



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Florissant Fossil Beds
National Monument

15807 Teller County
Road 1, Florissant, CO
80816

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Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument

For immediate release

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**Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument
Seeks Public Input on Potential Entrance Fee Increase**

Florissant, CO – Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument is proposing a change in their current entrance fees and requests input from the local community. As authorized by the National Park Service, the Monument would change their fee rates to align with the new National Park Service rate schedule in 2015. Florissant Fossil Beds is one of 131 National Park units that currently charges entrance fees. It is important that the decision to adjust fees be made locally after they have engaged the public and stakeholders about proposed changes and impacts. Based on subsequent feedback, Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument will then develop an implementation strategy designed specifically to meet the needs and expectations of the community. The Park Service is allowing new fee implementations to begin in 2015; however, parks may choose to phase in rates over several years. Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument is proposing a phased rate increase over a two year period.

Current and proposed fee rates are as follows:

| Entrance Fees Increase Per Person (7 day pass) | 2014 Per Person Current Fee | 2015 Per Person Proposed Fee | 2017 Per Person Proposed Fee |
|---|--|---|---|
| | \$3 | \$5 | \$7 |
| Annual Pass (good for cardholder and 3 additional adults for entrance to Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument) | 2014 Current Fee | 2015 Proposed Fee | 2017 Proposed Fee |
| | \$15 | \$20 | \$30 |

***Proposed per person park pass would increase to \$5 in 2015; \$7 by 2017.**

***Annual park pass would increase to \$20 in 2015; \$30 by 2017.**

Entrance fees are not charged to persons under 16 years of age or to holders of the America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass, Annual (for frequent park visitors), Senior (age 62 or older), Active Duty Military (free annually), Access (permanently disabled), and Volunteer passes. These passes are available at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument and their rates are not proposed to change.

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) is the legislation under which Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument currently collects entrance fees. These fees are important in funding much needed visitor improvements and upkeep. Since the beginning of FLREA and its predecessor program,

Fee Demo, Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument has spent over \$565,000 in repairs, renovations, and improvements and resource restoration projects. Daily entrance fees at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument have not increased since 2001. Annual pass fees have not increased since 2003. There continues to be a growing need for funds to improve facilities, trails, infrastructure, and visitor services in the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument.

The following are projects funded and/or planned for the future using fee dollars:

Projects funded: Trail maintenance and improvements along the Hornbek Wildlife Loop, Shooting Star, Petrified Forest, and Ponderosa Loop Trails. Orientation film in the visitor center theater. Digitized museum collection to provide accessibility of park resources. Purchase of supplies to support the park's Junior Ranger Program (activity booklets, badges, patches for 5-12 year olds - 3,500 participants annually). Foundation rehabilitation of the Hornbek Homestead. Installation of interpretive wayside signs along the Ponderosa and Petrified Forest Trails and Hornbek Homestead parking area.

The new revenue from the fee increases will be used for following projects: Hiring additional staff to provide curriculum-based education to visiting school groups K-12. Stargazing for the visiting public. Community outreach programming for underserved youth and active/retired military and their families. Digital media enhancement of one indoor fossil exhibit and a mobile app for twenty-eight outdoor interpretive waysides. Digitize the park's museum collection. Replenish Junior Ranger Program supplies (activity booklets, badges, patches). Remodel the picnic area near the visitor center to meet accessibility standards. Continued trail maintenance on 14-miles of trails.

“We are committed to keeping Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument affordable, and we also want to provide visitors with the best possible experience. We do need community input to help us implement this important fee change,” said Superintendent Michelle Wheatley. “While basic operations of the park are funded by direct appropriations from Congress, the fee program is intended to provide for various enhancements to visitor services and facilities. We feel that our proposed fee changes are appropriate, yet necessary, as they will supply a critical source of funding for Florissant Fossil Beds as we move forward into the future. Plus, 100 percent of the entrance fees collected stay right here in Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument to benefit visitors.”

We want to hear from you! We value your input about the proposed entrance fee schedule and we encourage comments. The feedback the park receives will help determine how and when a fee increase will be implemented. Please contact us. You can email comments to **flfo_information@nps.gov**. Post comments on Facebook @FlorissantNPS. Mail your comments to Superintendent, Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, 15807 Teller County Road 1, Florissant, CO 80816. Or, stop by the park's visitor center between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm to fill out a visitor comment form.

Comments will be accepted through January 8, 2015.

Please remember that if you plan to stop by the Visitor Center, it will be closed on December 25 and again on January 1.

For more information, please visit the park's website at <http://www.nps.gov/flfo/parknews/newsreleases.htm>