



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Michael Foote

Date comment received:

December 9, 2025 06:30 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

footemf@yahoo.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

To whom it may concern.

I am writing this as a concerned Disabled Veteran. I am understanding you are all looking at reducing the number of times a disabled Veteran will be allowed to use our passes. I am not for this idea. Most states outside of Oregon DO NOT allow outside veterans to use a disabled pass inside there states or even allow us the opportunity to receive one. So take that away and leave ours alone. I suffer from PTSD along with a vast majority of other veterans. We like to get out to the State parks and relax and rest our minds. If anything I would like to see the veterans allowed to use the Yurts, either with a limited use or a discount t. This would help us immensely. Thank you for reading this.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Barb Ball

Date comment received:

December 9, 2025 06:31 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

nikitasadie@yahoo.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}**Public comment:**

To whom it may concern,

I am utterly devastated to hear of the possible gouging increases being proposed to Oregon's campers. Since when should camping be only for the elite in Oregon? I am a disabled camper. I have been struggling to camp in a regular spot and have been getting cabins and yurts whenever possible because camping is my sanctuary. It's tough enough to pay the already average \$100 a night fee for a yurt or cabin much less \$190 a night! How is that equitable to the average Oregonian much less those living on a fixed income? Are they not supposed to have a right to enjoy our state parks?

I have friends that go camping with me and we try to go every month to fellowship and be in nature. Many of my friends who camp with me are retirees living on a fixed income. And some have disabilities with low income. These price increases will be devastating. The fee structure increases leave low income families, fixed income - disabled individuals and retirees at home. How could such inequitable increases be suggested?

We intentionally stay in Oregon more because the fees have been more reasonable. And the cancellation fees in Washington make zero sense - penalizing you for giving ample notice just because you booked when the booking window opened. Basically punishing those who plan ahead.

Camping is a need for many. A refuge from our busy world, a time to recharge in nature and have fellowship with family and friends. It shouldn't have to cost so much that the average Oregonian can't even go.

Cancellation fees - Yes, Oregon has had an extremely generous cancellation policy and I can understand making changes there. But I hope Oregon is not copying the way Washington does it. It should solely be based on how far in advance you cancel NOT how long you have had the reservation. We avoid Washington camping because their cancellation structure almost penalizes campers who book the day the booking window opens but even when giving a two week notice, they lose most of their money. In many parks, 1 week is plenty of time to fill an empty spot, especially an RV spot.

Charge an extra fee to out of state campers. Washington has done this for years. \$5 extra on top of the admin fee.

If you must go through with these increases, make Special Access Passes for Low to Middle class income individuals and families, and individuals with disabilities. Not a free pass to camp but where they are not left behind, forgotten. And make the income lines reasonable and not so low they will not benefit anyone.

Day Passes - where in Oregon would you possibly charge \$25 a day for day parking where people would actually enter? You are talking an almost 200% increase of what it was just a year ago. I totally get increasing it to \$10, but some of these parks are stop and view points and people are at these parks for less than an hour. You will have people not going full stop to these parks if you raise the fees astronomically.

I am looking forward to attending the zoom meeting to hear more on this proposal and hoping you have heard from enough people to get a clearer picture of what and what not to do.

Best regards
Barb Ball



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

kelly wynant

Date comment received:

December 9, 2025 06:32 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

kellywynant@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Please do not restrict the Veterans benefit of 10 days per month.

The biggest problem, even by your recognition, is cancelations. People need to be responsible and too many are taking advantage of our lax cancelation policies. You can fix 2 problems with one action.

I am retired and a disabled veteran of the Air Force. With limited income this benefit is what allows me to get out and enjoy the outdoors of our state

Thank you and please keep our parks open to disabled veterans.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Jon Davenport

Date comment received:

December 9, 2025 06:33 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

jondavenport1@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Director, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

My name is Jon Davenport, a long-time Oregon resident and holder of an Oregon State Parks Disabled Resident Pass (I anticipate dividing time between Oregon and Arizona in the future). I relate to the challenges raised in the December 6 Oregonian article regarding campground reservation no-shows and late cancellations. Public land management is complex, and maintaining fair access while minimizing unused inventory is a legitimate concern.

However, despite my professional background, which includes graduate degrees in both Business and Data Analytics, the reporting lacks sufficient statistical context to support conclusions that could lead to reductions in disabled veteran camping benefits. The cited 30 percent cancellation or no-show rate is presented without demographic disaggregation or causal analysis. While aggregate campground usage data may inform general budget reporting, it does not provide evidence linking cancellations to disabled veterans or any other distinct user group. Without such attribution, there is insufficient evidence to justify targeting veterans for benefit reductions based on system-wide performance issues.

Sound public policy depends on accurate attribution. General reservation inefficiencies cannot be reasonably assigned to veteran pass holders without:

- Comparative analysis across reservation categories (veteran vs. standard, resident vs. non-resident);
- Examination of contributing factors, including weather conditions, emergency obligations, cancellation policies, and reservation system limitations; and
- Evaluation of usage patterns unique to disabled populations, whose service-connected

mobility or medical challenges can make travel plans more uncertain despite sincere intent to attend.

Disabled veterans are not casual recreational users. These benefits represent a long-standing public commitment recognizing service-connected sacrifice. Access to outdoor recreation supports physical rehabilitation, mental health stabilization, and family reintegration—outcomes well documented in veteran recreation and public health research. Reducing these benefits based on aggregate statistics lacking demographic attribution risks disproportionately impacting a veteran community that has not been shown to contribute meaningfully to the identified challenges.

I am very thankful for Oregon Parks' veteran benefit, which has enabled me to become more familiar with Oregon's public lands over the past two years than during the previous four decades of residency. I have also routinely used tools such as same-day reservations and waitlists. Friends and colleagues—retired Oregon educators, Oregon law enforcement officers, and other Oregon public servants—have wondered why similar benefits are not available to them. While I would welcome expanding outdoor access programs for additional public service groups, I sincerely appreciate Oregon's recognition of the unique physical and psychological strains carried by disabled military veterans.

I experienced one unintentional no-show this year due to a personal scheduling mistake. An automated reminder would have prevented the error. The missed day was counted against my monthly benefit allotment, limiting my ability to make a later stay. Oregon Parks staff were professional and helpful at both locations, and I continue to use the program responsibly.

If reservation inefficiencies persist, remedies should focus on system-level improvements rather than benefit reductions:

- Automated reservation confirmations and reminders for all users.
- Tiered or incentivized early cancellation policies are applied system-wide.
- Shortened advance booking windows for benefit-based reservations in high-demand parks while retaining extended reservation access at standard rates—generating revenue and reducing advance blocking.
- If data shows veteran cancellations are a meaningful contributor to unused reservations, consider non-refundable or non-changeable veteran reservations, with all booked nights counting toward benefit limits—targeting misuse rather than restricting the entire eligible population.
- Public transparency of reservation and cancellation metrics before proposing policy changes that affect defined user groups.

Importantly, penalizing disabled veterans to resolve system-wide administrative challenges is neither equitable nor evidence-based. Effective policy responses must correlate directly with verified causes—not assumptions drawn from incomplete data.

I respectfully urge Oregon Parks leadership and the Parks and Recreation Commission to refrain from implementing reductions to disabled veteran benefits until independent, transparent data analysis demonstrates a causal and proportionate link between veteran reservations and operational or budgetary concerns. Any review of these benefits should be guided by fairness,

measurable impacts, and ongoing respect for the service these programs acknowledge.

Oregon has long demonstrated leadership in responsible outdoor stewardship. Continuing that tradition means ensuring that future policies remain grounded in clear evidence rather than generalized narratives—and protecting vulnerable populations from unintended administrative consequences.

Respectfully,

Jon Davenport
Oregon State Parks Disabled Resident Pass Holder #51306
LtCol USMC (Ret)



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

William Kemper

Date comment received:

December 9, 2025 06:42 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

wmvlkemper@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I agree with the rule about no refunds for no shows with no cancelations.

As a retired Disabled Vietnam Veteran, I do oppose the new rule of limiting the number of days camping per year to 10 days, for those of us that are discounted. For most retired Veterans on a fixed income, that camp, this is the only way we can afford to camp, or go anywhere! Limiting us to 10 days a year disables us even further!



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Kimberly Linden

Date comment received:

December 9, 2025 06:48 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

klindenmsrc@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

OPRD:

I received this below announcement (*italics*) that your department has proposed to reduce the earned Veterans benefits to 10 nights/year from 120 nights/year.

As a licensed clinician specializing in serving Veterans and a multi-generation Veterans family member, I would request you return to the drawing board. The evidence is in: spending time in nature benefits Veterans with disability across disability, diagnosis and condition. Earned benefits do not get cut.

These proposed cuts are unacceptable and I am frankly outraged to even read of this and asked to comment.

Please be advised this ill-conceived proposal will end up in court.

Save money ahead of time and find somewhere else to cut funding.

I think your department should be writing a formal apology to Veterans and Veterans Families. Please confirm you have received my correspondence.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Linden

Received this on 12/7/2025:

The OPRD is proposing massive cuts to the SAP program that will severely impact disabled veterans who rely on this benefit for recreation and respite. We need every veteran and ally to make their voice heard before the Jan. 15 deadline! Here is the Proposed Cut: This change is a huge blow to disabled veterans who have earned these benefits. A cut from 120 nights per year to just 10 is unacceptable. Current Benefit: 10 FREE camping nights per month + Free Day-Use Passes, available to disabled veterans from ANY state. Proposed Change: 10 FREE camping nights per year (a cut of 110 nights!) + NO Free Day-Use Passes, limited to Oregon veterans ONLY. The OPRD is obligated to consider all public comments before the Parks Commission votes in February. 1. Write an Email (MOST IMPORTANT STEP): Tell OPRD how this cut would personally impact you and why these benefits are critical for the veteran community's well-being. Be polite, be firm, and use your personal story! Email: OPRD.Publiccomment@opr.d.oregon.gov Deadline: 5 p.m. on January 15, 2026 2. Attend the Virtual Public Hearing: You can testify directly on the proposed rule changes. Check OPRD's website for the exact link and time. Date: December 15, 2025



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Cecil Owens

Date comment received:

December 9, 2025 07:35 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

owenscj37@msn.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I am writing to oppose the proposed change that would limit the overnight rental fee waiver for Oregon's disabled veterans to no more than ten nights per calendar year.

Negative Impact on Oregon Disabled Veterans

- Oregon is home to about **53,000–67,000 disabled veterans**,
,
tens of
thousands of federally recognized disabled veterans, who rely on the Special Access Pass to enjoy the outdoors affordably.
- Many veterans live on fixed
incomes and face ongoing medical challenges. Reducing the waiver to only ten nights per year places an undue burden on those who have already sacrificed for our state and nation.
- Access to nature and recreation

is not a luxury for disabled veterans — it is a vital source of healing, community, and mental health support. Restricting their ability to camp in Oregon State Parks undermines these benefits.

Negative Impact on Oregon State Parks Revenue

- By reducing the waiver, Oregon risks driving disabled veterans away from state parks and toward **federal parks**, where broader benefits remain available.
- This shift will not only harm veterans but also reduce Oregon State Parks' overall income. Veterans who currently use state parks often bring family members and friends, who pay fees for additional reservations, day-use parking, and other amenities.
- Limiting veterans' access will reduce this secondary revenue stream, weakening the financial stability of Oregon State Parks rather than strengthening it. Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) budget reports and public filings do **not publish detailed statistics on veteran Special Access Pass usage**. The official records confirm the existence of the program and its fiscal impact but stop short of breaking down how many veterans use the pass, how many nights they camp, or how much revenue is forgone.

Request for Transparency of Reservation Fees

- Veterans currently pay a **\$8 non-refundable reservation transaction fee**

when booking campsites,
even if their camping costs are waived.

- The proposed rule changes do not clearly state whether this fee will remain at \$8 or be adjusted.
- I respectfully request that OPRD be **transparent and explicit** about the actual reservation fee veterans will pay under the new rules, so veterans can plan accordingly and understand the true cost of access.

Conclusion

The proposed reduction of the overnight rental fee waiver is inequitable and counterproductive. It penalizes Oregon's disabled veterans while simultaneously discouraging park use and reducing revenue. I urge the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to maintain the current waiver structure and clearly communicate whether the veterans' reservation fee will remain at \$8.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Randy Brusven

Date comment received:

December 9, 2025 09:58 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

rbrusven@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:**To the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department:**

I oppose the proposal to limit the overnight rental fee waiver for Oregon's 53,000–67,000 disabled veterans to ten nights per calendar year. This change would unfairly restrict access for veterans who rely on Oregon's parks for affordable recreation, healing, and community. Many disabled veterans live on fixed incomes, and reducing their ability to camp will diminish their quality of life.

This proposal will also hurt Oregon State Parks financially. The official records confirm the existence of the program and its fiscal impact but stop short of breaking down how many veterans use the pass, how many nights they camp, or how much revenue

is forgone.

Veterans often bring family and friends who pay for additional reservations, day-use parking, and other amenities. If disabled veterans are forced to turn to federal parks, Oregon will lose not only their presence but also this secondary revenue stream.

Additionally, I request transparency regarding the reservation fee.

Veterans currently pay a \$10 non-refundable reservation transaction fee even when camping costs are waived. The proposal does not clearly state whether this fee will remain at \$10. Veterans deserve clarity on the actual costs they will face under the new rules.

In summary, reducing the waiver to ten nights will harm Oregon's disabled veterans and reduce park income. I urge OPRD to maintain the current waiver structure and clearly communicate whether the veterans' reservation fee will remain at \$10



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Paul K. Lonquist

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 12:50 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

paul@lonquist.net

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

As written, the changes are offensive to Oregon Veterans, but other suggested changes also need work.

#1. Disabled Veterans...a great benefit that can and does recognize the Oregon Disabled Veteran. **This should remain unchanged.** Remove the benefit for Disabled Veterans from other states or let them have a couple of weekdays at a one time 50% discount in Oregon's recognition of their sacrifice. As you have stated, not all veterans utilize this discount so budget impact seems to be vastly overstated. Keep free day use (again only for OR disabled veterans), this is a VERY small budget item and has little impact as day use always seems to be available. Why is it that Veterans benefits are ALWAYS targeted by government oversight. It is already limited to Disabled Veterans (not all, only those with higher disability ratings) with zero benefit to veterans who have been lucky enough to avoid becoming disabled due to their service to Oregon and the U.S. Shame on the Parks Commission for even proposing these obnoxious changes.

#2. Foster parent benefits...do I need to remind you that the state of Oregon pays these parents to support these children? Reduce or eliminate these benefits. Thank God for the foster parents, but another cost to Oregonians is not good fiscal management nor is it necessary. Delete these benefits or reduce tremendously.

#3. Change the cancellation policy as this is a major budget impact. Suggested...if cancellation is within one month of scheduled date, 50% refund. If within two weeks, 25% refund. And...if within a week...zero refund. Make sure those terms are CLEARLY laid out on the reservation website. Make sure that the site is automatically made available to last minute reservations on the State Park's website or on-site availability at the park kiosk at the time of the cancellation. Our neighboring state (California) has no problem reselling campsites when cancellations occur. Perhaps with some signage at the park entrance..similar to parking

garages showing the new availability of campsites.

#4. Dynamic pricing. I understand the logic of this proposal, but keep the differential to within about 10% of the off-season pricing. There is no sense ripping off the working population that have children and can only utilize our parks during peak seasons. Perhaps looking at dynamic discounts from current pricing for off-season camping or a low usage campground. This looks more generous of the state vs. punitive. You are suggesting raising prices to levels even higher than commercially available campsites.

#5. Lastly, and clearly not mentioned...take a good and hard look at current expenses and hire a trained lean expert to see if you have any waste within current budget expenditures. Is there a better way to do things that would reduce costs? A governmental organization should always look at costs and methods FIRST, as do companies that do not rely on taxes for their income but must generate their entire budget from their products. If you cannot generate your entire budget from our vast system of state parks, there is something wrong.

Thank you for this opportunity to voice my opinion as a disabled vet and citizen of Oregon.

Paul K. Lonnquist
Grants Pass, OR



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Bob Greenburg

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 12:53 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

bgreen3@protonmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I fully support. The proposed changes in campground rules or oregon state campgrounds. It is time for the rules to enter the 21st Century, and allow for common sense costs for a person using these beautiful campgrounds.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Kayla Dean

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 12:53 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

kaylasd93@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Good Afternoon,

Many veterans rely on access to outdoor spaces as part of their overall well-being. State parks can provide opportunities for physical activity, stress reduction, and social connection, which are often meaningful for individuals transitioning from military service back into civilian life. Maintaining regular access to these environments may contribute to improved mental and physical health outcomes.

There are also potential financial considerations. For veterans living on fixed or limited incomes, reduced-cost or complimentary access to state parks can make recreational activities more feasible. Removing these privileges could create a new cost barrier for some individuals who currently use these spaces for recreation, family activities, or therapeutic purposes.

Additionally, veteran-specific benefits are sometimes viewed as a way of recognizing the unique commitments and sacrifices associated with military

service. Adjusting or removing such benefits may have implications for how appreciation is perceived, even if the change is driven by administrative or budgetary factors.

Very Respectfully,

Kayla Dean

United States Navy Veteran



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Diana Grimm

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 12:54 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

dgrimmk9@hotmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

We would really like to see change in the no-show & cancelled reservations. EVERY time we camp (at the coast) there are empty sites. Maybe have them be 1st come after a certain time7 pm? Would be nice to have more sites built, but would probably take some sort of donation situation? Never had these issues prior to "reserveamerica".....maybe they are the problem.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Mike Desmond

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 05:47 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

michaeldesmond@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

While I understand the need to increase park revenue, slashing the free camping for disabled veterans by over 90% seems like gross overkill. Instead of re-injuring disabled veterans with a cut of that magnitude, consider simply reducing

the number of facility deposits and overnight rental fees from the current 10 per month to 5 per month. That's a palatable 50% reduction that still permits disabled veterans to enjoy camping in the parks each month without incurring a sometimes insurmountable cost.

The

waived Day-use parking permit fee should remain unchanged for disabled veterans. Sometimes they can't get to a park but one day a month.

I

concur changing the eligibility for an Oregon Special Access Pass to Oregon residents only. Frankly, it should have been that way since the SAP inception.

Lastly, don't underestimate the generosity of citizens from our great state. You could simply ask those making camping reservations if they would like to contribute to a dedicated State Park Maintenance Fund. Personally, I would donate each and every time, especially if you point out that no tax dollars are spent on State Parks.

Thank you!



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Kathryn Unruh

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 04:26 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

unruh.lk@juno.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Please do not implement the change to the cancellation policy, with refunds based on how long the reservation is held and how close to the reservation date the cancellation is made. It is already too hard to get reservations at popular parks. In our experience, when a reservation is cancelled, the site is immediately re-booked by another person, so the park system is not missing out on revenue. It seems greedy for the park system to also want to make a profit by keeping most of my reservation fee when I have to cancel my reservation. This is the same system that the state of Washington uses, and we avoid camping in their state parks because of the exorbitant cost if we have to cancel. If Oregon decides to change to this cancellation policy too, we will likely not use the state parks as much because they will become unaffordable. As an alternative solution for the state parks revenue shortfall, we would prefer to see out of state residents have to pay even more than the recent fee increase for camping reservations since they are not paying into the system as taxpayers. Also, instead of raising user fees for residents, please consider going back to the legislature to ask for more support for the state parks.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Ron Wright

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 05:51 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

cacharly@aol.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Veterans. Let alone those of us who are DISABLED VETERANS. Deserve to have the freedom for camping and to commune with nature. It is because of your FREEDOM that we have become DISABLED

Do you really think it is too much to ask

to allow us to continue to use those parks and Nature that we have so rigorously defended

Especially our PTSD attacks that Mother Nature is one of the best sources of calm there is on the planet

Please do not remove us from what we now currently access

Ron Wright
USN. Disabled



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Cory Janssen

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 05:52 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

coryrjanssen@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

To whom it may concern,

I understand the need for money to keep our parks maintained and for further improvement but to limit the days further that our disabled veterans, all of them, not just Oregon vets can use our camp sites for free?! That's disgusting, they served our country, to protect our freedoms, to enjoy such amenities and you want to make them pay more? You should be ashamed to even consider it. Then there's the foster families, the kids in foster homes don't have it bad enough? I'm glad to know that there are foster parents that still take their foster children camping and you want to limit their days and charge the more too? Makes me sad to be an Oregonian thinking this is how we treat people already in so much need, get your money elsewhere or figure out what you're doing wrong with the current taxes we pay.

Oregon Citizen



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Corrie O'Brien

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 05:53 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

corrieob@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I have noticed some improvement with your reservation system when people don't show. That is helping.

As a native Oregonian, I've camped at State parks all over the state, especially the coast. I think the answer is obvious- charge non-resident campers more for coastal campgrounds. Oregon has the best campgrounds and beach access on the west coast. They will come.

Don't make it unaffordable for Oregonians. As a kid, camping was the only vacation we could afford. Don't take that opportunity away from lower income Oregonians.

Personally, I can afford your rates, but I think of those kids and families who will be priced out.

Washington, Idaho, California people- I'm sorry. We need to focus on our own.

Thank you.

Corrie O'Brien

Current. Lebanon, Oregon

Originally, Sublimity, Oregon



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

James Weathersbee

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 05:54 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

jymbee3521@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

reetings,

I do not like the idea of reducing the amount days permitted to veterans and foster families. That is an enormous cut, changing from 10 or 14 days a month down to 10 a year? And eliminating the free day use for us? That's just outright insulting. I use the free day use so many times throughout the year, and the free camping several times a year. Another issue is the flexible pricing. This idea is absurd. It will price out the option of camping for a lot of people. This isn't going to lead to a notable increase in revenue. This will lead to an increase in open and unused sites and facilities.

Thank you for your time,

James Weathersbee



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 05:59 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

vhvhqthebunker@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Attached is a comment letter from our organization regarding the changes to the Special Access Pass. We have received many calls from veterans concerned about the proposed changes. Thank you.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to respectfully but firmly oppose the proposed cuts to Oregon's Special Access Pass program. These cuts—particularly those that would reduce or restrict benefits for disabled veterans—are deeply troubling.

The Special Access Pass was established in large part to honor and show respect for those who served our nation and sacrificed greatly in doing so. For disabled veterans especially, the pass represents more than a financial benefit; it is recognition of service, a gesture of gratitude, and an acknowledgment of the challenges many continue to face long after their time in uniform.

Access to Oregon's parks and outdoor spaces has profound therapeutic value for veterans. Time spent outdoors has been shown to reduce symptoms of PTSD, alleviate stress, and support overall mental and physical health. For many veterans, these benefits are not simply recreational.

Reducing access to these beautiful spaces will ultimately harm the disabled veteran community.

While I understand the concerns surrounding an anticipated budget shortfall, the burden of addressing those financial challenges should not fall on our state's disabled veterans. They

have
already given immeasurably in service to Oregon and to the country. Oregon's outdoor spaces belong to all of us, but for veterans living with service-related disabilities, they serve as a vital part of long-term recovery and quality of life.

I urge you to reconsider the proposed cuts and to seek alternative solutions that preserve the Special Access Pass in its current form. Protecting this program affirms our state's commitment to honoring veterans not only with words, but with meaningful action.

Thank you for your time and for your continued stewardship of Oregon's parks. I hope you will stand with our veteran community by safeguarding this important benefit.

Sincerely,

Mike McMillen, Secretary/Treasurer, Disabled Veteran
Wayne Stott, Board Member, Disabled Veteran
Pat Mastenbrook, Operations Manager



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Scott Reynolds

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 10:10 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

reynolds9835@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

As a native Oregonian and current resident that has long enjoyed the state park system for camping, I'm very interested in the new rules under consideration.

I fully support changing the reservation refund schedule. Full refunds should only be offered for cancelations 2 weeks prior to the event. 50% refunds a week ahead of time and no refunds after that. I would be open to an even stricter program if this did not significantly improve the problem after 2 years.

I also support scaling back the special access program, removing free access to out of state veterans and reducing free days offered to Oregon veterans. Foster families should still get free access, but I would drop the free access given to adoptive Foster families.

I share concerns that a dynamic pricing model could price out lower income residents from one of the still somewhat affordable vacation options available. Perhaps consider dynamic pricing with a discount for a limited amount of nights to Oregon Health Plan members? Nothing promotes health and wellbeing more than time spent outdoors.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Scott Reynolds



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Maggie

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 10:18 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

mlstep453@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I did not realize that the last minute cancellations are causing such a problem. I confess I have cancelled close to the reservation date myself. But since this is an issue, I agree that refund windows should be tightened. I am in favor of robustly funding OPRD and whatever it takes to do so, and is reasonable as far as fee increases, I will support. I especially agree that out of state campers and visitors should share more of the burden than us (Oregon residents), as we are providing a service to them while they are visiting. Thanks to OPRD workers for all dedication and great service to us all! Our parks are great and I totally support them!



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

sarah Wallace

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 10:19 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

sarahmwarner83@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Good morning,

I am reaching out to comment on the proposal to increase fees for camping at state parks and to propose day usage fees as high as \$25 per car. To be completely blunt, in this current economic climate where costs are rising across the board, I feel that it would be a major misstep to increase fees or propose high rates for day use. People are already struggling and raising rates would make using our state parks inaccessible to many people.

I would like to propose an alternate revenue source that is currently utilized by Washington State Parks, pay per use showers. Showers are coin operated and visitors buy tokens from machines in the bathrooms. This is a small but profitable way to raise funds.

Thanks,
Sarah Wallace



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Bruce Webb

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 10:40 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

bruce@brucewebb.net

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:**To the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department:**

I oppose the proposal to limit the overnight rental fee waiver for Oregon's 53,000–67,000 disabled veterans to ten nights per calendar year. This change would unfairly restrict access for veterans who rely on Oregon's parks for affordable recreation, healing, and community. Many disabled veterans live on fixed incomes, and reducing their ability to camp will diminish their quality of life.

This proposal will also hurt Oregon State Parks financially. The official records confirm the existence of the program and its fiscal impact but stop short of breaking down how many veterans use the pass, how many nights they camp, or how much revenue is forgone. Veterans often bring family and friends who pay for additional reservations, day-use parking, and other amenities. If disabled veterans are forced to turn to federal parks, Oregon will lose not only their presence but also this secondary revenue stream.

Additionally, I request transparency regarding the reservation fee. Veterans currently pay an \$8 non-refundable reservation transaction fee even when camping costs are waived. The proposal does not clearly state whether this fee will remain at \$8. Veterans deserve clarity on the actual costs they will face under the new rules.

In summary, reducing the waiver to ten nights will harm Oregon's disabled veterans and reduce park income. I urge OPRD to maintain the current waiver structure and clearly communicate whether the veterans' reservation fee will remain at \$8.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Heather Chiaffino

Date comment received:

December 10, 2025 10:49 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

heather.porter.heather@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed reductions to the Special Access Pass for veterans. Cutting the current allowance of 10 free camping nights per month down to only 10 per year would significantly harm the mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing of the veterans who rely on regular access to Oregon's parks.

For many disabled veterans and those living with PTSD or other service-related injuries, time outdoors is not a luxury—it is an essential form of therapy. Camping provides stress relief, improves mental health, supports physical activity, and helps veterans reconnect with family and community. Reducing access will disproportionately affect veterans with lower incomes or disabilities who already face barriers to recreation and healing.

Veterans and their families use Oregon's parks responsibly, and the existing program offers tremendous therapeutic value at very little cost to the state. I respectfully ask the Commission to maintain the current camping benefits and keep the Special Access Pass unchanged. These benefits are not just recreation—they are a lifeline for many who served.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Ryan Lehnert

Date comment received:

December 11, 2025 12:05 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

ryan.lehnert@yahoo.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:**To the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department:**

I oppose the proposal to limit the overnight rental fee waiver for Oregon's 53,000–67,000 disabled veterans to ten nights per calendar year. This change would unfairly restrict access for veterans who rely on Oregon's parks for affordable recreation, healing, and community. Many disabled veterans live on fixed incomes, and reducing their ability to camp will diminish their quality of life.

This proposal will also hurt Oregon State Parks financially. The official records confirm the existence of the program and its fiscal impact but stop short of breaking down how many veterans use the pass, how many nights they camp, or how much revenue

is forgone.

Veterans often bring family and friends who pay for additional reservations, day-use parking, and other amenities. If disabled veterans are forced to turn to federal parks, Oregon will lose not only their presence but also this secondary revenue stream.

Additionally, I request transparency regarding the reservation fee.

Veterans currently pay an \$8 non-refundable reservation transaction fee even when camping costs are waived. The proposal does not clearly state whether this fee will remain at \$8. Veterans deserve clarity on the actual costs they will face under the new rules.

In summary, reducing the waiver to ten nights will harm Oregon's disabled veterans and reduce park income. I urge OPRD to maintain the current waiver structure and clearly communicate whether the veterans' reservation fee will remain at \$8.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Stacey Tonick

Date comment received:

December 11, 2025 02:22 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

staceytonick@yahoo.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I strongly disagree with limiting the disabled veterans pass to just 10 days per year, this cut is TOO EXTREME. I am married to a disabled veteran who served in the Marines and has PTSD. I cannot tell you how beneficial the free camping days are to his mental health and I don't know what we would do if this were cut so extremely. Please do not penalize our beloved veterans over this issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Stacey Tonick



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

James Tonick

Date comment received:

December 11, 2025 02:41 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

jtonick76@yahoo.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I am an Oregon Disabled United States Marine Corp veteran and I use the camping pass to help me get out in nature to relieve my PTSD symptoms. I helps me get out the the negative spaces and be present. It will be a detrement to the many Oregon Veterans that use this benefit.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Leslie Howland

Date comment received:

December 11, 2025 04:37 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

leslie08051982@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}**Public comment:**

Hi,

I understand that there is a lack of funding but I wanted to give my feedback as a family camping is how we connect and make new memories with those prices a night for rv sites is spendy that impact will most likely cost the parks to lose money as families are already struggling with inflation. So with camping rates going up families wont be able to have food for there trips. I would not have a problem paying for dump station use or parking.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Date comment received:

December 11, 2025 05:42 AM

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I believe if you rent any buildings or gazebo r whatnot parking should be free for that event. This is just ridiculous.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Jeff Crane

Date comment received:

December 11, 2025 05:47 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

jmarneusa@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Oregon Parks is proposing to reduce the number of nights that are free for those who have the Disabled Veteran Special Access pass from 10 nights a month to 10 nights a year.

Personally, I don't need 10 nights a month, but it is nice to have the option. The ones I worry about are homeless Veterans who use this pass with a travel trailer or RV to have a place to stay for a third of a month.

I wonder how many people are truly using 10 nights a month, and how much the cost savings would be to Oregon Parks to justify this reduction. Is it hundreds? Thousands? What is the justification for the reduction in dollars saved? Until the state can answer that question with real numbers and analysis, the benefit should stay in place.

Additionally, for SAP cancellations, what exactly does: "Refunded nights will be based on length of time reservation is held." mean? If I reserve 5 June nights in January and then find out in May that I am unable to remain committed to my reservation, I don't get my full 5 nights returned to me? Life is full of changes.

As a camper, I understand why some of these changes sound like a good idea. And because campgrounds can be reserved far in advance, people tie up slots and then release them last minute. What is the percentage of out of state reservations that are affecting this? In state? SAP holders? Why not address the problem where the problem lies instead of reducing a benefit that is likely not contributing significantly to the problem.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Mary Kamm

Date comment received:

December 11, 2025 06:50 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

kammlambert@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I support the proposed changes to the fee structure for Oregon State Parks. As an avid trail rider, I enjoy the numerous offerings for trail riding and horse camping in our state parks. I truly hope that the proposed rate increases will allow our state parks systems to continue to provide amazing opportunities for outdoor recreational activities. I would suggest that visitors from out of state pay a slightly higher fee than park users who reside in Oregon.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Nicholas Flory

Date comment received:

December 11, 2025 07:34 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

nf777nd@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

as a navy veteran who enjoys the outdoors, I am strongly opposed to changing veteran benefits in the state of Oregon. These benefits were earned, and they are appreciated by many veterans who enjoy camping in the outdoors of our beautiful state. There are other ways to save money than cutting benefits to the people who have served our country With much respect Nick Flory



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Linda Phillips

Date comment received:

December 11, 2025 07:42 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

lindaphillips06@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Dec 11, 2025

57407 Fat Elk Rd

Coquille OR 97423

RE: Oregon Parks and Recreation Division 15 Rule Changes

I am so thankful that one day, many months ago, I added my email address to the list to receive notifications regarding public comment on changes to OPRD fees and rules. Otherwise I would have been very sad to find out that my special pass benefits were being cut significantly. I am a special pass holder, card number 2510, and a veteran who has been enjoying every bit of Oregon's magnificent parks for 36 years, the last 24 years as a retired USAF veteran.

I'm probably mistaken but as I understand it the pass allowed no-fee camping for not more than 10 days per month in any OPRD campground. In other words you could reserve another 10 days in a second campground and continue as a no-fee camper.

When I checked recently I read that the special pass benefit was reduced to not more than 10 nights per month regardless of the park or campsite.

Now the proposal under consideration call for a an additional reduction int he special pass benefit to not more than 10 days PER YEAR. I am writing to add my disappointment at this reduction and wonder who thought this was a good idea.

To begin with imagine yourself as a foster care family with a special pass. You would be limited to less than to **less than two weeks** of camping with your family at an Oregon State campground. A trip of 3 nights, the usual summer weekend camping, would only allow you 3 3-night trips **per year**.

Imagine yourself as a disabled veteran who enjoys camping at Oregon's famous coastal parks. But now, do you spread out your allotted 10 overnight stays across the year? Want to make a trip around Oregon and enjoy all that central and eastern Oregon has to offer? You had better make that trip in the 10 overnight stays, or less if you have another camping trip on your agenda. And then you are done for the year.

My recommendation to the review panel is to extend the no-fee nights to 15 per year for foster families, limited to Oregon residents only. And to hold to that number, not as a benefit but as a promise.

The benefits of the special pass is an example of how Oregon treats its people. People who care for children in the Oregon foster system and veterans who have served our nation and live in our towns and cities. We don't make a lot of money, and the cost of visiting Oregon parks has been steadily rising each year. Soon, very soon, we will be pushed out of using these excellent facilities all together.

Linda Phillips
lindaphillips06@gmail.com
541 396-3494



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Constance Crout

Date comment received:

December 11, 2025 08:15 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

usndt83@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

This input is for the Veterans free 10 day camping, per month and the proposal to change to annually. If you changed the free camping to Oregon Vets only I believe you will see more Veterans using the State parks more often than monthly, which will generate more revenue. Right now we don't use the states parks as often as we would like because the lack of availability reservations due to the free camping available to the Nations Veterans!



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Heather Chiaffino

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 12:55 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

heather.porter.heather@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission
c/o Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
725 Summer St. NE, Suite C
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Strong Opposition to Reducing Camping Benefits for Veterans Under the Special Access Pass

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed changes to the Special Access Pass (SAP) that would reduce the number of free camping nights available to veterans and restrict other related benefits. I respectfully urge the Commission to retain the current level of access for veterans, including the existing allowance of up to 10 free camping nights per month.

For many veterans—especially disabled veterans and those living with service-related trauma—regular access to Oregon’s natural spaces is not merely recreational. It is a vital component of their mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Camping provides an accessible, low-cost, non-stigmatizing therapeutic outlet that supports healing and reintegration into civilian life. Reducing these camping benefits risks cutting off one of the few resources that consistently fosters resilience, stability, and community connection for those who served.

A substantial body of research has shown that time outdoors significantly reduces PTSD symptoms, decreases stress, improves mood, and strengthens social connection among veterans. Overnight recreation, in particular, creates opportunities for rest, reflection, and family bonding in ways that are difficult to replicate elsewhere. For many veterans living with disabilities, limited incomes, or chronic health challenges, free camping access is the only

means by which they can safely participate in these restorative activities.

The majority of veterans who use the Special Access Pass do so responsibly, following all park regulations and treating Oregon's public lands with care. Their families also benefit deeply from these experiences, which provide stability, joy, and healing for children and partners who share in the sacrifices of military service. Reducing the number of free nights—from 10 nights per month to only 10 per year—would disproportionately harm veterans who have come to rely on access to public lands as part of their ongoing recovery and family wellbeing.

While I understand and appreciate the fiscal challenges the Department is facing, cost-saving strategies should not come at the expense of the health and welfare of those who served our nation. Veterans make up a small percentage of park visitors but receive significant therapeutic value from consistent access. Eliminating or restricting that access may save dollars on paper, but it carries a real and measurable human cost.

I respectfully ask the Commission to preserve the current camping allowances and to continue supporting Oregon's veterans by maintaining the Special Access Pass program as it exists today. Keeping these benefits intact honors their service, protects their wellbeing, and strengthens the communities they call home.

Thank you for considering this critical issue and for your continued stewardship of Oregon's natural resources. I appreciate your commitment to engaging the public in this process and hope you will uphold the current access that so many veterans depend upon.

Sincerely,
Heather Chiaffino



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Drew Child

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 12:56 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

Drew.Child@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I approve of your effort to change the campsite cancellation process to open up more campsites and discourage late cancellations. So frustrating to see empty sites that are reserved online and unoccupied.

We travel around to adjacent states and pay more than in state campers (more than 25 %) . Please consider charging 50- 100% more for out of state campers, it won't likely change out of state visits in our wonderful parks and will improve your revenue.If it doesn't work adjust.

Idaho State Parks charge more for out-of-state visitors, **often double the resident fees for daily vehicle** entry at popular parks like Farragut, Priest Lake, and Bear Lake, with higher camping fees (e.g., \$48 vs. \$24 for basic sites) and an \$80 annual Motor Vehicle Entry Fee (MVEF) sticker available as a cheaper alternative for frequent visitors

--

Drew

Drew Child
Bend, Oregon



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Lindi Goins

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 12:58 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

lindigoins@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I'm looking forward to the potential OPRD rule change to reduce late cancellations or no-shows. I could not find an RV appropriate campsite when friends invited us to camp with them. I kept checking and there were no sites available. Our friends had a site reserved and went without us. They told us there were plenty of empty RV appropriate campsites that weekend.

I'm concerned about the effects of dynamic pricing. I don't believe it fits the OPRD Mission. Dynamic pricing may prevent low-middle income families out into the Oregon State Parks. Many people get 3-4 day "weekends" for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, etc. Kids are out of school and parents have a few days off. Higher fees would be a disservice to those families.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposed rule changes.

Lindi Goins

Multnomah County Resident



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Herb Kateley

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 12:59 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

herb@hwkateley.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Well, how do I start without cursing?

As I understand it, changes to the Special access pass would reduce the camping benefit, (which I've never used, but was hoping to), by 90%.

90%!

...And eliminate the day use benefit, which I do use. Usually just to sit by the river and eat lunch, since you folks started charging for just parking on the road along Newport's south jetty. Occasionally I also stop at the Heceta Head beach parking on my way back from Florence. My usual visit being perhaps 20 minutes. So, I'm supposed to pay \$10 or buy a yearly pass for that?

I think that you will lose goodwill from many Oregon veterans for this change if you decide to do it and I will certainly be one of them.

Frankly, I consider the State Parks and Rec Commission to be a bunch of jerks just for suggesting it.

Best regards,

Herb Kateley

USN 1976-1980.

Seal Rock, Oregon



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Aanielda Aasichla

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:01 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

lifetimetourist@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Dear Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission,

As an avid camper and a 40-year resident of this beautiful state, I want to share feedback and suggestions regarding campground reservations and incentives.

For years, I've struggled to secure sites six months out, often relying on alerts and juggling multiple reservations just to cover a weekend, most times I'm unsuccessful.

I would appreciate new policy changes, especially making cancellations more difficult like within 30 days and/or the 50% refund on day 29, which help prevent Facebook arbitrage and keep our parks accessible from the ghost campers that rob your annual income.

As a disabled, retired combat veteran, I value the incentives offered for day use and camping. However, the current allowance of 10 free days per month could unintentionally encourage long-term stays rather than frequent visits.

I propose: Reduce to 5 free days per month, capped at 30 days per year.

After 30 days, offer a discounted rate for additional stays. This would provide a couple free week days/weekends a month while maintaining fairness and accessibility.

We can't make up that many camp spots at any given time.

Day-use fees should remain unchanged—they are minimal cost to the state and essential for keeping our parks welcoming to our veterans that are dying at a rapid rate from suicide due to mental health. Taking this from us would have a death ripple affect across all the veterans in this state. They/we all need the outdoors.

Additionally, I recommend a tiered pricing structure: Out-of-state visitors pay a higher premium per

night with the shorter reservation period mentioned above.

Oregon residents receive standard rates, with seniors, disabled individuals, foster parents and veterans receiving further discounts.

Out-of-state reservations should be limited to 90 days or even 30 days in advance, ensuring residents have priority access.

I do also understand the summers are when the Oregon Coast makes all their money for the year so maybe stick with 90 days out. I'm sure yall have a lot of historical data to make an educated decision.

Thank you for considering these suggestions. Oregon's parks are a treasure, and these changes could help balance accessibility, fairness, and sustainability.

*Note the numbers are purely my thoughts for the low side offer but my hopes are my park pass has no significant changes.;

Sincerely,

Disabled, Retired Combat Veteran Oregon resident.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Amanda Willett

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:02 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

ankenymobile@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Foster families and veteran passes should not be altered! Our veterans have laid their lives on the line and getting a few days per month does not seem like a big ask in comparison to what they have given. Many have been to hell and back and only know trauma that you couldn't get through nightmares of. They need to have this option for peace! Foster families are performing such an important role and they may not have that much extra money to take the kids out for adventures and again, the trauma some of these kids have been through, they deserve the escape.

Amanda Willett



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Reagan Clark

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:04 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

greenlinepcs@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

To the Oregon State Legislators,

I'm writing as an Oregon resident, a veteran, a 100% P&T service-connected disabled veteran, a former park ranger, a peer wellness specialist, and a graduate in environmental studies. I have spent much of my life working with veterans and in outdoor programs, and I moved to Oregon thirteen years ago because of its natural beauty and its strong environmental ethic. I want to share a personal experience that demonstrates why access to state parks is critical for holistic wellness — not just recreation — for veterans and others who rely on these lands. This change will have a measurable impact on my quality of life.

Several years ago, I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer linked to my service. My treatment required a radioactive ablation that forced me to isolate myself from people and animals for ten days. Living in a small home, there was no safe way to comply at home. Renting a motel was financially impossible, and other alternatives would have created environmental risks and unsafe conditions for those around me. Access to a state park campsite under the veteran benefit made completing my treatment feasible.

During that period, my experience touched on all eight spheres of wellness:

Emotional: Being outdoors in nature reduced stress and provided a sense of emotional well-being, instead of feeling cooped up and isolated.

Social: Access to the parks allowed me to interact safely with the environment and be part of a pro-social activity, protecting the health of others while still feeling connected.

Spiritual: Being immersed in natural spaces fostered a sense of connection to life and the world, even while facing a serious illness.

Occupational: Experiencing the parks as a visitor deepened my perspective as a professional, allowing me to observe and learn from other land stewards and land management practices.

Physical: Hiking, setting up camp, beachcombing, fishing, and clamming kept me physically active and supported my overall health.

Intellectual: Identifying organisms, observing geologic features, understanding tides, and exploring the environment stimulated curiosity and learning.

Environmental: Spending time in these natural spaces strengthened my commitment to protecting fragile ecosystems that we all depend on.

Financial: The free-camping benefit made this period feasible; alternative accommodations were financially impossible. Without access to the park, I would have faced not only financial hardship but potentially unsafe conditions for myself and others.

This experience is not unique; it reflects challenges and needs that many veterans and other vulnerable populations face — needs often overlooked in policy discussions. Access to state parks is not merely recreational: it supports mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health; provides safe and environmentally responsible spaces; and allows those who served to remain connected to their communities and the natural world.

I support limiting free camping for out-of-state veterans, ideally through a reciprocity model, but resident veterans should retain full access, particularly disabled veterans. I support 10 free nights per month for disabled veterans and 4 nights per month for non-disabled veterans. These benefits directly sustain the wellness of veterans in ways lawmakers may not fully appreciate.

I also support reasonable cancellation rules during peak periods, but flexibility during shoulder and off-peak seasons should account for weather, wellness needs, and safe access.

For foster families, a fair compromise would be 5 free nights per month for in-state families, with accrual for longer trips, and 5 free nights per year for out-of-state families, with reciprocity where applicable. Like veterans, foster families' access to parks supports emotional, social, and environmental wellness.

On the Public Trust Doctrine, Environmental Justice, and Policy Coherence

I also want to highlight a deeper legal and moral concern: reducing access to natural resources while demanding environmental stewardship is contradictory. In U.S. law, the Public Trust Doctrine — most famously articulated in the foundational decision *Illinois Central Railroad Co. v. Illinois* (1892) — establishes that navigable waters and submerged lands are held by the state in trust for public use, and cannot be alienated if that would impair the public's traditional rights of navigation, fishing, recreation, and access. (Wikipedia)

More recently, states have applied the doctrine to shoreline access beyond just water — ensuring that citizens retain public use of shorelines, even when adjacent land is privately owned. For example, in *Gunderson v. State* (2018), the Indiana Supreme Court affirmed that the shoreline of Lake Michigan up to the “ordinary high water mark” remains public-trust land; private property owners may own land above that line, but may not exclude the public from walking, swimming, or otherwise using the shoreline. (The Indiana Lawyer)

These precedents reflect a clear principle: natural resources and public lands are held for the benefit of all citizens — not just for private or exclusive use.

So when a state encourages reduced carbon intensity and environmental protection, yet

simultaneously restricts or reduces public access to its natural lands — especially for vulnerable populations like disabled veterans — that policy choice feels incongruent. It sends a message that access to land, nature, and the healing and stability they provide is conditional, strongly influenced by political or budgetary whims, rather than protected as a public trust.

In my case, the loss of access would not just be a fee increase or inconvenience — it would directly harm my physical health, mental well-being, and ability to safely access spaces I need for healing. For many others, it would erode the guarantee that natural lands exist for the benefit of the public, not just as a resource to be rationed.

In short: I view this not only as a question of policy fairness or budget priorities — but as a public trust doctrine issue. Reducing access to state parks for residents — especially those most in need — undermines the principle that natural resources belong to the people and must remain accessible to them. You cannot expect people to commit to stewardship, climate goals, or environmental responsibility if you limit their access to the very land you ask them to cherish, pay for, and protect.

Oregon parks are not just recreational spaces. They are essential to holistic wellness, environmental responsibility, and public trust. I urge lawmakers to preserve meaningful benefits for residents, and to ensure that policy changes align with broader commitments to environmental justice — not contradict them.

Thank you for your attention and service to Oregon's parks — and to the people who depend on them.

Reagan Clark



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Matthew Mills

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:05 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

hdparadox90@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

To whom it may concern,

Id like you to reconsider cutting the number of camping days to 10 per year. Per the states own statistics Veterans don't use the full benefits now and so aren't costing the state money. Taking away access threatens what to me is therapeutic.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Dave Farmer

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:06 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

davefarmer15362@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Please don't make camping more expensive for Oregon residents that are disabled veterans.
Please don't reduce the number of free days that Oregon disabled veterans receive.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Michael Croxford

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:07 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

mcrox4@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I'm a 75 year old Oregon resident and disabled veteran. I am mostly in favor of the proposed State Park changes to address the budget shortfall, especially implementing a revised cancellation policy. It's a severe problem; I've seen so many reserved campsites that remain empty.

I'm very appreciative of my Special Access Pass. I didn't know that the camping benefit was for disabled veterans of any state and I do agree with changing that to Oregon residents only. I would prefer that the camping didn't get cut so drastically, from 10 per month to 10 per year but it's still a wonderful benefit, especially if it continues to cover entrance and parking (which could also be limited to Oregon residents, if it's not already).

Michael Croxford
Bend, OR



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Ian Williams

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:08 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

ianwilliams123456@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

tamara staton

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:10 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

tamarastaton2@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Hello,

I just read an article (Seeking to fill \$8 million budget hole, Oregon Parks Commission reopens rules on reservations and fees • Lincoln Chronicle <https://share.google/4JyPkqh2DC1FFEfUt>) about proposed changes to address the budget shortfall in the parks. I appreciate the intentionality this - my family and I have deeply appreciated the opportunity to camp at some beautiful parks and want to continue to be able to do so.

Most of the changes proposed make sense to me and I feel in support of, but I am concerned about the potential price hikes of campsites and cabins. \$80/ night is far too much to ask for an RV site, as is \$45/night for a tent site. And \$190 for a deluxe cabin is also ridiculous and would price out so many people. It's not like they are truly deluxe cabins in the middle of nowhere - they are feedback surrounded by many other people, dogs, kids, lots of hubbub. The idea of paying \$190/night or similar to stay in a campground vs. finding a secluded cabin elsewhere - no question, it just wouldn't feel worth it, and it would be catering to the wealthy. I also think \$25 is far too much to pay for parking for a day.

Thanks for hearing my comments,
Tamara

From the article:

"Under the proposal, RV sites would cost \$31 to \$80 per night, while tent sites would cost \$10 to \$45 per night. Nightly rates for rustic yurts and cabins could peak as high as \$105 and \$115, while deluxe cabins and yurts could cost as much as \$190 per night.

Day use parking fees could theoretically cost as much as \$25 per vehicle under the proposed rule changes, with annual passes costing up to \$100 per year."



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

David Roberts

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:11 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

tauhinga@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Il am a 100% disabled vet . I know the 10 nights a month camping is a privilege not a right. However, without the free camping, my life will be a lot less enjoyable . I will still camp at Oregon State parks because the are fantastic but I couldn't afford to stay the 50 to 60 nights a year I do now.If there is any way, please keep the veterans camping and day pass available to us. Sincerely David Roberts



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Heather Chiaffino

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:14 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

heather.porter.heather@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I am submitting this comment to strongly oppose the proposed reduction in camping benefits for veterans under the Special Access Pass. As someone who has seen firsthand how time outdoors affects the wellbeing of veterans, I cannot overstate how important it is to preserve the current allowance of up to 10 free camping nights per month.

For many veterans — especially disabled veterans and those living with PTSD — regular time in nature isn't just a hobby. It is one of the few places where they can breathe deeply, feel safe, reconnect with family, and rebuild a sense of peace. Research consistently supports what veterans already know through lived experience: spending time outdoors reduces PTSD symptoms, improves mood, and strengthens social support. One study found clear reductions in PTSD indicators when veterans increased time spent in natural environments during treatment (PubMed ID: 33899932). Another study showed that after multi-day outdoor trips, veterans experienced over a 10% improvement in psychological well-being, and these benefits often lasted for weeks afterward (PubMed ID: 25509055).

For some veterans, camping is the only affordable and accessible form of therapy that truly works for them. The outdoors doesn't judge, doesn't require appointments, and doesn't come with stigma — which is why many veterans turn to Oregon's parks for healing when other forms of support feel overwhelming or out of reach.

Reducing camping access from up to 10 nights **a month** to only 10 **per year** would take away a lifeline from veterans who rely on frequent, low-cost time in nature to manage anxiety, trauma, and chronic stress. It would especially harm disabled and lower-income veterans who cannot simply "make up the difference" by paying more. These are the very people who benefit most from being able to return to the same parks, trails, and campgrounds regularly — places where they find calm, community, and a sense of belonging.

Public lands have been described as “therapeutic landscapes” for veterans, offering emotional restoration, physical activity, and social connection that clinical environments often struggle to provide (USDA Forest Service, 2022). When we restrict access, we’re not just changing a fee structure — we are removing a form of therapy that has been proven to help.

I understand the financial challenges OPRD faces, but cutting access for veterans is not the place to solve budget shortfalls. The impact on mental health, family stability, and overall quality of life would far outweigh the financial savings. Oregon has long been a state that values its veterans, and maintaining the current SAP camping benefits is a meaningful way to honor that commitment.

I respectfully ask the Commission to preserve the current Special Access Pass camping allowances. The wellbeing of Oregon’s veterans — and their families — truly depends on it.

Thank you for listening and for considering the human impact behind these numbers.

Heather Chiaffino



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Doug Wride

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 01:25 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

dougwride@yahoo.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I agree with no refunds on cancellations, maybe up to 3 days in advance of the reserved date. What I don't understand and is not disclosed is how much was the decrease in funding from the Oregon Lottery and why was it decreased? My guess is the Lottery Funds are growing and are being diverted to a less popular need. Then, we all support parks, so we agree to spend and charge more money for parks, while something we do not support as fervently is getting the park money from the Lottery.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Walter Adams

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 02:29 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

wally.adams89@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I support all of the changes in the proposed rulemaking. We are regular campers, almost always at Oregon State Parks. The rule changes proposed will help to increase revenue without placing an undue hardship on campers who respect the reservation system (and other campers). Many of these changes have already been implemented in neighboring states.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Tonie Stevens

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 05:43 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

twilitekat@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

A 6month reservation is already needed to get a place when you want now - no matter what time of year - holiday or not. Might as well just raise prices all around instead of charging extra for heavy usage and holidays.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

KAREN HANSIS

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 02:23 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

KARENHANSIS@GMAIL.COM

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

To the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission,

I am writing to oppose the proposed rule change that would reduce the Special Access Pass overnight camping benefit for **service-connected disabled veterans** from the current **10 nights in a 30-day rolling window** to **10 nights per year**. Oregon should retain the existing benefit level, and if changes are necessary, limit eligibility to **Oregon resident veterans** rather than reducing access for those who live here.

A 92% Reduction in Access Is Not a Minor Adjustment

Reducing the benefit from **10 nights per month** to **10 nights per year** represents an effective **92% reduction in access**. This fundamentally changes the purpose and value of the program.

For service-connected disabled veterans, many of whom manage chronic physical or mental health conditions and live on fixed incomes, this reduction removes the practical usefulness of the benefit.

Restricting the Benefit to Oregon Residents Is Reasonable

Currently, this benefit is available to **eligible veterans from any U.S. state**. Limiting eligibility to **Oregon resident veterans** is appropriate, as Oregon state parks are funded and stewarded for Oregonians.

No other state provides Oregon veterans with free access to its state park camping systems or facilities based solely on veteran status. Residency limits are a fairer solution than reducing access for Oregon veterans themselves.

Oregon Has a Significant Population of Service-Connected Disabled Veterans

Oregon is home to approximately **250,000–260,000 veterans**, and **tens of thousands** receive VA disability compensation for service-connected conditions. This program is narrowly targeted and not broadly distributed.

A 10-night annual cap no longer reflects the scale of need or the intent of the benefit.

Many Oregon Veterans Face Long-Term Economic Disadvantage

Many Oregon veterans—particularly those with service-connected disabilities—spent years earning **military wages that lagged behind civilian pay**, delaying career advancement and long-term earning potential. Disabilities can further limit employment after separation, leaving many on fixed or reduced incomes.

In a high-cost state like Oregon, affordable access to state parks helps offset these cumulative economic disadvantages.

Veteran Mental Health Remains a Statewide Priority

Oregon has experienced a significant number of veteran suicides over the past decade. While camping access is not treatment, it is a **low-barrier, preventative support** aligned with broader veteran wellness priorities.

Scaling back access sends the wrong message at a time when veteran mental health is widely recognized as a public concern.

Access to Oregon's Outdoors Supports Veteran Health and Quality of Life

Time in nature supports stress regulation, pain management, mobility, and overall well-being—especially for individuals living with service-connected disabilities. Oregon's state parks provide accessible environments for activity, restoration, and family connection.

Reducing access to 10 nights per year sharply limits these benefits.

Budget Challenges Should Not Be Solved by Eliminating Veteran Access

If OPRD needs to manage capacity or funding, there are alternatives that preserve the program's intent:

- retain the **10 nights per month** structure with peak-season or high-demand park limits
 - limit eligibility to **Oregon residents** rather than all U.S. veterans
 - maintain or modestly adjust **reservation or transaction fees**
-

Requested Action

Please **do not adopt** the proposed reduction to **10 nights per year**. Retain the current benefit of **10 free overnight camping nights in a rolling 30-day period** for service-connected disabled veterans, and if changes are required:

- retain the **10 nights per month** policy
- limit eligibility to **Oregon residents only**
- maintain or modestly adjust **reservation or transaction fees**

Thank you for your consideration and for your stewardship of Oregon's state parks.

Sincerely,

Karen Hansis

Oregon City, Oregon



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Charles James Hansis

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 03:46 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

jimhansis@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I'm writing as an Oregon resident, a Marine Corps veteran with 22 years of service, and a disability rating well over 50%. The proposed change to cut the Special Access Pass benefit from **10 nights per month** to **10 nights per year** would gut the program. I'm asking OPRD to **keep the current structure** and, if changes are needed, **limit eligibility to Oregon residents** instead of slashing access for those who live here.

Why This Matters

- **92% Reduction in Access:** Going from 10 nights every 30 days to 10 nights per year isn't a tweak—it's a near-total rollback.
 - For veterans like me, camping isn't a luxury. It's affordable time outdoors that helps manage chronic pain, stress, and mental health. Losing this benefit means losing one of the few accessible options we have.
-

Oregon Veterans by the Numbers

- Oregon has about **252,000 veterans**, and roughly **75,000** of us have service-connected disabilities.
 - This program is already narrow and targeted. Cutting it this hard ignores the real need.
-

Why Residency Limits Make More Sense

- Oregon taxpayers fund these parks. Limiting the benefit to Oregon residents is fair.

No other state gives Oregon veterans free camping access. Residency restrictions are a better fix than gutting the program for everyone.

Veteran Mental Health Is Still a Crisis

- Oregon lost **139 veterans to suicide in 2021**. Time outdoors isn't treatment, but it's proven to help with stress and isolation.
 - Cutting access sends the wrong message when veteran wellness is a statewide priority.
-

Alternatives to Slashing Benefits

- Keep the **10-night rolling window**.
 - Limit eligibility to **Oregon residents only**.
 - Add peak-season caps or modest fee adjustments if needed.
-

Requested Action

Please **do not adopt the 10-night annual cap**. Instead:

- Retain the current benefit structure.
 - Apply residency restrictions if necessary.
 - Explore small fee adjustments rather than dismantling the program.
-

Bottom line: This isn't about free camping—it's about health, equity, and honoring commitments to those who served. Cutting this benefit by 92% would erase its purpose.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Austin Pederson

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 04:20 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

austin.pederson@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

"Ben joined the 22 club last night"

A text received in the early morning hours. A meaning only a Veteran, and possible a psychologist or physician would understand.

The 22 Club refers to the 20+ Veterans that die by Suicide each day. Google now has this estimate down to 17-18 Veterans per day. Well above the national average of non service members. This is ~6,500 Veterans each year. Individuals that signed a literal blood oath to defend every notion of the freedoms we enjoy. Including camping, day-use; or overnight.

Oregon has been long praised for it's acknowledgement of service members. The Veteran community that travels (and even some that don't) discuss this. As a Veteran myself, in my circles; it's even been a signal that an honoring of military service needn't follow political boundaries. That Oregon, a markedly Blue state still has a tremendous offering for Veterans within the Parks.

To remove or reduce the offering for Veterans... to even propose it; will be a travesty. This would impact your Veterans... not only your Oregon Veterans; but your disabled Veterans. Further, your Veterans are a low impact group. These are professionals that were taught to care for their space. To leave it better than you found it.

The proposed \$2.2M net gain in your budget won't come from the pockets of Veterans. They simply don't have it. Maybe some, to a small degree. But you won't close the \$2.2M directly from Veterans. What will happen, is Veterans will stop coming. Veterans will stop traveling. Stop camping. They will have one more reduction in the services that existed prior to making an oath. What will happen, is you will have a reduction in Veterans in your parks. A reduction of this community, that has served you well... just simply won't be there. On more than one occasion, I

am certain my presence in the parks prevented a much uglier outcome. Whether it's two opposing campers in a disagreement. Or aiding in translation between a park ranger and a confused camper. Within your proposal, have you accounted for the *positive* presence that Veterans in your parks presents? When we checkout my girls (now 9 and 12) know the drill... and don't even say "but daddy, that's not our trash" anymore. At this point, I think they even know what 'policing your area' means. They walk our campsite, while I walk the sites immediately left and right of mine. Standard procedure... a literal standard procedure for any Army (and possibly other branches) for clean-up after a field exercise. The Veterans you have been honoring aren't just a net negative in your budget. And I suspect many of you reading this know it... while a few possibly... would disagree with it.

Middle ground. If you're looking to still honor Veterans *and* find some middle ground so as to optimize your budget process (which I very much respect). Aspects of the most recent proposal that would impact Veterans, that I can certainly support:

This one absolutely makes sense. If a Veteran doesn't show, but otherwise has taken a space, count it against the SAP.

- **No-show** reservations will not be refunded and may count against benefit limits (e.g., for Special Access Pass holders).

Maybe consider those with a SAP to book further out, to better understand the demand.

- Rates may vary by **day of week, season, holidays, amenities, and demand.**

All gave some. Some gave all. And some are still struggling. Let's consider honoring them for a bit longer... and stave off the inevitable for a future generation of policy makers to forget their service.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Dana Alvares

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 04:37 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

dana.z.alvares@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I am opposed to the decrease in over night stays for disabled Veterans. The ability to use these nights/days in public parks increases the wellbeing of the Veteran and I would say that the majority of Veterans would leave their space, and the park, better when they leave then it was when they got there.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Heather Toland

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 05:33 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

rikkiattevis2012@yahoo.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I support changing the way the camping fee platform is run. You as a state miss out on a lot of open space that could be rebooked because of current way of running cancellation policy and rebooking.

I completely disagree with any and all parking fees unless its for camping in excess vehicles. Charging people for parking at places to day use is horrible. I am speaking for our local people in Coos County that rely heavily on tourism. I feel this will absolutely cause demise in our local tourism industry. As an avid horse rider this also causes locals to not want to enjoy our local parks if we always have to pay for parking. Go back to the drawing board on this fee, find it in the everyday over spending of our taxpayer dollars.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Russell Rodgers

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 06:02 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

rrodger4@hotmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I think it is a good idea to charge a veteran or foster family for not canceling and leaving campsites empty. I would even propose to charge the veteran with an access pass the full camping fee for those nights if they do not cancel in advance appropriately. To take a benefit that was hard fought for veterans and foster families and basically end the program by reducing the amount proposed is unacceptable. You are saying to all of us veterans that you want us to take the burden for the shortfalls of everyone who abuses the state parks cancellation policy. There is always a funding issue, but there are several common sense solutions to avoid impacting veterans or foster families. 1. Have more merchandise for sale at the campgrounds at an affordable price. Kids and families love shopping while walking around RV parks at their stores. 2. Charge a much higher rate for out of state campers just like other states do to us. 3. Don't hurt veterans and foster families with disabled kids. They need somewhere to go to deal with PTSD, loss of limbs, loss of mobility and to enjoy the outdoors safely. Veterans go to the state parks to seek a reprieve from the hell they living with be it cancer from burn pit exposure, depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, wounds from combat, injuries from immensely difficult training...all of which is eased by being outdoors due to the great benefit that was hard fought for in Oregon. Please do not slap veterans in the face because of budget issues that total hardly anything in the big picture. Use the lottery funds for Veterans and Foster families, not illegals please. Have real Americans at the forefront of decision making. It really is a bad idea to reduce these benefits for disabled veterans because of a couple of million dollars. It is a bad idea to have campsite fees tied to a dynamic funding model. Noone will be able to afford to go to the State Parks.

Story: One veteran I met last year had PTSD and bad hips and knees, was a Vietnam veteran and had his grandkids with him. He had a beat up older class c camper and I was helping him try to get his water leak figured out. He told me with his limited income and his problems, he would never be able to afford to take his grandkids camping, but that he does every month because of Oregon State Parks Veterans Access Pass. There are so many veterans that would be

hurt by this proposal. It makes me angry that vets will deal with the burden of state parks mismanagement. Make an actual proposal without cutting these benefits. This should not even be on the table. This is political warfare...why are veterans having to defend our benefit that helps us cope with life when it could be solved by other means including marijuana funds, lottery funds and a complete cutting out of funds going to help people who are here illegally. Do not cut veterans state parks benefits or those who are trying to help foster kids have a better life in their messed up scenarios. Why, why, why are we always having to fight to keep what has already been given to us. This will most definitely hurt veterans and give them more PTSD due to a society that would rather them suffer than help them. I am not impressed Oregon State Parks. I am not impressed Oregon legislature. You work for yourselves and the money flows to you...use it more wisely and leave veterans and foster families alone. Do not charge higher park fees to use publicly owned land, do not take day use from veterans and foster families, do not continuously purchase newer vehicles and electric golf carts, do not use veterans as a way to increase funding for state parks or shore up a deficit. Find the money in lottery funds or marijuana funds, increase cancellation penalties, increase fees for out of staters....LEAVE VETERANS ALONE. We need access to our parks to help us with our issues. We live for it...please do not remove the benefit that has already been given to us as a way to help get through life.

I completely oppose any changes to the Veterans State Park Access pass and also to the Access pass for Foster families. I also oppose any seasonal based fees as they will destroy the ability of regular people to be able to access State Parks. Most people cannot afford private RV Parks and many parks are refusing campers that are past 10 years old. Oregon State Parks will literally screw veterans with any changes to the 10 days a month camping and free day use. Foster families should still receive the benefit because those kids and families need the parks as well and will not be able to even afford 25 dollar day use fees. Do not do this Oregon. Do not take anything from Disabled Veterans or Foster Families. Find other ways to balance the State Parks budget, but not on the backs of Disabled Veterans.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Laura Fisher

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 06:23 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

wolfie987@hotmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I seldom camp at our state parks because they seldom have sites available in the summer. Much of my camping is done at federal campgrounds due to the senior discount and frequently nearly half the campground is empty but reserved. That stops others from being able to enjoy the park so I strongly support a strict no-refund policy. I'm opposed to the changes to the SAP program.

Those eligible deserve at least double the proposed number of days. I also love the 2-year park pass and have purchased one ever since they became available.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Joshua Hastings

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 06:36 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

hastingsjoshua1611@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Oregon is not a veteran friendly place. With all of the other areas to cut spending, please do not take it away from us disabled veterans.

I have met a number of veterans, with PTSD and other disabilities which rely regularly on the 10 days/month of staying at Oregon State parks. Being able to camp and ground in nature is an important way of healing.

Thank you so much!



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

David Keeth

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 07:03 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

davidkeeth@me.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Cutting **Special Access Pass** days by 92% seems excessive. Please reconsider this draconian change and reduce access by a smaller percentage.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Scot Brooks

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 07:54 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

brosco76@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Hello and good day. I'm a disabled veteran that uses my access pass throughout the year and appreciate the value of having 10 days of free camping per month this privilege affords.

I support limiting the pass to Oregon veterans only but strongly oppose the additional limit of 10 days camping per year. Please don't place this limit on Oregon disabled veterans.

Thank you,

Scot Brooks



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Arnie Pooler

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 08:43 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

arniepooler@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

You claim demand for spaces are high yet most state parks have several vacant spots throughout the summer. Taking days from veterans, seniors and foster families makes it harder for them to do things. Oregon is becoming more like California. The governor and her appointed people are doing nothing but screwing the citizens of Oregon. ODFW fee raises are absurd as well



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

William Atwood

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 09:13 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

Williamatwood88@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

The reduction in waived fees is a major shift (~92% reduction) from the current system for Service-Connected Disabled Veterans. The appearance on the surface is that these reductions are targeting minority groups and being labeled as "supporting", that is deceptive at best. Many veterans with service connected disabilities use the outdoors as a therapeutic tool, with many being on a fixed income due to their disabilities, but they will now forego these activities because they are unable to afford the new fees.

Independent of the significant impact on veterans ethically, objectively what are the details of any impact analysis? Support of this decision or any variant of it needs to be supported by evidence of due diligence. Clarity around how many veterans would be impacted and how large that impact would be based in average year, are just minimal examples. Are the assumptions around recaptured fees due to charging veterans or replacing them with new visitors? Lots of concerning implications here.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Linda Odermott

Date comment received:

December 12, 2025 09:24 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

dlsodermott@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

The proposal to reduce the SAP benefits to foster families and disabled veterans by 92% is not only insulting to both communities, but shows a blatant disregard to the challenges faced by both communities. Additionally, SAP are fee waivers so the Parks department wasn't actually spending money on these waivers, just not collecting fees from these already financially impacted individuals. This is a bad look and a bad idea.

My husband is a disabled vet and would be directly impacted by these changes. Please reconsider.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Jenine Gomez

Date comment received:

December 13, 2025 12:57 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

jenine.gomez.gutierrez@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I am a fan of the State Parks!

I am still an avid hiker and buy my yearly day use pass and I do get my money's worth.

I'm writing to state my objection to raising the prices for our veterans and low income community.

I raised a "litter" of foster/adopted kids and was blessed by the camping and day use opportunities that I could afford with the State Parks benefits. Not only did our time in the wild teach the kids skills, but it was great for their mental health. They were taught the discipline of leave no trace, learned about the natural world and made tons of dusty dirty safe memories. For me it had the added benefit of offering them freedom to roam in the campgrounds that they didn't have at home because of the proximity of unsafe birth families.

Fast forward to now and two of them are Army Veterans, one is a disabled vet.

The value of offering them free and discounted services should not be overlooked.

On the other hand, I fully support no refunds when people snatch up reservations six months in advance and then cancel them.

Thank you for all you do to keep Oregon green and clean.

Jenine



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Robert Phillippi

Date comment received:

December 13, 2025 08:21 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

robertpkwhoa@icloud.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

The benefits for all veterans, especially disabled veterans, should be **increased**. We cannot pay some of them enough for their service, but free access to Oregon State Parks is a start. Many of the Vets who take advantage of this benefit are struggling with economic survival. Cutting their free camping days by over 90% is essentially raising their rent. For some it will mean camping along the road without access to utilities. Also, this proposed policy does not make sense economically. It is not reasonable to assume that much of the waived fees would be paid by the disabled vets if they lose this benefits. Most will find alternative 'camping'.

I also disagree with dropping out of state vets (there can't be that many of them) or surge pricing. The cancellation policy is something that needed to be changed. It is not fair that large blocks of sites can be reserved, then cancelled with little or no penalty. This is the one area where it would be beneficial for Oregon State parks to mirror the private sector.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Anna Carper

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 12:13 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

anna.f.carper@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Please do not change pricing to dynamic pricing. I believe this would disproportionately impact low-income families who can often only go camping on the weekends or holidays as they need to work typical business days. It also makes it hard for families to budget for camping trips. Camping is the only kind of vacation our family can afford.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Kelly Turner

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 12:50 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

bearbranch25@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

I understand the need to raise rates. I would like to suggest that cancelations be even stricter, so many people reserve and never arrive!

My most important suggestion is about local use of state parks in areas like Eastern Oregon. It would help a lot of passes were available for all residents of Wallowa Oregon at Wallowa Lake. This would reduce resistance to the changes. Please consider this suggestion- it is not about me it is about conservatives that don't understand how much it costs to run the government. This would not cost the state much as there are only 7,000 people in Wallowa County.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

David Ledford

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 02:23 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

roadskipper@yahoo.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

It would be unfortunate if you cut off all non-resident disabled veterans. Disabled vets have served the country, not a state. For example, I lived most of my life in Oregon, although I don't reside there at the moment. I would suggest you consider maybe something that isn't all or nothing - perhaps a 50% discount on rates for non-resident disabled veterans, for the given number of days.

I also think it is drastic to go from 10 days a month to 10 days a year. It is important for disabled veterans to have time out in nature and also to be able to experience affordable recreation.

There must be some middle ground here that is not quite so drastic.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

John Fornof

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 07:24 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

fornofj@yahoo.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

As a disabled Veteran, I use the Oregon State campgrounds as much as possible. Restricting my use does little to no impact. I don't agree with this proposal.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Daniel Osborne

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 03:46 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

emaildavidosborne@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Initiating dynamic pricing is wrong and moves the parks systems into a profit based system. State parks are for the people and the state shouldn't be attempting to price people out during certain times of the year. A fee range is a dumb idea and is hurtful to the free use of parks by citizens. If you need to raise the rates then do that and be transparent about it instead of trying to force the less financially fortunate to camp during the slow season.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Bruce Andrade

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 06:43 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

eglide1@aol.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Regarding reducing the number of days that Disabled Veteran Special Access pass holders to 10 per year sends the wrong message to veterans that have served this country. Without their service, this country may not have the freedoms and liberties that all citizens enjoy. What is the real reason for this proposal? I find it difficult to believe it is financial. And even harder to accept that another group of persons are more deserving. Most veterans, like me, that have these passes, rarely use 10 days per month or use this benefit more than a month or two each year. But there are veterans that do. My concern is for the low-income or homeless vets whose survival may depend on this benefit and have no other options other than to camp on the street or go without other necessities to pay for camps where water and electricity for heat is available.

Please do not take from our veterans.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Laurie Holdsworth

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 07:10 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

laurieholdsworth@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. My husband, Charles Boyer, and I agree with most of the proposed changes except for changing the SAP for Disabled Veterans to Oregon residents only. We live in Washington State and have camped in Oregon many times. We would hate to have our access limited as we love camping in Oregon State Parks. We understand why you want to decrease tpressure on the system, but we are good neighbors that used to be a part of the Oregon Territory. We hope you reconsider this change. Thank you for your time and consideration.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Thomas Beall

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 07:22 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

tebeall1@gmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

It's very difficult to GET benefits for veterans, especially special ones for the disabled, so why can one be eliminated, for all intents and purposes at the stroke of a pen. There are NO benefits too much for veterans. Remember, this is the Land of the Free Because of the Brave! We all sacrificed, and suffered through low wages during our service, and those who have no clue what that means, deign to write policy.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Jeff Morris

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 08:26 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

jtmorris9@hotmail.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Very few people like change, especially when it results in increased costs. However, change is inevitable. I am glad that the Oregon Parks System is allowing us to comment on the proposed changes even though it is likely that few revisions will be made in the final result. To address each of the proposals:

Cancellation (and Refund) Policy

. This is one proposal that I take no exception with. I get it that sometimes extenuating circumstances may come up.

However, people need to take responsibility for their actions. I make my reservations, usually the maximum 6

months in advance, with the intent that my kids and I will be camping at the intended campground on the intended dates.

If something comes up last minute, too bad—we are going camping and you will have to miss it! As others have stated, it is frustrating to see a supposedly full campground not actually be full because of irresponsible idiots that book campsites because they “think” they might want to go camping but likely are not really committed to doing so and then don’t bother to cancel their reservations at all or do so last minute.

This takes away opportunities for others who would love to be able to camp in that space. If anything, these people deserve to be “poked in the eye” for their actions and lack of disregard for others.

Dynamic Pricing.

I am not a big fan of dynamic pricing as a person should be able to determine ahead of time what the price will be for a campsite, hotel room, baseball game, or concert, and not have it be dependent on the date or time. This isn't to say that the parks couldn't charge a higher overnight fee for times of higher demand, but that it should be more uniform, similar to the long-deceased Discovery Season pricing where campsites were cheaper in the winter than they were for the summer in order to encourage camping in the off season. Another option might be to add a holiday fee for designated long weekends such as Memorial Day and Labor Day. Either way, this should be included in the posted pricing schedule, not sprung on you when you go to book a reservation.

Special Access Pass (SAP)

. This change is the hardest one for me to accept. I am a service-connected (SC) disabled veteran. Currently, I could camp for free for 120 days per year. However, I do not use it near that much—usually 15 to 30 days per year, mostly in the off season. Oregon is the most liberal state in the western third of the US when it comes to allowing veterans to pay no sites fees for campsites and, no other state waives fees for out of state veterans. I can see both sides of the argument for joining the other states and ending this benefit for out state veterans. However, for Oregon resident SC disabled veterans, reducing the site fee free days from 120 to 10 per year is unacceptable. I would propose that if there is going to be a reduction, that it be reduced to 30 days per year while observing that no more than 10 of those days can occur in the same month. An alternative option, if sticking with the 10 day per year site fee free limit, might be to offer 20 (or more) additional days at a 50% discount similar to how the national park system does (must have a SAP to obtain). Due to site fee free camping in Oregon, my kids and I spend our vacation dollars here in the state supporting our local businesses rather than spending those funds in a neighboring state. Plus, I include a donation to the parks when making a reservation and plan to be a volunteer park host when I retire in a few years as my way of giving back.

Day Use Parking Permits & Fee Increase

. Again, I am not a fan of dynamic pricing. You should be able to know the price before hand and not be surprised that the daily fee for the Honeyman day use area is not \$10 this weekend like it was when you were there last month. If you want to increase the day use fee publish the pricing and offer up a predetermined and posted surcharge for certain dates, such as a holiday. While I have the ability to park for free with my SAP, I like the idea of tying the annual permits to a license plate as this would reduce the permit costs to the parks and as a side benefit, reduce the ability to pass the permit to friends and family, thereby increasing parking fees received by the parks. National Parks annual passes can only be used by two people per pass per year, why should this be any different for our state parks.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

William Lambiaso

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 08:39 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

billdarlene1@msn.com

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Stop paying benefits for illegal aliens and direct those funds to the park services. Our veterans have already paid for the privileges afforded to them.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Joanne Kittel

Date comment received:

December 14, 2025 09:22 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

jnkittel@peak.org

Location (if provided): {city}, {state}

Public comment:

Due to the higher costs and reduced funding I support the increased fees and safeguards to assure our parks are taken care of.