

Our NATIONAL PARKS

Fees Help Keep Parks Safe, Clean And Beautiful

(NAPSA)—Many of America's national parks may be growing greener and greater thanks to a pilot fee program.

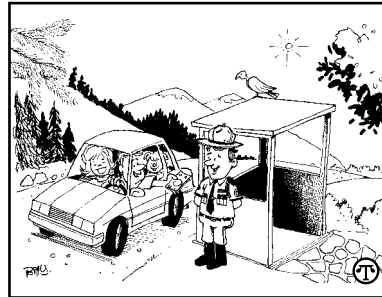
Under a Congressionally-authorized demonstration program recently extended through 2002, federal land-management agencies are authorized to increase and retain entrance and user fees.

"Revenues derived from this pilot program provided needed funds to begin fixing the badly deteriorated infrastructure of our aging park system," said National Park Service Acting Director Denis Galvin, citing an estimated \$4.9 billion backlog in repair and maintenance projects. "These revenues also fund visitor programs and resource protection efforts."

Among the projects these fees support:

- Forty-two separate trail improvement projects encompassing 681 miles of trail. Trail improvement projects protect resources, provide access and improved safety for visitors.
- Wastewater and drinking water treatment plant improvements at Yosemite National Park.
- Accessibility improvements at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site, Glacier National Park, Cabrillo National Monument, Appomattox Courthouse National Historical Park and Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Samples of projects include accessible walkways, trails, elevators, building modifications and curb cuts.

In the past, fees were deposited into the U.S. Treasury and distributed by Congress back to the National Park Service through the appropriation process. In contrast, the fee demonstration program lets participating park sites keep up to 80 percent of the new fee revenues on site with the remain-



Thanks to a new fee system, many of our national parks may be more fun and more effective.

ing 20 percent going to other priority needs in the park service.

"With the increase, a family of four can still enjoy a week's visit to Yosemite, Yellowstone or Glacier national parks for less than it costs to see a first run movie."

In addition, the National Park Service introduced the National Parks Pass in April of 2000. The National Parks Pass is an annual entrance pass to all national parks that charge entrance fees. It costs \$50 and admits the pass-owner and any accompanying passengers in a private vehicle. When entry is not by private vehicle, pass-owners, their spouses, children and parents can gain entrance with the National Parks Pass. The pass is valid for one year from date of purchase.

Galvin noted: "We are looking forward to the positive results of the program as these fees will make a direct and beneficial impact on our nation's parks."

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. Says Galvin, "Experience Your America!"

To learn more about these changes and what they may mean to you, visit the National Park Service Web site at www.nps.gov.