

Explore Your America

Visiting National Parks And Public Lands

(NAPSA)—Visiting America's national parks and other federal recreation sites has just gotten more convenient, thanks to an annual pass that can be purchased in advance of your trip via the Internet or simply by calling a toll-free telephone number.

The America the Beautiful—the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Annual Pass is a yearly entry pass to nearly 2,000 federal recreation sites including national forests, wildlife refuges, national parks and recreation areas. The pass can be purchased as a birthday or holiday gift and is great for those who enjoy visiting the nation's public lands.

Purchasing a pass before you take off on vacation is especially advantageous at many U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management sites, which require you to display your valid entry pass in designated areas. In some cases, the closest place to purchase the pass and accompanying hang-tag may be miles from the area you are interested in exploring. Having your pass ahead of time enables you to relax, take in the views and maximize your experience in the great outdoors.

The pass admits pass holders and passengers in a noncommercial vehicle at sites that charge a vehicle entrance or standard amenity fee. At areas that charge a per-person fee, it allows the pass holder and up to three more adults to enter the site together. Children under 16 are admitted free of charge.

Funds generated by pass sales are used to improve visitor facilities and services, such as improv-



A Federal Recreational Lands Annual Pass gives families access to nearly 2,000 recreation sites.

ing trails and campgrounds, replacing aging water and sewer systems, providing new exhibits and interpretive signs and providing accessibility to visitors with disabilities. Funds allocated by Congress to federal lands only cover part of the work that needs to be done to preserve the nation's inheritance.

The Annual Pass can be purchased for \$80 online at <http://store.usgs.gov/pass>. For additional information, you can e-mail fedrecpass@usgs.gov or call (888) ASK-USGS, ext 1. You may also purchase a pass in person at participating federal recreation sites and offices at National Park Service, Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation sites.

If you are a U.S. citizen who is 62 or older or a U.S. citizen who receives disability benefits, you may be eligible for the Senior (\$10) lifetime pass or Access (no charge) lifetime pass. These passes are only available by visiting recreation sites in person. For more information about these passes, visit www.recreation.gov.