newspapers of record if the rule is marked for publication. Publication of notices will be charged back to the promulgating agency.

PLEASE REMOVE ANY COVERSHEET OR FORM NOT REQUIRED WITH THE CURRENT FILING BEFORE DELIVERY!

Certification Statement: As the adopting Authority of this rule (see 3 V.S.A. § 801 (b) (11) for a definition), I approve the contents of this filing entitled:

Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees for State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands

/s/ Julia S. Moore , on 10/16/2026
(signature) (date)

Printed Name and Title:
Julia S. Moore, Secretary of Agency of Natural Resources

RECEIVED BY: _____

- ☐ Coversheet
- ☐ Adopting Page
- ☐ Economic Impact Analysis
- ☐ Environmental Impact Analysis
- ☐ Strategy for Maximizing Public Input
- ☐ Scientific Information Statement (if applicable)
- ☐ Incorporated by Reference Statement (if applicable)
- ☐ Clean text of the rule (Amended text without annotation)
- ☐ Annotated text (Clearly marking changes from previous rule)
- ☐ ICAR Minutes
- ☐ Copy of Comments
- ☐ Responsiveness Summary

1. TITLE OF RULE FILING:
   Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees for State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands
2. PROPOSED NUMBER ASSIGNED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE
   26P009
3. ADOPTING AGENCY:
   Agency of Natural Resources
4. PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON:
   (A PERSON WHO IS ABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CONTENT OF THE RULE).

   Name: Nate McKeen, Director of State Parks

   Agency: Natural Resources

   Mailing Address: 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2, Montpelier VT 05620

   Telephone: 802-777-0814 Fax:

   E-Mail: Nate.McKeen@vermont.gov

   Web URL *(WHERE THE RULE WILL BE POSTED)*: vtstateparks.com
5. SECONDARY CONTACT PERSON:
   (A SPECIFIC PERSON FROM WHOM COPIES OF FILINGS MAY BE REQUESTED OR WHO MAY ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT FORMS SUBMITTED FOR FILING IF DIFFERENT FROM THE PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON).

   Name: Emily White

   Agency: Natural Resources

   Mailing Address: 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2, Montpelier VT 05620

   Telephone: 802-595-1044 Fax:

   E-Mail: Emily.White@vermont.gov
6. RECORDS EXEMPTION INCLUDED WITHIN RULE:
   (DOES THE RULE CONTAIN ANY PROVISION DESIGNATING INFORMATION AS CONFIDENTIAL; LIMITING ITS PUBLIC RELEASE; OR OTHERWISE, EXEMPTING IT FROM INSPECTION AND COPYING?) No

   IF YES, CITE THE STATUTORY AUTHORITY FOR THE EXEMPTION:

   PLEASE SUMMARIZE THE REASON FOR THE EXEMPTION:
7. LEGAL AUTHORITY / ENABLING LEGISLATION:

(THE SPECIFIC STATUTORY OR LEGAL CITATION FROM SESSION LAW INDICATING WHO THE ADOPTING ENTITY IS AND THUS WHO THE SIGNATORY SHOULD BE. THIS SHOULD BE A SPECIFIC CITATION NOT A CHAPTER CITATION).

Title 10 V.S.A. Chapter 83 S2603(c);S2606(b)

8. EXPLANATION OF HOW THE RULE IS WITHIN THE AUTHORITY OF THE AGENCY:
   The authorizing statute requires the Commissioner to establish rules and rates and fees for use of department-managed lands.
9. THE FILING HAS CHANGED SINCE THE FILING OF THE PROPOSED RULE.
10. THE AGENCY HAS INCLUDED WITH THIS FILING A LETTER EXPLAINING IN DETAIL WHAT CHANGES WERE MADE, CITING CHAPTER AND SECTION WHERE APPLICABLE.
11. SUBSTANTIAL ARGUMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS WERE RAISED FOR OR AGAINST THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL.
12. THE AGENCY HAS INCLUDED COPIES OF ALL WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS AND SYNOPSES OF ORAL COMMENTS RECEIVED.
13. THE AGENCY HAS INCLUDED A LETTER EXPLAINING IN DETAIL THE REASONS FOR THE AGENCY'S DECISION TO REJECT OR ADOPT THEM.
14. CONCISE SUMMARY (**150 WORDS OR LESS**):
    Following is a list of proposed changes: Simplifies minimum reservation period determination for all site types to be based on individual characteristics, use, and occupancy patterns, set by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Removes system-wide remote site maximum stay of seven nights. Provides Commissioner authority to set rates for State Park services based on specific criteria, and is consistent with recommendations in the 2023 Vermont State Parks Modernization Study. Standardizes advanced reservation period. Modernizes smoking policy, composting information, service animal language and non-discrimination language. Amends pet policy to include nuisance animal criteria. Removes procedure for assigning slips at Burton Island Marina. Updates license and special use permit (SUP) base prices. Clarifies license definition. Removes outdated statute

reference. Administratively clarifies language within existing rules.

15. EXPLANATION OF WHY THE RULE IS NECESSARY:

These rule updates are intended to acknowledge VSA Title 10 V.S.A. Chapter 83 S2603(c) providing authority to the Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation to set rates for state park services. Periodic adjustments are necessary to match the true costs of state park system operations and maintenance. The current Vermont State Parks rules structure regarding fees causes a significant lag in response time between realized costs, changing market rates, and ability to implement rate adjustments and other cost-recovery recommendations from the Parks Modernization Study.

Additionally, these rule updates provide streamlined authority to the Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation to set the minimum camping reservation period based on proposed criteria, to better ensure site utilization and increase camping access.

Other rule updates are necessary to modernize language and continue to ensure a hiqh-quality visitor experience.

16. EXPLANATION OF HOW THE RULE IS NOT ARBITRARY:

All park-related changes are a direct outcome of deliberate consideration from a combination of park system, visitor, and stakeholder needs and interests, including the 2023 Parks Modernization Study (https://www.vtstateparks.com/sites/stateparks/files/documents/Parks_Modernization_Study_Full.pdf).

17. LIST OF PEOPLE, ENTERPRISES AND GOVERNMENT ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS RULE:

State park campground, Seyon Lodge, and marina visitors, state park day use visitors, and special use and license permit holders on department-managed land.

18. BRIEF SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC IMPACT (150 WORDS OR LESS):

The ability for the Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation to adjust park rates based on specific criteria provides the ability and flexibility for reasonable cost recovery while remaining competitive with other state park systems in the region. This proposed change provides the flexibility to adjust

rates in the future, but does not impact any current Vermont State Parks rates. The only direct monetary impact of the proposed rule is the adjustment of the Special Use Permit base fee on FPR lands from $50 to $100, and the removal of the per person Special Use Permit day use fee for activities outside of developed State Park fee areas.

19. A HEARING WAS HELD.

20. HEARING INFORMATION
(THE FIRST HEARING SHALL BE NO SOONER THAN 30 DAYS FOLLOWING THE POSTING OF NOTICES ONLINE).

IF THIS FORM IS INSUFFICIENT TO LIST THE INFORMATION FOR EACH HEARING, PLEASE ATTACH A SEPARATE SHEET TO COMPLETE THE HEARING INFORMATION.

Date: 5/11/2026

Time: 05:00 PM

Street Address: Catamount Room, 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2, Montpelier VT

Zip Code: 05620

URL for Virtual: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_ZDU1OWQ0YjItOTgyMy00ZWZjLWJjZDQtN2NkYjEyMDI3ZjU5%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2220b4933b-baad-433c-9c02-70edcc7559c6%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%222254159a-d578-4078-b029-c2e2cca50968%22%7d

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Date:

Time: AM

Street Address:

Zip Code:

URL for Virtual:

Date:

Time: AM

Street Address:

Zip Code:

URL for Virtual:

Date:
Time: AM
Street Address:
Zip Code:
URL for Virtual:

21. DEADLINE FOR COMMENT (NO EARLIER THAN 7 DAYS FOLLOWING LAST HEARING):
    6/11/2026

    KEYWORDS (PLEASE PROVIDE AT LEAST 3 KEYWORDS OR PHRASES TO AID IN THE SEARCHABILITY OF THE RULE NOTICE ONLINE).

State Park
Day Use
Camping
Parks Pricing
Burton Island Marina
Seyon Lodge
Special Use Permit (SUP)
Forests, Parks and Recreation

Adopting Page

Instructions:

This form must accompany each filing made during the rulemaking process:

Note: To satisfy the requirement for an annotated text, an agency must submit the entire rule in annotated form with proposed and final proposed filings. Filing an annotated paragraph or page of a larger rule is not sufficient. Annotation must clearly show the changes to the rule.

When possible, the agency shall file the annotated text, using the appropriate page or pages from the Code of Vermont Rules as a basis for the annotated version. New rules need not be accompanied by an annotated text.

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1. TITLE OF RULE FILING:
   Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees for State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands
2. ADOPTING AGENCY:
   Agency of Natural Resources
3. TYPE OF FILING (*PLEASE CHOOSE THE TYPE OF FILING FROM THE DROPDOWN MENU BASED ON THE DEFINITIONS PROVIDED BELOW*):

   - **AMENDMENT -** Any change to an already existing rule, even if it is a complete rewrite of the rule, it is considered an amendment if the rule is replaced with other text.
   - **NEW RULE -** A rule that did not previously exist even under a different name.
   - **REPEAL** - The removal of a rule in its entirety, without replacing it with other text.

   This filing is **AN AMENDMENT OF AN EXISTING RULE .**

4. LAST ADOPTED (*PLEASE PROVIDE THE SOS LOG#, TITLE AND EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE LAST ADOPTION FOR THE EXISTING RULE)*:

   22-024, Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Fees and Charges for State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands, effective date 08/24/2022

Interagency Committee on Administrative Rules (ICAR) Minutes

Date/Time: March 19, 2026, 3:00 PM

Location: Virtually via Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Chair Nick Kramer, Diane Sherman, Jared Adler, John Kessler, Patrick Murphy, and Jennifer Mojo

Members Absent: Nicole Dubuque

Minutes By: Chrissy Gilhuly

- 3:00 p.m. meeting called to order.
- No additions/deletions to agenda. Agenda approved as drafted.
- No public comments made.
- Presentation of Proposed Rules with recommended changes on pages to follow.

1. Department of Forests Park and Recreation (FPR) – Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees on Department Lands.
    a. Simplifies minimum reservation period determination for all site types to be based on individual characteristics, use, and occupancy patterns, set by the Commissioner of FPR. Removes system-wide remote site maximum stay of seven nights. Provides Commissioner authority to set prices based on site characteristics, use patterns, market rates, and reasonable cost recovery, and is consistent with recommendations in the 2023 Vermont State Parks Modernization Study. Standardizes advanced reservation period. Modernizes smoking policy, composting information, service animal language and non-discrimination language. Amends pet policy to include nuisance animal criteria. Removes procedure for assigning slips at Burton Island Marina. Updates license and special use permit (SUP) base prices. Clarifies license definition. Removes outdated VSA reference. Administratively clarifies language within some existing rules.

2. Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) – Lands Management Planning Rule
    a. The purpose of this ANR Lands Management Rule is to codify ANR's land management planning framework and process, and to set forth the requirements for public input related to land management planning.

DRAFT

- Next scheduled meeting is April 13, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.
- 4:01 p.m. meeting adjourned.

To receive this information in an alternative format or for other accessibility requests, please contact:

Agency of Administration
ADM.Secretary@vermont.gov, 802-828-3322

DRAFT

Proposed Rule: Department of Forests Park and Recreation (FPR) – Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees on Department Lands.

Presented By: Danielle Fitzko, Nate Mckeen and Emily White

Motion made to accept the rule by John Kessler, seconded by Patrick Murphy, and passed unanimously, except for Jennifer Mojo, who abstained, with the following recommendations:

1) **Cover Sheet**
    a. If there is room, consider adding "following is a list of changes to rule…"
    b. Economic Impact: Add brief summary of economic impact. Highlight that with these rules primarily give the Commissioner flexibility to change prices in the future, and are not currently changing any prices, with the exception of the several special use permit base prices discussed.
2) **Economic Impact**
    a. Include all details on who and how it will be affected.
    b. Expand on what minimal means as related to fees.
    c. Remove stray #10.
3) **Proposed Rule itself**
    a. Page six of redline: under pets – typo correction.

DRAFT

Proposed Rule: Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) – Lands Management Planning Rule

Presented By: Hannah Phillips

Motion made to accept the rule by Diane Sherman, seconded by Patrick Murphy, and passed unanimously, except for Jennifer Mojo, who abstained, with the following recommendations:

1) **Cover Sheet**
    a. #6: Expand to spell out Agency of Natural Resources.
    b. #7: Harmonize with #6 in spelling out Agency of Natural Resources
    c. #7: Add a ‘s’ to the word use.
    d. #7: Sixth line from the bottom Interloping hyphen ‘lands owned’
    e. #8: Expand; pulling from #9.
2) **Economic Impact**
    a. Cover Sheet: add the details from #3 (ok if the same).

DRAFT

Economic Impact Analysis

Instructions:

In completing the economic impact analysis, an agency analyzes and evaluates the anticipated costs and benefits to be expected from adoption of the rule; estimates the costs and benefits for each category of people enterprises and government entities affected by the rule; compares alternatives to adopting the rule; and explains their analysis concluding that rulemaking is the most appropriate method of achieving the regulatory purpose. If no impacts are anticipated, please specify "No impact anticipated" in the field.

Rules affecting or regulating schools or school districts must include cost implications to local school districts and taxpayers in the impact statement, a clear statement of associated costs, and consideration of alternatives to the rule to reduce or ameliorate costs to local school districts while still achieving the objectives of the rule (see 3 V.S.A. § 832b for details).

Rules affecting small businesses (excluding impacts incidental to the purchase and payment of goods and services by the State or an agency thereof), must include ways that a business can reduce the cost or burden of compliance or an explanation of why the agency determines that such evaluation isn't appropriate, and an evaluation of creative, innovative or flexible methods of compliance that would not significantly impair the effectiveness of the rule or increase the risk to the health, safety, or welfare of the public or those affected by the rule.

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1. TITLE OF RULE FILING:

   Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees for State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands

2. ADOPTING AGENCY:

   Agency of Natural Resources

3. CATEGORY OF AFFECTED PARTIES:

   LIST CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE, ENTERPRISES, AND GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY THE ADOPTION OF THIS RULE AND THE ESTIMATED COSTS AND BENEFITS ANTICIPATED:

   Affected parties are Vermont State Park visitors and Special Use Permit holders utilizing department-managed land. This proposed rule change does not currently change any rates for developed State Park services. The only direct monetary impact is an adjustment of the

special use permit base fee from $50 to $100, balanced with the removal of the $5 per person state park day use fee assessed for special use permit holders recreating outside of developed state park fee areas. For the majority of commercial groups recreating on state land outside of developed fee areas, this will be a net decrease in fees. For commercial entities or organized groups recreating within developed State Park fee areas, this will be an increase of $50 per permit.

4. IMPACT ON SCHOOLS:
INDICATE ANY IMPACT THAT THE RULE WILL HAVE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION, PUBLIC SCHOOLS, LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS CLEARLY STATING ANY ASSOCIATED COSTS:

The proposed rule changes will have no impact on public education or schools.

5. ALTERNATIVES: *CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES TO THE RULE TO REDUCE OR AMELIORATE COSTS TO LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHILE STILL ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVE OF THE RULE*.

The proposed rule changes will have no impact on public education or schools.

6. IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES:
INDICATE ANY IMPACT THAT THE RULE WILL HAVE ON SMALL BUSINESSES (EXCLUDING IMPACTS INCIDENTAL TO THE PURCHASE AND PAYMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES BY THE STATE OR AN AGENCY THEREOF):

The proposed rule changes will have no impact on small businesses.

7. SMALL BUSINESS COMPLIANCE: *EXPLAIN WAYS A BUSINESS CAN REDUCE THE COST/BURDEN OF COMPLIANCE OR AN EXPLANATION OF WHY THE AGENCY DETERMINES THAT SUCH EVALUATION ISN'T APPROPRIATE.*

The proposed rule changes will not create a burden on any small businesses.

8. COMPARISON:
COMPARE THE IMPACT OF THE RULE WITH THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF OTHER ALTERNATIVES TO THE RULE, INCLUDING NO RULE ON THE SUBJECT OR A RULE HAVING SEPARATE REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS:
With increasing recreational demand from sustained visitation levels and visitor expectations, it is not practical to solely reduce operating costs further

without impacting customer service standards, facility standards of care, and the Vermont State Parks brand. The Parks fee structure needs to be sufficient to continue to provide recreational opportunities in Vermont State Parks that meet visitor expectations while meeting the rapidly changing and increasing costs of operation, maintenance, materials, trash removal, utilities and other services integral to the operation of a park. This proposed rule amendment focuses on establishing a method or process for regularly determining whether rates and fees for uses of State Parks need to be increased, decreased or should remain the same. The proposed rule amendments do not directly adjust any Vermont State Parks rates or fees at this time. Therefore, there is no direct economic impact from the proposed rule amendments themselves. However, there could be economic impacts from actions taken under the authority of the rule amendments, namely if the Commissioner determined an increase or decrease in rates and fees is appropriate for an upcoming park season. There are also economic impacts from the "no action" alternative and from the alternative of continuing to propose changes in parks rates and fees through a separate rulemaking process. These impacts are discussed below in more detail.

Proposed Rule: If rates and fees are increased in the future, the Proposed Rule will have economic impacts on the users of Vermont State Parks through higher user fees. The Department has revised the Proposed Rule to include clearer parameters that must be considered in establishing annual rates and fees, including costs of operation, affordability and access to Vermonters. Also, the Department has included a provision that clarifies that higher prices for out-of-state visitors and lower prices for Vermonters may continue to be established (within the LWCF Grant restrictions). The revised Proposed Rule also clarifies that rates and fees may be adjusted up or down no more than once per

year to reflect current operational costs. The new proposed revisions to the Proposed Rule will reduce economic impact to parks users by ensuring that the rates and fees are the lowest possible to cover the Department's operating costs and ensuring continuation of the same quality and level of State Park services. This is supported by existing Parks user and revenue data and the existing budget shortfall.

The "no action" alternative: leave the Rule as it currently is, with no changes in rates and fees. This alternative would result in no economic impact to users because rates and fees would remain the same. However, there would be an economic impact to Vermont State Parks through a continuing and increasing revenue shortfall. This is likely to result in reduced services at State Parks and potentially, if not addressed, could result in limited operations of some or many State Parks. This is supported by existing Parks user and revenue data and the existing budget shortfall. This is not a reasonable or acceptable alternative.

Alternative to continue to only adjust rates and fees through the rulemaking process: This alternative would require the Department to go through rulemaking any time it proposes to adjust a rate or fee either up or down. Continuing to only adjust rates and fees through the rulemaking process will result in a continuing and increasing revenue shortfall, as is currently being experienced, as there is a significant time lag between realized operational cost increases and the ability for FPR to complete the administrative rulemaking process to adjust rates accordingly.
Additionally, reducing operating costs further is not possible without negatively impacting park operations, visitor safety, and visitor experience. Vermont State Parks is operationally self-funded with very limited general fund support. Under this funding system, in order to enjoy high quality state parks, the end user bears a significant portion of funding the operating costs. The alternative is a reduction in services and

standards to balance the state parks operating budget which could lead to a decrease in attendance and fewer people benefiting from the state park system. This is supported by existing Parks user and revenue data and the existing budget shortfall. This is not a reasonable or sustainable option.

Conclusion: the most appropriate method of achieving the regulatory purpose of operating Vermont State Parks and providing the existing level and quality of services to users, is the Proposed Rule. The Proposed Rule, as revised, provides a clear method for establishing annual rates and fees based on clear parameters that focus on actual operational costs, affordability and access to Vermonters. The Proposed Rule, as revised also includes a requirement that the Commissioner consider affordability and access to Vermonters, thereby providing a check on the Department and certainty to users that rates and fees won't change dramatically from year to year. The Proposed Rule, as revised, provides the necessary flexibility to the Department to adjust rates and fees, either up or down, in response to fluctuating market prices that impact operational costs.

Regarding the special use permit fee adjustment, the base fee is intended to cover the cost of administration of the permit. This is the first base fee increase for special use permit fees in approximately 20 years, and is necessary due to increasing costs associated with permit administration, most notably staff time. Raising the base fee to $100 strikes a balance between administrative cost recovery and affordability for organized groups and commercial entities to recreate on FPR land.

9. SUFFICIENCY: *DESCRIBE HOW THE ANALYSIS WAS CONDUCTED, IDENTIFYING RELEVANT INTERNAL AND/OR EXTERNAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED.*
State Parks are operated as efficiently as possible while meeting the growing demand for services and increasing complexity of operations. These proposed rule changes codify the major analysis criteria

used by FPR in evaluating Vermont State Parks rates. Revenue, attendance, and site utilization data is sourced from the parks reservation and point of sale software, and supplemented by VISION as necessary. National Association of State Parks Directors reporting and information requests to other state park systems are used to benchmark against other comparable state park systems' fees.

Environmental Impact Analysis

Instructions:

In completing the environmental impact analysis, an agency analyzes and evaluates the anticipated environmental impacts (positive or negative) to be expected from adoption of the rule; compares alternatives to adopting the rule; explains the sufficiency of the environmental impact analysis. If no impacts are anticipated, please specify "No impact anticipated" in the field.

Examples of Environmental Impacts include but are not limited to:

- Impacts on the emission of greenhouse gases
- Impacts on the discharge of pollutants to water
- Impacts on the arability of land
- Impacts on the climate
- Impacts on the flow of water
- Impacts on recreation
- Or other environmental impacts

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1. TITLE OF RULE FILING:

   Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees for State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands

2. ADOPTING AGENCY:

   Agency of Natural Resources

3. GREENHOUSE GAS: *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACTS THE EMISSION OF GREENHOUSE GASES (E.G. TRANSPORTATION OF PEOPLE OR GOODS; BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE; LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT, WASTE GENERATION, ETC.):*
   The proposed rule changes will have no impact on Greenhouse gas emissions.

4. WATER: *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACTS WATER (E.G. DISCHARGE / ELIMINATION OF POLLUTION INTO VERMONT WATERS, THE FLOW OF WATER IN THE STATE, WATER QUALITY ETC.):*
   The proposed rule changes will have no impact on water resources.

5. LAND: *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACTS LAND (E.G. IMPACTS ON FORESTRY, AGRICULTURE ETC.):*
   The proposed rule changes will have no impact on forestry, agriculture, or other land uses.

6. RECREATION: *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACTS RECREATION IN THE STATE:*
   The rule changes will have a positive impact on recreation. By affirming the Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation's ability to adjust rates and fees based on set criteria, the Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation can remain responsive to evolving visitor expectation and user demands through revenue management and cost recovery that maintains the high-quality, high-value recreation services visitors expect from our state parks. The other rule adjustments outside of price-setting should make for higher-quality recreational experiences.

7. CLIMATE: *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACTS THE CLIMATE IN THE STATE:*
   The proposed rule will have no impact on Vermont's climate.

8. OTHER: *EXPLAIN HOW THE RULE IMPACT OTHER ASPECTS OF VERMONT'S ENVIRONMENT:*
   The proposed rule will have no impact on other aspect's of Vermont's environment.

9. SUFFICIENCY: *DESCRIBE HOW THE ANALYSIS WAS CONDUCTED, IDENTIFYING RELEVANT INTERNAL AND/OR EXTERNAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED.*
   The proposed rule changes are very limited in scope to park operations within the confines of state park fee areas and special use permitting fee adjustments within the confines of department lands. The nature of these rules are limited in complexity and impact.

Public Input Maximization Plan

Instructions:

Agencies are encouraged to hold hearings as part of their strategy to maximize the involvement of the public in the development of rules. Please complete the form below by describing the agency's strategy for maximizing public input (what it did do, or will do to maximize the involvement of the public).

This form must accompany each filing made during the rulemaking process:

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1. TITLE OF RULE FILING:

   Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees for State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands

2. ADOPTING AGENCY:

   Agency of Natural Resources

3. PLEASE DESCRIBE THE AGENCY'S STRATEGY TO MAXIMIZE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED RULE, LISTING THE STEPS THAT HAVE BEEN OR WILL BE TAKEN TO COMPLY WITH THAT STRATEGY:

   Besides conducting a public hearing, the strategy includes notifying the public via the state parks web page (2.3 million annual views), Instagram (47,100 followers), Facebook (58,100 followers), and e-newsletter (45,700 followers). These channels will be utilized in advance of the public hearing to promote the public hearing and provide additional avenues for public feedback.

4. BEYOND GENERAL ADVERTISEMENTS, PLEASE LIST THE PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN OR WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED RULE:

   n/a

State of Vermont *Agency of Natural Resources*
Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3801 [phone] 802-828-1531
www.fpr.vermont.gov [fax] 802-828-1250

To: Rep. Trevor Squirrel, Chair of the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules
Re: Rule Amendment Proposal 26P009
Date: October 16, 2026

Based on feedback received, the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, is submitting proposal 26P009 with the following changes and clarifications to the Final Proposed Rule.

Section I.c. Pets paragraph 3: Added the language "including but not limited to" to clarify that nuisance animals include dogs and other pets. The new proposed language is: "3. No person who is the owner of a pet shall allow the pet to be a nuisance animal. Nuisance animal means any animal, including but not limited to dogs which:…"

Section II.e.1: Added "for pets and for prime sites" to the second sentence, and deleted "(see II.e.2-7 for definitions)" so it now states: "An additional ~~fee~~ rate shall be charged for each additional camper beyond four, for pets and for prime sites."

Sections II.e.3., III.a.1., IV.a.3., V.f.2.a.: Added language to clarify that fees may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner, so it now states:

> II.e.3.: "Fees for camping at any campground or designated remote sites may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1 and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks."
>
> III.a.1.: "Day use fees may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1. and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks."
>
> IV.a.3.: "Marina fees and associated marine-based service fees may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1. and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks."

V.f.2.a: "Room and food service rates may be adjusted by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation annually for the operating season based on factors set forth in Section VII.1. and 2., Fees and Charges for All Uses of State Parks.

Section VII.1: Added language to state that the Department will publish any changes to rates and fees for day use, camping or other overnight lodging on the website and through other park specific outreach channels and in a press release; Added language stating that the Department shall adjust rates and fees no more than once annually prior to the parks operating season unless such change relates to an experimental or special service or promotional or vacation package; and added a requirement that the Commissioner may increase or decrease rates or fees after consideration of factors in Section VII.2. The language now reads as follows:

1. A list of rates and fees for use of State Parks shall be published annually by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and posted on their website. All rate or fee adjustments shall be published at least 90 days in advance on the State Parks website. Any changes to day use or camping and other overnight lodging rates or fees shall additionally be advertised through appropriate existing park-specific outreach channels and a formal press release. The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation may adjust rates and fees no more than once annually prior to the Parks operating season unless such adjustment relates to an experimental or special service or promotional or vacation package as set forth in VII.10 below. The Commissioner may increase or decrease rates or fees as appropriate after consideration of the factors outlined in paragraph VII.2. below.

Section VII.2: Added language stating that the Commissioner may establish lower rates or fees for Vermont residents and higher rates or fees for out of state visitors for specific services; Revised and added new language to establish the factors the Commissioner will consider at a minimum when determining rates and fees, and a list of factors that the Commissioner may also consider. The language now reads as follows:

2. The Commissioner of the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall establish reasonable rates or fees for all uses of State Parks, including but not limited to: overnight camping and campsite reservations in developed State Parks, cottage and cabin rentals, overnight camping at remote campsites, camping and marina fees at Burton Island State Park, rates or fees for use of Green River Reservoir State Park and rental and use of Seyon State Park, fees for day use areas (including individual, vehicle and seasonal passes and punch cards), boat and equipment rentals, firewood sales, miscellaneous merchandise, reservations of day use shelters and other structures available for private rental, sanitary dump station fees, vehicle and equipment storage, reservation and pet fees, and any other use or service including rental of the Mt. Mansfield Stone Hut. The Commissioner may establish a lower rate or fee for Vermont residents and a higher rate or fee for out of state visitors for specific services. The Commissioner will at minimum consider the following in establishing reasonable fees or charges: recovery of the Department's costs to provide the associated service, access for Vermonters, affordability, the type of visitor use or service provided, the amenities of the site or facility, occupancy patterns and demand, market rates and the value of

comparable services. The Commissioner may consider other factors including, but not limited to: broader economic conditions, industry or regional market trends, and unexpected events that significantly affect visitor use or Department operations (for example, public health emergencies or natural disasters)

Section VII.4: Changed "Charges" to "Rates and fees" so it now reads: "Rates or fees for merchandise such as firewood, T-shirts, hats, publications, etc. shall be priced to cover purchase and production costs and be competitive with comparable commercial sales."

Section VII.9: Added the previously existing language back into the Rule: "The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation is permitted to temporarily (not
to exceed one season per project) adjust fees and charges at any area for the purposes of bona fide research or to handle an immediate need or concern."

Section VII.10.: Added in "promotional programs and vacation", adjusted the language slightly to better align with 10 V.S.A. §2603(c)(3) and added that promotional packages and discounted rates are exempt from the proposed 90-day notice period, so it now states: "The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation is permitted to develop State Park ~~experimental~~ services, including experimental or special services, promotional programs, and vacation or special event packages, and may adjust rates or fees and offer discounted rates or fees for those services and packages to promote the park system ~~and~~ or increase campground occupancy. Rates and fees established pursuant to this paragraph for experimental or special services, promotional programs, and vacation or special event packages are exempt from the 90-day notice described in VII.1."

Section VIII.3: Changed the word "of" to "or" for clarity of special use permit definition, so it now states: "It will not involve a permanent structure ~~of~~ or any permanent significant change to the land."

Section IX.b.: Added language to clarify that penalties assessed for violations may be prescribed through statute or rule and that the Department may pursue enforcement through a civil action or by any other means available at law, so it now reads: "A person who violates a rule or regulation adopted pursuant to Chapter 83 of Title 10 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated may be subject to such penalties prescribed by statute or rule or may be subject to enforcement and ~~prescribed under Section 2603 (c) of Title 10 may be imprisoned not more than thirty days or fined not more than $50.00 or both. Such person~~ shall be liable for all damages resulting from a violation to be recovered in a civil action or as otherwise provided by law. ~~under this statute by the person injured (Title 10, Section 2608, Vermont Statutes, Annotated, 1977)."~~

Section IX.c.: Changed language to be consistent with the ANR Nondiscrimination statement so it now reads: "The Department will provide the same services and recreational opportunities to all legitimate state lands visitors without regard to ~~handicap, race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, marital status, or sexual orientation~~ race, religion, creed, color, national origin (including language), ancestry, place of birth, disability, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or breastfeeding."

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

Public Comments Received on Proposed Rule Amendments to

C.V.R. 12-020-009 Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees for State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands

From: Mckeen, Nate
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 11:17 AM
To: Alford, Kaitlin
Subject: Fw: Comments on Rule 26P009

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Nate McKeen Director of State Parks (he/him)
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources | Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2Montpelier, VT 05620-3801
802-777-0814
Nate.mckeen@vermont.gov
anr.vermont.gov

From: vt-noreply@egov.com <vt-noreply@egov.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 11:34 AM
To: Mckeen, Nate <Nate.Mckeen@vermont.gov>
Subject: Comments on Rule 26P009

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Comments on Rule 26P009
Reply To:mcotter520@gmail.com
I am concerned that the change in fees/rates will lead to unfair and unequal price differences for people. It sounds similar to dynamic pricing, which I think could lead to inequity for people trying to book campsites last minute. Specifically, the language that says "Fees for camping at any campground or designated remote sites shall be set by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation..." leaves it up to the determination of the Commissioner. I think it is a better practice to have clear prices for vehicles, camping sites, etc. then to have it be dynamic pricing. The current rule charges a different fee for non-Vermont residents. Will the new rule also include a different fee for non-residents? As a Vermonter, I really value that I pay a slightly smaller fee than non-residents. Especially considering all the other taxes and fees I pay while living in Vermont. A lot of people budget and plan expenses, and by moving to dynamic pricing, you are adding a burden to people who pla
n trips to our parks.

From: Lauren Milideo <lauren.milideo@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 9:02 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Dynamic pricing comment

[You don't often get email from lauren.milideo@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello,

I'm a Vermonter (Moretown), and I and my family are proud and active park visitors. We camp, swim, and hike in state parks across Vermont, and it's an important piece of our family's culture and our summer experience. I want other folks to be able to have the same experience. For this reason, I want to share my thoughts on the proposed dynamic pricing in state parks.

I do support higher pricing for parks that require additional maintenance; this makes sense. Maintaining the parks is vital, and (reasonable) price increases for this purpose is understandable.

I do NOT support dynamic pricing based on demand. This feels so commercialized and gross. Our state parks are for everyone. Pricing those that are popular (and may be popular due to ease of access, provision of needed opportunities like a lake to cool off, and/or proximity to population centers) at a higher rate may put them out of reach for some of the folks who need them and don't have an opportunity to get to a less popular (and possibly more remote) park. Please, don't do this.

Thank you!
Lauren Milideo, PhD
she/her/hers

From: Michael Duell <michael@duellengineering.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 8:46 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Proposed rules changes 26P009

[You don't often get email from michael@duellengineering.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello, I am generally OK with your proposed rules changes. I do have a few specific comments though.

1) I think Vermont Parks are great. Please keep up the good work. I am against any changes that would sacrifice the number of parks, or the quality of the parks. I am willing to pay my fair share to support the parks whenever I use them.

2) I strongly believe the parks need to generate adequate revenue from users to help support the maintenance and improvements of the parks. Park fees should be consistent with the cost of maintaining the parks and providing services to the users.

3) I do not support free admittance to the parks. All users should have to pay for their use of a park. Encouraging users to come at no cost unfairly places the maintenance and improvement burden on others.

Thank you.

Michael Duell.
Waitsfield, VT
703-216-7665

From: Kim Findlay <farafieldfarm@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 8:46 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Park Fees

[You don't often get email from farafieldfarm@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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The fees for camping have been the same since I started visiting VSPs nearly ten years ago. I think it is fair to raise them considering that expenses of operation have likely risen quite a bit.

Perhaps a multi-day camping pass for a discount could be considered although the administration of that might be cumbersome.

#II.3: Eight people to a campsite seems like a lot.

Kim Findlay
Charlotte, VT
802.999.3084

From: Samantha <samantha.langevin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 8:39 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public comment

You don't often get email from samantha.langevin@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello,

In changing park access fees to reflect the popularity or use of a site, I would urge you to consider how that disadvantages some Vermonters. Many sites are popular because they are accessible - easy to get to, near transportation hubs or urban areas, supportive of families or people with out tons of gear for hiking or camping. Increasing fees will make those places further out of reach for folks who deserve access to the outdoors.

It's already hard for Vermonters to access our own outdoors, particularly in the face of increasing numbers of out of state visitors. This proposed change does not feel like it levels the playing field, but instead prices the poorest out of the outdoors.

Thanks,

Samantha

From: Lisa McCullough <clearsister@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 9:28 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Gratitude, Trail Care, and Price hikes

You don't often get email from clearsister@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello.
First, thank you for your good work.

1. we need great trail management such as the upper part of Mt Philo in more of our most-used trails: the trails on Camel's Hump and Mt Mansfield - and many others have been beaten so wide because people don't respect Mud Season, during the Season they walk around wet, and they think it's better to walk on nice soil and plants than to inconvenience themselves or others.
Solutions: better training for hikers,
better invitations from your media teams - please wait! - turn around and find alternatives! - walk through, not around! please stop hiking after the growing season = second mud season.
Better trails that offer safe ascent/descent like Mt Philo stairs will keep most from picking their own line off the trail around a tricky bit or a muddy spot.
Thank you for passing this part along to the media teams, trail design crews, and whoever is behind protecting soil, plants, and trails.
Costs protecting soil structures around trails is a *lonnnng term* investment.

2. The price hike ideas .
A) Yes, it should be sustainable for the parks system. We need to afford to keep the parks in good shape (trails). Yes, some people already getting entrance fee benefits should continue to get them as eligible - and please know that there are many of us who aren't signed up for benefits, don't probably qualify, who also can't afford to go to concerts ($40-100 each), famous museums, local theaters ($25-150 each), or on swanky vacations ($$$?).
Camping is the vacation.
B) re: the idea to increase the price on popular spots: Please don't increase the likelihood that the richest people camp in the prettiest spots: they already get to go to VSO concerts at Shelburne Farms with champagne picnics, they already live on quiet no-outlet roads with views of the lake or mountains ... moonlight and birdsong. They have already had their vacations skiing in Colorado, and a cruise off the Galapagos. They might have a camp on Lake Echo. But they still want the best spots on Burton Island. And they have the work flexibility to be there for several days. I know some of these people, but I am not in their position.
If you make some parks more expensive, or some sites more expensive based on popularity, that makes it harder for regular Vermonters to get them. And we already have to be organized *and* lucky to get the best spots, and also compromise on the dates (usually) we wanted, speaking for myself.

Okay, that's it.
Thank you so much for reading and sharing as appropriate.
Hooray for Vermont State Parks!

Lisa McCullough
802-343-1678

Sent from my iPhone

From: rebecca padnos <rpadnos@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 9:56 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comment on Proposed Fee Changes

You don't often get email from rpadnos@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello,

I am writing to request that you do not raise camping fees for Vermonters. There are a lot of families whose income is above the poverty line, but even camping is a stretch financially. The changes would make special places like Burton Island not an option.

Best,

Rebecca P.

From: Michele Boomhower <michele.boomhower@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 10:46 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Parks Division Proposed Rule Changes

You don't often get email from michele.boomhower@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

I would like to provide a comment on the Parks Division Proposed Rule Changes specific to the setting of variable rates for camp sites based on market demand. As a lifelong Vermonter who has had the privilege of enjoying our state parks over the years, and as I am now entering my retirement years, I would like to encourage the Department to be mindful of families and individuals who are on a fixed income as they consider the rate structure. Popular sites should not be limited to those who can afford to pay a premium price, but should be available for all to enjoy regardless of their ability to pay.

Michele Boomhower
2711 Georgia Shore Rd, Georgia, VT 05478
802-793-8303

From: Lindsay OSteen <osteenlins@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 1:06 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public comment on rule changes

You don't often get email from osteenlins@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom it may concern,
I am a long time user of the Vermont state Parks. I regularly camp with dogs who are better behaved than many children. It is ok for children and adults to be a nuisance with their noise and behavior (with the exception of between the quiet hours) but that is not allowed for dogs??? This seems out of alignment with the intention of your modernization. I would like to see this provision removed with exception of during quiet hours or amended to reflect that people and pets should be held to the same standards. I pay extra to bring my pet and I am restricted the areas I can access with my dog. I think this is an unnecessary provision as everyone has to adhere to quiet hours. It is unlikely we will add any nuisance policy for children or people so lets not set a double standard.

Respectfully,
Lindsay

From: Patti L <pmlancast@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 15, 2026 4:42 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public comment

You don't often get email from pmlancast@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Please fully fund the staff needed to properly achieve these new measures.
Thank you for your great work!

Patti Lancaster
Mendon, Vermont

From: Mckeen, Nate
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 11:16 AM
To: Alford, Kaitlin
Subject: Fw: Comments on Rule 26P009

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Nate McKeen Director of State Parks (he/him)
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources | Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2Montpelier, VT 05620-3801
802-777-0814
Nate.mckeen@vermont.gov
anr.vermont.gov

From: vt-noreply@egov.com <vt-noreply@egov.com>
Sent: Monday, June 8, 2026 12:48 PM
To: Mckeen, Nate <Nate.Mckeen@vermont.gov>
Subject: Comments on Rule 26P009

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Comments on Rule 26P009
Reply To:arscull@gmail.com
As a frequent visitor to VT State Parks, these rules will directly affect me and my family - but we are lucky enough that the cost increases will not deter or prevent us from visiting and camping at the parks. The State Park system is one of the best things about VT, and I understand that revenue needs to be raised to maintain these parks and adequately pay those who steward them. I am very willing to pay more in support of this work.
That said, I would like to see more provisions that protect access and reduce the cost burden for Vermonters. Different fees for those in state versus out of state is the main thing - the Dept could increase the out of state fees by a higher amount and still be less expensive than what MA, CT, or NY charge for their parks. People would pay it.

From: Mary McQuillen <mbmcq444@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 9:36 AM
To: ANR - Parks <ANR.Parks@vermont.gov>
Subject: Idea for fees

[You don't often get email from mbmcq444@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Good morning,

I saw your social post about keeping parks affordable.

When paying, customers could be offered an extra donation option. Kind of like when a business asks for a tip but it would be "additional donation to keep Vermont parks affordable for all." Those who can, may. Those who can't are not obliged to.

When I was on music committee at school, our best fundraiser for the scholarship fund was a line on permission slips that said "additional donation to scholarship fund to ensure all children can attend. ". Those $5 added up.

Love the parks. Thank you for keeping them so accessible.

Mary McQuillen
Fairfax, VT

From: RA <vtkitty@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 7:33 PM
To: ANR - Parks <ANR.Parks@vermont.gov>
Cc: VTKITTY@GMAIL.COM
Subject: Proposed Park rules

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. No part of any sleeping unit or vehicles on the campsite may be placed outside the cleared area designated as the site. The maximum number of vehicles allowed per site, including self-propelled sleeping units, shall be two. Other vehicles shall be parked in areas designated by park manager.

This is ridiculous...2 vehicles per campsite. Parking in cleared areas only. A single family may have 3 vehicles, not including visitors. This is clear discrimination against disabled persons. A disabled person, exceeding the 2 vehicle limit will be forced to park, potentially, thousands of feet from a site. "Cleared areas"....grass grows and covers cleared areas, annually. This is more parking prohibition, disquised as environmental BS.

8. Dishwashing is allowed only at individual campsites or areas specifically designated as dishwashing areas.

Dishwashing has always been considered harmless to the environment. This is another woke environmental policy.

9. Gray water and other direct discharges on the ground from camping vehicles and trailers are not permitted. Holding tanks or other appropriate containers must be emptied at the campground "sanitary dump station" or other suitable facility.

Again..... dishwashing and grey water, are harmless camping discharges. This is a "woke" policy.

My family and I grew up in Franklin and currently live there. We went camping once about 3 years ago at Carmi. We were forced to park in a remote, empty site, because of the idiotic 2 vehicle rule.

My family members used to camp, every year, at a Vermont State Park. We have not camped at a Vermont park since our last unpleasant visit: Park employees acting like military drill Sargents, 2 vehicle limits, forcing us to park

far from our site.

*****In addition, if the parks Dept is seeking efficiency..... The use of electric Ranger UTVs is anything but efficient. The up front new cost is multiple times that of an ICE engine or the use of used golf carts. Repair costs for electric Rangers are extremely high, relative to ICE VEHICLES or golf carts.... This is wokeism... disquised as care for the environment.

My family will no longer patronize Vermont parks, as long as they are operated by woke employees and woke departments. Vermont is regulating itself into bankruptcy!

Richard Andersen and Family

Sent from my Galaxy

From: lar.2436@gmail.com <lar.2436@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2026 1:17 PM
To: ANR - Parks <ANR.Parks@vermont.gov>
Subject: Comments about the state park regulations

You don't often get email from lar.2436@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello,

Please accept my comments below regarding the changes to the State Park rules:

Proposal:

Insert a new II.a.2 as follows (current #2 becomes #3):

Individuals with a Vermont primary residence shall have a 3-day opportunity to make a reservation before opening the reservations to the general public.

Note: I feel strongly about this. We have tried to make reservations for certain spaces or cabins and have gotten closed out; meanwhile when we go to the parks, we often see the best spaces taken by out of staters.

II.a.4 – **Does 'gear' need to be defined?**

NEW II.e.3 :

Vermonters with a primary residence in Vermont shall receive a discounted rate.

VII. RATES AND FEES FOR ALL USES OF STATE PARKS

2. The Commissioner of the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall establish rates and fees for all uses of State Parks, including but not limited to: overnight camping and campsite reservations in developed State Parks, cottage and cabin rentals, overnight camping at remote campsites, camping and marina fees at Burton Island State Park, rental and use of Seyon State Park, fees for day use areas (including individual, vehicle and seasonal passes and punch cards), boat and equipment rentals, firewood sales, miscellaneous merchandise, reservations of day use shelters and other structures available for private rental, sanitary dump station fees, vehicle and equipment storage, reservation and pet fees, and any other use or service including rental of the Mt. Mansfield Stone Hut. Individuals with a Vermont primary residence shall receive a discounted rate on State Park fees. The Commissioner may consider the following in establishing rates and fees: characteristics of the area, the type of use, occupancy patterns, market rates and value, and recovery of the cost to the Department of providing such services, and any other factor determined to be appropriate by the Commissioner.

Note: I feel strongly that language needs to be inserted in the bill to ensure that Vermont taxpayers receive a discounted rate. These are our parks first and foremost.

Thank you,
Lynne Robbins
Jericho, VT

Lynne A Robbins
lar.2436@gmail.com

From: Mckeen, Nate
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 11:15 AM
To: Alford, Kaitlin
Subject: Fw: Comments on Rule 26P009

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

VERMONT
Nate McKeen Director of State Parks (he/him)
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources | Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2Montpelier, VT 05620-3801
802-777-0814
Nate.mckeen@vermont.gov
anr.vermont.gov

From: vt-noreply@egov.com <vt-noreply@egov.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 6, 2026 8:08 AM
To: Mckeen, Nate <Nate.Mckeen@vermont.gov>
Subject: Comments on Rule 26P009

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Comments on Rule 26P009
Reply To:hikevt4395@atomicmail.io
Adopting a private industry style pricing for a public resource is unethical. Imagine a government that lets you get out of jury duty if you can pay a fee because the courts budget is short. An express lane for the liquor license or at the DMV if you can pay the fee.

If a user is geographically limited or by schedule to a certain park or certain time of year they could potentially be locked into higher prices. A person who could be priced out of their favorite park or campsite because it happens to be popular. This model is simply not consistent with treating people equitably say nothing of the lack of review.

As I understand this is a proposal to address a budget shortfall, but like with all public resources the burden should be spread across then entire public. Be that with general fund money or at the least equal pricing throughout the park system.

I am a long time user but failed to speak up when you added prime sites as the price increase was negligible and worry that this opens it up to being substantial.

I would encourage you to rewrite the price increase in a way that isn't arbitrary and vague. While your are at it simplified.

Why does it cost me more to solo camp with my cat, who never leaves the camper than if I brought 3 friends? Why does a state that is so highly dependent on tourism charge our out of state guests so much more for a campsite - we need to encourage more tourists to come to our state and bring their dollars, operational costs surely can't be more based on state of residence. Why do 2 campsites cost different amount of money when I would defy anyone to able to tell me the difference between a prime site and a regular site?

If the issue is the ability to react to the rapid inflation, why not a rule where the state parks Commissioner sets new pricing structure for the first year and has the ability to uniformly raise prices up to x percentage every 2 years or whatever the time frame?

The discriminatory, unwelcoming, arbitrary, and without review nature of this rule change is simply un Vermont like.

Outlook

Fw: Comments on Rule 26P009

From Mckeen, Nate <Nate.Mckeen@vermont.gov>
Date Mon 5/18/2026 2:40 PM
To White, Emily <Emily.White@vermont.gov>; Alford, Kaitlin <Kaitlin.Alford@vermont.gov>

Get Outlook for iOS

From: vt-noreply@egov.com <vt-noreply@egov.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 10:01 AM
To: Mckeen, Nate <Nate.Mckeen@vermont.gov>
Subject: Comments on Rule 26P009

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Comments on Rule 26P009
Reply To:joshuapauljerome@gmail.com
Good Morning,

This message is intended as public comment on the proposed rules changes ANR is proposing for state park rules and fee changes.

I love our state parks and have purchased the day use annual pass for several years now. I also typically camp in Vermont state parks at least 12 nights a year and have done that for at least the last 10 years. I understand the State wanting to be more flexible in their rules to enable pricing that is more in alignment with the value the camping and use opportunities offer. One of the reasons why I take my family to Vermont state parks is that it is affordable, compared to other hospitality models like hotels. It is always a challenge to get the campsite I want because of the reservation system, which I know is being revamped, but knowing what the pricing is when I'm booking out 11 months in advance is important. I would hope that people booking 11 months out don't have a change in their pricing structure because that would impact financial planning.

Additionally, I understand the intention is to be able to price sites on a dynamic matrix i.e. some sites are worth more than others. That is certainly true, so I think it will be important to have a system that is characteristic matrix based instead of subjective. I believe this would make it easier and equitable.

Regarding state parks that have pavilions for rental. I am getting married in August 2026 and my partner and I looked at several state parks pavilion/shelter rentals as options for our wedding because we love Vermont state parks and spend a lot of time in them. We found a few that we could make work, but there were limitations that ultimately prevented us from moving forward. Such as, lack of electricity, accessibility in the evenings or out of season, distance to restrooms or inability to rent a port o potty. I think ANR should look at all of their pavilion assets and review what kinds of amenities would be needed

to be installed or improved, and what kinds of policy changes need to be implemented to increase the value of those assets and use by residents and non-residents.

Thank you,
Josh Jerome
Montpelier

From: Faith Brown <fbrownie@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 3:27 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Dynamic pricing

[You don't often get email from fbrownie@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Please make any changes consistent over time so that for a year or so you can count on a certain price and not having in change based on the season etc…

Thank you
Sent from my iPhone

From: Brooke Wilkinson <brookewilk@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 3:30 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: change of fees

You don't often get email from brookewilk@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Vermont State Parks are often a go-to for my family. I have been such an avid supporter of the accessibility of the parks for our location and for our budget. In fact, I wrote a story about how important it was when I became a mother and needed an affordable and attainable getaway.
https://www.vermontpublic.org/programs/2015-06-12/wilkinson-state-park-prescription

I fear that increasing the price will make the parks inaccessible for those of us who are not in a comfortable socio-economic category. I hope that, if you do increase your prices, you keep your local clientele in mind, lest you only become a getaway for those who have time and money to play with.

I appreciate that you are allowing for online reservations closer to the date, and that one night options exist. Often, my kids and I will decide spontaneously to support one of your parks for an overnight trip. I hope that we will still be able to do that.

Thank you,
Brooke Wilkinson

Comments Received By Phone

4/17/26
Dan Kehoe
802-318-8098

He is looking for a senior camping discount like the National Forests. The federal Interagency Senior Pass provides a 50% camping discount to the passholder on federal lands. He said he was born in Vermont and he pays tax dollars. Why can't Vermont State Parks offer camping discounts for seniors?

From: Zack Porter <zporter@standingtrees.org>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 4:34 PM
To: Mckeen, Nate; White, Emily; ANR - Parks
Subject: Fwd: Comments and questions re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from zporter@standingtrees.org. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Mr. McKeen and Ms. White,

I sent a previous version of this email at 4:29pm and all messages bounced back.

I am resending without attachments.

Thanks,

Zack

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Zack Porter** <zporter@standingtrees.org>
Date: Mon, May 18, 2026 at 4:29 PM
Subject: Comments and questions re: rulemaking proposal 26P009
To: <Nate.McKeen@vermont.gov>, <Emily.White@vermont.gov>, <parks@vermont.gov>

Dear Mr. McKeen and Ms. White,

I hope this email finds you well. The following email contains questions and comments regarding rulemaking proposal 26P009, "Rules and Regulations for Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees on Department Lands." I'm grateful that Emily White responded promptly to my phone call this morning.

As I will explain below, this rulemaking process has been conducted in violation of 3 V.S.A. § 838 and the Rule on Rulemaking. We request that the process be started over again according to statute and the Rule on Rulemaking.

I am an immense fan of VT State Parks on a personal level. My family goes camping, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, biking, and paddling at Vermont State Parks year-round. I'm very grateful to you for the services that you provide to Vermonters and visitors alike, and for protecting many important and beloved places across the state.

In 2021, I co-founded Standing Trees to be an organization that advocates for the protection of Vermont's public lands, including state parks. Our members regularly visit and use Vermont state parks. A big part of our work is making sure that the public has a meaningful say in how decisions are made for the future of Vermont's public lands. For example, we are very involved with the ongoing ANR Lands Management Planning Rule process. Standing Trees is also concerned with the ability of the public to access public lands, such as the fees and permits that might be required to visit or stay at a State Park. We understand that public land agencies are often under-resourced, so we certainly do not harbor any philosophical opposition to increasing funding for public lands. That said, Standing Trees believes any such changes must be fair, equitable, and justified, and that they must not compromise the public's trust and the public resources that State Parks protect.

Following are concerns related to both process and substance, although I have not had time to exhaustively review the rule since I only learned about it on the day that comments are due.

PROCESS CONCERNS:

Because of how "tuned-in" Standing Trees is to all things related to public lands, I was surprised to learn this morning that a comment period will close today, May18th, for new 2026 rules and regulations for VT State Parks. I learned about this on a story on Vermont Public during Morning Edition. I normally receive email updates from VT State Parks, but I have not received any notifications about this rulemaking. In fact, my records show that the most recent VT State Parks email was sent on April 3rd, 2026, and it contains no mention of the pending rulemaking comment period, which started on April 8th. I am also signed up to receive VT FPR emails about rulemaking, policy-making, and long range management planning comment periods, but I did not receive an email about rulemaking proposal 26P009.

After hearing the story on Vermont Public, I searched for all ANR proposed rules and 26P009 does not show up.

However, a link to a page with some basic information is located on the "recent postings" page on the VT SOS rulemaking website. The page links to a VT SOS summary of the proposed rule. On this page, there is no link to any detailed information about the rule. The link that is provided takes you to the basic home page for VT State Parks. Then someone must find another link to a press release page for VT State Parks. Here, there is a link to an "Annotated Proposed 2026 Rules and Regulations for the Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation" but there is no additional information or analysis provided.

3 V.S.A. § 838 contains a list of requirements for rulemaking, some of which are further described in the Rule on Rulemaking. I am attaching the proposed rule form that VT SOS requires for rulemaking. The Rule on Rulemaking says that "Agencies must use the forms published by the Office of the Secretary of State; altered forms will not be accepted." The VT APA requires an Environmental Impacts Analysis, Economic Impacts Analysis, and "a plan to maximize public input," among other requirements.

On our brief call this morning, Ms White explained that one person attended the public meeting in person and one person attended online.

How many comments has the agency received at this point in time?

Regardless of the merits of the proposed rule (which again I have not had time to investigate), my understanding is that the proposed rule should have been made readily available to the public in its entirety, including all information required by statute and the Rule on Rulemaking. Without access to all relevant information, how can the public be expected to provide an informed comment?

I am also concerned about the degree to which the public was made aware of this rulemaking. Did VT State Parks make a plan to "maximize public input" as required? If so, was the plan adequate?

Is there a version of proposed rule 26P009 that uses the rulemaking form? Can you please share this with me and post this to the VT SOS rulemaking webpage and to the VT State Parks webpage for the rulemaking?

Can you please share the:

- Environmental Impacts Analysis
- Economic Impacts Analysis
- Plan to "maximize public input"

***REQUEST**: I am formally requesting via this email that VT State Parks and VT ANR restart the public comment period for this rulemaking, provide all required materials for the public to review and follow all procedures per 3 V.S.A. § 838 and the Rule on Rulemaking, use additional means of notification (such as by email), and provide additional in-person and virtual meetings to inform the public and gather*

comments.

SUBSTANTIVE CONCERNS:

The proposed rule contains several concerning elements that I will highlight below, although I have not had sufficient time to review the proposed rule in detail for reasons already stated, and the state has not yet provided the public with all required information for preparing an informed comment.

1) Dynamic Pricing:
Changes to Sections II(e), III(a), IV(a), V(f), VII will replace a transparent and accountable pricing system with a "dynamic pricing" system that is opaque and unaccountable. We oppose the use of such systems in Vermont State Parks.

Dynamic pricing is commonly used for commercial purposes such as setting prices for airline tickets, concert tickets, or rentals on a site like Airbnb. These practices are stress-inducing, favor the wealthy, and are not becoming of a public land management agency whose mission is to serve the public good and make access to the outdoors available to all. Vermont State Parks claims that certain discounts or vouchers will be made available to a subset of the population, but this will not prevent many Vermonters from becoming priced out of using their state parks. And it certainly will have a stain on the experience of visiting a state park by transforming state park reservations into even more of a competitive commercial system than it currently is.

There is no information provided about how this dynamic pricing will function. What will be the upper limits to camping prices, if any? What is in the algorithms that are used to determine prices? Will the state parks determine prices based on the personal data, characteristics, or income of the individual buying the reservation? We question both the legality and ethics of this proposal.

2) XIII Commercial Activities:
We object to section XIII (3) which says, in part: "[m]inimal timber cutting, skidding, landing, and hauling especially for temporary rights-of-way may be exempted from this constraint. Any permitted timber removal will be undertaken according to a cutting plan and stumpage payment approved by the Department." Such activities must be authorized in a legally-approved Long Range Management Plan, must be subject to public notice and comment, and must be approved with a final record of decision. The ANR State Lands Management Planning Rule should (if done well) determine how such decisions are made and how the public needs to be involved at every step of the process.

We also object to section XIII (3)(a) which says:

> *A special use permit or license is required for any activity proposed by a commercial or non-profit entity using Department lands that does not have a lease and the activity meets at least one of the following criteria:*
> *1) is organized or publicized, or*
> *2) involves a fee (charged to participants), or*
> *3) alters a site or alters/removes natural resources, or*
> *4) may conflict with other established, ~~traditional~~ authorized uses.*

Many nonprofit organizations regularly schedule free outings into public lands to help people connect with their public lands. Many of these outings are planned on an as-needed basis, or when the weather or seasonal conditions are favorable, etc... We object to the requirement for a special use permit for a free guided outing that is advertised to the public. Furthermore, this policy contradicts the federal policy which only requires a special use permit for commercial activities that charge a fee (see: https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/contracts-commercial-permits/special-use-permit-application).

Thank you for your consideration and for your work at VT State Parks. Please feel free to get in touch.

Thanks,

Zack

--
Zack Porter
Executive Director, Standing Trees
he/him/his

Montpelier, VT
802.552.0160
zporter@standingtrees.org

Standing Trees works to protect and restore forests on New England's public lands.

--
Zack Porter
Executive Director, Standing Trees
he/him/his

Montpelier, VT
802.552.0160
zporter@standingtrees.org

Standing Trees works to protect and restore forests on New England's public lands.

From: Lynda Hutchins <lynda.hutchins@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 5:38 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: dynamic pricing unfair to struggling families

[You don't often get email from lynda.hutchins@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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VT Parks,
First of all, I'm not sure why we're only being provided one day to make comments!

Second point: as a former low-income single parent myself, with limited options for family vacations, any attempt to wrench increased fees out of parents who are struggling to provide healthy recreational options for their children, is a shameful idea.

If you are looking to increase revenue, charge those with means (i.e. those with second homes) more, and leave poorer families alone! The economy is already cutting into fheir ability to fund their children's educational opportunities.

Thank you.
Lynda Hutchins,
Retired special educator, who worked with many struggling families over 28 years of service

From: Lindsey Britt <lindseyabritt@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 6:18 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comment on proposed rule changes

You don't often get email from lindseyabritt@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello,
My husband, Eric Furman, and I are residents of Brattleboro. Generally speaking we do not support the rule changes. We particularly object to creating longer maximum stays. Individuals and families, especially Vermonters, who can neither afford the cost or find the time off from work/caretaking should not be excluded from parks because they cannot stay for a longer period of time. They should be able to enjoy all the parks--regardless of popularity. These lands are public and, while charging fees is reasonable, those fees should be predictable, favor Vermonters, and not place undue barriers to access for people who may have less money. In fact people with lower incomes may especially need the vacation opportunities provided by our public parks since parks are more affordable generally than other types of vacations.

Sincerely,
Lindsey Britt
19 Pearl St
Brattleboro, VT 05301

From: Sean O'Neil <seanoneil.vt@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 8:15 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Fee Increases

You don't often get email from seanoneil.vt@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello State Parks,

With all due respect, while everyone would like to have more money to spend, most working class Vermonters are struggling to keep up with rapidly increasing tax and cost of living expenses. May I suggest more transparency into how your annual revenues are spent i.e how much on full time staff, seasonal staff, vehicle and equipment purchases etc and look at other state park models like Connecticut where day use is free for all residents before increasing prices again.

All the best,

Sean

From: Kassia Randzio <k.randzio@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 9:48 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: State Park Fee Comments
Attachments: State Parks Fees.xlsx

You don't often get email from k.randzio@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hi State Parks,

I just heard this morning on Vermont Public Radio that Vermont is proposing changes to its fee structure. I am on a number of email lists and I pay attention to news stories, and I was surprised to be hearing about this change on the final day that comments are due. It makes me think that many Vermonters likely have not had a chance to review and provide comments on the proposed changes.

I wanted to resurface my comments from a June 17, 2022, which I similarly submitted after hearing about a state park fee change on the final day comments were due. Again, having heard about the changes at the final hour, I haven't had a chance to do more thorough research. However, here's a summary of my comments: Please make public lands affordable to Vermonters by keeping costs extraordinarily low. Please recoup necessary revenue by substantially increasing fees for out-of-staters. This is an approach all other New England states *except* Vermont takes. When I visit Maine or Massachusetts, I pay *far* more as an out-of-state visitor than in-state residents do. This seems quite fair – I don't pay taxes in those states.

I haven't had a chance to update the market research I prepared in 2022, but I suspect it is still quite relevant (as emailed to this address on June 17, 2022; please see attached spreadsheet):

> Yesterday I did some brief market research to see how other New England states handle state park fees. Please see the attached spreadsheet, which compares day use and camping fees across Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont. I would have also included New Hampshire, but it was harder to find standardized fees. The three states here nonetheless seem to provide some helpful insights:
>
> **Day Use Fees:** Highlighted in green. Massachusetts charges by *car* rather than by *person.* For the sake of comparison, I've used a "family of four":
> - The "standard" resident day use fee in MA and ME is just $5-$8. Compare this to Vermont, where a family of four would have to pay $14 to have a picnic. This amounts to Vermont charging its own residents 130% - 180% *more* than other states charge their own residents.
> - The exception to this is a handful of MA and ME waterfront/beach state parks, which charge $14 for residents, equal to what VT would charge for *all* state parks, no matter whether they're "standard" or "prime" (as VT has distinguished its campgrounds).
> - **Vermont state parks should be made more accessible to Vermont state residents. Please *lower* fees for Vermont residents to just $5-8 per car to match the majority of Massachusetts state parks.**
> - ME charges out-of-state visitors 25% - 33% more than residents. MA charges out-of-state visitors 185% - 300% more than residents.
> - The VT proposal would have *no* difference in fees for in-state or out-of-state visitors. This is unconscionable. Why would Vermont residents pay the same high fees as non-residents? All other area states charge more for out-of-state visitors.
> - **Again, Vermont state parks should be made more accessible to Vermont state residents. Please *increase* fees for non-residents to at least $15 - $20 per car to match the majority of Massachusetts state parks.**

Camping Fees: Highlighted in blue.

- If I were to reserve a "Prime" Massachusetts campsite, I would be charged $75 per night, a 240% increase over in-state fees. A Massachusetts resident could reserve the same campsite for just $20. This fee system makes campsites very affordable for state residents, and out-of-state visitors have to pay a premium. This seems quite sensible. Afterall, it's *their* state park, not mine.
- Compare this to the VT proposal. For equivalent prime campsites/lean-tos, VT residents would be charged $22 - $32. This is *more* than the very highest fee a MA resident would ever pay to camp for any campsite.
- The non-resident increase in the VT proposal is only 25% - 36%. This is lower than either MA or ME, and is a whopping *10-times less* than the MA out-of-state increase.
- **Please decrease all VT resident camping/lean-to/cabin fees, and balance this with significant increases for out-of-state visitors. Non-residents should be paying *at least* 50% - 100% more across all overnight fee levels.**
- While the VT proposal does have a slim increase for out-of-state residents, the better the accommodations are, the lower the out-of-state increase. For example, the proposed out-of-state increase for a standard campsite is 40%, while the proposed out-of-state increase for a prime lean-to is 25%, and the out-of-state increase for a cabin is just 13%. This is backwards. Reference Massachusetts, where the most rustic campgrounds have an out-of-state increase of 185% and the very nicest camping locations have an out-of-state increase of 240%.
- **Please modify the VT proposal to ensure that -- as accommodations improve from "standard" to "prime" to "cabin" and so forth -- the out-of-state increase is *more* for better accommodations, not less.**

Across the day use and camping system, Vermont State Parks are losing significant revenue by not charging more for out-of-state visitors. Please increase all out-of-state fees, and balance this with a *decrease* in all fees for Vermont residents. These are *Vermont* state parks. Please make them affordable for *Vermont* residents.

I hope you'll conduct similar market research, as I'm sure these numbers could be updated and I haven't seen a publicly available economic study of the changes you're proposing. Even if some of the content is out of date, the findings are the same: **All other states charge substantially *less* for residents than Vermont does, and charge substantially *more* for non-residents than Vermont does.**

Let's use this as an opportunity to update Vermont's fee structures to be more affordable for Vermonters.

Finally, please share public comment opportunities more broadly in the future, and please provide more detailed information to the public during the comment period. This will make it easier for the public to participate in shaping the management of our publicly-owned lands.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to seeing Vermont's additional market research, and an updated proposal for further public review and comment.

Thank you,
Kassia Randzio
Montpelier, VT

Vermont State Park Fee Proposal

As Compared to Massachusetts and Maine State Park Fees

State	Location	Use	In-State	Out-of-State	increase for	Reference
MA	Salisbury State Park (equivalent to VT "Prime" State Park	Day Use Parking	$14	$40	185.71%	locations-schedule-updated-52720/download
	Skinner State Park (equivalent to VT "standard" State Par	Day Use Parking	$5	$20	300.00%	Per carload, not per person
	Salisbury State Park (Beach/Prime)	Camp	$22	$70	218.18%	fees
	Nickerson State Park (Beach/Prime)	Camp	$22	$75	240.91%	
	Clarksburg State Park (Standard)	Camp	$17	$54	217.65%	
	Beartown State Forest	Camp	$14	$40	185.71%	
	Mohawk State Forest	Cabin	$75	$170	126.67%	
	Savoy Mountain State Forest	Cabin	$50	$130	160.00%	
ME	Arroostock State Park (most state parks)	(Family of 4: 2	$8	$10	25.00%	s_fees_rules/park_day_use_fees.shtml
	Lake St. George (single highest state park)	(Family of 4: 2	$12	$16	33.33%	
	Bradbury Mountain	Camp	$15	$25	66.67%	schedule.pdf
	Lily Bay	Camp	$20	$30	50.00%	
	Sebago Lake (no hook-up)	Camp	$25	$35	40.00%	schedule.pdf
VT	Any State Park	of 4: 2 adults, 2	$14	$14	0.00%	
	Any State Park (standard)	Camp	$20	$28	40.00%	
	Any State Park (prime)	Camp	$22	$30	36.36%	
	Any State Park (standard lean-to)	Camp	$30	$38	26.67%	
	Any State Park (prime lean-to)	Camp	$32	$40	25.00%	
	Any State Park	Cabin	$60	$68	13.33%	

Great!

Multiple entries/exits

Multiple gathering areas. If people are gathered at one area, there are other "separate" feeling areas that others

Multi-use: eg. could sit on stairs, could walk down stairs

Trees: Canopy + view corridors

Possible

First overlook - "flat rock or stone or something in the middle" --> sculpture that could be climbed by kids, could

Missing:

Splash pad :-)

Slide :-)

Like the two artist / stonework areas. What about also Discovery elements?

Fishing platform: What about seating/benches on edges of this?

be seating, could be table.

From: Pam Piper <pspiper@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 10:30 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: proposed on-demand fees for state parks

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Hello -

There are certain weekdays/weekends that "veteran families" overbook a state park's campsites. We saw that as State Park camp hosts from 2018-21. It's kind of interesting that folks can say 'we have booked half the campsites for the last 40 years', but at the same time, that restricts the general public from access to our state parks.

I would be in favor of increasing fees for some of these weekends. Not by a lot, but just enough to say that this is a prioritized time of year. If you want it, you should be able to pay a few extra dollars for the experience.

I know having a conglomerated group of sites is not the same as individual campsite reservations. One park saw all picnic tables moved to a 'group dining site' for their two week period. Nice that these families have locked into this experience, but it reduces access to the general public.

Thanks for listening -
Pam & Bill Piper
ex-camp hosts Ricker Pond and Elmore State Parks
802-922-2103

Outlook

Comments on Rule 26P009

From vt-noreply@egov.com <vt-noreply@egov.com>
Date Wed 6/3/2026 7:35 PM
To White, Emily <Emily.White@vermont.gov>

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Comments on Rule 26P009
Reply To:joel.mathews@protonmail.com
I was alarmed to read about your proposed rule changes. The chief responsibility of government is to treat everyone equally. To think that I can be charged a higher fee to visit my local park because it is in a touristy area or a popular time of year than someone else visiting their local park is disturbing. The proposed rule allows for consideration of a wide breadth of factors in deciding prices and leaves the rule process in the hands of a single person that is politically appointed.

It is an unprecedented power grab. I can't think of any other department that can set fees or policy with so little oversight. Our system is rightfully built on checks and balances and public comment. As prices spiral, I am sure your organization is not exempt for the effects. Still, a new Gouverneur and new commissioner could attempt to turn a public resource into a ATM.

Parks need to available to all at reasonable fee that is set with oversight. IF the funding model needs to change that is a separate consideration. It is a service that costs money and benefits the entire state. Surely it is an economic driver and should be paid for by the entire tax base. We don't only pay school taxes when we have kids in school. A well educated public is a benefit to us all and protecting the places that make Vermont so special is a responsibility of all Vermonters, regardless of the last time they went to a park. I realize we are not going to solve that issue now. But in the interim the solution can't be left to the arbitrary decisions of one person with no review that treats different locations and different people differently.

From: Cheryl Joy Lipton <cheryljoylipton@outlook.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 10:21 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from cheryljoylipton@outlook.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Please do not change to "demand-based pricing." I already pay taxes that should cover this, and higher prices are not affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. State parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

I and my family would no longer be able to afford to visit the parks in our own state, parks that we already pay for. Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system (like me and my family and many of my friends and neighbors.)

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

Sincerely,

Cheryl Joy Lipton
Chester, Vermont

Public Hearing on Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees for Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands - Questions/Comments Received

Catamount Conference Room - National Life, Davis 2, Montpelier VT

May 11, 2026

Start Time: 17:00
End Time: 18:00

Present:

Nate McKeen (FPR)
Danielle Fitzko (FPR)
Emily White (FPR)
Kaitlin Alford (FPR)
Meghan Purvee (FPR)
Jan Ruda from Barre
Paul [last name unknown]

1. **Introduction and Short Presentation on Proposed Rule Changes** (Nate McKeen)
2. **Question Received:** Noticing fees have been changing a lot recently. Site fee has remained same with in-state residents but concerned about doubling and tripling fees. What is driving this? What can we expect going forward? Cost of wood is from $6 to $9. Dog $1 to $3 a day. Are there new fees planned?
3. **Question Received:** What is the policy for charging an e-bike? How can I charge my bike in parks?

From: Susan Averill <2vets@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2026 7:00 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Increasing park fees

[You don't often get email from 2vets@comcast.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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I believe you should increase fees to out of staters like Massachusetts does. They have a substantial rate increase if you are not a Massachusett's resident. This will help Vermonters camp in Vermont and increase our revenue at the same time.
Susan Averill
Sent from my iPhone

From: Matthew LeFluer <matthewlefluer1989@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2026 12:33 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Proposed 2026 Rules and Regulations for the Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation

You don't often get email from matthewlefluer1989@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Technology advancement within digital kiosk and LED electric signing boards for important information to be broadcast across camp ground sites and state parks Vermont statewide I hear that technology connectivity is limited in certain areas across Vermont due to technology infrastructure like cell towers Wi-Fi hubs hotspot areas but using technology integration within campground sites for parks trails etc would help drastically to bring tourists back with in Vermont without connection to a device or connected device via airwaves cell towers or community as a whole Community is that want to participate and cramp ground activities parks and enjoying trails will have a hard time completing those tasks without updated 21st century Technology advancements for campground sites State parks and recreational trailheads across Vermont Statewide Technology should be available within Zoe sites and online at all times to provide emergency services regards of where you are at ever say campground site state parks and recreational trails You should have ability to call for help or request medical services or emergency service at all times so I think this technology advancement feedback is very important within camp sites State parks and recreational trailheads across Vermont statewide

Sincerely Matthew LeFluer From Alburgh Vermont

From: AJ Braverman <aj.p.braverman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2026 10:06 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: State Park Pricing Based on Demand

You don't often get email from aj.p.braverman@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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To whom it may concern,

I am a Randolph resident writing in opposition to Section 7, item 2 of proposal proposal 26P009 which would allow the commissioner to set state park prices based on "market rates and value."

What an incredibly shortsighted proposal. We have seen what pricing based on market rates has done to concert and sports tickets, making it completely unaffordable for most people. The idea that a PUBLIC ENTITY would do the same to Vermont's State Parks is outrageous. The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation should be ashamed of this proposal. I strongly encourage you to abandon it.

Sincerely,
AJ Braverman

From: Jwasyliko <jwasyliko@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2026 4:43 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Park fee structure

[You don't often get email from jwasyliko@comcast.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello,
As a resident of Londonderry, I've been supportive of instituting fees at Lowell Lake. My biggest complaint / concern has been the need for designated vehicle passes. Would it possible to have family vehicle passes that could move from car to car? Since the cards cannot be replicated, there is no risk that more than one vehicle would enter the park at a time. This would help for those of us who are local to use different cars for lake trips, without paying the extra vehicle fee.
Thank you for considering this request.
Jen Wasyliko

Sent from my iPhone

From: Matthew Kieras
To: Richert, Julie
Subject: Camping Fees
Date: Sunday, May 24, 2026 7:34:48 PM

You don't often get email from mattkrs01@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello Julie, I hope this email finds you well this Memorial Day weekend. I saw that you are the Lead Customer Service Representative and wanted to share my thoughts with you. If this email is better suited for another person in VT State Parks please forward this to them.

My family has enjoyed camping in Vermont every summer for many years and truly appreciate the beautiful parks and campgrounds the state maintains. However, I was disappointed to see another increase in non-resident camping fees this year, especially since it was a $10 increase! (Last year I paid $28/night and this year it is $38/night.)

I understand that costs rise over time, but the continued increases are making it more difficult for out-of-state visitors like myself to continue returning each year. I hope future fee decisions will take long time visitors into consideration.

Thank you for your time and work maintaining such wonderful outdoor spaces.

Regards, Matthew Kieras

From: Zack Porter <zporter@standingtrees.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2026 5:08 PM
To: White, Emily
Cc: Mckeen, Nate; ANR - Parks
Subject: Re: Comments and questions re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

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Hello VT ANR,

I just read on the VT State Parks website today that the comment period for rulemaking proposal 26P009 was reopened on May 20th and will last until June 11th. A week has nearly gone by and Standing Trees had no idea that the comment period was extended. How is VT State Parks letting the public know about this extension? I don't believe that I've received a single email notification from VT ANR or any VT State Parks-affiliated entity about the original comment period or the extension.

In contrast, ANR sent a second email today about the lands management planning rule comment period (the state parks rulemaking comment period overlaps with at least one other major ANR rulemaking comment period that is currently ongoing for the ANR lands management planning rule - it would be much better to do these at separate times). ANR is also holding a total of five public meetings (4 in person, and 1 virtual) for this land management planning rulemaking.

Will VT ANR or any other entity send an email about the VT state parks comment period? Will another public hearing be scheduled?

In the materials that were shared with me by email on May 19th, I noticed that there is no economic impact analysis. According to ANR, this is (at least in part) because VT ANR claims that there is no direct economic impact from the new fee structure proposed by the rule, with the exception of special use permits (ostensibly because new prices for camping and day-entry will be set later on). But there is no indication that future price-setting will occur via rulemaking, so ANR seems to be concealing the fact that it will never actually perform an economic impacts analysis (as required by 3 V.S.A. § 838(b)) for fee changes that are anticipated by this rule. Was this a deliberate attempt to avoid the economic impact analysis required by the Vermont Administrative Procedure Act (VT APA)?

10 V.S.A. § 2603(c)(1) says: "The Commissioner, subject to the direction and approval of the Secretary, shall adopt and publish rules in the name of the Agency for the use of State forests, or park lands, including reasonable fees or charges for the use of the lands, roads, camping sites, buildings, and other facilities and for the harvesting of timber or removal of minerals or other resources from such lands, notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 603."

The paragraph above creates a legal obligation for FPR to use rulemaking for the establishment of fees. Fees cannot be set through an opaque, alternative (i.e. non-rulemaking) mechanism sometime in the future, as proposed by the draft 2026 regulations. Giving the public 90 days' notice to respond, as proposed in the draft rule, is not a substitute for rulemaking, which has distinct legal requirements under the VT APA.

Moreover, 10 V.S.A. § 2603(c)(1) requires "reasonable fees or charges." At present, the draft regulations are not "reasonable" in any sense of the word. Merriam Webster defines "reasonable" as (see: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reasonable):

> *1(a): being in accordance with reason; a reasonable theory*
> *1(b): not extreme or excessive; reasonable requests*
> *1(c) MODERATE, FAIR; a reasonable chance; a reasonable price*

1(d) INEXPENSIVE

The proposed market-based fees, which apparently will not go through future rulemaking, are *unreasonable*. The public does not know what the fees are. The public does not know how fees will be determined. There is no upper limit on the fees. And there hasn't been a required economic impacts analysis to determine what the impact will be on Vermonters.

Among other requirements, the economic impacts analysis under 3 V.S.A. § 838(b) also must "compare the economic impact of the rule with the economic impact of other alternatives to the rule, including having no rule on the subject or a rule having separate requirements for small businesses." In the form that was provided by email on May 19th, there is no discussion about any "other alternatives to the rule," with the exception of a brief discussion comparing the draft rule to the status quo (but only from the perspective of maintaining or expanding ANR's budget).

Per the requirements of the VT APA, VT ANR should also analyze alternative sources of revenue that wouldn't involve using a market-based system for setting state park prices. For example, VT ANR could charge out-of-state residents more than Vermont residents for park entry or camping, as is commonly done in other states. In Massachusetts, for example, parking (https://www.mass.gov/guides/parking-at-massachusetts-state-parks) and camping (https://www.mass.gov/info-details/camping-fees) are several times more expensive at state-managed lands for out-of-state residents than for in-state residents. (To illustrate, camping in 2026 at Nickerson State Park on Cape Cod will cost $22 per night for MA residents, and $70 for a resident of another state. In addition, out-of-state residents may also be charged a $5 surcharge that goes directly to the park where they are staying. See here for details: https://massdcrcamping.reserveamerica.com/camping/nickerson-state-park/r/campgroundDetails.do?contractCode=MA&parkId=32601).

As drafted and presented, the proposed 2026 regulations and their accompanying documentation are unlawful.

Standing Trees supports increased funding for VT State Parks, but it must be achieved through lawful and ethical means.

Please let us know if you would be interested in visiting about this further.

Thanks,

Zack

On Tue, May 19, 2026 at 11:14 AM Zack Porter <zporter@standingtrees.org> wrote:

> Thanks, Emily.
>
> Zack
>
> On Tue, May 19, 2026 at 10:54 AM White, Emily <Emily.White@vermont.gov> wrote:
>
> > Hi Zack,
> >
> > As requested, attached is the full document package.
> >
> > Thank you for your comments. We will respond to your process questions once we have information compiled. Substantive comments will be addressed in the rulemaking Responsiveness Summary and posted on our webpage once completed.

From: Zack Porter <zporter@standingtrees.org>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 4:33 PM
To: Mckeen, Nate <Nate.Mckeen@vermont.gov>; White, Emily <Emily.White@vermont.gov>; ANR - Parks <ANR.Parks@vermont.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Comments and questions re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

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EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Mr. McKeen and Ms. White,

I sent a previous version of this email at 4:29pm and all messages bounced back.

I am resending without attachments.

Thanks,

Zack

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Zack Porter** <zporter@standingtrees.org>
Date: Mon, May 18, 2026 at 4:29 PM
Subject: Comments and questions re: rulemaking proposal 26P009
To: <Nate.McKeen@vermont.gov>, <Emily.White@vermont.gov>, <parks@vermont.gov>

Dear Mr. McKeen and Ms. White,

I hope this email finds you well. The following email contains questions and comments regarding rulemaking proposal 26P009, "Rules and Regulations for Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees on Department Lands." I'm grateful that Emily White responded promptly to my phone call this morning.

As I will explain below, this rulemaking process has been conducted in violation of 3 V.S.A. § 838 and the Rule on Rulemaking. We request that the process be started over again according to statute and the Rule on Rulemaking.

I am an immense fan of VT State Parks on a personal level. My family goes camping, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, biking, and paddling at Vermont State Parks year-round. I'm very grateful to you for the services that you provide to Vermonters and visitors alike, and for protecting many important and beloved places across the state.

In 2021, I co-founded Standing Trees to be an organization that advocates for the protection of Vermont's public lands, including state parks. Our members regularly visit and use Vermont state parks. A big part of our work is making sure that the public has a meaningful say in how decisions are made for the future of Vermont's public lands. For example, we are very involved with the ongoing ANR Lands Management Planning Rule process. Standing Trees is also concerned with the ability of the public to access public lands, such as the fees and permits that might be required to visit or stay at a State Park. We understand that public land agencies are often under-resourced, so we certainly do not harbor any philosophical opposition to increasing funding for public lands. That said, Standing Trees believes any such changes must be fair, equitable, and justified, and that they must not compromise the public's trust and the public resources that State Parks protect.

Following are concerns related to both process and substance, although I have not had time to exhaustively review the rule since I only learned about it on the day that comments are due.

PROCESS CONCERNS:

Because of how "tuned-in" Standing Trees is to all things related to public lands, I was surprised to learn this morning that a comment period will close today, May18th, for new 2026 rules and regulations for VT State Parks. I learned about this on a story on Vermont Public during Morning Edition. I normally receive email updates from VT State Parks, but I have not received any notifications about this rulemaking. In fact, my records show that the most recent VT State Parks email was sent on April 3rd, 2026, and it contains no mention of the pending rulemaking comment period, which started on April 8th. I am also signed up to receive VT FPR emails about rulemaking, policy-making, and long range management planning comment periods, but I did not receive an email about rulemaking proposal 26P009.

After hearing the story on Vermont Public, I searched for all ANR proposed rules and 26P009 does not show up.

However, a link to a page with some basic information is located on the "recent postings" page on the VT SOS rulemaking website. The page links to a VT SOS summary of the proposed rule. On this page, there is no link to any detailed information about the rule. The link that is provided takes you to the basic home page for VT State Parks. Then someone must find another link to a press release page for VT State Parks. Here, there is a link to an "Annotated Proposed 2026 Rules and Regulations for the Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation" but there is no additional information or analysis provided.

3 V.S.A. § 838 contains a list of requirements for rulemaking, some of which are further described in the Rule on Rulemaking. I am attaching the proposed rule form that VT SOS requires for rulemaking. The Rule on Rulemaking says that "Agencies must use the forms published by the Office of the Secretary of State; altered forms will not be accepted." The VT APA requires an Environmental Impacts Analysis, Economic Impacts Analysis, and "a plan to maximize public input," among other requirements.

On our brief call this morning, Ms White explained that one person attended the public meeting in person and one person attended online.

How many comments has the agency received at this point in time?

Regardless of the merits of the proposed rule (which again I have not had time to investigate), my understanding is that the proposed rule should have been made readily available to the public in its entirety, including all information required by statute and the Rule on Rulemaking. Without access to all relevant information, how can the public be expected to provide an informed comment?

I am also concerned about the degree to which the public was made aware of this rulemaking. Did VT State Parks make a plan to "maximize public input" as required? If so, was the plan adequate?

Is there a version of proposed rule 26P009 that uses the rulemaking form? Can you please share this with me and post this to the VT SOS rulemaking webpage and to the VT State Parks webpage for the rulemaking?

Can you please share the:

- Environmental Impacts Analysis
- Economic Impacts Analysis
- Plan to "maximize public input"

***REQUEST**: I am formally requesting via this email that VT State Parks and VT ANR restart the public*

comment period for this rulemaking, provide all required materials for the public to review and follow all procedures per 3 V.S.A. § 838 and the Rule on Rulemaking, use additional means of notification (such as by email), and provide additional in-person and virtual meetings to inform the public and gather comments.

SUBSTANTIVE CONCERNS:

The proposed rule contains several concerning elements that I will highlight below, although I have not had sufficient time to review the proposed rule in detail for reasons already stated, and the state has not yet provided the public with all required information for preparing an informed comment.

1) Dynamic Pricing:
Changes to Sections II(e), III(a), IV(a), V(f), VII will replace a transparent and accountable pricing system with a "dynamic pricing" system that is opaque and unaccountable. We oppose the use of such systems in Vermont State Parks.

Dynamic pricing is commonly used for commercial purposes such as setting prices for airline tickets, concert tickets, or rentals on a site like Airbnb. These practices are stress-inducing, favor the wealthy, and are not becoming of a public land management agency whose mission is to serve the public good and make access to the outdoors available to all. Vermont State Parks claims that certain discounts or vouchers will be made available to a subset of the population, but this will not prevent many Vermonters from becoming priced out of using their state parks. And it certainly will have a stain on the experience of visiting a state park by transforming state park reservations into even more of a competitive commercial system than it currently is.

There is no information provided about how this dynamic pricing will function. What will be the upper limits to camping prices, if any? What is in the algorithms that are used to determine prices? Will the state parks determine prices based on the personal data, characteristics, or income of the individual buying the reservation? We question both the legality and ethics of this proposal.

2) XIII Commercial Activities:
We object to section XIII (3) which says, in part: "[m]inimal timber cutting, skidding, landing, and hauling especially for temporary rights-of-way may be exempted from this constraint. Any permitted timber removal will be undertaken according to a cutting plan and stumpage payment approved by the Department." Such activities must be authorized in a legally-approved Long Range Management Plan, must be subject to public notice and comment, and must be approved with a final record of decision. The ANR State Lands Management Planning Rule should (if done well) determine how such decisions are made and how the public needs to be involved at every step of the process.

We also object to section XIII (3)(a) which says:

> *A special use permit or license is required for any activity proposed by a commercial or non-profit entity using Department lands that does not have a lease and the activity meets at least one of the following criteria:*
> *1) is organized or publicized, or*
> *2) involves a fee (charged to participants), or*
> *3) alters a site or alters/removes natural resources, or*
> *4) may conflict with other established, ~~traditional~~ authorized uses.*

Many nonprofit organizations regularly schedule free outings into public lands to help people connect with their public lands. Many of these outings are planned on an as-needed basis, or when the weather or seasonal conditions are favorable, etc... We object to the requirement for a special use permit for a free guided outing

> that is advertised to the public. Furthermore, this policy contradicts the federal policy which only requires a special use permit for commercial activities that charge a fee (see: https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/contracts-commercial-permits/special-use-permit-application).
>
> Thank you for your consideration and for your work at VT State Parks. Please feel free to get in touch.
>
> Thanks,
>
> Zack
>
> --
> Zack Porter
> **Executive Director, Standing Trees**
> *he/him/his*
>
> Montpelier, VT
> 802.552.0160
> zporter@standingtrees.org
>
> *Standing Trees works to protect and restore forests on New England's public lands.*

--
Zack Porter
Executive Director, Standing Trees
he/him/his

Montpelier, VT
802.552.0160
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Zack Porter
Executive Director, Standing Trees
he/him/his

Montpelier, VT
802.552.0160
zporter@standingtrees.org

Standing Trees works to protect and restore forests on New England's public lands.

From: Margaret <webexemail802@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2026 11:22 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public Input on 2026 Rules and Regulations

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From: Brenna Kimball <brenna.nolan19@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2026 9:04 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Friendly suggestion

[You don't often get email from brenna.nolan19@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello.
Avid Vt park visitor. My family LOVES going to the Vt state parks. They are well kept, organized and run by some amazing and knowledgeable staff. Our favorite is the person who runs the button bay visitor center!

Might you offer a lifetime State park pass for individuals or car? I have lifetime hunting and fishing licenses but I think a lifetime park pass would be a hit and I would surely purchase a car pass! Just food for thought. It would make a great gift too!

Keep it up VT parks dept! You rock!

Best,
Brenna

From: Janet Pierce <jap962@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2026 9:47 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments on Proposed Rules

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Good evening

I have enjoyed camping at your parks since 1992! For years, they were 2nd to none! However, 3 years ago I began camping with a puppy. He's now 3 yrs old, entering his 4th camping season. Since 2023, I have spent less time in Vermont State Parks. I primarily camp alone in my popup. I am not allowed to bring my dog with me into the restroom, no can he go near a public use area, such as a beach.

I have spent many weekends in NH and NY (no additional fee for a dog), where dogs are welcome. In NY, quite a few State Parks have designated dog beaches, along with a few in my State of Massachusetts (no additional fee for a dog). I also have not run into any problems in Maine State Parks. We spent a week touring the Great Lakes, rather than Vermont, where every State and Ontario Provincial Park had a dog beach area, with no additional fees for a dog.

I camp every weekend, from Memorial Day to Columbus Day +, with 3 full weeks during the summer. I am sorry to say, most of that time will be spent away from Vermont. During bird hunting season, I will be in Pittsburg NH with my dog. I no longer buy a VT out of State sportsman's license.

On a positive note, I was happy to see dogs are not prohibited, as mentioned to me as a possible change by the Ranger at Brighton last year. My favorite ranger is Tom at Maidstone - he reminds me of the "olden days" when rangers rode throughout the parks and rules were enforced.

Vermont State parks are beautiful, well kept parks. I hope to return more often should rules change in the future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Janet A. Pierce
New Braintree, MA

From: NatemKing <natemking@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2026 8:14 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: 2026 Rules and Regulations feedback

[You don't often get email from natemking@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Why not start charging out of state visitors more? Vermont is vacation state. Stop punishing Vermonters by increasing prices. It’s damn time that out of staters pay more. Look at Massachusetts. It cost me $30 to paddle at DAR because I was from out of state.

- Nate

From: Dawn Morris <damorris1970@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2026 5:32 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Feedback on rule changes

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EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

I am a New York resident (Granville, NY). I have camped at Lake St Catherine State Park for as long as I can remember. I am only 15-20 minutes away. We camp here several times a season. To see the non Vermont resident fee increase so much has made us decide to not camp there this year. The cost for a bundle of wood there last year went from $6 at the start of the season to $9 by Labor Day! It's no longer an affordable family vacation.

Dawn Morris

From: rhaggy47@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2026 8:59 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Change in Reservation Policy

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Good morning. Although I have written letters to the Vermont State Park Headquarters and made numerous calls, I have yet to receive a call back or any communication from the management of the Vermont State Park Management. Very unprofessional.

As a camper, that has been camping at Vermont State Parks for 53 years, I did not expect to not get even “one” email, telephone call, or text to any of my numerous inquiries.

My family usually goes camping the 3rd week in July. Your new policy “discriminates” against those campers that traditionally camp during the 3rd or 4th week of the month.

On September 2, 2025 at 8 AM, an individual logged into the Vermont State Park web site and reserved Site 27 at Bridgton State Park for 21 days starting on June 30, 2026. Just 2 weeks ago, Site 27 was open forthe dates of July 18-25, 2026. One would have to assume that this individual wanted to insure he was guaranteed Site 27, and not have to compete with all campers at 9 AM on September 2nd.

That is just one example, which you should be able to verify from your web site.

Hopefully you wont lose these traditional campers. But come time in September when we attempt to make reservations for July 2027, if the sites aren’t available, we most likely will look for other options outside the Vermont State Park System for 2027. Not because we dont enjoy camping at Vermont State Parks, it would because you failed to ask for unput from campers on this reservation change.

Richard D Haggerty

From: Janine O. <janineaosterman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2026 9:24 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Remote sites

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I do not think remote sites should have the 7 day rule lifted. This is not safeguarding environmental impact and will grunge up those sites for everyone.

Janine A. Osterman DAT, ATC

From: Brandon Hayes <hayes.brandon77@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2026 10:43 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public Feedback

[You don't often get email from hayes.brandon77@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello,

I saw a Facebook post looking for feedback from the public. My wife and I camp at different parks every year. One thing I have always thought would boost RV camping would be water and electric hook ups at some sites. I understand the infrastructure would be extensive to do this. After camping at a few state parks in NY and NH which have full hook ups for RV's, it got me thinking how much this would really increase the amount of RV owners booking sites. Some people shy away knowing they can only rely on generators during specific hours if they are not set up for off grid. I just wanted to share this idea with you all.

Thank you for your time!

Sent from my iPhone

From: william simmons jr <billsimmons40@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2026 10:19 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Rule change

[You don't often get email from billsimmons40@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Hello
The one thing that I absolutely do not agree with is the cost increase for “more popular “ parks You will create a separation between economic classes. The more popular parks will become only for those who can afford it, wheather they are VTer’s or not. Odds are not. Just raise the cost across the board. Raise wood cost by $1 or $2 Bump the camping fee by $5 a night, not the day use fee. Again keep our lands accessible to all Thank you from a Many generations deep Vter on both sides of the family tree.
Bill Simmons

Sent from my iPhone

From: John Roy <223albionst@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2026 9:46 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: feedback on proposed rule changes for 2026

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EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

I respectfully submit this email to answer your call for feedback to proposed changes.

Understanding that changes are inevitable and healthy I appreciate your undertaking as a chance to improve your parks. My concern is that the fees associated with camping, in particular out of state campers, has risen substantially over the past few years. My wife and I have been visiting your parks for many years and absolutely love the time we have spent in Vermont. Our (now grown) children continue to visit Vermont large in part because of their exposure to your state over the years. However it is becoming increasingly more difficult for us to absorb the increase in cost to camp, especially now that we are retired and on a fixed income. We urge you to consider the impact of these increases and the ramifications of these measures. We have shortened our reservation for 2026 in response to your latest increase and will continue to reevaluate reservation policies accordingly in the future.
Vermont State Parks are one of the best run park systems we have encountered over the years. We want to continue to enjoy our time as a visitor to your area and urge you to think deeply about the impact of policy decisions on all of us.

Respectfully submitted,
John Roy
533 Middle Rd,
Acushnet, MA 02743

From: JanIce Trombley <janicetrombley7@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2026 3:14 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Input for public comments

You don't often get email from janicetrombley7@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello, I received your email regarding the public comments for the Vermont State parks.

I was wondering if the parks would consider making more of the cabins dog friendly. Although I personally believe people are more destructive than dogs, you might consider requiring a deposit be made in advance for any pet that is brought. The deposit would be refunded only after inspection of the property. I would be more than happy to oblige with that. There are very limited cabins that allow pets, and I believe that you could expand that which would make it possible for more families to enjoy your campgrounds.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this.

From: Tracy Sweeney <clemintine5@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2026 7:13 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Proposed changes

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EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello,
I support our Parks and the changes proposed. However, I would prefer if the camping prices remain set for Residents on high demand sites and increased for Non-Residents. thank you, Tracy

- Allows the Commissioner to set prices based on use, demand, and cost recovery with a proposed minimum of 90 days advanced public notice to ensure transparency in pricing.

From: Kathleen P Willis <kpw319@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2026 9:28 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Bad neighbors and confusing reservation redesign

[You don't often get email from kpw319@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello, and thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment.

I have been enjoying the State Parks for over 30 years. As a resident of Vermont, I love that I can have an outstanding camping and swimming experience within a 30 minute drive from my home! Vermont is just perfect in the summer!

I am dismayed by the new reservation system. In previous years, I could check in on the first day of the month, 11 months before I hoped to make a reservation. Now, while I have “the opportunity” to check in every day of the month, that is not, in my opinion, an improvement. If I am unsuccessful on the first day I try, then I can try again, and again,, and again, until HOPEFULLY I find an open date to start my reservation.

This summer I will be at one of the parks for over 2 weeks. There is little to no cell service there. This means, I will have to drive into town with my laptop before 9 AM to see if I am lucky enough to score a site on the specific date I want. If not, I will have to drive to cell service again the next day, and the next, and the next. That is not an improvement. I fear that I will rarely, if ever, be able to secure a campsite at the time I am able to use it. I know ho competitive the quest for sites can be. I am anticipating heartbreak as I write this.

As to bad neighbors, I have witnessed and heard of groups of campers who are consistently abusing the rules of the parks … ignoring quiet hours and generator hours, drinking to excess, showing a total lack of consideration for other campers. While these events are not wide spread and the majority of campers are respectful, there are some bad apples out there.

I cannot understand why those who repeatedly ignore the few rules for consideration, after repeated requests from park staff, are allowed to return, year after year, and keep flaunting their privilege. Is it not possible to say they are no longer welcome?

I am excited about my upcoming camping experience later this summer and hopeful that it will not turn out to be my last. Thank you for allowing me to speak up. And thank you for making the Vermont State Parks such wonderful, and affordable, places to enjoy the beauty of Vermont.

Kathy Willis

From: Krista Cheney <groundhog@gmavt.net>
Sent: Sunday, May 31, 2026 9:47 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comment on proposed rule changes

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I'd like to make a comment on I.c Pets, 3.d Nuisance animal: "Barks, whines, howls or cries in an excessive, continuous or untimely fashion."

Are dogs now supposed to be silent? That's not reasonable. Personally I'd rather listen to dogs making noise than the constant screaming and yelling children running rampant through the campground.

Please keep the parks dog friendly. For some of us, that is our family, and we just want to enjoy time camping at these beautiful parks and to be left alone.

Thank you,
Krista Cheney

From: Peter Erb <perb@gmavt.net>
Sent: Saturday, May 30, 2026 9:11 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: 2026 Rules and Regulations Public Input Vermont State Parks

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To whom it may concern,
While I can understand that flexible pricing i.e. demand pricing, could help fill available slots at lesser used parks, by making them less expensive, it should never be used to “auction” off sites and access based on wealth. The application for the best site in a certain park and trying to be first in line, regardless of financial leverage is a Vermont tradition, and the perfect example of a State that is available for all, equally. The most crushing aspect with the huge imbalance in buying power that exists in our country now is to be in “line” and then see someone buy their way ahead of you, or hire a proxy to stand in for them. Keep Vermont equal for all its citizens, and don’t screw up one of the few remaining opportunities for someone that may be struggling to have a great day off or a vacation.
DON’T SELL OUR PUBLIC LANDS ACCESS TO THE WEALTHY, PRIVILEDGED AND KEEP IT EQUAL, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY AFFORDABLE, FOR ALL VERMONTERS
Thank you Peter Erb, Hinesburg Vermont

From: Carolyn Peduzzi <cspeduzzi@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 30, 2026 8:29 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: State parks

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Greetings from home in our fair state of Vermont,

Paddling quiet waters, hiking trails amidst the songs of birds, sleeping outdoors in the dark of night hearing loons call - these are the delights of many Vermonters. I am one of them. Living not far from the Green River Reservoir state park, I have always loved the opportunity to see a number of sunny days ahead, calling the park for a campsite, and packing my canoe and gear.

In recent years, with the advent of reservations being made online and nationally, I have found it difficult and often impossible to camp there. Sites are booked months in advance, squeezing out the local would-be campers. There is no allowance for a few locals only campsites. We must join the throng and hope for the best. For three years, having made reservations far in advance, the best I got were days of rain.

Raising prices will only make it increasingly difficult for many in Vermont to camp at the park at all. The park shouldn't be made available to only the highest bidders.
I believe a better solution would be to have 4 or 5 campsites left available to Vermonters with short stays - three nights maximum - and more immediate reservations. No more than 7 days in advance. This could be done locally through the ranger station. (The park entrance staff have often expressed their shared frustration that local Vermonters are seldom able to camp with short notice).

Yours sincerely,
Carolyn Peduzzi
Worcester,Vt

From the budding and greening warmth of northern Vermont

From: Andrew Watters <awatters2016@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 1, 2026 11:51 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Re: State Park camping pet fee

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Kaitlin,

Thanks for the reply. Yes, please add to the public comment that we feel the fee should not apply to indoor only cats. Thank you.

Andrew and Barbara Watters

On Mon, Jun 1, 2026, 10:27 AM ANR - Parks <ANR.Parks@vermont.gov> wrote:

> Hi Andrew and Babara,
>
> Yes, the $3 pet fee applies to any pet brought to parks (except for horses which are $5 per night).
>
> Are you looking to have this filed as park of the public feedback period?
>
> **Kaitlin Alford** (she/her) | Parks Sales & Services Manager
> Division of State Parks – Central Office
> Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation
> 1 National Life Dr, Davis Bldg.| Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
> 802-249-3128 | Kaitlin.alford@vermont.gov
>
> vtstateparks.com
>
> Connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, or our YouTube.
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Andrew Watters <awatters2016@gmail.com>
> **Sent:** Sunday, May 31, 2026 4:03 PM
> **To:** ANR - Parks <ANR.Parks@vermont.gov>
> **Subject:** State Park camping pet fee
>
> You don't often get email from awatters2016@gmail.com. Learn why this is important
>
> **EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.**
>
> Does the $3 per pet per night fee apply to indoor only cats? It seemed like the policy information was describing issues with dogs. Thanks in advance.
>
> Andrew and Barbara Watters

From: Judy Aubin <aubininc@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 4, 2026 11:26 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: New Reservation Policy

[You don't often get email from aubininc@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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Our family has been camping at Vermont State Parks for well over 50 years. We grew up in Vermont and moved out of state a number of years ago, but we return to Vermont State Parks twice a year to connect with friends and family. The change in reservation policy will make reservations for these cherished weeks in our home state much more difficult and uncertain. We sincerely hope that you will return to the previous system next year.

Thank you for listening.

Rick and Judy Aubin
Sent from my iPad

From: Roberta Tracy <rtracyjr@sover.net>
Sent: Monday, June 8, 2026 2:23 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: State Parks Proposed Fee Scheme

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EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

TO: Vermont Agency of Natural Recources
RE: State Parks Proposed Fee Scheme

On April 8, 2026, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (VT ANR), announced rule changes that would allow it to adopt a State Park "flexible pricing" admission scheme, i.e. prices would be based on demand, use, and "cost recovery".

VT ANR used semantics to avoid both the legislatively required economic impact analysis and public comment and transparency protections as required by the Vermont Administrative Procedure Act, and provided few details about the fee change criteria. The proposal gives every indication of being written to allow VT ANR to raise prices whenever it wants for however much it wants.

I feel compelled to remind VT ANR that they do not own Vermont's State Parks. Their role is one of stewardship, not ownership. State Parks are owned by the people of Vermont and VT ANR is legally accountable to every single Vermonter for the decisions they make and the consequences thereof.

This agency used the tactics of an authoritarian regime to avoid its legislative and statutory obligations and avoid the due diligence it owes to the people of Vermont. These are despicable and underhanded actions and bring shame to your agency and by extension the people whom it employs.

Vermonter's tax dollars pay your salaries and we deserve better for our money. I vehemently oppose your fee scheme proposal and the shameless and underhanded tactics VT ANR is using to force it down Vermonter's throats.

Stop gaslighting us! Fulfill your legal obligations to perform a cost analysis and be able to tell Vermonter's how many of us will be shut out of our State Park's due to your fee scheme, hold public comment periods, and engage in transparency or have the dignity to resign and let someone who will obey the law take your place.

Vermonter's deserve better from their leaders.

Roberta S. Tracy
4545 St. George Road
Williston, Vermont 05495
802-279-2587
rtracyjr@sover.net

From: Ronnie Bodkin <rtbodkin@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, June 8, 2026 10:51 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: New reservation policy

You don't often get email from rtbodkin@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

I have been going to a Vermont State Park for over 30 + years, but I fear this is the last year for me. I know for a fact that I will never be able to get the times I want because of the new policy. If I want to come in on a Saturday you know that someone will book it ahead of Saturday probably a Friday or a Thursday so I can't get the times I want. I am now looking into other State Parks that have a better reservation policy. . I'm really sad about this policy and wish that you would reconsider this policy. Yours truly. Ronnie Bodkin

From: Heather Harrington <heatherhh4peace@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 8, 2026 9:53 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Policies

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Hello. My only input at this time is that I just tried to cancel a reservation and due to being only 2 day notice not the 3 days. I would have been happy to get credit to use another time although I guess that isn't feasible due changes. Maybe you could reconsider and allow for credit.
Thank you. I do appreciate the parks!

Heather Harrington

From: Linda B. Gray <linda.b.gray@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2026 7:22 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments on proposed rule changes, 2026

You don't often get email from linda.b.gray@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Greetings and thanks for the opportunity to comment,

I have noticed that capital and operating costs at our state parks have strained the department's budget. As a result, the ferry to Burton Island was not available for part of last year (2025) and part of this season (late May and June, 2026). Also, the pool is not available at Button Bay until July 1, 2026.

The reservation system works well, but popular parks are filled up very quickly, especially for weekend overnight use at lean-tos and cabins. Even if I log on the day the reservations open, I often have little choice.

I have had a chance to see how the cancellation fees work. I understand that cancellation fees are waived if the person who cancels reserves for a different park or a different date while cancelling.

The cancellation fee is $8. That barely covers the cost of two credit card transactions (the booking, then the cancellation/refund).

I would recommend tripling the cancellation fee....to $24 or even $30. Allow the person cancelling to choose where the fee goes. A choice of perhaps:

1. Maintenance of facilities (signage, restrooms)
2. Adaptive use of parks by disabled Vermonters
3. Improving access for income-eligible Vermonters
4. Capital improvements (structures, docks, paths, roads)

Yes, there is some cost to allowing persons to choose, and then

accounting for those choices. However, this method would ease the sting of having to cancel a planned trip, and would give the department a good idea of where the overnight visitors would like to see improvements. It functions as a donation to the park system, and means that the person who cancels is a little more personally invested in the system going forward.

Finally, a shout-out to the volunteers who are a wonderful addition to the park experience. They model what we all should be doing, and provide such a warm welcome and friendly face. They sustain the parks year after year, providing year to year continuity for the revolving group of young park employees. Also, the naturalist, education, and canoeing opportunities at the parks are wonderful for families. Thank you thank you!

Linda

--
Linda

Professor Linda Gray

"Only Connect" E.M. Forster

The best way to reach me, and to get a quick reply, is via e-mail.
To set up a phone appointment, please e-mail me.

From: Gene White, Jr. <genewhitejr@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2026 10:40 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: New rates possible

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Since the original Covid lockdown in 2020, my wife and I have visited eighteen state parks to camp and hike. In 2020, we even purchased a (used) minivan for camping. Having just read the article in Vermont Digger about possible rate hikes and the increased operating costs at our state parks, I want to offer my opinion on the subject:
- Our experiences at VT State Parks have been nothing short of exemplary. Every visit (averaging six multi-day visits per summer season) has been rewarding. We have been favorably impressed at each park by the friendly professionalism of the personnel and the condition of the grounds and facilities.
- Of the concerns cited in the VT Digger article, the three factors I see that are having a negative effect on park attendance and increased costs are: (1) drought, (2) reduced Canadian visitors, and (3) waste disposal. Of these, I don't understand the waste disposal factor (is it the actual cost of taking the garbage away, or is it sewage treatment related, or ?).
- With regard to drought; Drought and flood conditions are increasingly a factor of climate change. Since 2016, the Trump administration has consistently denied that climate change is real, and has gone out of its way to make it worse (by deregulating all efforts related to environmental protections). We had a brief reprieve from Trump's idiocy during the Biden administration, but come 2024, we are worse off than before. Every other country in the world is doing better about dealing with the climate issue than we are.
- With regard to the decrease in Canadian visitors to Vermont, is it not clear that the Trump administration's tariffs and hostile attitude toward our northern neighbors is responsible for this dynamic? The situation is not only costing Vermont (and all border states) a great deal of visitor income, but it is shameful, embarrassing, and morally wrong.

In conclusion, it is my opinion that getting rid of Trump and his gang of thieves, electing rational, reasonable persons who actually govern is the best way to address these problems in the long term. Short term? Harder to know what will help quickly. My wife and I are fortunate to have enough money that a reasonable price increase for campsite rental won't deter us. We already prefer Sunday through Thursday rentals because it's generally quieter, and the sites we've come to prefer are usually more available those days. We truly adore the Vermont State Parks and will support all reasonable efforts to keep them viable and well-maintained. I apologize for politicizing the issue, but the truth is that Trump is largely responsible for the troubles that we are ALL having these days. We need to vote the creeps out and take our country back! Thank you. Sincerely,

Gene White Jr & Gail Cummings
Essex Jct, VT

From: Emily Ruff <emily@sagemountain.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 10:57 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Rule 26P009

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EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

I am writing to offer comment on the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation's proposed rule update allowing the commissioner greater flexibility in setting fees based on use, demand, and cost recovery.

Sage Mountain Botanical Sanctuary is a 600-acre conservation and education center in Orange, Vermont. We work directly with families, youth, and communities across central Vermont, including through licensed afterschool and summer youth programs serving students from low-income households. We offer this comment in our capacity as a conservation organization deeply invested in both the ecological health of Vermont's public lands and the equitable access of all Vermonters to those lands.

We support sustainable, long-term funding for Vermont's state parks. The Department's cost pressures are real: rising waste disposal, staffing, and maintenance costs are not in dispute, and we share the goal of ensuring Vermont's parks are financially healthy for generations to come. We also recognize that Vermont's outdoor recreation economy has grown substantially: outdoor recreation represents over 4.6% of Vermont's GDP, placing Vermont second highest in the nation for outdoor recreation as a share of its economy. The current funding model has not kept pace with either the costs or the use.

We do not oppose the principle of new revenue generation. What we oppose is the specific path of broad, undifferentiated pricing flexibility applied to all users, when the Department's own commissioned study identifies numerous revenue alternatives that would generate meaningful new income without pricing Vermonters off their own land.

Omission of Modernization Study Options:

The VSP Modernization Study commissioned by the Department and completed in 2023 is explicit on this point: "Part of what makes Vermont so attractive to both residents and out-of-staters is the sheer beauty of the state and the ability to enjoy it without having to pay a fee for everything." The study further acknowledges that "operating the park system with such a heavy reliance on revenue is not sustainable," and that "alternative funding sources need to be discovered."

The study identifies an extensive menu of alternative revenue strategies that have not been fully pursued before the Department now seeks broad fee-setting authority over Vermont residents. These include:

- A Vermont State Parks license plate and/or dedicated vehicle registration fee, as already implemented in Maine, Oregon (which generates 15% of its parks budget from a recreation vehicle plate), and New Hampshire
- State lottery revenue allocation, as in Oregon, which funds 40% of its parks budget through this mechanism
- Royalties on natural resources on park property, as Maine receives from spring water sales from wells on park land
- Utility lease revenue, as New Jersey generates through infrastructure leases
- Oil and gas lease fund revenue, as Pennsylvania uses to supplement parks funding
- Expanded and improved concession offerings, including firewood, food, merchandise, and equipment rentals such as kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards, a category the study identifies as significantly underutilized, with concession revenue growing 88% year-over-year when it was actively developed
- Expanded RV and glamping infrastructure to meet documented visitor demand

- Repurposing existing infrastructure for programming and events, such as amphitheater use for outdoor concerts
- Adult programming fees
- Strengthened Friends of Parks and private foundation partnerships, modeled on Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and other states that have built robust private revenue streams
- Cancellation and no-show fees that recover lost revenue from unfilled reservations

Many of these alternatives generate revenue primarily or exclusively from high-demand and out-of-state use: precisely the visitors whose price sensitivity research confirms is lowest. None of them burden Vermont residents accessing their parks for day use, hiking, wildlife watching, or low-impact recreation.

We ask: why is the Department seeking broad authority to set market-rate fees for all users before exhausting these alternatives? The proposed rule answers this question by authorizing maximum pricing flexibility now, with rates to be set later, without any further rulemaking and without the economic impact analysis the legislature required.

Non-Resident Fees Must Be Prioritized:

Should the legislature and Department proceed with expanded fee authority, the research is unambiguous: out-of-state tourists are not deterred by fee increases. Destination visitors who have already committed to travel, lodging, and other trip expenses treat modest park fee increases as negligible. A study of Yellowstone National Park found that raising vehicle entry fees from $30 to $70 would decrease out-of-state visitation by less than one percent. Federal research on state park systems found demand to be largely inelastic for destination visitors at modest fee levels, with revenue rising even as visitation held steady.

The tourism deterrence argument is real, but it applies to repeat, price-sensitive, local users. These are overwhelmingly Vermont residents, not tourists. The same federal research found that state park recreation demand is highest among low-income visitors, meaning that fee increases hit hardest at the Vermonters who have the fewest alternatives and depend most on public lands for affordable, restorative recreation. Vermont cannot afford to price its own residents, particularly lower-income families and children, off public lands in the name of fiscal sustainability.

Vermont is currently an outlier: it is one of only two states in the region, alongside New Hampshire, that charges residents and non-residents the same fee. That is changing everywhere. About a quarter of U.S. state park systems already charge out-of-state residents a higher entrance fee. New Hampshire is actively moving to allow up to 50% higher fees for non-residents. New Mexico's revised proposal makes day entry free for residents while charging non-residents $10. Montana charges residents $9 annually while non-residents pay $50 or $8 per entry. Oregon's current proposal adds a 25% surcharge for out-of-state visitors on top of higher annual fees. At the federal level, the National Park Service now charges international visitors up to three times the resident rate.

Vermont already charges higher base rates to non-residents. The question before the Department is whether to widen that differential meaningfully and transparently, or to pursue demand-based and peak pricing that will in practice fall hardest on the Vermonters who can least afford it.

Procedural Deficiencies:

ANR has proposed to establish rate-setting authority now while deferring the actual rate decisions to a later administrative process, one that would involve no rulemaking and no public comment. The legislature required an economic impact analysis before fee changes of this nature. That analysis has not been conducted or published. The Department has not asked how many Vermonters will be priced out of visiting a state park. It has not modeled the equity impacts of demand-based pricing on low-income households. Any rate change above a defined threshold should require a return to rulemaking, as the legislature intended.

Requested Conditions:

We urge the Department to structure any new fee authority around the following principles:

First, exhaust the alternative revenue strategies identified in the Department's own 2023 Modernization Study before imposing new costs on Vermont residents. These include a VSP license plate, vehicle registration opt-in fee, strengthened private partnerships, expanded concessions, and programming fees, all of which generate revenue primarily from high-demand and out-of-state use.

Second, maximize the non-resident fee differential as the primary lever of any new pricing authority. Vermont residents are taxpayers and owners of these lands. They should not be charged market rates before the Department has fully leveraged revenue from those who are not.

Third, codify income-based access programs, including Vermont Parks Forever, as a mandatory and adequately funded component of any fee structure, not a discretionary supplement.

Fourth, conduct and publish the economic impact analysis required by the legislature before any rates are set under new authority, with full public comment on that analysis.

Fifth, require legislative review for any fee increase above a defined threshold. The legislature recently asserted this principle with respect to Fish and Wildlife's fee authority. It should apply consistently here.

Vermont's public lands are among our most cherished shared assets for conservation, for community health, and for the wellbeing of families who might otherwise have no access to wild places. We strongly support funding them sustainably, and the tools to do so without pricing Vermonters off their own land are identified in the Department's own study. We urge the Department to pursue them first.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Respectfully,
Emily Ruff
Executive Director, Sage Mountain Botanical Sanctuary
Orange, Vermont

From: David Martin <david@davidsmartin.net>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 11:37 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Rule 26P009

[You don't often get email from david@davidsmartin.net. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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The proposed new rule would facilitate excessive increases in the rates paid by Vermonters who rely on our State Parks for inexpensive recreation opportunities. While it might help ANR to have more flexibility to set rates for non-residents, this proposal goes too far.
Before any new rule takes effect ANR should complete an economic impact analysis of what increases in rates would mean for Vermonters. The rule should not permit unlimited increases in rates for residents. I suggest something like a requirement for returning to rulemaking if any new set of rates would result in an increase for Vermonters of greater than 25% plus accumulated inflation in the CPI since 1925.

David Martin
Member
Mount Holly Conservation Commission

From: Janine Fleri <j9fleri@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 12:10 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Feedback on proposed rule changes

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Hi there,

I was reading about the proposed updates to State Parks Rules and Regulations, specifically the request to allow park entry and overnight camping fees to be modified at the discretion of the Commissioner with a 90-day warning period to the public.

This is of great concern to me, as I believe our public lands should be financially accessible for all Vermonters. I am not personally familiar with the current Parks Commissioner and this is not a judgement of them or their ethics; I simply do not trust that giving *anyone* carte blanche to impose fee adjustments would be of benefit to our statewide community.

To give you some background, I have historically always been what one might call an “indoor kid” who prefers the comfort of A/C and binge-watching tv to fishing or camping. I don’t like mosquitos, I’m terrified of ticks, I get overheated easily, and I refuse to poop in the woods. So it should speak volumes when I tell you how much I love our state parks. Spending an afternoon sitting on the shores of Kingsland Bay State Park, reading a book and cooling off in the water, or driving up to the Islands to wade around Knights Point are some of my favorite summer activities. While a $5 entry fee is not a barrier for me at this point in my life, there is a younger, cash-strapped version of myself that always cringes when I have to pay to access a resource my taxes help pay for. I’m grateful that $5 doesn’t hinder my ability to experience our parks, but I worry about those who aren’t in a position to spend that cash as comfortably. How would they be impacted by entry fees that aren’t static? Negatively, I imagine.

Yes, I am familiar with VT Parks Forever and their Parks Access Program. They are a terrific organization with an important mission and I am grateful for the work they do to help low-income, social-benefits-eligible Vermonters to get out and into our parks. However, as a nonprofit professional with over a decade of experience working with underserved Vermonters, I can confidently say our systems often fail those who make just enough to not qualify for benefits and not nearly enough to comfortably enjoy what income they do have. I hate to think about the number of people who would be left behind as a result of unregulated fee changes to access our parks and would encourage you to consider alternative ways to generate revenue (for example, I’ve seen others suggest increasing fees for out of state visitors, and I’m not wholly against it).

Additionally, a recent OpEd to The Other Paper, Zach Porter also suggested decisions concerning land management are often made behind closed doors with little to no regards for land owners who could be impacted by those decisions. I do not know Mr. Porter or the depth of the validity of his claims. If there is truth to them, however, I would hope that the Agency of Natural Resources would opt to adjust their practices to embrace a higher level of transparency and collaboration with the Vermonters whose lives are impacted by the ANR’s decisions and actions.

Thank you for extending the period for public feedback and for taking the time to consider my input.

-Janine Fleri
South Burlington

From: Nancy Dunavan <birdylover2022@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 12:36 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Rule 26P009

[You don't often get email from birdylover2022@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

We pay an incredible amount of taxes! DO NOT raise fees on Vermonters!!!!!! If you need more money, charge out of state people. Wendy's tried to pass off that chestnut too, surge pricing, and it bit them in the backside. We are sick and tired of EVERYTHING costing more!
Thanks,
Nancy Dunavan
Morrisville, VT

From: Moni <fordham.monique@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 1:38 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments on 2006 rules and regs

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EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

I'm writing this after having my vacation at Burton Island detailed by the lack of maintenance and contingency planning for the Island Runner ferry - this is the second year this had happened, forcing people without their own boats or extra funds to pay for private transport to the island. Folks with coveted July reservations will be fine, but folks who could only get June reservations are screwed. Really unacceptable is putting it mildly. Thanks for ruining my vacation.

Now, let's add more problems and difficulties to the mix! Raising prices, giving folks who can afford to stay for more than 7 days no length restrictions so they can monopolize sites...wow, this is just a slap in the face for those less fortunate.

And as the topper, you want to change the reservation system so folks will have to risk not getting an earlier site date if their preferred, later date is snatched up in the reservation competition. That is an absolutely horrible idea. Are you purposely trying to drive people away from summer camping???? It sure seems like it and as someone who had been camping at Burton since I was a child, I'm deeply disturbed that these suggestions would even be taken seriously. It will not be easier to camp, unless you're rich and literally have all the time flexibility imaginable.

Whomever is proposing these changes does not care who gets excluded, as long as the people who do get reservations pay more. Wow. I am truly disgusted. Your mismanagement (see the ferry debacle) and terrible ideas are ruining the Vermont State Parks camping experience.

Monique Fordham

From: Bill Conley <bll.conley@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 2:35 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public Comment on Rule 26P009

You don't often get email from bll.conley@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello,
I'm writing to urge you to not allow market-based pricing for Vermont State parks and to explore the multiple revenue sources available to increase revenue.
Working Vermonters should be able to afford park stays as travel costs become increasingly out of reach for even the middle class. Our state parks should stay affordable for Vermonters even if out of state fees must increase.
Please keep our public lands accessible to the public who funds them through our hard earned tax dollars.

Bill Conley
Dummerston, Vermont

From: Eesha Williams <eeshawilliams@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 4:20 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

I live in Vermont. Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

Sincerely,

Eesha Williams

From: Laura Simon <simonlaura06@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 4:22 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Park entrance fees

[You don't often get email from simonlaura06@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Please make entrance fees to state Parks affordable. Laura Simon, Wilder, Vt

From: ecronana <ecronana@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 8:53 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: 2026 Rules and Regulations, PROPOSED. Comment

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EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

The proposed rules and regulations do not have an economic impact analysis associated with the changes to the fee structure. As such, it appears to be illegal.
The legislature requires an economic impact analysis under APA.
If rates are to be changed, that should happen WITHIN the rule making process, not outside that process. This reduces accountability required in a rule change.

The proposed rule gives the Commissioner broad pricing flexibility without any requirement to protect resident access or prioritize the non-resident fee differential that more than a dozen other states already use. Parks are here for Vermont residents and any new rule should clearly demonstrate that residents will have priority use.

ANR's referenced 2023 Parks Modernization Study identifies alternative revenue sources such as a VSP license plate, vehicle registration fee, expanded concessions, private partnerships and lottery revenue. All of these alternatives would generate meaningful revenue without burdening Vermont residents.

Please complete an economic impact analysis as mandated by the legislature before changing rates and evaluate maximizing a non-resident differential before increasing fees to residents!

Thank you,
Ellen Cronan, Middlebury

From: Lmnopi <lmnopi@lmnopi.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2026 9:45 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from lmnopi@lmnopi.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear VT State Parks,

I am opposed to your proposal to shift to "demand based pricing" because they set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources and neglect to include required economic impacts analysis so we can ascertain how many Vermonters would be excluded from accessing our state lands under the new system.

As life becomes more unaffordable for regular Vermonters, please do not make a simple camping trip or day at a lake into something only out of staters and the wealthy can afford. There should be lower rates for locals and higher for those who are coming to our state to enjoy the Green Mountains.

Please drop the proposal!

thank you
Lopi LaRoe
Rutland, VT

LMNOPI website
@LMNOPIMAIZE on Instagram

From: Candy Jones <seajones55@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 7:01 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Rulemaking 26P009

You don't often get email from seajones55@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hi,
Concerning the proposed change in fee rates for Vermont State Parks, I suggest that out of state folks pay higher fees, and Vermonters pay the fees as they now exist.
Candy Jones
Rutland, Vt

From: Pamela Stanyon <stanyonpjs@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 8:54 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Rule 26P009

You don't often get email from stanyonpjs@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

The ANR should be required to complete economic impact analysis the legislature mandated before any rates are set; evaluate a non-resident fee differential to be maximized before any resident fees increase; codify income-based access (Vermont Parks Forever) as mandatory, not discretionary; require a return to rulemaking for any rate change above a defined threshold; and that the Department pursue the alternative revenue strategies as outlined in their own Modernization Study first.

Best, Pam

From: Jerry Throne <Jerry.throne@outlook.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 9:29 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public Input on 2026 Rules and Regulations- Vt. State Parks

You don't often get email from jerry.throne@outlook.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

I am concerned about new fees being considered for Vermont State Parks and would like to see a deep discount for Vermonters.

Thank you,

Jerry Throne
Morrisville, Vt.

From: Rod - Sage Mountain <rod@sagemountain.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 10:18 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Rule 26P009

You don't often get email from rod@sagemountain.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

My name is Rod Coronado and I am the caretaker of a 600-acre property that adjoins the Groton State Forest. I am also a kayaker, angler and hiker that regularly recreates in the state forest. I am writing to express opposition to Proposed Rule 26P009 because I believe it would remove the public from having greater input to how state lands are managed. I also believe any change to the rulemaking process for our state lands should require a complete economic impact analysis.

Also, any change in fees to Vermont residents will have a detrimental impact on the ability of marginalized peoples to use their public lands. Access to state lands requires personal transportation and costs that continue to rise. Vermont residents like myself should not have to pay more to use the same areas we have for years, just because they are popular for non-residents. Please do not penalize hard working Vermonters for being longtime supporters of our state parks system.

Thank You,

Rod Coronado
Wildlife Programs Director, Sage Mountain Botanical Sanctuary
State Director, Vermont Wildlife Patrol
Chairman, Town of Orange Cemetery Commission

From: Alan Pierce <alanrobertpierce@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 10:32 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Park fees, proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from alanrobertpierce@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

FPR Staff,

I strongly object to FPR's proposal to raise entrance fees and camping fees for state parks.

Higher fees are regressive and will hit the lowest income Vermonters the most.

This is yet another case of FPR privatizing our public lands and excluding the public from decision-making processes regarding our parks.

FPR has a huge budget. There are many ways to address maintenance costs; raising fees is the worst solution. Tighten FPR's budget. Do not use our state lands as your private slush fund.

Shame.

Alan Pierce
Duxbury, VT

From: Susan Donovan <ssdonovan@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 11:42 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Re: MESSAGE RECEIVED

You don't often get email from ssdonovan@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hope My reply came thru this morning. I know today is the last day of comments. I did not save my copy but printed one....looks like it is not easy to read.

Here is the quick ask:

Your NEW reservation system is antiquated and will not work. I read 64 pages of your report on things to do at VTSTATEPARKS. A lot to accomplish but the rez system where you can only book 11 months out to the day is NOT FEASIBLE. If I want to visit on July 13th and I have to wait until the 13th, 11 months out....well people who book on the 12th probably will have taken dates. Even if their rez ends on the 13th....I cannot book.

THINK LIKE A HOTEL RESERVATION SYSTEM. STUDY HOTEL RESERVATION SYSTEMS.

in 1998 , one night a Coolidge was $17. This year I paid $50 per nite and not even a ledge site. I get prices increase but I do not get making it MORE DIFFICULT to make a reservation. I think next year it will be impossible to get the dates I can do. SOOOOO.....long term dedicated visitors get no accommodations. THINK LIKE A HOTEL.

I know you have a ton more things to work on. I agree you need to hire more FT staff who are dedicated like Ranger Bill and Jane. You need to offer them a place to stay. We have same problem on Cape Cod. Seasonal workers cannot afford to live on thecape.

Good luck. I LOVE VT. and Coolidge. I fear my days of visiting are ending.

Best

Susan Donovan

On Thursday, June 11, 2026 at 07:16:34 AM EDT, ANR - Parks <anr.parks@vermont.gov> wrote:

Hi Susan, I don’t see your email from earlier. Can you send your message in response to this email?

Kaitlin Alford (she/her) | Parks Sales & Services Manager
Division of State Parks – Central Office
Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation
1 National Life Dr, Davis Bldg.| Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
802-249-3128 | Kaitlin.alford@vermont.gov
vtstateparks.com

Connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, or our YouTube.

From: Susan Donovan <ssdonovan@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2026 7:59 AM
To: ANR - Parks <ANR.Parks@vermont.gov>
Subject: MESSAGE RECEIVED

You don't often get email from ssdonovan@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

HELLO,

I WROTE A LETTER TO YOU THIS MORNING. MY RESPONDS CAME FROM YOUR WEBSITE BUT I CANNOT TELL IF IT WAS TRANSMITTED CORRECTLY. CAN YOU PLEASE CONFIRM THAT YOU RECEIVED MY FIRST EMAIL THIS MORNING.

THANK YOU

SUSAN DONOVAN
SSDONOVAN@YAHOO.COM

From: Sue Sullivan <suesul@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 11:45 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Keep prices down

[You don't often get email from suesul@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

--
Sue

From: Margaret Olson <mrgrt.olson@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 11:50 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from mrgrt.olson@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

How can you do this to middle/lower class families?! This is all we have that is somewhat affordable - or used to be!! Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

Sincerely,
YOUR NAME HERE

From: Laurel Facey <lfacey88@crocker.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 11:55 AM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments on rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from lfacey88@crocker.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

Sincerely,

Laurel Facey of Massachusetts

From: Heather Immoor <heather.immoor@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 12:06 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from heather.immoor@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like me and my family of five, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

We working-class Vermonters are already being priced out of basic necessities, including housing, groceries, and healthcare. Now you want to price us out of the parks? Price our kids out of the parks? So if Hazel, my seven-year-old, says hey mom, let's go canoeing! Let's go hiking! Let's look for spring flowers and peepers! This is going to be yet one more thing where my answer has to be "we can't afford it"?

What are you even thinking? Aren't you supposed to be stewards for us, for Vermonters?

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Listen to Vermonters. Be on the right side of history. Keep our kids in the parks.

Sincerely,Heather ImmoorIsland Pond

--
Sent from Gmail Mobile

From: Allan Seymour <allanvt@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 12:06 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from allanvt@me.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

Allan Seymour
allanvt@me.com
C 603-852-0028
www.havenfarm.com

From: Bob Galvin <bobgalvin777@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 12:32 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from bobgalvin777@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello Vermont State Parks,

My name is Bob Galvin, and I live in Bolton. I serve as chair of the Bolton Conservation Commission and work as the Volunteer Coordinator for the Vermont chapter of the Sierra Club, but my comments today are in my personal capacity. I want to register my opposition to allowing the Commissioner to set prices based on use, demand, and cost recovery with a proposed minimum of 90 days advanced public notice. At a time when a growing number of Vermonters are struggling to stay afloat financially, allowing the Commissioner the ability to increase the cost of our shared state lands is not a direction we should be heading as a state. If this proposal passes, I foresee a future where lower-income Vermonters are less able to camp, hike, and spend time generally in our wonderful state parks than wealthy out-of-state folks, and it feels like these parks are one of the last few affordable places to spend time.

I also want to express that I think the economic impact analysis associated with this rule is insufficient. Having some sort of idea of how increased fees at state parks will impact different subsets of Vermonters is important, and I would like the state to undertake a robust economic impact analysis moving forward.

I understand that there are many challenges that face FPR and ANR generally, and I appreciate your work to protect our treasured state lands. Thanks for taking the time to read these comments, and take care.

Bob

From: JoAnn Berns <dr_jo@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 12:37 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Please be creative re VT's state parks (Rulemaking proposal 26P009)

You don't often get email from dr_jo@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear VT Parks thought & policy leaders,

Please be creative about the many possibilities for helping to fund VT's state parks in order to keep fees down and allow them to be affordable for all Vermonters and also guests.

They are extraordinary gems in our state.

I know funding is a huge issue. Thinking creatively and expansively, and inviting others to participate in brainstorming, may yield additional ideas beyond raising fees.

Thank you,
JoAnn Berns
Thetford Center, VT

From: mary simons <mary.beth.simons@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 12:54 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: COMMENT: Rule Change - FEE Increase

You don't often get email from mary.beth.simons@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Hi Folks.THANK YOU for your work.I LOVE our parks! Especially Green River Reservoir!!
I'm concerned about the proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing".As we know, spending time outdoors is essential for our health, and for the health of our planet. PLEASE don't increase the rates, thereby adding additional barriers for some to enjoy our parks.
If you need additional revenue, maybe offer a sliding scale which would incentivize folks who can to give more?
Anyhow,PLEASE don't raise the cost for all.

Thank you,Mary SimonsLincoln, VT

From: Karen Horn <karenhorn@mind.net>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 1:09 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from karenhorn@mind.net. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont Parks:

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

Sincerely,
Karen Horn ***Vergennes, Vermont***

From: Dale Good <good.d9@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 1:12 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re; rule making proposals 26P009

You don't often get email from good.d9@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

To Vermont Parks authorities,
I just found out about the changes to the fees for using public parks.
Please try to help keep them affordable for everyone. Our favorite is Grout Pond, which used to have a caretaker and a little store on site. I know it's hard to keep out the "riff-raff "but so many good people are willing to help clean up their trash and not mess up the toilets.
Let's see if we can tap into some of the wealth that flows into our state to let us locals afford a little nature time.
Thank you
Dale Good
Westminster, Vt.

From: Eric Jones <legacyforest@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 1:26 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from legacyforest@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

Sincerely,

Eric & Margaret Jones
Legacy Forest Trust
"When you go home,
Tell them of us and say,
For your tomorrow,
We gave our today"

From: Abby Colihan <abbycolihan@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 3:12 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Pricing fees at State Parks

You don't often get email from abbycolihan@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

To whom it may concern,

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" could be challenging for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

Abby ColihanMontpelier

From: Kate Kenner <faunesiegel@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 3:27 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: unlimited power

[You don't often get email from faunesiegel@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Good day,

I have just been reading about Vermont State Parks possibly granting itself unlimited power on entry fees, rentals, and everything that goes along with visiting State Parks and I am appalled at this proposal. Do you want to make State Parks accessible for everyone or only for those who have the means to pay whatever prices are at the time? People should not have barriers to nature, including our parks. Life is not cheap these days and won't be getting any better. The least you can do is to help them get some respite by not giving yourselves the authority to raise prices, seemingly on a whim, or that is how it feels. Once upon a time, all of nature was free, now there are people who may not be able to visit State Parks at all if prices are too high, and it will not look very good to those visiting from out of state. I do hope this move will not come to pass.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Kate Kenner
Guilford

From: Keetu Winter <winterk@wellspringcommons.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 3:38 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from winterk@wellspringcommons.org. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like my friends and colleagues, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

Sincerely,Keetu Winter

From: Kevin Gish <kevin.gish@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 4:12 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: Rulemaking Proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from kevin.gish@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

The proposed rule changes to allow for "demand-based pricing" is an unsatisfactory solution for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care rise to new heights, state parks must remain affordable and accessible to all, as a place for day trips and vacations.

The proposed regulation changes set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system. Stating that "This proposed rule change does not currently change any rates for developed State Park services" is simply not being transparent, as rates could be raised as soon as the proposed changes take effect.

While current revenue from sale of services is approximately 70% of the operating budget, this could, and should, be changed. Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands, higher rates for out of state visitors, or collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals.

Please stop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thank you,

Sincerely,
Kevin GishSharon, VT

From: Laura Hill-Eubanks <lhilleub@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 4:34 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from lhilleub@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear officials of Vermont State Parks,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to your proposal to shift to "demand-based" pricing for the use of our state parks. This approach to funding the state parks is regressive and will prevent a number of individuals and families from being able to afford the use of the parks.

The state parks belong to all of us. And all Vermonters should be guaranteed the right to use them. By proposing a pricing structure that is bound to keep some people from entering or enjoying the parks--because they do not have the funds to pay the fees--you're saying it's OK for only *some* Vermonters to be able to use the parks, and that you don't care to ensure that *all* Vermonters are able to use them.

I suggest an alternative to the use of fees. We pay for other state infrastructure and services with income taxes, which are much more fair than flat fees. Funding based on income, or lack of it, would allow everyone to access the parks.

I find it astonishing that there is no Economic Impact Analysis included with the rulefiling. How could there be no economic impact from a rule that would allow an across-the-board increase in fees? I'm no economist, but it seems apparent that there will be financial impacts. For one, the number of people that would use the parks under the current fee structure is likely to decrease with an increase in fees, as those who cannot afford the fees simply stop going to the parks. And as the number of users decline, so will the visitors to the areas surrounding the parks, which would likely lead to a decline in the number of visitors to local businesses. This would have a negative impact on the businesses and livelihoods in those areas. An Economic Impact Analysis should be required in this case. Without that analysis, the proposed fee structure is simply arbitrary.

The current state administration likes to talk a great deal about "affordability" in Vermont. But what does that really mean? It seems to mean that they are very concerned about making sure big business and the wealthy are happy to be here ("no new or higher taxes on the rich"!?). But when it comes to those lower on the income scale, I don't see that same level of concern. Those less fortunate are finding it difficult to afford healthcare, housing and other basic necessities; but essentially no mention is made of intentionally depressed wages, or the need for universal healthcare, or the societal benefits of increasing taxes on the wealthiest in our community. And at the same time, this administration seems to have no qualms about making everyone pay the same higher fees to use a state-owned asset, whether they can afford to or not. So how is this "affordable" for all Vermonters?

This is the type of fee structure that is causing families to miss out on taking their kids to the places that many of us have enjoyed over our lifetimes. For some that means no more baseball games, no more skiing, no more music concerts, etc. These activities have become so expensive, that only those higher up on the income scale can afford to enjoy them. And now--no more adventures in state parks? --Unless you have the income level to afford it.

I ask that you withdraw this proposed rule, find an alternative funding approach that guarantees the opportunity for all Vermonters to use our state parks, seek transparency and public input on any and all future proposals, and provide a realistic and informative economic impact analysis.

All Vermonters own the state parks, and they deserve better than the proposal offered here.

Sincerely,

Laura Hill-Eubanks
Northfield, VT

From: Rebecca Morlock <rebeccalmorlock@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 5:01 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from rebeccalmorlock@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thank you,

Sincerely,
Rebecca Morlock

From: Annette Smith <vce@vce.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 6:39 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from vce@vce.org. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

The proposal on the table is not a good idea. Please consider alternatives as identified in the "modernization study" of 2023, such as creating a Vermont State Parks license plate, an opt-in fee associated with vehicle registration renewals, charging out-of-state visotors a higher rate, a longer state parks operating season. And the ski areas which attract many wealthy out of state visitors could be good sources for increasing funding to support public access to state parks.

Thank you for not adopting the current proposal and offer different alternatives.

Annette

Annette Smith
Executive Director
Vermonters for a Clean Environment
789 Baker Brook Road
Danby, VT
(802)446-2094
vce@vce.org
https://www.vce.org/

From: David Ellenbogen <pianomath@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 7:01 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

[You don't often get email from pianomath@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification]

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To whom it may concern:

It seems important for over monsters that access to our state parks remain as easy as possible. Our parks are a common asset and for many it's the only way to have a peaceful vacation or day in the country.

Please see to it that any change in fees structure be thoroughly vetted by all Vermonters in as broad a way as possible.

Thank you,

David Ellenbogen
PO Box 193.
Calais, Vermont
802-363-6868

From: Wally Elton <oldevermonter@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 8:11 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: Rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from oldevermonter@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

I write to express my opposition to this proposal to adopt "demand pricing" with no upper limit for access to our state parks and services available in them. I believe that our parks should be as accessible to all Vermonters as possible. I am amazed that an administration that talks so much about "affordability" would even consider placing greater barriers before people seeking access to the outdoors and the enjoyment and relief it can bring, especially at a time when so many are struggling with higher costs of food, transportation, housing and health care. Actions speak louder than words, you know.

Because I can, I contribute to Vermont Parks Forever to supplement your revenue and boost the quality of park services and infrastructure. As a donor, I do not expect to see higher fees for all Vermonters seeking to enjoy our parks, which are, after all, public lands.

There are numerous ways to supplement admission and use fees that were outlined in an agency report in 2023. I, for example, pay extra for a wildlife license plate to provide additional funds to the Fish and Wildlife Department. I am confident that there are Vermonters who would pay similarly for a state park plate. That is just one idea. I do not believe that the current arrangement, in which admission/use fees account for nearly 3/4 of state park funding, is sustainable in the long run. You need to diversify rather than boost another cost that will hurt those Vermonters already having to choose which bills to pay.

So I call on you to take the following steps:
1. Withdraw this proposal now.
2. Start developing a plan for diversifying revenue sources for our state parks based on the 2023 report.
3. Launch a better publicity plan for Vermont Parks Forever to encourage more donations. Many Vermonters I have spoken to are not aware of the need or this option.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Wallace Elton
275 S Munger Street
Middlebury 05753

From: Jared Pendak <jpendak@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 8:11 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from jpendak@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks, Please refrain from acting like price-gouging conglomerates such as Ticketmaster which exploit data under the guise of "dynamic pricing" at the expense of everyday customers. Fee-for-entry access to Vermont State Parks MUST remain affordable to ALL Vermonters, and rates should be fixed prior to each season. Further, your notification process for the public input session was entirely insufficient. Issues such as this warranting public input needs to be sent out to your email subscribers as well onto your social media channels.

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME HERE

From: Betzy <betzyherbalist@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 9:14 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from betzyherbalist@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Administrators of Vermont State Parks,

Right now is a terrible time to change your stat park fee structures or raise prices. Everything is more expensive, and that limits Vermonters and other people in New England from traveling for vacations and much-needed recreation. “Demand-based pricing” is a scam just like businesses basing prices on who their customer is. Please keep state parks affordable and accessible places for day trips and vacations.

Problems with Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations include setting no upper limit on fees, failing to review alternative revenue sources, and neglecting to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of putting increased costs on Vermonters, our State Park system should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Bancroft
Orange, VT

From: Kathleen White <kwsugarsnap@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 9:47 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

You don't often get email from kwsugarsnap@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Vermont State Parks,

Your proposal to shift to "demand-based pricing" is a gut punch for regular Vermonters, like me, who pay taxes and expect affordable access to state parks and campgrounds. In 2026, as prices for gas, groceries, health care, and child care soar to new heights, state parks must remain an affordable and accessible place for day trips and vacations.

Vermont State Parks' proposed regulations set no upper limit on fees, fail to review alternative revenue sources, and neglect to include the required economic impacts analysis so that we can see how many Vermonters might be excluded from accessing their state lands under the new system.

Instead of charging the general public exorbitant rates, Vermont should study alternative ways to generate revenue, such as charging higher rates to out of state visitors, collecting opt-out fees associated with vehicle registration renewals, or raising lease fees for private ski resorts that use state lands.

Please drop this proposal, conduct a robust economic and alternatives analysis, and come back to Vermonters with a new plan.

Thanks,

Sincerely,
***Kathleen White* Brattleboro, Vt**

From: Zack Porter <zporter@standingtrees.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 11:11 PM
To: ANR - Parks
Subject: Comments re: rulemaking proposal 26P009
Attachments: Part 3 - Comments and questions re rulemaking proposal 26P009 - Zack Porter, Standing Trees.pdf; Part 2 - Comments and questions re rulemaking proposal 26P009 - Zack Porter, Standing Trees.pdf; Part 1 - Comments and questions re rulemaking proposal 26P009 - Zack Porter, Standing Trees.pdf

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Dear Vermont State Parks,

Attached please find a new comment letter from Standing Trees re: rulemaking proposal 26P009, as well as our two previously submitted comments for your convenience.

Thanks for your consideration,

Zack

--
Zack Porter
Executive Director, Standing Trees
he/him/his

Montpelier, VT
802.552.0160
zporter@standingtrees.org

Standing Trees works to protect and restore forests on New England's public lands.

Protecting and restoring forests on New England's public lands
PO Box 132, Montpelier, VT 05601 - 802.552.0160

Dear Vermont State Parks,

This is part 3 of Standing Trees' comments on rulemaking proposal 26P009.

Standing Trees is a Vermont-based grassroots membership organization with over 3,700 supporters across New England. Standing Trees works to protect and restore New England's forests, with a focus on public lands in Vermont and New Hampshire. Standing Trees works to ensure that New England's public lands are managed using just and equitable policies and practices that support the region's residents and natural ecosystems. Standing Trees promotes managing public lands and waters to safeguard the region's native biodiversity; improve public health; contribute to flood and drought resilience; maximize carbon uptake and storage; and maintain clean water and clean air.

Public lands depend on public support. Public support for public lands depends (in large part) on helping the public to foster positive experiences and associations with public lands. To that end, an essential goal of Standing Trees' work is to make public lands welcoming and affordable to all, and to democratize public land management by making it accessible, accountable, and transparent. Much to our disappointment, Vermont State Parks' rulemaking proposal 26P009 does not make public lands more welcoming, affordable, accessible, accountable, or transparent.

1. Introduction

Vermont State Parks (VSP) is proposing a radical restructuring of charges and fees. The draft rule would function as a regressive tax, leaning on the very Vermonters who can least afford to pay more. At a moment when Vermonters are reeling from the price of groceries, gas, health care, child care, and housing, the Scott Administration is doubling down on charging higher fees for use of state lands, instead of pursuing alternative funding sources that are familiar to Vermont State Parks. This isn't fair to Vermonters, and it sets a dangerous precedent for other New England states.

Actions speak louder than words. The Scott Administration has made "affordability" into an oft-used talking point, but what does that really mean in practice? How is the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), and specifically the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation (FPR), looking out for the bottom line of Vermonters when it proposes to balance the books for Vermont State Parks on the backs of regular, working people?

2. Diversifying the revenue portfolio

Vermont State Parks relies on user fees, including day passes and camping reservations, for approximately 74% of its annual revenue.[1] This isn't a sustainable model, as Vermont State Parks recognized in a "modernization study" that it published in 2023. That study points to (but does not analyze) many opportunities for diversifying state park revenue streams, including (but not limited to) creating a Vermont State Parks license plate, an opt-in fee associated with vehicle registration renewals, charging out-of-state visitors a higher rate, and a longer state parks operating season to cover the *extremely busy* fall tourism season when most state parks are currently closed. The 2023 report also implies (but does not analyze) the option of charging more for corporate ski resort leases on state lands. Ski resorts including Stowe, Jay Peak, Okemo, and Killington contribute a large portion of the remainder of State Park revenue,[2] but the report provides no assessment of whether current lease fees are reasonable or appropriate (instead, the report emphasizes the impacts of climate change on ski seasons, but this factor, by itself, is not a good indicator of whether ski resorts are paying an appropriate amount to the State of Vermont for the privilege of using state lands). Contrary to the "modernization" study's recommendation to "explor[e] new and reliable funding sources,"[3] the draft rule does not explore (much less analyze) the economic costs and benefits of pursuing user-fee increases compared to other potential revenue sources.

As noted in the modernization report, other states show the way to a more diversified portfolio. In Montana, state residents are familiar with a popular opt-out fee for Montana State Parks. For the reasonable price of $9.27 per year, paid at the time of vehicle registration, Montana residents can gain "free" daytime access to their state parks.[4] This simple fee generates 54% of the annual revenue for Montana State Parks, and lowers the bar for general entry.[5] In Vermont, a family of four that wants to buy an annual state park

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[1] "Investing Today to Build the Future of Vermont State Parks." Vermont Dept of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, 2023. Available for download at https://www.vtstateparks.com/sites/stateparks/files/documents/Parks_Modernization_Study_Full.pdf.

[2] Proposed Filing Coversheet at 12. Available for download at https://www.vtstateparks.com/media/document/2026-apa-filing-forms-proposed-filing-rules-and-regulations-fpr04022026.

[3] "Investing Today to Build the Future of Vermont State Parks." Vermont Dept of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, 2023. Available for download at https://www.vtstateparks.com/sites/stateparks/files/documents/Parks_Modernization_Study_Full.pdf.

[4] "State Parks Earmarked Revenue State Special Revenue (02411)." Montana Legislative Fiscal Division. https://archive.legmt.gov/content/publications/fiscal/2023-Interim/IBC-C/State-Parks-Miscellaneous-(02411)_GM_MD.pdf

[5] "Waiver of State Park & Fishing Access Site Fees," Montana Motor Vehicle Division. Available at: https://mvdmt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/MV119-Waiver-of-State-Parks-Fee.pdf

pass will be set back $90 *per registered vehicle.*[6] Rather than prioritizing changes to user fees, VSP would be well served to pursue revenue sources that do not create undue burdens on low-income Vermonters, as Montana has done.

3. <u>VT ANR must perform the required economic impact analyses</u>

The Vermont Administrative Procedures Act (VT APA) says that state agencies "shall analyze the anticipated costs and benefits to be expected from adoption of the rule."[7] Neither the Proposed Filing Coversheet, nor any other material provided by VT ANR, includes such an analysis. Merriam Webster defines "analysis" as "a detailed examination of anything complex in order to understand its nature or to determine its essential features: a thorough study."[8] In the Proposed Filing Coversheet, VT ANR briefly describes its proposed rule, claims no direct monetary impact because rates will be set later,[9] and absolves itself of any responsibility to consider the economic consequences of proposed changes to camping and day use fees. For the sake of argument, even if we were to take VT ANR at its word (which we do not) that there are no direct impacts, the VT APA does not make an exception that would allow state agencies to ignore other "anticipated costs and benefits to be expected from adoption of the rule." And yet, no impacts from changes to user fees are analyzed by VT ANR.

For example, the proposed rule contains no upper limits on charges for state park camping or day use fees, nor does it explore or compare the impacts of current fees and charges or rate changes in the future. It is reasonable and prudent for the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to analyze the impact of current rates and future rate increases on the Vermont public. VT ANR should assess the impacts on the public of setting rates at a variety of levels, including rates that are equal to, above, and below present amounts. Furthermore, VT ANR should compare the impact of anticipated rates on Vermont residents to the impact of anticipated rates on out-of-state visitors. How might Vermont or out-of-state residents be encouraged, discouraged, or prevented from visiting state parks if camping fees were set at $10, $25, $35, $50, $75, or $100 per night? How might the economic impact of the proposed rule be lessened with a maximum cap on fees, or if VT ANR limited the number of times that it can change fees in a calendar year?

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[6] "Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Fees and Charges for State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands." Available for download at: https://www.vtstateparks.com/media/document/annotated-proposed-2026-rules-and-regulations-dept-forests-parks-and-recreation.

[7] 3 V.S.A. § 838(b)(1)

[8] See: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/analysis.

[9] Proposed Filing Coversheet at 10.

The economic impacts analysis is especially important since VT ANR appears to be claiming that it no longer has to abide by 10 V.S.A. § 2603(c)(1), and need only provide 90-day notice of future rate increases after promulgation of this proposed rule. VT ANR seems to think that it can use this rule to avoid having to perform an economic impacts analysis ever again for proposed rate changes.

4. VT ANR must perform the required alternatives analyses

An alternatives analysis is a required component of the economic impacts analysis.[10] Specifically, the VT APA requires state agencies to "compare the economic impact of the rule with the economic impact of other alternatives to the rule, including having no rule on the subject or a rule having separate requirements for small businesses."[11] VT ANR did not perform an alternatives analysis. First, VT ANR failed to analyze the costs and benefits of its proposed rule, as noted in section 3, above. Second, it did not analyze the status quo or "no action" alternative. Third, it failed to analyze viable alternatives to the rule, including (but not limited to) revenue sources listed in the 2023 modernization study, such as vehicle registration fees or the creation of a new license plate; a rule that sets a maximum cap on fees and charges, and/or which limits the amount that rates can change in a calendar year; or a rule that guarantees substantially lower fees and charges for Vermont residents compared to out-of-state visitors.

The VT APA stipulates that "each economic impact analysis shall conclude that the rule is the most appropriate method of achieving the regulatory purpose."[12] However, VT ANR does not clearly state a regulatory purpose anywhere in the Proposed Filing Coversheet or in other materials, and it does not offer a final conclusion about the appropriateness of the proposed rule. The apparent purpose is to increase revenue for Vermont State Parks. Given this broad purpose and need, VT ANR must explain and justify why the proposed rule is the "most appropriate method for achieving the regulatory purpose."

5. Conclusion

The State of Vermont should reconsider its proposal and investigate alternative sources of revenue. At a minimum, it must cure the errors in its draft rule and/or start anew.

Thanks for your consideration of our comments. We look forward to working with Vermont State Parks to raise revenue in a fair and equitable manner.

---

[10] 3 V.S.A. § 838(b)(1)(B)
[11] Ibid
[12] 3 V.S.A. § 838(b)(4)

Sincerely,



Zack Porter
Executive Director
Standing Trees

Gmail

Zack Porter <zporter@standingtrees.org>

Comments and questions re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

Zack Porter <zporter@standingtrees.org> Tue, May 26, 2026 at 5:07 PM
To: "White, Emily" <Emily.White@vermont.gov>
Cc: "Mckeen, Nate" <Nate.Mckeen@vermont.gov>, ANR - Parks <ANR.Parks@vermont.gov>

Hello VT ANR,

I just read on the VT State Parks website today that the comment period for rulemaking proposal 26P009 was reopened on May 20th and will last until June 11th. A week has nearly gone by and Standing Trees had no idea that the comment period was extended. How is VT State Parks letting the public know about this extension? I don't believe that I've received a single email notification from VT ANR or any VT State Parks-affiliated entity about the original comment period or the extension.

In contrast, ANR sent a second email today about the lands management planning rule comment period (the state parks rulemaking comment period overlaps with at least one other major ANR rulemaking comment period that is currently ongoing for the ANR lands management planning rule - it would be much better to do these at separate times). ANR is also holding a total of five public meetings (4 in person, and 1 virtual) for this land management planning rulemaking.

Will VT ANR or any other entity send an email about the VT state parks comment period? Will another public hearing be scheduled?

In the materials that were shared with me by email on May 19th, I noticed that there is no economic impact analysis. According to ANR, this is (at least in part) because VT ANR claims that there is no direct economic impact from the new fee structure proposed by the rule, with the exception of special use permits (ostensibly because new prices for camping and day-entry will be set later on). But there is no indication that future price-setting will occur via rulemaking, so ANR seems to be concealing the fact that it will never actually perform an economic impacts analysis (as required by 3 V.S.A. § 838(b)) for fee changes that are anticipated by this rule. Was this a deliberate attempt to avoid the economic impact analysis required by the Vermont Administrative Procedure Act (VT APA)?

10 V.S.A. § 2603(c)(1) says: "The Commissioner, subject to the direction and approval of the Secretary, shall adopt and publish rules in the name of the Agency for the use of State forests, or park lands, including reasonable fees or charges for the use of the lands, roads, camping sites, buildings, and other facilities and for the harvesting of timber or removal of minerals or other resources from such lands, notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 603."

The paragraph above creates a legal obligation for FPR to use rulemaking for the establishment of fees. Fees cannot be set through an opaque, alternative (i.e. non-rulemaking) mechanism sometime in the future, as proposed by the draft 2026 regulations. Giving the public 90 days' notice to respond, as proposed in the draft rule, is not a substitute for rulemaking, which has distinct legal requirements under the VT APA.

Moreover, 10 V.S.A. § 2603(c)(1) requires "reasonable fees or charges." At present, the draft regulations are not "reasonable" in any sense of the word. Merriam Webster defines "reasonable" as (see: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reasonable):

> *1(a): being in accordance with reason; a reasonable theory*
> *1(b): not extreme or excessive; reasonable requests*
> *1(c) MODERATE, FAIR; a reasonable chance; a reasonable price*
> *1(d) INEXPENSIVE*

The proposed market-based fees, which apparently will not go through future rulemaking, are *unreasonable*. The public does not know what the fees are. The public does not know how fees will be determined. There is no upper limit on the fees. And there hasn't been a required economic impacts analysis to determine what the impact will be on Vermonters.

Among other requirements, the economic impacts analysis under 3 V.S.A. § 838(b) also must "compare the economic impact of the rule with the economic impact of other alternatives to the rule, including having no rule on the subject or a rule having separate requirements for small businesses." In the form that was provided by email on May 19th, there is no discussion about any "other alternatives to the rule," with the exception of a brief discussion comparing the draft rule to the status quo (but only from the perspective of maintaining or expanding ANR's budget).

Per the requirements of the VT APA, VT ANR should also analyze alternative sources of revenue that wouldn't involve using a market-based system for setting state park prices. For example, VT ANR could charge out-of-state residents more than Vermont residents for park entry or camping, as is commonly done in other states. In Massachusetts, for example, parking (https://www.mass.gov/guides/parking-at-massachusetts-state-parks) and camping (https://www.mass.gov/info-details/camping-fees) are several times more expensive at state-managed lands for out-of-state residents than for in-state residents. (To illustrate, camping in 2026 at Nickerson State Park on Cape Cod will cost $22 per night for MA residents, and $70 for a resident of another state. In addition, out-of-state residents may also be charged a $5 surcharge that goes directly to the park where they are staying. See here for details: https://massdcrcamping.reserveamerica.com/camping/nickerson-state-park/r/campgroundDetails.do?contractCode=MA&parkId=32601).

As drafted and presented, the proposed 2026 regulations and their accompanying documentation are unlawful.

Standing Trees supports increased funding for VT State Parks, but it must be achieved through lawful and ethical means.

Please let us know if you would be interested in visiting about this further.

Thanks,

Zack

[Quoted text hidden]

Gmail

Zack Porter <zporter@standingtrees.org>

Comments and questions re: rulemaking proposal 26P009

6 messages

Zack Porter <zporter@standingtrees.org> Mon, May 18, 2026 at 4:29 PM
To: Nate.McKeen@vermont.gov, Emily.White@vermont.gov, parks@vermont.gov

Dear Mr. McKeen and Ms. White,

I hope this email finds you well. The following email contains questions and comments regarding rulemaking proposal 26P009, "Rules and Regulations for Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees on Department Lands." I'm grateful that Emily White responded promptly to my phone call this morning.

As I will explain below, this rulemaking process has been conducted in violation of 3 V.S.A. § 838 and the Rule on Rulemaking. We request that the process be started over again according to statute and the Rule on Rulemaking.

I am an immense fan of VT State Parks on a personal level. My family goes camping, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, biking, and paddling at Vermont State Parks year-round. I'm very grateful to you for the services that you provide to Vermonters and visitors alike, and for protecting many important and beloved places across the state.

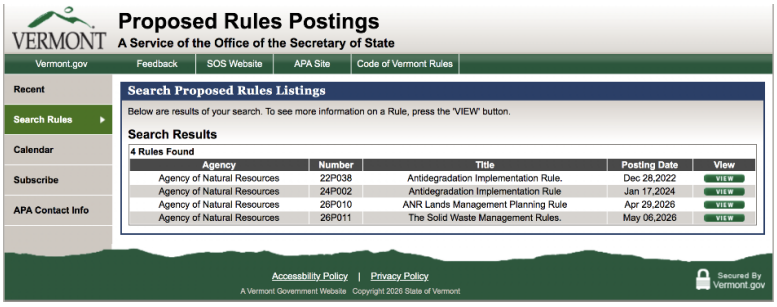
In 2021, I co-founded Standing Trees to be an organization that advocates for the protection of Vermont's public lands, including state parks. Our members regularly visit and use Vermont state parks. A big part of our work is making sure that the public has a meaningful say in how decisions are made for the future of Vermont's public lands. For example, we are very involved with the ongoing ANR Lands Management Planning Rule process. Standing Trees is also concerned with the ability of the public to access public lands, such as the fees and permits that might be required to visit or stay at a State Park. We understand that public land agencies are often under-resourced, so we certainly do not harbor any philosophical opposition to increasing funding for public lands. That said, Standing Trees believes any such changes must be fair, equitable, and justified, and that they must not compromise the public's trust and the public resources that State Parks protect.

Following are concerns related to both process and substance, although I have not had time to exhaustively review the rule since I only learned about it on the day that comments are due.

PROCESS CONCERNS:

Because of how "tuned-in" Standing Trees is to all things related to public lands, I was surprised to learn this morning that a comment period will close today, May18th, for new 2026 rules and regulations for VT State Parks. I learned about this on a story on Vermont Public during Morning Edition. I normally receive email updates from VT State Parks, but I have not received any notifications about this rulemaking. In fact, my records show that the most recent VT State Parks email was sent on April 3rd, 2026, and it contains no mention of the pending rulemaking comment period, which started on April 8th. I am also signed up to receive VT FPR emails about rulemaking, policy-making, and long range management planning comment periods, but I did not receive an email about rulemaking proposal 26P009.

After hearing the story on Vermont Public, I searched for all ANR proposed rules and 26P009 does not show up (see below).



However, a link to a page with some basic information is located on the "recent postings" page on the VT SOS rulemaking website. The page links to a VT SOS summary of the proposed rule. On this page, there is no link to any detailed information about the rule. The link that is provided takes you to the basic home page for VT State Parks. Then someone must find another link to a press release page for VT State Parks. Here, there is a link to an "Annotated Proposed 2026 Rules and Regulations for the Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation" but there is no additional information or analysis provided.

3 V.S.A. § 838 contains a list of requirements for rulemaking, some of which are further described in the Rule on Rulemaking. I am attaching the proposed rule form that VT SOS requires for rulemaking. The Rule on Rulemaking says that "Agencies must use the forms published by the Office of the Secretary of State; altered forms will not be accepted." The VT APA requires an Environmental Impacts Analysis, Economic Impacts Analysis, and "a plan to maximize public input," among other requirements.

On our brief call this morning, Ms White explained that one person attended the public meeting in person and one person attended online.

How many comments has the agency received at this point in time?

Regardless of the merits of the proposed rule (which again I have not had time to investigate), my understanding is that the proposed rule should have been made readily available to the public in its entirety, including all information required by statute and the Rule on Rulemaking. Without access to all relevant information, how can the public be expected to provide an informed comment?

I am also concerned about the degree to which the public was made aware of this rulemaking. Did VT State Parks make a plan to "maximize public input" as required? If so, was the plan adequate?

Is there a version of proposed rule 26P009 that uses the rulemaking form? Can you please share this with me and post this to the VT SOS rulemaking webpage and to the VT State Parks webpage for the rulemaking?

Can you please share the:

- Environmental Impacts Analysis
- Economic Impacts Analysis
- Plan to "maximize public input"

***REQUEST*: I am formally requesting via this email that VT State Parks and VT ANR restart the public comment period for this rulemaking, provide all required materials for the public to review and follow all procedures per 3 V.S.A. § 838 and the Rule on Rulemaking, use additional means of notification (such as by email), and provide additional in-person and virtual meetings to inform the public and gather comments.**

SUBSTANTIVE CONCERNS:

The proposed rule contains several concerning elements that I will highlight below, although I have not had sufficient time to review the proposed rule in detail for reasons already stated, and the state has not yet provided the public with all required information for preparing an informed comment.

1) Dynamic Pricing:
Changes to Sections II(e), III(a), IV(a), V(f), VII will replace a transparent and accountable pricing system with a "dynamic pricing" system that is opaque and unaccountable. We oppose the use of such systems in Vermont State Parks.

Dynamic pricing is commonly used for commercial purposes such as setting prices for airline tickets, concert tickets, or rentals on a site like Airbnb. These practices are stress-inducing, favor the wealthy, and are not becoming of a public land management agency whose mission is to serve the public good and make access to the outdoors available to all. Vermont State Parks claims that certain discounts or vouchers will be made available to a subset of the population, but this will not prevent many Vermonters from becoming priced out of using their state parks. And it certainly will have a stain on the experience of visiting a state park by transforming state park reservations into even more of a competitive commercial system than it currently is.

There is no information provided about how this dynamic pricing will function. What will be the upper limits to camping prices, if any? What is in the algorithms that are used to determine prices? Will the state parks determine prices based on the personal data, characteristics, or income of the individual buying the reservation? We question both the legality and ethics of this proposal.

2) XIII Commercial Activities:
We object to section XIII (3) which says, in part: "[m]inimal timber cutting, skidding, landing, and hauling especially for temporary rights-of-way may be exempted from this constraint. Any permitted timber removal will be undertaken according to a cutting plan and stumpage payment approved by the Department." Such activities must be authorized in a legally-approved Long Range Management Plan, must be subject to public notice and comment, and must be approved with a final record of decision. The ANR State Lands Management Planning Rule should (if done well) determine how such decisions are made and how the public needs to be involved at every step of the process.

We also object to section XIII (3)(a) which says:

> *A special use permit or license is required for any activity proposed by a commercial or non-profit entity using Department lands that does not have a lease and the activity meets at least one of the following criteria:*
> *1) is organized or publicized, or*
> *2) involves a fee (charged to participants), or*
> *3) alters a site or alters/removes natural resources, or*
> *4) may conflict with other established, ~~traditional~~ authorized uses.*

Many nonprofit organizations regularly schedule free outings into public lands to help people connect with their public lands. Many of these outings are planned on an as-needed basis, or when the weather or seasonal conditions are favorable, etc... We object to the requirement for a special use permit for a free guided outing that is advertised to the public. Furthermore, this policy contradicts the federal policy which only requires a special use permit for commercial activities that charge a fee (see: https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/contracts-commercial-permits/special-use-permit-application).

Thank you for your consideration and for your work at VT State Parks. Please feel free to get in touch.

Thanks,

Zack

--
Zack Porter
Executive Director, Standing Trees
he/him/his

Montpelier, VT
802.552.0160
zporter@standingtrees.org

Standing Trees works to protect and restore forests on New England's public lands.

apafilingforms.docm
133K

postmaster@vermontgov.onmicrosoft.com <postmaster@vermontgov.onmicrosoft.com> Mon, May 18, 2026 at 4:30 PM
To: zporter@standingtrees.org

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

Responsiveness Summary for Public Comments received on Proposed Rule Amendments to C.V.R. 12-020-009 Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees for State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands

Date: 10/16/2026

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Introduction to Outreach, Public Feedback, and Themes

This document is a compilation of all public comments received on the proposed revisions to the Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees on Department Lands Rule and the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation's (FPR or Department) response to those comments. Ninety-nine comments were received. This document organizes comments by theme and includes a response from the Department. Where appropriate, comments have been paraphrased, consolidated, and categorized. The full text of written comments is submitted as an attachment to the Agency's final proposed rule filing and is available on request for review from the Division of State Parks and also on the State Parks website at: https://www.vtstateparks.com/news/vermont-state-parks-seeks-public-input-2026-rules-and-regulations

The Secretary of State placed the rulemaking proposal on public notice on April 8, 2026 and the public comment period remained open through May 18, 2026. In anticipation of public interest, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) held a public meeting in Montpelier, VT on May 11, 2026 with a virtual attendance option. Due to the volume of comments received near the end of the original public comment period deadline, FPR opted to extend the public comment period to June 11, 2026.

In addition to the Secretary of State's postings and public warnings, the Department shared information on the parks website's news page and through social media on April 8, 2026. The news page can be found at: https://www.vtstateparks.com/news/vermont-state-parks-seeks-public-input-2026-rules-and-regulations. The front page of vtstateparks.com included a link to this news page starting on April 8, 2026.

The extension of the deadline was announced via vtstateparks.com (2.3 million annual views), social media (Facebook 59K followers, Instagram 51.7K), and updated on the SOS Proposed State Rules Postings website. Information about the rulemaking proposal was also included in the Vermont State Parks May newsletter, published on May 28, 2026.

Based on timing of the rescheduled Interagency Committee on Administrative Rules hearing, FPR was unable to meet the publishing deadline to include public notice in the April Parks' newsletter. This was remedied through inclusion in the May Newsletter after the deadline extension, allowing ample time for the public to review and respond prior to the extended deadline.

List of Public Comment Themes

Public comments have been categorized into the following themes:

A. Support for Proposed Rule for Pricing Based on Maintaining and Operating Parks
B. Comments on the Process
C. Comments Related to Dynamic or Demand Based Pricing and Clarity in Setting Fees
D. Comments Related to Authority of the Commissioner
E. Comments Related to the Economic Impact Analysis
F. Comments Related to Commercial Use of Department Land
G. Comments Related to Prioritizing Vermonters
H. Comments Related to Equitable Access to the Outdoors
I. Comments Related to Pets
J. Comments Related to Maximum Stay
K. Miscellaneous Comments

Proposed Changes Based on Public Feedback

Based on feedback received, the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, is submitting proposed rule 26P009 with the following changes and clarifications to the Final Proposed Rule. Some of the proposed changes are addressed in more detail in the individual comment themes below.

Section I.c. Pets paragraph 3: Added the language "including but not limited to" to clarify that nuisance animals include dogs and other pets. The new proposed language is: "3. No person who is the owner of a pet shall allow the pet to be a nuisance animal. Nuisance animal means any animal, including but not limited to dogs which:..."

Section II.e.1: Added "for pets and for prime sites." to the second sentence, and deleted "(see II.e.2-7 for definitions)" so it now states: "An additional ~~fee~~ rate shall be charged for each additional camper beyond four, for pets and for prime sites."

Sections II.e.3., III.a.1., IV.a.3., V.f.2.a.: Added language to clarify that fees may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner, so it now states:

> II.e.3. : "Fees for camping at any campground or designated remote sites may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1 and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks."
>
> III.a.1 : "Day use fees may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1. and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks."

IV.a.3. : "Marina fees and associated marine-based service fees may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1. and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks."

V.f.2.a: "Room and food service rates may be adjusted by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation annually for the operating season based on factors set forth in Section VII.1. and 2., Fees and Charges for All Uses of State Parks.

Section VII.1: Added language to state that the Department will publish any changes to rates and fees for day use, camping or other overnight lodging on the website and through other park specific outreach channels and in a press release; Added language stating that the Department shall adjust rates and fees no more than once annually prior to the parks operating season unless such change relates to an experimental or special service or promotional or vacation package; and added a requirement that the Commissioner may increase or decrease rates or fees after consideration of factors in Section VII.2. The language now reads as follows:

1. A list of rates and fees for use of State Parks shall be published annually by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and posted on their website. All rate or fee adjustments shall be published at least 90 days in advance on the State Parks website. Any changes to day use or camping and other overnight lodging rates or fees shall additionally be advertised through appropriate existing park-specific outreach channels and a formal press release. The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation may adjust rates and fees no more than once annually prior to the Parks operating season unless such adjustment relates to an experimental or special service or promotional or vacation package as set forth in VII.10 below. The Commissioner may increase or decrease rates or fees as appropriate after consideration of the factors outlined in paragraph VII.2. below.

Section VII.2: Added language stating that the Commissioner may establish lower rates or fees for Vermont residents and higher rates or fees for out of state visitors for specific services; Revised and added new language to establish the factors the Commissioner will consider at a minimum when determining rates and fees, and a list of factors that the Commissioner may also consider. The language now reads as follows:

2. The Commissioner of the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall establish reasonable rates or fees for all uses of State Parks, including but not limited to: overnight camping and campsite reservations in developed State Parks, cottage and cabin rentals, overnight camping at remote campsites, camping and marina fees at Burton Island State Park, rates or fees for use of Green River Reservoir State Park and rental and use of Seyon State Park, fees for day use areas (including individual, vehicle and seasonal passes and punch cards), boat and equipment rentals, firewood sales, miscellaneous merchandise,

reservations of day use shelters and other structures available for private rental, sanitary dump station fees, vehicle and equipment storage, reservation and pet fees, and any other use or service including rental of the Mt. Mansfield Stone Hut. The Commissioner may establish a lower rate or fee for Vermont residents and a higher rate or fee for out of state visitors for specific services. The Commissioner will at minimum consider the following in establishing reasonable fees or charges: recovery of the Department's costs to provide the associated service, access for Vermonters, affordability, the type of visitor use or service provided, the amenities of the site or facility, occupancy patterns and demand, market rates and the value of comparable services. The Commissioner may consider other factors including, but not limited to: broader economic conditions, industry or regional market trends, and unexpected events that significantly affect visitor use or Department operations (for example, public health emergencies or natural disasters)

Section VII.4: Changed "Charges" to "Rates and fees" so it now reads: "Rates or fees for merchandise such as firewood, T-shirts, hats, publications, etc. shall be priced to cover purchase and production costs and be competitive with comparable commercial sales."

Section VII.9: Added the previously existing language back into the Rule: "The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation is permitted to temporarily (not to exceed one season per project) adjust fees and charges at any area for the purposes of bona fide research or to handle an immediate need or concern."

Section VII.10.: Added in "promotional programs and vacation", adjusted the language slightly to better align with 10 V.S.A. §2603(c)(3) and added that promotional packages and discounted rates are exempt from the proposed 90-day notice period, so it now states: "The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation is permitted to develop State Park ~~experimental~~ services, including experimental or special services, promotional programs, and vacation or special event packages, and may adjust rates or fees and offer discounted rates or fees for those services and packages to promote the park system ~~and~~ or increase campground occupancy. Rates and fees established pursuant to this paragraph for experimental or special services, promotional programs, and vacation or special event packages are exempt from the 90-day notice described in VII.1."

Section VIII.3: Changed the word "of" to "or" for clarity of special use permit definition, so it now states: "It will not involve a permanent structure ~~of~~ or any permanent significant change to the land."

Section IX.b.: Added language to clarify that penalties assessed for violations may be prescribed through statute or rule and that the Department may pursue enforcement through a civil action or by any other means available at law, so it now reads: "A person who violates a rule or regulation adopted pursuant to Chapter 83 of Title 10 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated may be subject to such penalties prescribed by statute or rule or may be subject to enforcement and ~~prescribed under Section 2603 (c) of Title 10 may be imprisoned not more than thirty days or fined not more than $50.00 or both. Such person~~

shall be liable for all damages resulting from a violation to be recovered in a civil action or as otherwise provided by law. ~~under this statute by the person injured (Title 10, Section 2608, Vermont Statutes, Annotated, 1977).”~~

Section IX.c.: Changed language to be consistent with the ANR Nondiscrimination statement so it now reads: “The Department will provide the same services and recreational opportunities to all legitimate state lands visitors without regard to ~~handicap, race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, marital status, or sexual orientation~~ race, religion, creed, color, national origin (including language), ancestry, place of birth, disability, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or breastfeeding.”

Theme A: Support for Proposed Rule for Pricing Based on Maintaining and Operating Parks

Summary

Many commenters noted the high-quality service provided by state parks to the public and understand that the Commissioner should have the flexibility to adjust pricing as proposed in the amendments to the Rule. Commenters noted that state park service rate increases are understandable with rising operational costs, and modest or reasonable rate adjustments would still provide good value when considering the high-quality recreational opportunities in Vermont State Parks. Commenters noted that rates and fees for use of State Parks have not changed in years and that the State Park rates and fees should be consistent with the cost of maintaining and operating State Parks and that State Parks needs to be able to generate enough revenue to maintain and operate the State Parks. Commenters noted they would be opposed to any changes that would impact the number and quality of State Parks. Some comments noted that establishing annual fees and charges should include some oversight.

Response

The Department acknowledges and appreciates the support of these public comments for the Proposed Rule Amendments related to establishing rates and fees for State Parks to be established recognizing existing costs for maintenance and operation of the State Parks and the associated revenue generated from users of State Parks. While increased support from general state tax revenue is the norm in many other states, which subsidize the public service, economic value, and public benefit of state parks with a larger portion of tax revenue, that is not the scheme used in Vermont. Funding for State Parks maintenance and operations comes primarily from user fees and charges, and is supplemented with fees from ski area leases on State lands. The Department is not able to unilaterally adjust ski area lease fees due to existing long-term lease agreements. With rapidly increasing costs for materials, maintenance and operations, State Parks needs to be able to adjust rates and fees regularly, but no more than once annually, in response to these costs and to be able to provide the same quality and amount of park services. Rates and fees could be increased or decreased based on the factors outline in the Proposed Rule and would reasonably reflect the current market rates and recovery of costs as outlined in the Proposed Rule.

The Department made changes to the Proposed Rule in Section VII to reflect public comments received. Please see Comment Theme C for more detail.

Theme B: Comments on the Process

B.1 Public Notice and APA Process

One commenter claimed the process has been conducted in violation of 3 V.S.A. § 838 and the Rule on Rulemaking and requested that the process be started over again because there was not general email notice of the Proposed Rule and they had trouble locating the Rulemaking forms on the State Parks website and claimed that the Rulemaking forms were not readily available to the public and the Department has not complied with the Administrative Procedures Act requirements with respect to public notice and making the Proposed Rule and APA filing documents available to the public. Commenter requested that the Department should provide the Rulemaking materials to the public via email and hold additional in-person and virtual public meetings.

B.1 Response

The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation complied with the requirements of the Administrative Procedures Act with respect to the filing the Proposed Rule with the Secretary of State and ICAR, providing public notice via multiple social media platforms and the May Parks Newsletter and posting on the State Parks News page in addition to the Secretary of State's required publication in accordance with 3 V.S.A. §839, providing a public comment period of 40 days and extending the public comment period for an additional 24 days, and making the draft Proposed Rule and rulemaking forms available to the public via the State Parks website and upon request. ICAR approved the Proposed Rule and the proposed public input plan. See "Introduction to Public Feedback and Themes" section for more details on the overall process. The Department declines to restart the rulemaking process.

B.2 Proposal to Authorize Commissioner to Set Fees Without Rulemaking

Some comments objected to the Proposed Rule authorizing the Commissioner to establish fees and charges for State Parks services without going through the rulemaking process set forth in the Administrative Procedures Act, and claimed that a 90 day advance notice of fee change is not adequate, is unreasonable and creates an opportunity for abuse and the potential of pricing lower income Vermonters out of the State Parks. They request that fee changes be accomplished through the rulemaking process.

B.2 Response

The Proposed Rule establishes a method for determining rates and fees for State Parks services and provides flexibility to the Department to adjust fees and charges, either up or down, based on factors set forth in the Proposed Rule in order to meet current operational costs and to be able to provide the same quality and amount of park services. The Department has amended the Proposed Rule to include more specific parameters and clarity around this process. Please see Comment Theme C for more detail. The statute does not expressly require that every adjustment to a rate, fee or charge for State Parks services go through the formal rulemaking process, and the Department believes that would result in an unreasonable requirement that was not intended by the Legislature. Such an interpretation would essentially require the Department to engage in an 8-month long rulemaking processes, resulting in fee adjustments that are lagging by up to 2 years, risking revenue shortfalls or potentially higher prices than needed for any given Park season.

In the past, the Department has established the fees for certain State Parks services and uses of State lands through the rulemaking process, but as operational and maintenance costs have become more volatile in recent years, the Department needs to exercise the statutory authority to set and adjust rates and fees for State Park services and to react in the near-term to avoid creating revenue shortfalls which are no longer sustainable. The Proposed Rule amendments now establish the method for determining rates and fees that provides needed flexibility to the Department to adjust rates and fees up or down for a given Park season to ensure that costs of providing such services can be covered at the lowest costs for park visitors. The proposed method for determining such annual rates and fees is now going through the rulemaking process in accordance with 10 VSA 2603(c)(1). Additionally, 10 VSA 2603(c)(3) authorizes the Department to establish State Park services, and adjust rates or fees for those services, on an annual basis without going through the rulemaking process. See Comment Theme D for more detail on the authority of the Commissioner.

Theme C: Comments Related to Dynamic or Demand Based Pricing and Clarity in Setting Fees

Summary

The Department received comments expressing concern and opposition to the Proposed Rule amendments that remove set prices for each specific State Park Service, and replaces that with a specific method that would allow the Commissioner of FPR to establish rates and fees on an annual basis to guarantee maintenance of existing standards of operation and maintenance of the State Parks system after consideration of specific factors set forth in the Proposed Rule. Commenters called the new proposed changes a "dynamic pricing" system that will impact Vermonters who are least able to pay an increase in price. Commenters criticized this method as lacking accountability, not transparent and not providing public notice of what the fees and charges will be. Commenters suggested an upper limit on price increases be established and questioned how the Commissioner would determine the annual fees and charges, e.g. what algorithms or information will be considered, will personal economic information of the user be considered. Some comments expressed concern that establishing higher prices for prime spots will price out Vermonters who are unable to afford a higher price and would be left with the non-prime spots, leading to inequality. Some comments suggested establishing a framework that would allow for price increases over a period of time to provide for certainty. Also, commenters expressed concern that those making reservations 11-months in advance would be subject to different prices that were not known to them at the time of the reservation. Some comments expressed a desire to not have tiered pricing for more popular parks or sites, but make prices the same across the park system. Finally, commenters expressed concern with using a market based pricing system which could result in very high prices, and urged the Department to explore alternative revenue sources outlined in the Parks Modernization Study.

Response

Vermont State Parks recognizes the concerns raised by the public over “dynamic pricing” and wants to clarify that the Department is not proposing a “dynamic pricing” method for establishing rates and fees for Vermont State Parks. Dynamic pricing is a system or strategy that adjusts prices in real time based on demand, inventory, competition and other market signals which helps businesses capture higher margins during peak demand. Generally, software programming is required for such systems to ensure accuracy and consideration of relevant data.

The Proposed Rule establishes a method for determining rates and fees for State Parks services and provides flexibility to the Department to adjust rates and fees, either up or down annually, based on factors set forth in Section VII of the Proposed Rule in order to meet current operational costs and to be able to provide the same quality and amount of park services. Any changes in rates or fees would occur no more often than on an annual basis, not in real time as in dynamic or demand based pricing. The proposed method for establishing rates, fees and charges includes a list of factors to be considered by the Commissioner in determining whether rates, fees and charges are increased or decreased in any given year, while covering the costs of the operations and providing the same level and quality of park services and keeping prices as low as possible for visitors. The Department made additional changes to the proposed language in response to public comments and to provide additional clarity and specific parameters to guide any changes to rates, fees and charges. These changes reflect the majority of comments received that were either supportive of the proposed rule, neutral with respect to the proposal regarding rates and fees, or supportive but urged the Department to keep rates and fees affordable for Vermonters and consider sliding scales for income levels and out of state versus in state visitors. Specifically, the Rule has been changed to include a list of factors that the Commissioner must, at a minimum, consider, including: recovery of the Department's costs to provide the associated service, access for Vermonters, affordability, the type of visitor use or service provided, the amenities of the site or facility, occupancy patterns and demand, market rates and the value of comparable services. See Section VII.2. This change clarifies that the Commissioner will consider affordability and access for Vermonters as well as the Department's ability to cover operational costs, among other factors. Additionally, the Rule has been changed to include a list of factors that the Commissioner may consider which include broader economic conditions, industry or regional market trends, and unexpected events that significantly affect visitor use or Department operations (for example, public health emergencies or natural disasters). See Section VII.2.

The Department has also amended the proposed Rule language to clarify that rates, fees or charges will not be increased more than once annually for the operating season (unless such adjustment relates to an experimental or special service or promotional or vacation package as set forth in Section VII.10, (also see 10 V.S.A. §2603(c)(3)), and that any annual adjustment of rates, fees or charges will not affect reservations made prior to the date the new rate, fee or charge is effective; the effective date will be included in the 90-day public notice. See Section VII.1. Finally, the Department has added language to clarify that the Department may establish a lower rate or fee for Vermont residents, and a higher rate or fee

for out of state visitors, within the constraints of the LWCF Grant Program (see Comment Theme G) which allows for continuation of the current practice of providing a lower rate or fee for Vermont residents. See Section VII.2.

The Department will continue to use the existing tiered pricing system based on site amenities or overall occupancy rates which has been in effect for approximately 20 years. A tiered pricing system is already the current practice for prime sites and resident vs. non-resident park users. Tiered rates reflect seasonal site popularity and out of state vs. in state residence. They are not and will not be adjusted based on individual customer behavior. In-season prices would not increase based on occupancy or demand as suggested in some comments referencing dynamic or demand pricing.

The proposed rule requires the Commissioner to publish any changes in Park rates and fees on its website at least 90 days prior to becoming effective. The Department has revised Section VII.1 to state that any change in day use or camping and other overnight lodging rates and fees will also be published through existing Park outreach channels and a formal press release. This change will provide advance public notice of any rate or fee change, and the effective date of the new rates and fees will also be included in the 90-day advance public notice, ensuring transparency in pricing.

In summary, Vermont State Parks seeks administrative flexibility to better meet the needs of park visitors, while operating within the fiscal reality of being a primarily self-funded system, funded through user fees. The Department has amended the proposed rule to provide clear parameters for determining any rate or fee increase. With any potential change, Vermont State Parks has always and will continue to analyze affordability, cost recovery, and access for Vermonters, and will strive to maintain rates and fees at the lowest amount possible to cover operational costs and provide the same level and quality of services the public expects and desires. While the Department may, in the future, be authorized to pursue additional sources of revenue, as noted in the Parks Modernization Study, the Department is not currently able to implement such measures without authority or programmatic changes both within and outside of the Department. Additionally, the Department is not able to unilaterally adjust ski area lease fees, which constitutes the other source of revenue to Vermont State Parks. The Department believes the revisions to the proposed rule address public concern and provide further clarity of the purpose and intent behind the proposed rule, which is to cover the fluctuating operational costs to ensure Vermont State Parks can continue to operate at its current level and continue to

provide the same or better quality of services to the public. For information on the Economic Impact Analysis, please see Comment Theme E below.

Theme D: Comments Related to Authority of the Commissioner

Summary

A few comments received by the Department challenged the Commissioner's authority to adopt the proposed rule which establishes a method for determining annual seasonal rates and fees for State Park services by the Commissioner, stating that the statute (10 V.S.A. §2603(c)(1)) requires the Commissioner to list specific fees or charges for State Park services in a Rule that has gone through the formal rulemaking process in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act. Commenters also claimed that the proposed rule does not comply with 10 V.S.A. §2603(c)(1) because the proposed amendments will not result in "reasonable fees or charges" as required by the statute.

Response

The Commissioner of FPR has the statutory authority to adopt a rule that establishes a clear method for determining rates and fees for State Park services rather than having a rule that establishes each specific rate, fee or charge for each specific State Park service and be required to go through the formal rulemaking process each time a fee needs to be increased or decreased. The Vermont Legislature recognized the importance of the Vermont State Parks system and the need for flexibility of the Commissioner to manage, plan, develop, construct, operate and maintain the State Parks system. 10 VSA 2601(b), Policy and purposes, in relevant part, directs the Commissioner of FPR to "implement the policies of this chapter by…managing, promoting, and protecting the multiple use of publicly owned forestlands and park lands; planning, constructing, developing, operating, and maintaining the system of State parks; determining the necessity of repairs and replacements to all Department-owned buildings and causing urgent repairs and replacements to be accomplished, with the approval of the Secretary of Administration, if within the limits of specific appropriations…" This provision establishes the State policy that the Commissioner of FPR is directed by the Legislature to manage, plan for, promote, construct, develop, operate and maintain the system of State Parks, without limitation on methods to achieve this policy.

10 V.S.A. §2603(c)(1) provides: "(c)(1) The Commissioner, subject to the direction and approval of the Secretary, shall adopt and publish rules in the name of the Agency for the use of State forests, or park lands, including reasonable fees or charges for the use of the lands, roads, camping sites, buildings, and other facilities and for the harvesting of timber

or removal of minerals or other resources from such lands, notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. §603."

This statute requires the Commissioner to adopt and publish rules for the use of State lands, including State Park lands, that include reasonable fees or charges for the use of the lands and campground facilities. The statute does not expressly provide how the Commissioner must establish such fees or charges, it leaves such discretion to the Commissioner. The Legislature could have required the Commissioner to engage in rulemaking each and every time the Commissioner proposes to adjust a fee or charge up or down, but it did not do so. In fact, the Legislature specifically authorizes the Commissioner to develop State Park services and adjust rates and fees for those services in order to promote the park system or increase campground occupancy without going through the rulemaking process. 10 V.S.A. §2603(c)(3) provides as follows:

"(c)(3) Notwithstanding subdivision (1) of this subsection, the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall be permitted to develop State park services, promotional programs, and vacation or special event packages and adjust rates and fees for those services and packages to promote the park system or increase campground occupancy."

Reading 10 V.S.A. §2603(c)(1) and (3) together with the policy directives set forth in 10 V.S.A. §2601, it is clear that the Legislature intended to provide discretion and flexibility to the Commissioner of FPR in establishing and determining reasonable fees and charges for the use of State lands and Parks facilities.

The Department's proposed rule falls squarely within the legislative intent of the statutory provisions mentioned above. Also, the Final Proposed Rule has been amended to provide additional clarity regarding the method and factors to be considered by the Commissioner in determining rates, fees and charges for State Park services to better reflect the Commissioner's intent to allow fees and charges to cover the actual costs of operation and maintenance and to ensure the Department can continue to provide the level and quality of services that the public expects and desires. The Vermont State Parks system is funded primarily through the user fees (74% of funding comes from user fees) and only receives a small percentage of general fund appropriations (approximately 3-5%) to cover costs of operation and maintenance (capital fund appropriations are allocated for specific larger scale capital improvements). With operational costs increasing 10-20% annually, the Commissioner needs flexibility in establishing reasonable fees and charges to cover costs to maintain the current level of services provided by Vermont State Parks. While the Department will continue to pursue and explore other revenue sources, many such potential programs require approval of other state agencies as well as legislative approval. Because the legislature has authorized the Commissioner to establish rates, fees and

charges without prescribing the specific method for doing so, and because the legislature has specifically authorized the Commissioner to develop State Park services and adjust rates and fees for those services without going through the rulemaking process (as discussed above) the Commissioner has the authority to propose the Final Proposed Rule and the Rule is reasonable and consistent with legislative intent.

Finally, there will be adequate and appropriate public notice of any rate and fee adjustments, and any new rates or fees (whether increased or decreased) will apply only to new reservations made after the effective date of the new rates or fees, and will not alter existing reservations, including those for that upcoming State Parks season. The proposed rule includes a requirement for the Commissioner to publish all price adjustments at least 90 days in advance on the State Parks website and also advertise such adjustments through appropriate existing park-specific outreach channels and a formal press release.

Theme E: Comments Related to the Economic Impact Analysis

Summary

The Department received comments alleging that FPR did not complete a robust economic impact analysis of future potential rate setting, did not analyze alternative revenue generation options presented in the Parks Modernization Study, and did not include an economic impact analysis of taking no action. Multiple comments requested the Department conduct an economic impact analysis that examines income of users and direct impact to individual users.

Response

The Parks fee structure needs to be sufficient to continue to provide recreational opportunities in Vermont State Parks that meet visitor expectations while meeting the rapidly changing and increasing costs of operation, maintenance, materials, trash removal, utilities and other services integral to the operation of a park. The method proposed by the Department is not a dynamic pricing or demand pricing system as characterized by some commenters (see Comment Theme C above). This proposed rule amendment focuses on establishing a method or process for regularly determining whether rates and fees for uses

of State Parks need to be increased, decreased or should remain the same. The proposed rule amendments do not directly adjust any Vermont State Parks rates or fees at this time. Therefore, there is no direct economic impact from the proposed rule amendments themselves. However, there could be economic impacts from actions taken under the authority of the rule amendments, namely if the Commissioner determined an increase or decrease in rates and fees is appropriate for an upcoming park season. There are also economic impacts from the "no action" alternative and from the alternative of continuing to propose changes in parks rates and fees through a separate rulemaking process. These impacts are discussed below in more detail.

It is infeasible and not required by statute to conduct an analysis of all possible future rate adjustments and all possible impacts on all Vermonters and persons of different income levels. That data is not available to Department staff, and thus, is not required by the Administrative Procedures Act for an Economic Impact Analysis. Per 3 V.S.A. § 838 (b)(4), "Only employees of the agency and information either already available to the agency or available at reasonable cost need be used in preparing economic impact analyses". As such, FPR is only charged with utilizing existing knowledge and data to support the conclusion that the proposed rule amendment is the most appropriate method, not to conduct additional data-gathering and investigation. While the Department does not agree that the Economic Impact Analysis is deficient as claimed by some commenters, the Department does agree that further clarification and explanation of the conclusions stated in the Economic Impact Analysis would be helpful and responsive to public comments. Therefore, the Department has amended the Economic Impact Analysis. An explanation of the information supporting the Department's proposal, and economic impacts from data available to the Department is provided below and in the revised Economic Impact Analysis rulemaking form.

Existing data suggests substantial fee increases do have an impact on park visitor behavior in Vermont State Parks. Additionally, existing data demonstrates that the Department has been experiencing a revenue shortfall that is no longer sustainable. In 2025, the Department both reduced the number of seasonal hires and increased rates and fees for that season under existing statutory authority, and even those changes did not alleviate the revenue shortfall, due to continually increasing costs of operation.

Many commenters suggested that the Department should pursue other revenue generating avenues (as proposed in the Parks Modernization Study) rather than increase user fees, especially on Vermont residents who already pay Vermont State taxes. The Vermont State Park system only receives a small amount of general funds appropriated by the legislature, ranging from 3-5% of the State Parks total budget. The majority of the State Parks budget

comes from user revenues. Some of the alternative revenue generating proposals identified by commenters cannot be implemented unilaterally by the Department without additional authority and administrative implementation through other State agencies. For example, a Vermont State Parks license plate with additional registration fees that would be transferred from Department of Motor Vehicles to Vermont State Parks cannot be implemented unilaterally by the Department. Other feasible alternatives, such as diversifying amenities offered, are long-term revenue-generating strategies, and require significant evaluation, planning, and capital funding to implement carefully and strategically. The Department will continue to pursue alternative revenue generating alternatives.

Some commenters pointed to the existing revenue source from ski area leases on State lands and suggested that the Department should raise those lease fees to cover increasing operational costs of State Parks. This is not an option that the Department can implement without agreement of each individual leaseholder, and going through a lease amendment process that requires approval of the Vermont General Assembly. Ski area leases are long-term agreements that establish the lease fees and cannot be changed by the Department. As ski area leases expire, the Department will be looking to update them, including evaluating lease fees.

The Department has revised the proposed rule to clarify and codify that in establishing rates and fees for Vermont State Parks, the Commissioner shall consider operational costs, affordability and access of Vermont residents. The Department will strive to keep rates and fees as low as possible while maintaining the existing level and quality of services.

The alternatives or Comparison section of the Economic Impact Analysis has been revised to include more detail on alternatives to the Proposed Rule as follows.

Proposed Rule: If rates and fees are increased in the future, the Proposed Rule will have economic impacts on the users of Vermont State Parks through higher user fees. The Department has revised the Proposed Rule to include clearer parameters that must be considered in establishing annual rates and fees, including costs of operation, affordability and access to Vermonters. Also, the Department has included a provision that clarifies that higher prices for out-of-state visitors and lower prices for Vermonters may continue to be established (within the LWCF Grant restrictions). The revised Proposed Rule also clarifies that rates and fees may be adjusted up or down no more than once per year to reflect current operational costs. The new proposed revisions to the Proposed Rule will reduce economic impact to parks users by ensuring that the rates and fees are the lowest possible to cover the Department's operating costs and ensuring continuation of the same

quality and level of State Park services. This is supported by existing Parks user and revenue data and the existing budget shortfall.

The "no action" alternative: leave the Rule as it currently is, with no changes in rates and fees. This alternative would result in no economic impact to users because rates and fees would remain the same. However, there would be an economic impact to Vermont State Parks through a continuing and increasing revenue shortfall. This is likely to result in reduced services at State Parks and potentially, if not addressed, could result in limited operations of some or many State Parks. This is supported by existing Parks user and revenue data and the existing budget shortfall. This is not a reasonable or acceptable alternative.

Alternative to continue to only adjust rates and fees through the rulemaking process: This alternative would require the Department to go through rulemaking any time it proposes to adjust a rate or fee either up or down. Section 8 of the Economic Impact Analysis, included in the APA filing states, "With increasing recreational demand from sustained visitation levels and visitor expectations, it is not practical to solely reduce operating costs further without impacting customer service standards, facility standards of care, and the Vermont State Parks brand." In short, continuing to only adjust rates and fees through the rulemaking process will result in a continuing and increasing revenue shortfall, as is currently being experienced, as there is a significant time lag between realized operational cost increases and the ability for FPR to complete the administrative rulemaking process to adjust rates accordingly.

Additionally, reducing operating costs further is not possible without negatively impacting park operations, visitor safety, and visitor experience. Vermont State Parks is operationally self-funded with very limited general fund support. Under this funding system, in order to enjoy high quality state parks, the end user bears a significant portion of funding the operating costs. The alternative is a reduction in services and standards to balance the state parks operating budget which could lead to a decrease in attendance and fewer people benefiting from the state park system. This is supported by existing Parks user and revenue data and the existing budget shortfall. This is not a reasonable or sustainable option.

Conclusion: the most appropriate method of achieving the regulatory purpose of operating Vermont State Parks and providing the existing level and quality of services to users, is the Proposed Rule. The Proposed Rule, as revised, provides a clear method for establishing annual rates and fees based on clear parameters that focus on actual operational costs, affordability and access to Vermonters. The Proposed Rule, as revised also includes a requirement that the Commissioner consider affordability and access to

Vermonters, thereby providing a check on the Department and certainty to users that rates and fees won't change dramatically from year to year. The Proposed Rule, as revised, provides the necessary flexibility to the Department to adjust rates and fees, either up or down, in response to fluctuating market prices that impact operational costs.

Theme F: Comment Related to Commercial Uses of Department Lands

Summary

One commenter objected to existing language is Section XIII.3 related to timber cutting, skidding, landing and hauling and timber removal, stating that such activities must be authorized in a legally approved Long Range Management Plan, subject to public notice and comment and must be approved with a final record of decision. The commenter also objected to the existing language in Section XIII.3.a. that requires any commercial or non-profit entity to obtain a Special Use Permit or License for any proposed activity on Department lands that is organized or publicized, or involves a fee, or alters a site or alters or removes natural resources or may conflict with other established authorized uses. The commenter objects to the requirement for non-profit organizations to obtain a Special Use Permit or License for free guided activities that are advertised to the public and states that this policy contradicts the federal policy that only requires special use permits for commercial entities and uses.

Response

The language objected to has not been revised, except for a minor adjustment to Section XIII.3.a. to delete the word "traditional." The language regarding timber cutting, skidding, landing and hauling and timber removal relates to a requirement for a special use permit and does not authorize an activity that would be proposed through the Department's Long Range Management Planning process. The Department is currently engaged in rulemaking regarding land management planning and comments related to Long Range Management Plans and process are not applicable to this Proposed Rule. See https://fpr.vermont.gov/state_lands/lands-management-planning/public-input-opportunities for more information on the Land Management Planning Proposed Rule.

As stated in existing language in Section XIII.3., s Special Use Permit or License is required for activities that have the potential to interfere with other public uses of State lands, is organized or publicized, or charges a fee or alters a site or alters or removes natural resources. Uses by non-profit organizations have the same potential for impact as a commercial entity. Pursuant to Section VIII.6. of the Rule, the Commissioner may waive the fee associated with a Special Use Permit or License if the proposed use provides services to enhance the Department's efforts to manage its lands or for training, research

or other supporting activities or services. The Department declines to waive this requirement for non-profit organizations.

Theme G: Comments Related to Prioritizing Vermonters

Summary

Many commenters urged the Department to continue providing discounted access for Vermont residents – often citing the fact that their tax dollars already support the parks. Commenters noted they wanted extra privileges to reserve campsites earlier than non-Vermont residents. Other commenters noted the Department should avoid raising prices significantly for non-Vermont residents as a tourism dependent state, while others petitioned the Department to further increase the cost of non-Vermont residents – citing other MA, CT, and NY State Parks pricing differentials. Another commenter wanted Vermont to offer a senior camping discount for state residents. Several long-term visitors raised concerns of being priced out of state lands due to their popularity with tourists. Concerns were raised that the Department is not pursuing other avenues to mitigate cost increases for Vermonters.

Response

The Department confirms that there will continue to be discounted camping rates for Vermont residents and has revised the Proposed Rule to include such specific language. See Section VII.2. FPR already employs a discounted rate structure for Vermont residents, and plans to continue to do so. In response to public feedback, FPR is proposing additional language stating that the Commissioner will at minimum consider a variety of factors in establishing reasonable fees, including affordability and access for Vermonters.

Being primarily self-funded, State Parks must remain competitive with other states regarding out-of-state pricing. Vermont State Parks aims to keep rates as low as feasibly possible, balanced against the financial realities of operating a park system that is primarily operationally self-funded, with minimal general fund support. Relying solely on continuing to increase out-of-state rates is infeasible – Vermont State Park nonresident rates must remain competitive with other states (and Canadian provinces) based on amenities offered, or risk losing significant out-of-state visitation.

Additionally, The National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been utilized by FPR for decades to construct and improve Vermont State Parks infrastructure. As such, most of Vermont's state parks are under an LWCF Grant encumbrance that limits preferential treatment based on residency and caps the allowable

rate difference between resident and non-resident rates in perpetuity to a reasonable fee differential that cannot exceed twice the amount charged for residents for use of the facilities constructed or improved with LWCF funding. See 36 C.F.R. §59.4.

Other northeast states have all remained competitive when comparing day use and camping rates for similar amenities, regardless of rate-setting authority. Competition for state park visitors exists, and as outdoor recreation professionals, the State Parks Division understands that substantial rate increases can result in decreased visitation and revenue.

As always, Vermont State Parks remain committed to providing recreational opportunities and economic benefit on behalf of the people of Vermont. Our priority is to keep day use entrance prices low as we understand state parks are affordable public access points. Vermont State Parks intend to maintain a discount for Vermonters on camping opportunities. The proposed rule change does not halt FPR's efforts to find other funding options, merely provides a clear method for adjusting prices on an annual basis in response to financial realities of operating costs. See Comment Themes C and E for more information.

Theme H: Comments Related to Equitable Access to the Outdoors

Summary

FPR received comments expressing concerns over future rate increases pricing disadvantaged Vermonters out of leisure options for a modest budget.

Response

While this proposed administrative rule change does not directly impact rates, FPR seeks to provide additional clarification for the comments received. As outdoor recreation professionals, FPR understands the myriad of benefits that outdoor recreation provides. As such, FPR aims to keep Vermont State Parks as affordable as feasibly possible for everyone. Additionally, Vermont State Parks supports a variety of partner organizations in providing free day use park access to Vermonters. Some examples include the library pass, Vermont Parks Forever Park Access program, Park prescription program, Green Mountain Passport for seniors, among others.

In response to public feedback, FPR is proposing additional language stating that the Commissioner will at minimum consider a variety of factors in establishing reasonable fees, including affordability and access for Vermonters.

FPR continues to consider all options to manage park operational costs. This proposal does not change how FPR reviews and evaluates rate structure, or how FPR approaches financial decision-making. FPR's goal is to reduce the price shocks by carefully making smaller incremental changes as necessary. Rate setting through administrative rule making causes a significant lag between realized costs and ability to raise revenue. This can lead to a budget shortfall and result in operational impacts that include shorter operating seasons and service hours, resulting in diminished access to Vermont State Parks for all users. See Comment Themes C and E for more information.

Theme I: Comments Related to Pets

Summary

Several commenters believe the nuisance animal policy is singling out dogs for their behavior while not addressing children or adults who are engaging in nuisance behavior. Commenters also objected to the existence and amount of pet camping fees, which already exist in the current rules.

Response

The Department's proposed nuisance animal language mirrors language used by Vermont municipalities and simply seeks to verify that state park staff can reasonably ensure a safe experience for all park visitors. State Parks visitors are also held to noise and behavior expectations through Sections I.18 and II.10 of the existing rules, which require visitors to be reasonably quiet during quiet hours and prohibits disorderly conduct.

Theme J: Comments Related to Maximum Stay

Summary

A few commenters were concerned about proposed changes regarding length of stay for remote camping. One commenter was concerned that lifting the 7-day maximum for remote sites would lead to degradation of the landscape and allow a minority of visitors to hoard sites.

Response

The Department is not operationally removing maximum stay limits at parks with existing 7-night policies. The proposed change is simply removing the rule language stating that all remote sites have a maximum limit of 7-nights, as to align with current practices at parks such as Knight and Woods Islands. This also provides the Department with the ability to evaluate appropriate maximum lengths of stay for remote sites on a case-by-case basis. Most campsites in Vermont State Parks already have a maximum stay of 21 nights, the remote sites are further restricted from this upper limit.

Theme K: Miscellaneous Comments

Summary

During the public comment period, additional miscellaneous feedback was received. FPR routinely evaluates rules, policies, and amenities to ensure they are in service to the public enjoying high-quality, safe recreational experiences while complying with the Vermont State Parks mission and always welcomes additional feedback for future consideration. However, FPR declines to make additional changes to the Rule without additional research into all potential impacts of such changes.

K.1 Campsite Capacity Limits

FPR received one comment that the current maximum number of people on a campsite seemed excessive. FPR received a separate comment opposed to the existing rule of a maximum of two vehicles per campsite, and that it discriminated against individuals with disabilities.

K.1 Response

Up to 8 people is a long-determined standard that allows families to camp together and not overtax the site. FPR may also, when appropriate, determine a site limit of fewer than 8 people per site. For example, currently cabin sites have a maximum of 6 occupants.

The two-car limit per site is set to minimize impacts on the resource by keeping cars parked fully within the maintained boundaries of the site. FPR appreciates the concern regarding access for visitors with disabilities. If a situation arose where there were more than two vehicles required for accessibility purposes, that camping party should reach out to the park to request reasonable accommodation.

K.2 Waste Management

One comment was received in opposition to existing regulations regarding disposal of gray water, proposing gray water discharge be permitted as “harmless camping discharges.”

K.2 Response

Section I.9. states that “Gray water and other direct discharges on the ground from camping vehicles and trailers are not permitted.” This rule is in place to prevent point source discharge of regulated wastewater.

Per the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, “Wastewater – means sanitary waste or used water from any building or structure or campground, including, but not limited to, carriage water, toilet water, shower and wash water, food processing wastewater, and process wastewater. Wastewater does not include stormwater.”

FPR cannot support gray water discharge onto the ground from camping vehicles and trailers and does not support changing the referenced language.

K.3 Gear Abandonment

One commenter asked if the term 'gear' needed to be defined regarding new proposed language in Section II.A.4.

K.3 Response

There is common understanding that gear includes all items brought by an occupant and/or purchased in a park to facilitate a camping trip.

K.4 Suggestions for Additional Revenue-Generation

Commenters submitted suggestions regarding the creation of additional pass options, such as a multi-day camping pass, and vehicle pass for multiple vehicles, and a lifetime state parks pass, as well as suggestions for increasing revenue through donations, such as a prompt at the payment screen to add a donation to the purchase.

Another commenter suggested charging significant cancellation fees, and allowing the person cancelling to select programmatically where the cancellation fee would go within the state park system (maintenance, access, capital, etc.).

Other commenters suggested reviewing pavilion amenities and adding RV hookups to increase visitation and revenue.

K.4 Response

FPR acknowledges these comments for future consideration.

FPR is open to considering additional pass types when user demand is high, balanced with necessary cost recovery. A lifetime day-use pass already exists in the form of the Green Mountain Passport for Vermont residents who are over the age of 62 or military veterans.

When paying online, visitors are already provided with the option to round up their purchase as a donation to Vermont Parks Forever, which funds targeted initiatives such as the Parks Access Program and the Natural Connections interpretive program. FPR will also be rolling out QR code-based donation options in Vermont State Parks in the future.

Regarding cancellation fees, cancellation fees can lead to uncancelled "no-show" situations, where campsites instead remain empty. FPR does not support payment to restricted funds in this case due to increased administrative costs that would result.

Finally, related to amenities, FPR frequently reviews recreational amenities offered and tracks usage and occupancy statistics to inform decision-making and capital improvement prioritization. FPR is exploring additional camping amenities, balanced with ensuring Vermont State Parks retains its character. FPR considers thoughtful expansion of

diversified camping opportunities to meet visitor demand a long-term priority for both improving access to outdoor recreation spaces and increasing revenue.

K.5 Opposition to Previous Rate Increases and Policy Changes

Comments were received from park visitors opposed to previous rate increases and a policy change that implemented a rolling 11-months in advance reservation window, rather than a static first-of-the-month 11-months in advance reservation window.

K.5 Response

While previous rate changes are out of scope of this proposed rule change, FPR acknowledges that large fee increases are challenging to absorb and can unfortunately lead to loss of visitation. The Proposed Rule, as revised adds language stating that the Commissioner will at minimum consider a variety of factors in establishing reasonable fees, including affordability and access for Vermonters, and allows the Commissioner to adjust rates and fees annually, thus eliminating large increases.

The operational policy change concerning 11-month advanced reservations was made to improve access to camping opportunities for more visitors, and to align reservation policies with neighboring park systems.

K.6 Miscellaneous Operations and Maintenance Feedback

Comments were received regarding park and trail operations and maintenance, including requests for additional trail management of heavily-used trails, consideration for quiet hours when scheduling grounds maintenance, use of electric equipment, making additional cabins dog-friendly, and e-bike charging policies. Additionally, one commenter asked if visitors who repeatedly violate park rules could be banned from entering parks in the future.

K.6 Response

Vermont State Parks welcomes over a million visitors per year during the park operating season. As stewards of public land, FPR has to carefully balance public access with visitor enjoyment and public safety, as well as budget realities and operational efficiency. Vermont State Parks and FPR always welcome feedback from visitors on how to improve the visitor experience. FPR routinely reviews and considers adjustments to amenities and policies in response to feedback and user demand.

Rules and Regulations

Visitor Conduct

And

~~Fees and Charges~~ Service Rates and Fees

For

State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands

Effective: xx/xx/xxxx

Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

1 National Life Drive, Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05602
1-888-409-7579
E-mail: parks@vermont.gov

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I. GENERAL VISITOR CONDUCT

(Applies to all Department lands, except where noted)

1. Posting bills without the permission of authorized personnel, cutting, peeling, defacing, writing upon or destroying or damaging any building, sign, plant, rock or other natural or manmade structure or object is prohibited.

2. No plant may be uprooted or cut without a special written permit from the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or their designee except wild berries, fruits, seeds, nuts, or mushrooms may be collected only for personal use at the risk of the collector. Commercial harvesting of such items for profit is allowed only with a special written permit from the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or their designee.

3. Removal of any earth material, including but not limited to rock, sand, gravel, topsoil and minerals, is allowed only with a special written permit from the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or their designee. Exempt from this requirement is the personal collection of small stones for educational or hobby collecting purposes unless the stones contain fossils or are otherwise historically significant.

4. Animals, other than species taken legally according to Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife laws and regulations, may not be collected without a special written permit from the Commissioners of Forests, Parks and Recreation and Fish and Wildlife or their designees and/or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Animals" include mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates.

5. The feeding of wildlife in State Parks by visitors is prohibited.

6. The use of metal detectors is permitted only in areas designated by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation and when their use does not conflict with other visitors to Department lands, or disturb lawn areas, rare or fragile plant or animal habitats or archeologically sensitive areas. Users must report to authorized personnel before using a metal detector. Probing in permitted areas may be done only with a small hand tool to a maximum depth of three inches. Any artifacts which may have historical or archeological significance are the property of the State of Vermont and shall be surrendered immediately to authorized personnel. All disturbed areas must be restored to their original state. Use of metal detectors is prohibited in areas of obvious historic significance, e.g., cellar holes, stonewalls, etc.

7. The use of mechanical techniques for gold panning is prohibited. Gold panning is permitted only by traditional hand panning technique.

8. Glass containers or other materials which may pose a hazard to swimmers are not allowed in pools, beaches or other swimming areas.

9. All refuse, ~~and~~ separated recyclables, and compost shall be placed in containers provided for that purpose. In remote camping and day use areas, waste and rubbish must be carried out and disposed of at proper locations.

10. Alcoholic beverages in bulk containers (larger than 1 gallon or 4 liters) are prohibited in State Parks except day use areas when served to an organized group by an individual possessing the appropriate license.

11. In situations when alcoholic beverages are being consumed or when otherwise appropriate, the park manager or park staff may require legal identification and proof of age.

12. Children under the age of 14 must be supervised by an adult, while visiting the State Parks.

13. Swimming is encouraged only in designated areas. Persons who swim in areas without lifeguard protection, or when a lifeguard is not on duty, do so at their own risk.

14. There is no fishing in marked, designated State Park swimming areas during the operating season.

15. Using soap is not allowed in any surface waters in, or adjacent to, State Parks.

16. Chainsaws may not be used in State Parks by visitors.

17. Aircraft are not allowed in State Parks and Forests facilities without the written approval of the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation except in an emergency.

18. Disorderly conduct is prohibited (per 13.V.S.A. § 1026).

19. Urinating, defecating, or disposing of human waste shall be in facilities designated for that purpose.

20. Smoking and vaping of ~~tobacco~~ any substance is prohibited in designated Smoke Free areas of state parks and forests. Smoke Free areas shall be established by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation on a site-by-site basis to protect the health and well being of nonsmoking park and forest visitors. Smoke Free areas shall include, but not be limited to playgrounds and intensively used day use areas such as busy beaches and picnic areas.

I.a. Vehicle Use

1. The maximum speed limit on State Parks and Forests roads is 15 miles per hour unless otherwise posted.

2. Recreational use of mountain bicycles and motorized all terrain vehicles shall be permitted only on roads and trails designated for such use.

3. Parking is allowed only in designated areas or as directed by FPR staff. Violators may be towed at owner's expense.

I.b. Fires and Firearms

1. In developed State Parks areas, fires are allowed only in fire rings, fireplaces, or charcoal grills at designated picnic and camping areas. All fires must be attended and under control at all times.

2. No firecrackers or other explosive devices, firearms, air rifles or pistols, gas weapons, slingshots, crossbows, bow and arrows except by special permit shall be discharged in any developed recreation area during the park operating season. No firearm shall be discharged within 500 feet of any occupied building or structure in any park or recreation area.

I.c. Pets

1. Visitors may bring domesticated or trained animals to designated campgrounds and day use areas provided they are safely confined or securely restrained on a leash not longer than 10 feet at all times. No animals will be allowed in certain day use areas including parking lots, beaches, pools, picnic areas and playgrounds. EXCEPTION: ~~Dogs/animals to assist people with disabilities~~ Service animals trained to perform specific tasks for a person with a disability and Police Canine Corps dogs are allowed in any public area of the park, if under leash or harness control of an owner or handler.

2. Pet owners are required to repair damage caused by their animals including digging and defecation in developed areas.

3. No person who is the owner of a pet shall allow the pet to be a nuisance animal. Nuisance animal means any animal, including but not limited to dogs, which:

   a. Threatens passers-by or passing vehicles,

   b. Attacks other people or animals,

   c. Damages property,

   d. Barks, whines, howls or cries in an excessive, continuous or untimely fashion.

II. CAMPING AND OTHER OVERNIGHT LODGING

(Applies only to State Parks, except where noted)

1. Camping is allowed only on designated sites. Off season camping is available only by permission of parks regional managers.

2. All campers and campground visitors are required to register with the park staff.

3. Not more than eight people, regardless of age, may occupy one campsite. In the interest of protecting the natural resources of the park, the limit at some campsites may be lower.

4. Visitors to campers must register with the park staff before entering the campground and must pay the regular day use ~~fee~~ rate. Day visitor hours in the campground are 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. The total number of day visitors per site may be limited at the discretion of the park manager.

5. The designated head of the camping party staying overnight on the site must be at least 18 years of age and is responsible for the conduct of all campers and visitors on the site.

6. No part of any sleeping unit or vehicles on the campsite may be placed outside the cleared area designated as the site. The maximum number of vehicles allowed per site, including self-propelled sleeping units, shall be two. Other vehicles shall be parked in areas designated by park manager.

7. Campsites shall be kept in a neat and clean condition at all times.

8. Dishwashing is allowed only at individual campsites or areas specifically designated as dishwashing areas.

9. Gray water and other direct discharges on the ground from camping vehicles and trailers are not permitted. Holding tanks or other appropriate containers must be emptied at the campground "sanitary dump station" or other suitable facility.

10. Quiet hours are between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. except in areas otherwise designated by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Visitors who violate quiet hours may be evicted from the camping area and may forfeit their fees and reservation. Reasonable quiet must be maintained at all times in both camping and day use areas. Sound that is audible on adjacent occupied campsites may be prohibited at the discretion of the park staff.

11. Generators and rechargers may be used only in areas and/or at times designated by the park manager. They may not be operated during quiet hours.

12. Camping in designated overflow areas will be limited to one night per camping party.

13. The park manager, with the approval of the parks regional manager, may designate a storage area during the summer season for camping trailers, boat trailers, R.V.'s or other similar equipment and vehicles of hikers, bicyclists or paddlers. A fee shall be charged. The State is not liable for theft or damage to equipment stored in these areas. All equipment and vehicles shall be removed from the storage area no later than the seasonal closing date of the park.

II.a. Reservations and Site Occupancy

1. Reservation requests shall be confirmed only when accompanied by payment of full camping and reservation fees. Payment must be received within two weeks of making the reservation ~~if there is sufficient time to do so.~~ For reservations made within two weeks of arrival, payment is due at time of reservation.

2. The minimum reservation period for campsites, ~~and~~ cabins, and cottages is determined by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. This determination shall be based on ~~use patterns for particular parks in an effort to maximize occupancy~~ individual site characteristics, use and occupancy patterns. Reservations may be made up to 11 months in advance.

   ~~a. Exceptions:~~

~~(i) Campers hiking or using bicycles or paddle craft as their mode of travel or their tour agents, may make a one night reservation in developed campgrounds. Such reservations will not be for specific sites.~~

~~(ii) Campers traveling as touring groups intending to stay at multiple campgrounds during their trip may make one night reservations for individual park stays.~~

~~(iii) There will be no minimum reservation period for camping groups in group camping areas or in other campgrounds before June 15 and after Labor Day, except over Memorial Day weekend.~~

~~(iv) There will be no minimum reservation period for Green River Reservoir State Park. and Molly's Falls State Park.~~

~~3. The minimum reservation requirement for cottages shall be set by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation based on individual cottage characteristics, use and occupancy pattern. Reservations may be made up to 11 months in advance.~~

4. Check out time is 11:00 a.m. at which time the site must be vacated. Check in time is 2:00 p.m. ~~If the site is reserved for the succeeding night and the party has not re-registered by check out time or declared their intent to re-register,~~ If a party does not vacate the site by 11:00 a.m. or does not re-register for another night stay by 11:00 a.m., the park manager, at their discretion and in the presence of two witnesses, not employees of the State Parks Division, may inventory and remove gear from the site. Any gear removed may be stored by the park manager for up to the duration of the operating season, after which the gear may be disposed of. Gear that is broken, damaged, or otherwise in poor condition may be disposed of immediately. Any cost incurred by the State in removing and disposing of gear or belongings from a site shall be charged to the registered party.

5. The maximum stay on any campsite shall be up to 21 consecutive nights unless adjusted by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation to improve occupancy. A camper occupying a campsite for the maximum stay shall vacate the campsite and may not occupy that site or any other site in that campground for a period of at least seven days.

6. The period of occupancy, reservation period, duration, and number of reservations per season for a campsite or lean-to may be adjusted at the discretion of the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation for the purpose of improving the occupancy rate or protection of the natural resource.

II.b. Group Camping

1. The definition of a camping group shall be eight or more people regardless of age.

2. In addition to those areas specifically designated for group camping, prior to June 15 and after Labor Day, group camping may be accommodated in any camping area in the park system on a space available basis except over Memorial Day weekend.

II.c. Remote Camping

1. Remote camping areas are located throughout a large forest complex, island, or shoreline.

They differ from "primitive camping" areas because the location is specific and may include pit toilets, fireplaces, lean-tos and/or tables.

2. Woods and Knight Islands, Waterbury Reservoir shoreline, Molly's Falls shoreline, Groton, Coolidge, Victory and Darling State Forests CCC campsites, and portions of Kingsland Bay and Jamaica State Parks are designated as remote areas. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation has the authority to designate or remove designation of remote areas on Department lands.

3. Remote camping is only by reservation or permit and payment of fee.

4. ~~The maximum stay per camper at any remote area is seven consecutive nights~~

5. Rules and regulations for camping in remote areas shall be the same as for camping in developed areas.

II.d. Horse Camping

Note: The following rules apply to overnight use of certain state park campgrounds at which horse camping is permitted during the operating season.

1. Proof of current (within one year) negative Coggins test is required prior to entry into the campground.

2. Horses may be used only on marked bridle trails, parks or forests roads, or other areas designated for equine use. Horses are not allowed on nature trails, or in day use or campground areas not designated for equine use.

3. The maximum number of horses allowed at each campsite is two.

4. Horses shall be securely restrained in paddocks, at hitch rails, high lines with tree saver straps, or tied to a trailer at the campsite when not being used.

5. Bathing of horses is only allowed at designated bathing areas.

6. Owners are responsible for all accidents, or any damage caused by their animals on state lands.

7. The park manager may require horse owners remove their animal from the park, if determined that the horse poses an unreasonable threat to park visitors, or other horses.

8. Galloping of horses is prohibited in developed areas.

9. Horses shall be watered only at designated areas or by tubs or buckets filled from the park water supply.

10. Owners are responsible for cleaning up the manure and placing in the designated area.

11. Horses shall not be left unattended at any time. Owners may be asked to leave without a

refund for leaving unattended horses.

II.e. ~~Fees and Charges~~ Rates and Fees: Camping and Other Overnight Lodging

1. The base rate for a tent, lean-to, cabin, or remote site permits up to four people. An additional ~~fee~~ rate shall be charged for each additional camper beyond four, for pets and for prime sites. ~~(see II.e.2-7 for definitions)~~

2. There is no charge for children 3 years and under for camping.

3. ~~Fees for camping at any campground or designated remote sites shall be as follows, but the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may adjust fees downward at his or her discretion to improve occupancy as necessary.~~ Fees for camping at any campground or designated remote sites may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1. and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks.

~~Standard Tent or Trailer Site:~~
~~Vermont Residents = $20.00 per night; extra person, $5.00 per night.~~
~~Non-Vermont Residents = $28.00 per night; extra person, $5.00 per night.~~
~~Prime Tent or Trailer Site:~~
~~Vermont Residents = $22.00 per night; extra person $5.00 per night.~~
~~Non-Vermont Residents = $30.00 per night; extra person, $5.00 per night~~

~~Standard Lean-to Site:~~
~~Vermont Residents = $30.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax; extra person,~~
~~$5.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax.~~
~~Non-Vermont Residents = $38.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms tax; extra person, $5.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax.~~

~~Prime Lean-to Site:~~
~~Vermont Residents = $32.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax; extra person,~~
~~$5.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax;~~
~~Non-Vermont Residents = $40.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax; extra person, $5.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax.~~

~~Burton Island State Park waterfront lean-to sites:~~
~~Vermont Residents = $40.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax; extra person,~~
~~$5.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax.~~
~~Non-Vermont Residents = $50.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax; extra person, $5.00 per night including VT Meals and Rooms Tax.~~

~~4. GROUP CAMPING - In group camping areas = $6.00 per person per night regardless of age, tent site or lean-to.~~

~~Group camping in non-group campgrounds shall be per site rates as established in Section~~

~~II.e.3~~

~~5. CABINS, COTTAGES, RESIDENTIAL RENTALS~~

~~a. Cabins are semi-furnished, enclosed structures in a camping area used for overnight lodging during the park season on a nightly basis. The per night charge for cabins will be based on the comparable market rate for the region of the state.~~

~~b. Cottages are furnished lodging units available for weekly rental during the park season. Rental rate for cottages shall be based on the comparable market rate for the region of the state.~~

~~c. Residential rentals are park staff quarters made available for rental during the off season (generally the first of November to the first of April). Rental rates for residential rentals will be based on the comparable market rate for the region of the state.~~

~~6. MISCELLANEOUS CHARGES~~

~~a. Mt. Mansfield Stone Hut = $300.00 including VT Meals and Rooms Tax, per group per night. $200.00 security deposit is required in advance and is refundable if Hut is left in acceptable condition. Maximum reservation is for five consecutive nights.~~

~~b. Sanitary Dump Station = There is no charge for dumping camping vehicle holding tanks for campers registered in the campground. All other RVs up to 30 feet in length = $15.00 per dump or pump out. RVs over 30 feet in length and buses = $30.00 per dump or pump out.~~

~~c. Vehicle/Equipment Storage = The fee by the week, or any part thereof, shall equal the tent or trailer site fee for one night paid in advance. The fee for vehicles of hikers, bicyclists, and paddlers shall equal one adult day use fee for each calendar day or part thereof.~~

~~d. Reservation fee = $8.00 per campsite, cabin, cottage, or group reservation.~~

~~e. Pet fee = $2.00 per night for all overnight camping accommodations where pets are permitted. Horse fee = $5.00 per night for all overnight camping accommodations where horses are permitted.~~

III. DAY ACTIVITIES

(Applies only to State Parks)

~~1. State Park day use areas are open to the public during the operating season from 10:00 a.m. to official sunset but no later than 9:00 p.m. unless by special arrangement.~~

2. Registered campers can use day use areas at no charge. A camper receipt allows the holders to use day use areas until normal closing hour on the scheduled day of check out.

3. The day use punch card entitles entrance to a day use area at the rate of one punch per person. No refunds or replacements will be issued for destroyed or lost punch cards.

4. The annual vehicle pass entitles vehicle assigned to the pass and its occupant's entrance at all State Parks for day use activities. Each vehicle pass allows up to eight people in legal seats to enter per day. In areas accessible by water, vehicle passes may be used on boats.

   a. Replacement for vehicle passes on traded, sold or damaged vehicles may be applied for by presenting to the State Parks headquarters office, or at the park where purchased during the park season, a written statement accompanied by as much of the vehicle pass which is identifiable, including, at least, the serial number.

   b. Under extenuating circumstances, upon the recommendation of the parks regional manager, the Director of State Parks may permit the temporary use of the purchaser's receipt in lieu of the vehicle pass.

5. The annual individual season pass entitles holder to enter all State Parks for day use activities.

   a. Damaged individual passes may be replaced upon presentation of as much of the pass as possible, including, at least, the serial number.

6. Recreation programs organized by cities or towns, including swimming instruction programs, shall be admitted under a special group rate by advance arrangement. Group day use visitors shall remove their own refuse from the park except as follows: caterers or organizers of group day use activities shall make their own refuse removal arrangements or pay a supplemental disposal fee, at the going market rate, for access to park disposal facilities where available. In some areas, park visitors may pay a fee to leave refuse at "carry in/carry out" parks.

7. Reservations for day use shelters may be made up to 11 months in advance.

III.a. ~~Fees and Charges~~ Rates and Fees: Day Activities

1. Day use fees may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1. and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks.

~~2. Day Use Daily Fee~~

~~a. Day use fee per person, 14 years and older = $5.00~~

~~b. Day use fee per person, 4 years through 13 years = $2.00.~~

~~c. No charge for persons 3 years old and younger.~~

~~2. Special Group Day Use~~

~~a. Municipal Recreation Groups~~
~~1 25 persons including staff and drivers = $250.00 per month.~~
~~Each additional group of 25 persons or parts thereof, additional $250.00 per month~~

b. Other Group Day Use (more than 25 people) = $3.00 per person when paid in one lump sum. If group members wish to pay individually, they will be subject to the regular day use fees.

3. School groups of grades K-12 on field trips = $.50 per person during the regular school year.

4. Season Passes

a. Vehicle pass = $90.00 per season. Additional vehicles registered to the same person(s) or other household members = $50.00.

b. Individual pass = $30.00 per season.

c. Organization Vehicle Pass = $180.00 for up to 17 persons in one vehicle. Timeline for implementation this pass is determined by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation.

5. Day use punch card = $30.00 for ten visits.

6. Day Use Shelters

a. Shelters may be reserved for up to 11 months in advance of the date of the activity to take place in the shelter.

b. Button Bay Shelter = $200.00 full shelter rental fee plus regular per person day use fee. Mt. Philo Shelter = $200.00 Monday – Friday full shelter rental fee plus regular per person day use fee. = $300.00 Saturday & Sunday full shelter rental fee plus regular per person day use fee.

Branbury East and West Shelter = $50.00 rental fee plus regular per person day use fee.

Camp Plymouth Dining Hall = $300.00 rental fee plus regular per person day use fee.

Kingsland Bay Dining Hall = $2,500.00 Friday – Sunday (package includes day use admission, use of Theatre Building and Hawley House. $900.00 Monday – Thursday (includes regular per person day use fee but does not include Theater Building or Hawley House).

Kingsland Bay Theater Building or Hawley House = $150.00 (each) Monday- Thursday (includes regular per person day use fee).

Elmore Beach House (function room only) = $200.00 (including regular per person day use fee)

Kill Kare Hotel Building (including west function room, porch, lawn area and picnic shelter)

~~= $1,200.00 (including regular per person day use fee)~~

~~Kill Kare Hotel Building (west function room only) = $300.00 (including regular per person day use fee)~~

~~All other shelters = $125.00 rental fee plus regular per person day use fee.~~

~~Note: All above shelter fees include a $25.00 non-refundable reservation fee.~~

~~c. Group use cleaning deposit (may be refundable) = $100.00 at all parks except Kingsland Bay Dining Hall and Kill Kare Hotel Building, which have different fee structures.~~

~~d. Canopy tents = Fees will be set to cover the cost of providing the service and will be competitive with rates charged for similar services in the area.~~

~~7. Rental Vessels~~

~~a. Canoes, rowboats and single kayaks with paddles and personal flotation devices = $10.00 per hour plus VT Sales Tax. Extended period fee = $30.00 for half day and $40.00 for full day plus VT Sales Tax.~~

~~b. Tandem kayaks with paddles and personal flotation devices = $12.00 per hour plus VT Sales Tax. Extended period fee = $32.00 for half day and $50.00 for full day plus VT Sales Tax.~~

~~c. Pedal boats with personal flotation devices = $7.00 per half hour plus VT Sales Tax. No extended period fee.~~

~~d. Standup paddle boards with paddle and personal flotation device = $20.00 per half hour plus VT Sales Tax.~~

~~e. Minimum rental is one hour for boats, canoes, and kayaks and half hour for pedal boats and standup paddle boards.~~

~~8. Charge for rubbish removal = $3.00 per bag for shelter group users unless otherwise included in rental fee; $1.00 per bag for other day visitors where service is available.~~

9. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may establish "deposits" for certain services. The deposit shall be administered directly by the park manager or their official designee, according to department procedures.

10. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may waive the day use fee and reservation fee for use of a picnic shelter or similar facility to host a meeting of any organization of which the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation is an official bona

fide member or sponsor.

11. Refunds will be granted on day use admission fees only for unusual circumstances approved by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation.

IV. BURTON ISLAND STATE PARK MARINA

1. Transient dock slips shall be assigned by the Park Manager or Dockmaster. All vessels must check-in and receive a slip assignment before proceeding to their slip.

2. Slip assignments are not final until the vessel is officially checked-in at the contact station. Park staff reserve the right to change slip assignments at any time due to weather, lake level, or to maximize marina occupancy.

3. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may designate certain slips as day-use only slips from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Transient day-use slips are first come, first served until 5 p.m., after which, they will be converted to overnight slips.

4. There is no minimum reservation requirement for marina slips.

5. Moorings are assigned on a first come, first served basis. There are no reservations for mooring space.

6. A portion of the dockage space may be reserved if so designated by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Except as modified herein, all appropriate provisions of Section II.a. apply for dock reservations as well. ~~All boats less than 36 feet in length shall be assigned a finger dock until all finger docks are full. After that point, any longside docking remaining shall be allocated.~~

7. Registered campers with boats up to 16 feet in length may use a marina slip for no additional fee. Campers with boats greater than 16 feet but less than 25 feet will be assessed at the current marina rate for each foot in length more than 16 feet. Boats greater than 26 feet in length, or boats with persons sleeping aboard overnight, will be assessed at the full marina rate.
8. Dockage does not include a continuous water hookup.

9. No refuse or drainage of any type shall be dumped in the marina area.

10. Charcoal grills or open fires are prohibited aboard boats or on docks.

11. All boats shall be operated at no greater than steerage speed in or about the marina.

12. Swimming is prohibited in the marina area.

IV.a. ~~Fees and Charges~~ Rates and Fees: Burton Island State Park

1. The marina day, for fee purposes, shall be 11:00 a.m. to 10:59 a.m.

2. Fees may be charged for mooring or anchoring inside an officially designated mooring or anchoring area adjacent to a State Park. The mooring or anchoring area subject to fee at Burton Island shall be the area inside of a line extending from the northernmost tip of the island which is northwest of the breakwater to the "red nun" marking the small boat channel between the island and Kill Kare State Park.

3. Marina fees and associated marine-based service fees may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1. and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks.

~~4. Docking = $2.25 per foot per day or any part thereof.~~

~~5. Moorings or Anchorings = $1.00 per foot per day or any part thereof.~~

~~6. Seasonal Slips at Burton Island Marina =$ 65.00 per foot; 18-foot minimum vessel length; Each slip includes four Island Runner Season Passes and one Vehicle Pass; $100.00 per day penalty if boat is not removed by final day of operating season.~~

~~7. Passenger Ferry Service = Fees shall be set as appropriate by Commissioner of Forests, Parks & Recreation based on market value and reasonable cost recovery.~~

~~8. Passenger Ferry Day Excursions = fees shall be set as appropriate by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation.~~

~~9. Electric hookups = $3.00 per day or any part thereof for 35 feet or under and $4.00 per day or any part thereof for longer than 35 feet.~~

~~10. Boat sanitary pump out station = Free for marina guests and $10.00 per pump out for non-guests.~~

~~11. Baggage handling fee to and from campsite = $10.00 each way.~~

V. SEYON LODGE STATE PARK

~~V.a. Concession~~

~~1. All rules, regulations and fees may be modified in any concession license agreement.~~

V.b. Angling

1. All anglers must hold a valid Vermont fishing license.

2. Fishing in Noyes Pond shall only be from rental boats or canoes provided by State Parks. Private car top boats or canoes as well as the use of outboard motors, including electric trolling motors are not allowed.

3. Only fly fishing with artificial flies is allowed. The flies shall be single hook only, and must be either barbless or the barb filed or crimped down. All equipment shall be subject to inspection.

4. To obtain optimum fishing, the number of boats and/or anglers allowed on Noyes Pond at any one time, shall be established by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation upon the advice of the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

5. There is no limit to the number of fish hooked and released. Daily limit and size of trout that may be taken shall be established by the Fish and Wildlife Board according to 10 V.S.A. Section 4082-4083 after consultation with the Departments of Forests, Parks and Recreation, and Fish and Wildlife.

6. Fishing is permitted only between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and a half hour after official sunset. The fishing season is the same as that set by the Fish and Wildlife Board for trout fishing.

V.c. Reservations for Boats to Fly Fish

1. Reservations for boats for fly fishing shall be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis at the park beginning the first day of the annual operating season. There is a maximum consecutive reservation period of two days.

V.d. Use Restrictions

1. Fishing from the shore, swimming and wading in Noyes Pond and its tributaries is not allowed.

2. Camping is not allowed in the Seyon Lodge State Park area.

V.e. Lodge and Grounds Use

1. Groups (a minimum of five people regardless of age) may reserve the entire lodge and/or grounds up to 11 months in advance by paying the designated fees within two weeks of ~~first contact~~ making the reservation. Individuals renting less than the entire lodge may reserve up to six months from the start of the rental period.

2. Groups exceeding 50 people must have catered or potluck meals.

3. Guest or visitor pets will not be allowed in the lodge. In winter, pets are not allowed on groomed cross-country trails.

4. Arrivals after 8:00 p.m. for overnight lodging will not be accommodated unless prior arrangements have been made with the lodge staff.

5. Quiet hours are 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

6. Check-out time for overnight guests is 11:00 a.m.

V.f. ~~Fees and Charges~~ Rates and Fees: Seyon Lodge State Park

1. All users, except anglers renting boats and those using or staying overnight at the lodge, shall pay the current park day use ~~fee~~ rate.

2. Seyon Lodge State Park Fees

a. Room and food service rates may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1. and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks.

b. Fees for unreasonable cleaning or repair will be assessed in accordance with methods and procedures used throughout the hospitality industry.

~~c. Individual day use:~~
~~Standard day use fees apply to all except those renting boats and using or staying overnight at the lodge.~~

~~d. Boat rentals with oars and PFDs:~~
~~$7.50 = per hour plus Vermont Sales Tax. Half day rate = $25.00 Full day rate = $40.00 plus Vermont Sales Tax.~~

~~e. Conference fees = $400.00, including VT Meals and Rooms Tax for conference room only for up to 50 people and includes coffee/tea for the entire day. $300.00 including VT Meals and Rooms Tax, if appropriate, for 501(c)3 non-profit groups for conference room only for up to 50 people and includes one "break" and coffee/tea for the entire day.~~

~~f. Wedding fees:~~
~~Small wedding up to 50 people = $500.00 including VT Meals and Rooms Tax. Large wedding 50 – 150 people = $1,500.00 including VT Meals and Rooms Tax.~~
~~Fee includes sole use of lodge and grounds for one day. Fee does not include any food or beverage service.~~

~~g. Overnight lodge fees:~~

~~Monday- Thursday nights = $750.00 including VT Meals and Rooms Tax per night for a group's sole use of the lodge and its indoor facilities for one night.~~

~~Friday- Sunday nights = $800.00 including VT Meals and Rooms Tax per night for a group's sole use of the lodge and its indoor facilities for one night.~~

~~Includes up to 16 overnight guests with a continental breakfast.~~

~~h. Per Room Rate = Rates will be based on double occupancy according to the seasonal rates charged for similar services in the area including VT Meals and Rooms Tax. Additional individuals in a room will be charged an additional fee.~~

~~i. Meals = Fees for food service shall be set at rates that cover the costs of providing the service and are competitive with rates charged for similar services in the area.~~

~~j. Cleaning/damages = charges for unreasonable cleaning or repair will be assessed in accordance with methods/procedures used throughout the hospitality industry.~~

~~k. Service charge = a 15% service charge will be added to all fees associated with a~~

~~group.~~

VI. GREEN RIVER RESERVOIR STATE PARK

VI.a. Individual Use

1. The maximum individual campsite occupancy depends on the campsite but in no case is it greater than seven people regardless of age.

2. The maximum stay is seven consecutive nights.

3. Up to two vehicles are permitted per campsite. There is a fee for additional vehicles.

VI.b. Group Use (8-12 people)

1. Groups shall camp on designated group campsites only.

2. The maximum group size is 12 people regardless of age.

3. Up to three vehicles are permitted per campsite. There is a fee for additional vehicles.

4. The maximum stay on a group campsite is three consecutive nights, not to exceed nine nights total at any Green River Reservoir group campsite by the same party in the same operating season.

5. Groups shall obtain a Group Permit. Not more than two Group Permits will be issued for any calendar day. Not more than ten group permits shall be issued to any group in any one operating season.

~~6. Fees:~~

~~Group (Day Use and Camping)~~
~~$25.00 Group Permit needed for each portion of a calendar day spent at park. Only two group permits will be granted for each calendar day.~~

~~Group Campsite~~
~~$6.00 per person per night, minimum of eight persons = $48.00 per site.~~
~~$5.00 per additional vehicle.~~

VI.c. Commercial Activities

1. Commercial or non-profit groups shall obtain a license prior to making reservations and/or using the park.

2. All commercial or non-profit groups (eight -12 people) shall also be subject to Group Permit requirements.

3. No commercial or non-profit group activities will be allowed on weekends (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday).

~~**VI.d. Reservations**~~

~~1. Reservations must be made at least one day prior to the beginning date of the reservation.~~
~~2. There is no minimum reservation period requirement.~~

~~**VI.e. Pets**~~

~~1. During the operating season, visitors may bring domesticated or trained animals to designated campground areas provided they are safely confined or securely restrained on a leash not longer than ten feet.~~

VII. ~~FEES AND CHARGES~~ RATES AND FEES FOR ALL USES OF STATE PARKS~~: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS~~

~~(Applies only to State Parks)~~

1. A list of rates and fees for use of State Parks shall be published annually by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and posted on their website. All rate or fee adjustments shall be published at least 90 days in advance on the State Parks website. Any changes to day use or camping and other overnight lodging rates or fees shall additionally be advertised through appropriate existing park-specific outreach channels and a formal press release. The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation may adjust rates and fees no more than once annually prior to the Parks operating season unless such adjustment relates to an experimental or special service or promotional or vacation package as set forth in VII.10 below. The Commissioner may increase or decrease rates or fees as appropriate after consideration of the factors outlined in paragraph VII.2. below.

2. The Commissioner of the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall establish reasonable rates or fees for all uses of State Parks, including but not limited to: overnight camping and campsite reservations in developed State Parks, cottage and cabin rentals, overnight camping at remote campsites, camping and marina fees at Burton Island State Park, rates or fees for use of Green River Reservoir State Park and rental and use of Seyon State Park, fees for day use areas (including individual, vehicle and seasonal passes and punch cards), boat and equipment rentals, firewood sales, miscellaneous merchandise, reservations of day use shelters and other structures available for private rental, sanitary dump station fees, vehicle and equipment storage, reservation and pet fees, and any other use or service including rental of the Mt. Mansfield Stone Hut. The Commissioner may establish a lower rate or fee for Vermont residents and a higher rate or fee for out of state visitors for specific services. The Commissioner will at minimum consider the following in establishing reasonable fees or charges: recovery of the Department's costs to provide the associated service, access for Vermonters, affordability, the type of visitor use or service provided, the amenities of the site or facility, occupancy patterns and demand, market rates and the value of comparable services. The Commissioner may consider other factors including, but not limited to: broader economic conditions, industry or regional market trends, and unexpected events that significantly affect visitor use or Department operations (for example, public health emergencies or natural disasters).

3. Credit cards and personal checks (not including traveler's checks) will be accepted for only

the exact dollar amount for services, rentals or merchandise.

4. Rates or fees ~~charges~~ for merchandise such as firewood, T-shirts, hats, publications, etc. shall be priced to cover purchase and production costs and be competitive with comparable commercial sales.

5. A valid receipt or ticket must be shown for reentry to a park.

6. No service, rental, or merchandise will be rendered until non-sufficient fund checks previously passed are paid first in cash, postal or bank money order or certified check. A service charge of $25.00 will be due on all checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

7. Organized programs of the Vermont State Hospital, Vermont Veteran's Home, and Regional Correctional Centers shall be admitted free of charge upon advance written application to the Director of State Parks. The letter from the Director of State Parks will be the ticket for admission when shown to the park attendant. Foster children shall be admitted free to State Parks upon presentation of appropriate identification applied for through the Director of State Parks.

8. Individuals or organizations may volunteer their efforts for training, research or other supportive purposes on public service projects or activities which will improve any portion of a State Park or its facilities or programs, or conduct a program which will improve the health, safety, education or welfare of the general public. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may authorize such projects in writing, give credit for the contribution, at his/her discretion, waive or reduce any fees and permit redemption of the credit for day use or camping within one year of the contribution.

9. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation is permitted to temporarily (not to exceed one season per project) adjust fees and charges at any area for the purposes of bona fide research or to handle an immediate need or concern.

10. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation is permitted to develop State Park ~~experimental~~ services, including experimental or special services, promotional programs, and vacation or special event packages, and may adjust rates or fees and offer discounted rates or fees for those services and packages to promote the park system ~~and~~ or increase campground occupancy. Rates and fees established pursuant to this paragraph for experimental or special services, promotional programs, and vacation or special event packages are exempt from the 90-day notice described in VII.1.

11. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may charge restitution to any person that:

    a. does any damage to any State Park land, facility, structure, vegetation, earth materials or timber, or,

    b. is the party registered with the State Park facility for use of such facility, when the registered party and/or any visitors or guests of the registered party does any damage to any State Park land, facility, structure, vegetation, earth materials or timber.

Restitution charged shall reflect as closely as possible the actual costs of replacement or repair of facility or structure, or value of vegetation or timber, based on current market value. This provision does not preclude the Department from seeking other penalties when warranted.

12. ~~REFUNDS OR CREDIT~~ The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall establish policies and procedures for refunding fees and/or granting credit for future use.

~~XIII~~ VIII. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

(Applies to all Department lands)

1. Soliciting, vending, sale or rental of goods, wares or services in any recreation area is not allowed except the goods and services provided by the State of Vermont, and concessionaires under contractual agreement with the State of Vermont. Other exceptions include special occasions or events such as, but not limited to, catering service for group picnics.

2. Anyone engaging in a commercial activity must obtain a special use permit or license All associated fees, certificates of liability insurance, and endorsed license or special use permit documents must be submitted prior to the beginning of operations. Commercial business groups are distinguished from non-profit by the qualification of non-profit groups to possess a 501 C-3 IRS tax exemption.

3. Definitions:

   A **license** is a formal written authorization for certain longer-term activities that ~~may allow the user some interest in the land~~ gives permission to a person or entity to use State land for a particular purpose but does not ~~transfer~~ create an estate in land or transfer contractual, vested or property rights and is revocable by the Department. The proposed use ~~will~~ must not permanently exclude all other public uses of the land.

   A **special use permit** is a formal written authorization for short-term, low-impact use by individuals and groups, requiring no or only minimal development and no permanent structures. Granting of a special use permit will be considered after it has been determined that a proposed use of public land meets the following conditions:

   It will not dominate or preclude all other public uses of the lands for periods of more than one week.

   It is short-term (one year or less).

   It does not in any way, due to the type, scale or nature of associated development, presume annual renewals. The proposed activity must be feasible without the necessity of repeated annual renewal. If it is not legitimately possible without the guarantee of annual renewal, a special use permit is inappropriate.

   It will not involve a permanent structure ~~of~~ or any permanent significant change to the land.

Minimal timber cutting, skidding, landing, and hauling especially for temporary rights-of-way may be exempted from this constraint. Any permitted timber removal will be undertaken according to a cutting plan and stumpage payment approved by the Department.

Notwithstanding the above conditions, any event or short-term special use for which an open invitation to the general public is offered shall require a special use permit.

a. A special use permit or license is required for any activity proposed by a commercial or non-profit entity using Department lands that does not have a lease and the activity meets at least one of the following criteria:

   1) is organized or publicized, or
   2) involves a fee (charged to participants), or
   3) alters a site or alters/removes natural resources, or
   4) may conflict with other established, ~~traditional~~ authorized uses.

b. There is a fee per area charge.

c. The terms are usually for one year or season for licenses and less than one year for special use permits.

4. License/Special Use Permit Fees:

Fees are charged to cover costs associated with administering special use permits and licenses, management and operational activities of staff for resource protection and visitor use, and to protect public resources for private use and gains.

Base Administration Fee: Minimum $~~50.00~~ 100.00 for all special use permits and licenses except as noted below. Base administration fees are not assessed on an annual basis but are assessed once for the duration of the license or special use permit.

Requests for a license or special use permit that must be expedited by staff to meet the short timeframe of the applicant may be assessed an additional 'premium' base fee of $50.00. Expedited requests for special use permits and licenses are those that are submitted to the Department less than 30 days prior to the start date of the requested activity.

Additional Fees:

a. Guided recreational activities and services (includes for profit, educational, and nonprofit trips) $~~50.00~~ 100.00 base fee plus ~~current state park day use or camping fee per person per day regardless of activity. If licensed activity occurs at a state park where a day use or camping fee is charged to the public, then licensee will not be assessed both this per person per day fee and the standard state park day use or camping fee~~ current state park day use or camping fee for individuals or groups if licensed activity occurs at a state park where a day use or camping fee is charged to the public. Guided hunting, fishing, and trapping activities on Department lands are not assessed any fees and do not generally require a license or special use permit. (Individuals participating in these activities must still obtain a hunting, fishing or trapping license from the Department of Fish and Wildlife.)

b. Recreational, Cultural, and Other Special Events (including weddings and family reunions) ~~$50.00~~ 100.00 base fee, plus current state park day use or camping fee for individuals or groups if licensed activity occurs at a state park where a day use or camping fee is charged to the public.

c. Agricultural Use ~~$50.00~~ 100.00 base fee plus prevailing rate for agricultural lands for specific uses ($ per acre) as determined by the Department of Agriculture, Extension Service, or by other means, or fees may be waived for special circumstances (e.g., wildlife benefits from agricultural practices, keeping a field open to maintain a view, etc.)

d. Utility Right-of-Way ~~$50.00~~ 100.00 base fee plus $1.00 per linear foot for Electric Distribution Lines and Telephone Lines; $2.00 per linear foot for Fiber Optic Cable Lines and Transmission Lines; $3.00 per linear foot for Pipelines.
Minimum fee of $500 for infrastructure on Department land such as guy wire(s), etc.
$1,000.00 minimum fee for fiber optic lines, transmission lines and pipelines. Fees may be reduced or waived if the utility line services a Department facility
$1,500.00 for utility cabinet sites (up to 20 feet by 20 feet). Utility license fees are based on a ten year license period. For utility projects whose scope and scale have the potential to significantly impact Department land, the Department in its discretion may decide to seek legislative authority to issue a long-term lease for a negotiated fee or to convey a permanent easement based on appraised value.

e. Time Trials/Mountain Roads ~~$50.00~~ 100.00 base fee plus minimum $750.00 per day (e.g.,
$1,500.00 fee for typical two-day reservation).

f. Temporary Rights-of-Way ~~$50.00~~ 100.00 base fee plus bond amount sufficient to insure protection of Department resources.

g. Permit for sale of forest products from state land (brush, seedlings, other ~~$50.00~~ 100.00 base fee, plus a reasonable charge for product. Fees assessed for firewood cutting permits shall be a minimum of $10.00 per cord.

h. State Park housing ~~rentals~~ licenses set at market value rate for the area.

i. Concessionaires/Vendors ~~$50.00~~ 100.00 base fee plus negotiated percentage of gross sales.

j. Research/Scientific. Base fee and other fees may be waived if final research results are provided to the Agency.

k. ATV Access to Designated ANR Lands by Disabled Persons. Fees are waived.

l. Training Activities – Civil and Military Fees may be waived by Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation

m. Commercial Photo Shoots, Advertisements, etc. ~~$50.00~~ 100.00 base fee plus negotiated fee depending on impact, duration, etc.

n. Primitive Camping $~~50.00~~ 100.00 base fee assessed for special use permit for group of ten or more people.

5. In addition to the minimum fees noted herein, the total fee for any license or special use permit shall be an amount sufficient to reflect the cost of accommodating the activity. Consideration shall be given to commitment of necessary human and natural resources, displacement of other uses, clean up costs, etc.

6. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may waive or reduce any fees charged to licensees or permittees providing services to enhance the Department's efforts to manage its lands or for training, research or other supporting services or activities.

IX. ENFORCEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

(Applies to all Department lands)

a. A person who violates any rule may be asked to leave Department land. A person refusing to leave the property may be arrested and prosecuted under State trespass law.

b. A person who violates a rule or regulation adopted pursuant to Chapter 83 of Title 10 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated may be subject to such penalties prescribed by statute or rule or may be subject to enforcement and ~~prescribed under Section 2603 (c) of Title 10 may be imprisoned not more than thirty days or fined not more than $50.00 or both. Such person~~ shall be liable for all damages resulting from a violation to be recovered in a civil action or as otherwise provided by law. ~~under this statute by the person injured (Title 10, Section 2608, Vermont Statutes, Annotated, 1977).~~

c. The Department will provide the same services and recreational opportunities to all legitimate state lands visitors without regard to ~~handicap, race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, marital status, or sexual orientation~~ race, religion, creed, color, national origin (including language), ancestry, place of birth, disability, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or breastfeeding.

d. In the event any of these Rules, or any portion thereof, is found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal or void, the remainder thereof shall be deemed unaffected and shall continue in full force and effect.

Rules and Regulations

Visitor Conduct

And

Service Rates and Fees

For

State Park Services and Commercial Activities on Department Lands

Effective: xx/xx/xxxx

Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

1 National Life Drive, Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05602
1-888-409-7579
E-mail: parks@vermont.gov

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I. GENERAL VISITOR CONDUCT

(Applies to all Department lands, except where noted)

1. Posting bills without the permission of authorized personnel, cutting, peeling, defacing, writing upon or destroying or damaging any building, sign, plant, rock or other natural or manmade structure or object is prohibited.

2. No plant may be uprooted or cut without a special written permit from the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or their designee except wild berries, fruits, seeds, nuts, or mushrooms may be collected only for personal use at the risk of the collector. Commercial harvesting of such items for profit is allowed only with a special written permit from the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or their designee.

3. Removal of any earth material, including but not limited to rock, sand, gravel, topsoil and minerals, is allowed only with a special written permit from the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or their designee. Exempt from this requirement is the personal collection of small stones for educational or hobby collecting purposes unless the stones contain fossils or are otherwise historically significant.

4. Animals, other than species taken legally according to Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife laws and regulations, may not be collected without a special written permit from the Commissioners of Forests, Parks and Recreation and Fish and Wildlife or their designees and/or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Animals" include mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates.

5. The feeding of wildlife in State Parks by visitors is prohibited.

6. The use of metal detectors is permitted only in areas designated by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation and when their use does not conflict with other visitors to Department lands, or disturb lawn areas, rare or fragile plant or animal habitats or archeologically sensitive areas. Users must report to authorized personnel before using a metal detector. Probing in permitted areas may be done only with a small hand tool to a maximum depth of three inches. Any artifacts which may have historical or archeological significance are the property of the State of Vermont and shall be surrendered immediately to authorized personnel. All disturbed areas must be restored to their original state. Use of metal detectors is prohibited in areas of obvious historic significance, e.g., cellar holes, stonewalls, etc.

7. The use of mechanical techniques for gold panning is prohibited. Gold panning is permitted only by traditional hand panning technique.

8. Glass containers or other materials which may pose a hazard to swimmers are not allowed in pools, beaches or other swimming areas.

9. All refuse, separated recyclables, and compost shall be placed in containers provided for that purpose. In remote camping and day use areas, waste and rubbish must be carried out and disposed of at proper locations.

10. Alcoholic beverages in bulk containers (larger than 1 gallon or 4 liters) are prohibited in State Parks except day use areas when served to an organized group by an individual possessing the appropriate license.

11. In situations when alcoholic beverages are being consumed or when otherwise appropriate, the park manager or park staff may require legal identification and proof of age.

12. Children under the age of 14 must be supervised by an adult, while visiting the State Parks.

13. Swimming is encouraged only in designated areas. Persons who swim in areas without lifeguard protection, or when a lifeguard is not on duty, do so at their own risk.

14. There is no fishing in marked, designated State Park swimming areas during the operating season.

15. Using soap is not allowed in any surface waters in, or adjacent to, State Parks.

16. Chainsaws may not be used in State Parks by visitors.

17. Aircraft are not allowed in State Parks and Forests facilities without the written approval of the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation except in an emergency.

18. Disorderly conduct is prohibited (per 13.V.S.A. § 1026).

19. Urinating, defecating, or disposing of human waste shall be in facilities designated for that purpose.

20. Smoking and vaping of any substance is prohibited in designated Smoke Free areas of state parks and forests. Smoke Free areas shall be established by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation on a site-by-site basis to protect the health and well being of nonsmoking park and forest visitors. Smoke Free areas shall include, but not be limited to playgrounds and intensively used day use areas such as busy beaches and picnic areas.

I.a. Vehicle Use

1. The maximum speed limit on State Parks and Forests roads is 15 miles per hour unless otherwise posted.

2. Recreational use of mountain bicycles and motorized all terrain vehicles shall be permitted only on roads and trails designated for such use.

3. Parking is allowed only in designated areas or as directed by FPR staff. Violators may be towed at owner's expense.

I.b. Fires and Firearms

1. In developed State Parks areas, fires are allowed only in fire rings, fireplaces, or charcoal grills at designated picnic and camping areas. All fires must be attended and under control at all times.

2. No firecrackers or other explosive devices, firearms, air rifles or pistols, gas weapons, slingshots, crossbows, bow and arrows except by special permit shall be discharged in any developed recreation area during the park operating season. No firearm shall be discharged within 500 feet of any occupied building or structure in any park or recreation area.

I.c. Pets

1. Visitors may bring domesticated or trained animals to designated campgrounds and day use areas provided they are safely confined or securely restrained on a leash not longer than 10 feet at all times. No animals will be allowed in certain day use areas including parking lots, beaches, pools, picnic areas and playgrounds. EXCEPTION: Service animals trained to perform specific tasks for a person with a disability and Police Canine Corps dogs are allowed in any public area of the park, if under leash or harness control of an owner or handler.

2. Pet owners are required to repair damage caused by their animals including digging and defecation in developed areas.

3. No person who is the owner of a pet shall allow the pet to be a nuisance animal. Nuisance animal means any animal, including but not limited to dogs, which:

   a. Threatens passers-by or passing vehicles,

   b. Attacks other people or animals,

   c. Damages property,

   d. Barks, whines, howls or cries in an excessive, continuous or untimely fashion.

II. CAMPING AND OTHER OVERNIGHT LODGING

(Applies only to State Parks, except where noted)

1. Camping is allowed only on designated sites. Off season camping is available only by permission of parks regional managers.

2. All campers and campground visitors are required to register with the park staff.

3. Not more than eight people, regardless of age, may occupy one campsite. In the interest of protecting the natural resources of the park, the limit at some campsites may be lower.

4. Visitors to campers must register with the park staff before entering the campground and must pay the regular day use rate. Day visitor hours in the campground are 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. The total number of day visitors per site may be limited at the discretion of the park manager.

5. The designated head of the camping party staying overnight on the site must be at least 18 years of age and is responsible for the conduct of all campers and visitors on the site.

6. No part of any sleeping unit or vehicles on the campsite may be placed outside the cleared area designated as the site. The maximum number of vehicles allowed per site, including self-propelled sleeping units, shall be two. Other vehicles shall be parked in areas designated by park manager.

7. Campsites shall be kept in a neat and clean condition at all times.

8. Dishwashing is allowed only at individual campsites or areas specifically designated as dishwashing areas.

9. Gray water and other direct discharges on the ground from camping vehicles and trailers are not permitted. Holding tanks or other appropriate containers must be emptied at the campground "sanitary dump station" or other suitable facility.

10. Quiet hours are between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. except in areas otherwise designated by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Visitors who violate quiet hours may be evicted from the camping area and may forfeit their fees and reservation. Reasonable quiet must be maintained at all times in both camping and day use areas. Sound that is audible on adjacent occupied campsites may be prohibited at the discretion of the park staff.

11. Generators and rechargers may be used only in areas and/or at times designated by the park manager. They may not be operated during quiet hours.

12. Camping in designated overflow areas will be limited to one night per camping party.

13. The park manager, with the approval of the parks regional manager, may designate a storage area during the summer season for camping trailers, boat trailers, R.V.'s or other similar equipment and vehicles of hikers, bicyclists or paddlers. A fee shall be charged. The State is not liable for theft or damage to equipment stored in these areas. All equipment and vehicles shall be removed from the storage area no later than the seasonal closing date of the park.

II.a. Reservations and Site Occupancy

1. Reservation requests shall be confirmed only when accompanied by payment of full camping and reservation fees. Payment must be received within two weeks of making the reservation. For reservations made within two weeks of arrival, payment is due at time of reservation.

2. The minimum reservation period for campsites, cabins, and cottages is determined by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. This determination shall be based on individual site characteristics, use and occupancy patterns. Reservations may be made up to 11 months in advance.

3. Check out time is 11:00 a.m. at which time the site must be vacated. Check in time is 2:00 p.m. If a party does not vacate the site by 11:00 a.m. or does not re-register for another night stay by 11:00 a.m., the park manager, at their discretion and in the presence of two witnesses, not employees of the State Parks Division, may inventory and remove gear from

the site. Any gear removed may be stored by the park manager for up to the duration of the operating season, after which the gear may be disposed of. Gear that is broken, damaged, or otherwise in poor condition may be disposed of immediately. Any cost incurred by the State in removing and disposing of gear or belongings from a site shall be charged to the registered party.

4. The maximum stay on any campsite shall be up to 21 consecutive nights unless adjusted by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation to improve occupancy. A camper occupying a campsite for the maximum stay shall vacate the campsite and may not occupy that site or any other site in that campground for a period of at least seven days.

5. The period of occupancy, reservation period, duration, and number of reservations per season for a campsite or lean-to may be adjusted at the discretion of the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation for the purpose of improving the occupancy rate or protection of the natural resource.

II.b. Group Camping

1. The definition of a camping group shall be eight or more people regardless of age.

2. In addition to those areas specifically designated for group camping, prior to June 15 and after Labor Day, group camping may be accommodated in any camping area in the park system on a space available basis except over Memorial Day weekend.

II.c. Remote Camping

1. Remote camping areas are located throughout a large forest complex, island, or shoreline. They differ from "primitive camping" areas because the location is specific and may include pit toilets, fireplaces, lean-tos and/or tables.

2. Woods and Knight Islands, Waterbury Reservoir shoreline, Molly's Falls shoreline, Groton, Coolidge, Victory and Darling State Forests CCC campsites, and portions of Kingsland Bay and Jamaica State Parks are designated as remote areas. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation has the authority to designate or remove designation of remote areas on Department lands.

3. Remote camping is only by reservation or permit and payment of fee.

4. Rules and regulations for camping in remote areas shall be the same as for camping in developed areas.

II.d. Horse Camping

Note: The following rules apply to overnight use of certain state park campgrounds at which horse camping is permitted during the operating season.

1. Proof of current (within one year) negative Coggins test is required prior to entry into the campground.

2. Horses may be used only on marked bridle trails, parks or forests roads, or other areas designated for equine use. Horses are not allowed on nature trails, or in day use or campground areas not designated for equine use.

3. The maximum number of horses allowed at each campsite is two.

4. Horses shall be securely restrained in paddocks, at hitch rails, high lines with tree saver straps, or tied to a trailer at the campsite when not being used.

5. Bathing of horses is only allowed at designated bathing areas.

6. Owners are responsible for all accidents, or any damage caused by their animals on state lands.

7. The park manager may require horse owners remove their animal from the park, if determined that the horse poses an unreasonable threat to park visitors, or other horses.

8. Galloping of horses is prohibited in developed areas.

9. Horses shall be watered only at designated areas or by tubs or buckets filled from the park water supply.

10. Owners are responsible for cleaning up the manure and placing in the designated area.

11. Horses shall not be left unattended at any time. Owners may be asked to leave without a refund for leaving unattended horses.

II.e. Rates and Fees: Camping and Other Overnight Lodging

1. The base rate for a tent, lean-to, cabin, or remote site permits up to four people. An additional rate shall be charged for each additional camper beyond four, for pets and for prime sites.

2. There is no charge for children 3 years and under for camping.

3. Fees for camping at any campground or designated remote sites may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1 and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks.

III. DAY ACTIVITIES

(Applies only to State Parks)

1. Registered campers can use day use areas at no charge. A camper receipt allows the holders to use day use areas until normal closing hour on the scheduled day of check out.

2. The day use punch card entitles entrance to a day use area at the rate of one punch per person. No refunds or replacements will be issued for destroyed or lost punch cards.

3. The annual vehicle pass entitles vehicle assigned to the pass and its occupant's entrance at all State Parks for day use activities. Each vehicle pass allows up to eight people in legal seats to enter per day. In areas accessible by water, vehicle passes may be used on boats.

   a. Replacement for vehicle passes on traded, sold or damaged vehicles may be applied for by presenting to the State Parks headquarters office, or at the park where purchased during the park season, a written statement accompanied by as much of the vehicle pass which is identifiable, including, at least, the serial number.

   b. Under extenuating circumstances, upon the recommendation of the parks regional manager, the Director of State Parks may permit the temporary use of the purchaser's receipt in lieu of the vehicle pass.

4. The annual individual season pass entitles holder to enter all State Parks for day use activities.

   a. Damaged individual passes may be replaced upon presentation of as much of the pass as possible, including, at least, the serial number.

5. Recreation programs organized by cities or towns, including swimming instruction programs, shall be admitted under a special group rate by advance arrangement. Group day use visitors shall remove their own refuse from the park except as follows: caterers or organizers of group day use activities shall make their own refuse removal arrangements or pay a supplemental disposal fee, at the going market rate, for access to park disposal facilities where available. In some areas, park visitors may pay a fee to leave refuse at "carry in/carry out" parks.

6. Reservations for day use shelters may be made up to 11 months in advance.

III.a. Rates and Fees: Day Activities

1. Day use fees shall may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1 and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks.

2. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may establish "deposits" for certain services. The deposit shall be administered directly by the park manager or their official designee, according to department procedures.

3. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may waive the day use fee and reservation fee for use of a picnic shelter or similar facility to host a meeting of any organization of which the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation is an official bona fide member or sponsor.

4. Refunds will be granted on day use admission fees only for unusual circumstances approved by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation.

IV. BURTON ISLAND STATE PARK MARINA

1. Transient dock slips shall be assigned by the Park Manager or Dockmaster. All vessels must check-in and receive a slip assignment before proceeding to their slip.

2. Slip assignments are not final until the vessel is officially checked-in at the contact station. Park staff reserve the right to change slip assignments at any time due to weather, lake level, or to maximize marina occupancy.

3. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may designate certain slips as day-use only slips from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Transient day-use slips are first come, first served until 5 p.m., after which, they will be converted to overnight slips.

4. There is no minimum reservation requirement for marina slips.

5. Moorings are assigned on a first come, first served basis. There are no reservations for mooring space.

6. A portion of the dockage space may be reserved if so designated by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Except as modified herein, all appropriate provisions of Section II.a. apply for dock reservations as well.

7. Registered campers with boats up to 16 feet in length may use a marina slip for no additional fee. Campers with boats greater than 16 feet but less than 25 feet will be assessed at the current marina rate for each foot in length more than 16 feet. Boats greater than 26 feet in length, or boats with persons sleeping aboard overnight, will be assessed at the full marina rate.
8. Dockage does not include a continuous water hookup.

9. No refuse or drainage of any type shall be dumped in the marina area.

10. Charcoal grills or open fires are prohibited aboard boats or on docks.

11. All boats shall be operated at no greater than steerage speed in or about the marina.

12. Swimming is prohibited in the marina area.

IV.a. Rates and Fees: Burton Island State Park

1. The marina day, for fee purposes, shall be 11:00 a.m. to 10:59 a.m.

2. Fees may be charged for mooring or anchoring inside an officially designated mooring or anchoring area adjacent to a State Park. The mooring or anchoring area subject to fee at Burton Island shall be the area inside of a line extending from the northernmost tip of the island which is northwest of the breakwater to the "red nun" marking the small boat channel between the island and Kill Kare State Park.

3. Marina fees and associated marine-based service fees may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set

forth in Section VII.1 and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks.

V. SEYON LODGE STATE PARK

V.a. Angling

1. All anglers must hold a valid Vermont fishing license.

2. Fishing in Noyes Pond shall only be from rental boats or canoes provided by State Parks. Private car top boats or canoes as well as the use of outboard motors, including electric trolling motors are not allowed.

3. Only fly fishing with artificial flies is allowed. The flies shall be single hook only, and must be either barbless or the barb filed or crimped down. All equipment shall be subject to inspection.

4. To obtain optimum fishing, the number of boats and/or anglers allowed on Noyes Pond at any one time, shall be established by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation upon the advice of the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

5. There is no limit to the number of fish hooked and released. Daily limit and size of trout that may be taken shall be established by the Fish and Wildlife Board according to 10 V.S.A. Section 4082-4083 after consultation with the Departments of Forests, Parks and Recreation, and Fish and Wildlife.

6. Fishing is permitted only between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and a half hour after official sunset. The fishing season is the same as that set by the Fish and Wildlife Board for trout fishing.

V.b. Reservations for Boats to Fly Fish

1. Reservations for boats for fly fishing shall be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis at the park beginning the first day of the annual operating season. There is a maximum consecutive reservation period of two days.

V.c. Use Restrictions

1. Fishing from the shore, swimming and wading in Noyes Pond and its tributaries is not allowed.

2. Camping is not allowed in the Seyon Lodge State Park area.

V.d. Lodge and Grounds Use

1. Groups (a minimum of five people regardless of age) may reserve the entire lodge and/or grounds up to 11 months in advance by paying the designated fees within two weeks of making the reservation. Individuals renting less than the entire lodge may reserve up to six months from the start of the rental period.

2. Groups exceeding 50 people must have catered or potluck meals.

3. Guest or visitor pets will not be allowed in the lodge. In winter, pets are not allowed on groomed cross-country trails.

4. Arrivals after 8:00 p.m. for overnight lodging will not be accommodated unless prior arrangements have been made with the lodge staff.

5. Quiet hours are 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

6. Check-out time for overnight guests is 11:00 a.m.

V.e. Rates and Fees: Seyon Lodge State Park

1. All users, except anglers renting boats and those using or staying overnight at the lodge, shall pay the current park day use rate.

2. Seyon Lodge State Park Fees

    4. Room and food service rates may be adjusted annually for the operating season by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation based on factors set forth in Section VII.1 and 2., Rates and Fees for All Uses of State Parks.

    a. Fees for unreasonable cleaning or repair will be assessed in accordance with methods and procedures used throughout the hospitality industry.

VI. GREEN RIVER RESERVOIR STATE PARK

VI.a. Individual Use

1. The maximum individual campsite occupancy depends on the campsite but in no case is it greater than seven people regardless of age.

2. The maximum stay is seven consecutive nights.

3. Up to two vehicles are permitted per campsite. There is a fee for additional vehicles.

VI.b. Group Use (8-12 people)

1. Groups shall camp on designated group campsites only.

2. The maximum group size is 12 people regardless of age.

3. Up to three vehicles are permitted per campsite. There is a fee for additional vehicles.

4. The maximum stay on a group campsite is three consecutive nights, not to exceed nine nights total at any Green River Reservoir group campsite by the same party in the same

operating season.

5. Groups shall obtain a Group Permit. Not more than two Group Permits will be issued for any calendar day. Not more than ten group permits shall be issued to any group in any one operating season.

VI.c. Commercial Activities

1. Commercial or non-profit groups shall obtain a license prior to making reservations and/or using the park.

2. All commercial or non-profit groups (eight -12 people) shall also be subject to Group Permit requirements.

3. No commercial or non-profit group activities will be allowed on weekends (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday).

VII. RATES AND FEES FOR ALL USES OF STATE PARKS

1. A list of rates and fees for use of State Parks shall be published annually by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and posted on their website. All rate or fee adjustments shall be published at least 90 days in advance on the State Parks website. Any changes to day use or camping and other overnight lodging rates or fees shall additionally be advertised through appropriate existing park-specific outreach channels and a formal press release. The Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation may adjust rates and fees no more than once annually prior to the Parks operating season unless such adjustment relates to an experimental or special service or promotional or vacation package as set forth in VII.10 below. The Commissioner may increase or decrease rates or fees as appropriate after consideration of the factors outlined in paragraph VII.2. below.

2. The Commissioner of the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall establish reasonable rates or fees for all uses of State Parks, including but not limited to: overnight camping and campsite reservations in developed State Parks, cottage and cabin rentals, overnight camping at remote campsites, camping and marina fees at Burton Island State Park, rates or fees for use of Green River Reservoir State Park and rental and use of Seyon State Park, fees for day use areas (including individual, vehicle and seasonal passes and punch cards), boat and equipment rentals, firewood sales, miscellaneous merchandise, reservations of day use shelters and other structures available for private rental, sanitary dump station fees, vehicle and equipment storage, reservation and pet fees, and any other use or service including rental of the Mt. Mansfield Stone Hut. The Commissioner may establish a lower rate or fee for Vermont residents and a higher rate or fee for out of state visitors for specific services. The Commissioner will at minimum consider the following in establishing reasonable fees or charges: recovery of the Department's costs to provide the associated service, access for Vermonters, affordability, the type of visitor use or service provided, the amenities of the site or facility, occupancy patterns and demand, market rates and the value of comparable services. The Commissioner may consider other factors including, but not limited to: broader economic conditions, industry or regional market trends, and unexpected events that significantly affect visitor use or Department operations (for example, public health emergencies or natural disasters).

3. Credit cards and personal checks (not including traveler's checks) will be accepted for only the exact dollar amount for services, rentals or merchandise.

4. Rates or fees for merchandise such as firewood, T-shirts, hats, publications, etc. shall be priced to cover purchase and production costs and be competitive with comparable commercial sales.

5. A valid receipt or ticket must be shown for reentry to a park.

6. No service, rental, or merchandise will be rendered until non-sufficient fund checks previously passed are paid first in cash, postal or bank money order or certified check. A service charge of $25.00 will be due on all checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

7. Organized programs of the Vermont State Hospital, Vermont Veteran's Home, and Regional Correctional Centers shall be admitted free of charge upon advance written application to the Director of State Parks. The letter from the Director of State Parks will be the ticket for admission when shown to the park attendant. Foster children shall be admitted free to State Parks upon presentation of appropriate identification applied for through the Director of State Parks.

8. Individuals or organizations may volunteer their efforts for training, research or other supportive purposes on public service projects or activities which will improve any portion of a State Park or its facilities or programs, or conduct a program which will improve the health, safety, education or welfare of the general public. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may authorize such projects in writing, give credit for the contribution, at his/her discretion, waive or reduce any fees and permit redemption of the credit for day use or camping within one year of the contribution.

9. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation is permitted to temporarily (not to exceed one season per project) adjust fees and charges at any area for the purposes of bona fide research or to handle an immediate need or concern.

10. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation is permitted to develop State Park services, including experimental or special services, promotional programs, and vacation or special event packages, and may adjust rates or fees and offer discounted rates or fees for those services and packages to promote the park system or increase campground occupancy. Rates and fees established pursuant to this paragraph for experimental or special services, promotional programs, and vacation or special event packages are exempt from the 90-day notice described in VII.1.

11. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may charge restitution to any person that:

    a. does any damage to any State Park land, facility, structure, vegetation, earth materials or timber, or,

    b. is the party registered with the State Park facility for use of such facility, when the registered party and/or any visitors or guests of the registered party does any damage to

any State Park land, facility, structure, vegetation, earth materials or timber.

Restitution charged shall reflect as closely as possible the actual costs of replacement or repair of facility or structure, or value of vegetation or timber, based on current market value. This provision does not preclude the Department from seeking other penalties when warranted.

12. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation shall establish policies and procedures for refunding fees and/or granting credit for future use.

VIII. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

(Applies to all Department lands)

1. Soliciting, vending, sale or rental of goods, wares or services in any recreation area is not allowed except the goods and services provided by the State of Vermont, and concessionaires under contractual agreement with the State of Vermont. Other exceptions include special occasions or events such as, but not limited to, catering service for group picnics.

2. Anyone engaging in a commercial activity must obtain a special use permit or license All associated fees, certificates of liability insurance, and endorsed license or special use permit documents must be submitted prior to the beginning of operations. Commercial business groups are distinguished from non-profit by the qualification of non-profit groups to possess a 501 C-3 IRS tax exemption.

3. Definitions:

   A **license** is a formal written authorization for certain longer-term activities that gives permission to a person or entity to use State land for a particular purpose but does not create an estate in land or transfer contractual, vested or property rights and is revocable by the Department. The proposed use must not permanently exclude all other public uses of the land.

   A **special use permit** is a formal written authorization for short-term, low-impact use by individuals and groups, requiring no or only minimal development and no permanent structures. Granting of a special use permit will be considered after it has been determined that a proposed use of public land meets the following conditions:

   It will not dominate or preclude all other public uses of the lands for periods of more than one week.

   It is short-term (one year or less).

   It does not in any way, due to the type, scale or nature of associated development, presume annual renewals. The proposed activity must be feasible without the necessity of repeated annual renewal. If it is not legitimately possible without the guarantee of annual renewal, a special use permit is inappropriate.

It will not involve a permanent structure or any permanent significant change to the land. Minimal timber cutting, skidding, landing, and hauling especially for temporary rights-of-way may be exempted from this constraint. Any permitted timber removal will be undertaken according to a cutting plan and stumpage payment approved by the Department.

Notwithstanding the above conditions, any event or short-term special use for which an open invitation to the general public is offered shall require a special use permit.

a. A special use permit or license is required for any activity proposed by a commercial or non-profit entity using Department lands that does not have a lease and the activity meets at least one of the following criteria:

    1) is organized or publicized, or
    2) involves a fee (charged to participants), or
    3) alters a site or alters/removes natural resources, or
    4) may conflict with other established, ~~traditional~~ authorized uses.

b. There is a fee per area charge.

c. The terms are usually for one year or season for licenses and less than one year for special use permits.

4. License/Special Use Permit Fees:

Fees are charged to cover costs associated with administering special use permits and licenses, management and operational activities of staff for resource protection and visitor use, and to protect public resources for private use and gains.

Base Administration Fee: Minimum $100.00 for all special use permits and licenses except as noted below. Base administration fees are not assessed on an annual basis but are assessed once for the duration of the license or special use permit.

Requests for a license or special use permit that must be expedited by staff to meet the short timeframe of the applicant may be assessed an additional 'premium' base fee of $50.00. Expedited requests for special use permits and licenses are those that are submitted to the Department less than 30 days prior to the start date of the requested activity.

Additional Fees:

a. Guided recreational activities and services (includes for profit, educational, and nonprofit trips) $100.00 base fee plus current state park day use or camping fee for individuals or groups if licensed activity occurs at a state park where a day use or camping fee is charged to the public. Guided hunting, fishing, and trapping activities on Department lands are not assessed any fees and do not generally require a license or special use permit. (Individuals participating in these activities must still obtain a hunting, fishing or trapping license from the Department of Fish and Wildlife.)

b. Recreational, Cultural, and Other Special Events (including weddings and family

reunions) $100.00 base fee, plus current state park day use or camping fee for individuals or groups if licensed activity occurs at a state park where a day use or camping fee is charged to the public.

c. Agricultural Use $100.00 base fee plus prevailing rate for agricultural lands for specific uses ($ per acre) as determined by the Department of Agriculture, Extension Service, or by other means, or fees may be waived for special circumstances (e.g., wildlife benefits from agricultural practices, keeping a field open to maintain a view, etc.)

d. Utility Right-of-Way $100.00 base fee plus $1.00 per linear foot for Electric Distribution Lines and Telephone Lines; $2.00 per linear foot for Fiber Optic Cable Lines and Transmission Lines; $3.00 per linear foot for Pipelines.
Minimum fee of $500 for infrastructure on Department land such as guy wire(s), etc. $1,000.00 minimum fee for fiber optic lines, transmission lines and pipelines. Fees may be reduced or waived if the utility line services a Department facility
$1,500.00 for utility cabinet sites (up to 20 feet by 20 feet). Utility license fees are based on a ten year license period. For utility projects whose scope and scale have the potential to significantly impact Department land, the Department in its discretion may decide to seek legislative authority to issue a long-term lease for a negotiated fee or to convey a permanent easement based on appraised value.

e. Time Trials/Mountain Roads $100.00 base fee plus minimum $750.00 per day (e.g., $1,500.00 fee for typical two-day reservation).

f. Temporary Rights-of-Way $100.00 base fee plus bond amount sufficient to insure protection of Department resources.

g. Permit for sale of forest products from state land (brush, seedlings, other) $100.00 base fee, plus a reasonable charge for product. Fees assessed for firewood cutting permits shall be a minimum of $10.00 per cord.

h. State Park housing licenses set at market value rate for the area.

i. Concessionaires/Vendors $100.00 base fee plus negotiated percentage of gross sales.

j. Research/Scientific. Base fee and other fees may be waived if final research results are provided to the Agency.

k. ATV Access to Designated ANR Lands by Disabled Persons. Fees are waived.

l. Training Activities – Civil and Military Fees may be waived by Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation

m. Commercial Photo Shoots, Advertisements, etc. $100.00 base fee plus negotiated fee depending on impact, duration, etc.

n. Primitive Camping $100.00 base fee assessed for special use permit for group of ten or more people.

5. In addition to the minimum fees noted herein, the total fee for any license or special use

permit shall be an amount sufficient to reflect the cost of accommodating the activity. Consideration shall be given to commitment of necessary human and natural resources, displacement of other uses, clean up costs, etc.

6. The Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation may waive or reduce any fees charged to licensees or permittees providing services to enhance the Department's efforts to manage its lands or for training, research or other supporting services or activities.

IX. ENFORCEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

(Applies to all Department lands)

a. A person who violates any rule may be asked to leave Department land. A person refusing to leave the property may be arrested and prosecuted under State trespass law.

b. A person who violates a rule or regulation adopted pursuant to Chapter 83 of Title 10 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated may be subject to such penalties prescribed by statute or rule or may be subject to enforcement and shall be liable for all damages resulting from a violation to be recovered in a civil action or as otherwise provided by law.

c. The Department will provide the same services and recreational opportunities to all legitimate state lands visitors without regard to race, religion, creed, color, national origin (including language), ancestry, place of birth, disability, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or breastfeeding.

d. In the event any of these Rules, or any portion thereof, is found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal or void, the remainder thereof shall be deemed unaffected and shall continue in full force and effect.

Title 10 : Conservation and Development

Chapter 083 : Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

Subchapter 001 : General Provisions

(Cite as: 10 V.S.A. § 2603)

- **§ 2603. Powers and duties: Commissioner**

(a) The Department shall be under the direction and supervision of a Commissioner appointed by the Secretary as provided in 3 V.S.A. § 2851. In addition to the duties and powers provided under this chapter, the Commissioner shall have the powers and duties specified in 3 V.S.A. § 2852 and such additional duties as may be assigned to the Commissioner by the Secretary under 3 V.S.A. § 2853. The Commissioner shall implement the policy and purposes specified in section 2601 of this title where appropriate and to the extent that resources of the Department permit.

(b) The Commissioner shall manage and plan for the use of publicly owned forests and park lands in order to implement the policy and purposes of this chapter; promote and protect the natural, productive, and recreational values of such lands; and provide for multiple uses of the lands in the public interest. The Commissioner may sell forest products and other resources on public lands and shall administer the State park system and a community recreation program as is in the best interests of the State and is consistent with the purposes and policies of this chapter.

(c)(1) The Commissioner, subject to the direction and approval of the Secretary, shall adopt and publish rules in the name of the Agency for the use of State forests, or park lands, including reasonable fees or charges for the use of the lands, roads, camping sites, buildings, and other facilities and for the harvesting of timber or removal of minerals or other resources from such lands, notwithstanding 32 V.S.A. § 603.

Title 10 : Conservation and Development

Chapter 083 : Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

Subchapter 001 : General Provisions

(Cite as: 10 V.S.A. § 2606b)

- **§ 2606b. License of forestlands for maple sugar production**

(a) The General Assembly finds and declares that:

(1) Maple sugaring is an important cultural tradition of Vermont life that should be maintained and encouraged.

(2) Maple sugaring is an important component of the agricultural and forest products economy in Vermont and is increasingly necessary for farmers that must diversify in order to continue to farm in Vermont.

(3) Maple sugaring is a sustainable use of forestland.

(4) State forestland should be managed and used for multiple uses, including maple sugar production.

(b) It is hereby adopted as State policy to permit limited use of designated State-owned land under the jurisdiction of the Department for maple sugar production.

(802) 828-2863

MEMORANDUM OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Primary Contact: Nate McKeen, Director of State Parks, Agency of Natural Resources, 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2, Montpelier VT 05620 Tel: 802-777-0814 E-mail: Nate.McKeen@vermont.gov

Secondary Contact: Emily White, Agency of Natural Resources, 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2, Montpelier VT 05620 Tel: 802-595-1044 E-Mail: Emily.White@vermont.gov.

URL: https://www.vtstateparks.com/news/vermont-state-parks-seeks-public-input-2026-rules-and-regulations

From: APA Coordinator, VSARA

RE: Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees on Department Lands.

Date 10/20/2026

We received Proposed Rule on 04/02/2026
Final Proposed Rule on 10/16/2026
Adopted Rule on
We have assigned the following rule number(s):
Proposed Rule Number: 26P009
Adopted Rule Number:
(Final Proposals are not assigned a new number; they retain the Proposed Rule Number.)

The following problems were taken care of by phone/should be taken care of immediately:

We cannot accept this filing until the following problems are taken care of:

The notice for this proposed rule appeared/will appear online on: 4/8/2026 and in the newspapers of record on 4/16/2026.

This rule takes effect on
Adoption Deadline: 12/02/2026

Please note: An updated link to the agency's site, and information for a new deadline for comment received by email 5/20/2026.

If you have any questions, please call me at 828-2863. OR
E-Mail me at: sos.statutoryfilings@vermont.gov

cc: Megan Cannella

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

VERMONT STATE ARCHIVES & RECORDS ADMINISTRATION (VSARA)

(802) 828-2863

TO:	Seven Days Legals (legals@sevendaysvt.com)	Tel: (802) 865-1020 x110.
	The Caledonian Record Julie Poutré (adv@caledonian-record.com)	Tel: 748-8121 FAX: 748-1613
	Times Argus / Rutland Herald Classified Ads (classified.ads@rutlandherald.com)	Tel: 802-747-6121 ext 2238 FAX: 802-776-5600
	The Valley News (advertising@vnews.com)	Tel: 603-298-8711 FAX: 603-298-0212
	The Addison Independent (legals@addisonindependent.com)	Tel: 388-4944 FAX: 388-3100 Attn: Display Advertising
	The Bennington Banner / Brattleboro Reformer Lylah Wright (lwright@reformer.com)	Tel: 254-2311 ext. 132 FAX: 447-2028 Attn: Lylah Wright
	The Chronicle (ads@bartonchronicle.com)	Tel: 525-3531 FAX: 525-3200
	Herald of Randolph (ads@ourherald.com)	Tel: 728-3232 FAX: 728-9275 Attn: Brandi Comette
	Newport Daily Express (jlafoe@newportvermontdailyexpress.com)	Tel: 334-6568 FAX: 334-6891 Attn: Jon Lafoe
	News & Citizen (mike@stowereporter.com)	Tel: 888-2212 FAX: 888-2173
	St. Albans Messenger Legals (legals@samessenger.com; cfoley@orourkemediagroup.com)	Tel: 524-9771 ext. 117 FAX: 527-1948 Attn: Legals
	The Islander (islander@vermontislander.com)	Tel: 802-372-5600 FAX: 802-372-3025
	Vermont Lawyer (hunter.press.vermont@gmail.com)	Attn: Will Hunter
	VT Digger (legals@vtdigger.org)	Attn: Legals

FROM: APA Coordinator, VSARA **Date of Fax:** October 19, 2026

RE: The "Proposed State Rules " ad copy to run on **April 16, 2026**

PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER MEMO: **2**

NOTE **8-pt font in body. 12-pt font max. for headings - single space body. Please include dashed lines where they appear in ad copy. Otherwise minimize the use of white space. Exceptions require written approval.**

If you have questions, or if the printing schedule of your paper is disrupted by holiday etc. please contact VSARA at 802-828-3700, or E-Mail sos.statutoryfilings@vermont.gov, Thanks.

PROPOSED STATE RULES

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By law, public notice of proposed rules must be given by publication in newspapers of record. The purpose of these notices is to give the public a chance to respond to the proposals. The public notices for administrative rules are now also available online at https://secure.vermont.gov/SOS/rules/ . The law requires an agency to hold a public hearing on a proposed rule, if requested to do so in writing by 25 persons or an association having at least 25 members.

To make special arrangements for individuals with disabilities or special needs please call or write the contact person listed below as soon as possible.

To obtain further information concerning any scheduled hearing(s), obtain copies of proposed rule(s) or submit comments regarding proposed rule(s), please call or write the contact person listed below. You may also submit comments in writing to the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, State House, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 (802-828-2231).

Rules and Regulations: Visitor Conduct and Service Rates and Fees on Department Lands.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 26P009

AGENCY: Agency of Natural Resources; Forests, Parks & Recreation.

CONCISE SUMMARY: Following is a list of proposed changes: Simplifies minimum reservation period determination for all site types to be based on individual characteristics, use, and occupancy patterns, set by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Removes system-wide remote site maximum stay of seven nights. Provides Commissioner authority to set prices based on site characteristics, use patterns, market rates, and reasonable cost recovery, and is consistent with recommendations in the 2023 Vermont State Parks Modernization Study. Standardizes advanced reservation period. Modernizes smoking policy, composting information, service animal language and non-discrimination language. Amends pet policy to include nuisance animal criteria. Removes procedure for assigning slips at Burton Island Marina. Updates license and special use permit (SUP) base prices. Clarifies license definition. Removes outdated statute reference. Administratively clarifies language within some existing rules.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Nate McKeen, Director of State Parks, Agency of Natural Resources, 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2, Montpelier VT 05620 Tel: 802-777-0814 E-mail: Nate.McKeen@vermont.gov URL: https://www.vtstateparks.com/.

FOR COPIES: Emily White, Agency of Natural Resources, 1 National Life Drive, Davis 2, Montpelier VT 05620 Tel: 802-595-1044 E-Mail: Emily.White@vermont.gov.
