



## Proposed Fee Increase & Flood Tour of Castle

Death Valley National Park seeks public input regarding possible camping and entrance fee increases. Most park fees have been unchanged since January 2006. The National Park Service is also considering charging a fee for temporary tours into Grapevine Canyon to Scotty's Castle.

### Park Passes Still Apply

The Interagency Annual Pass, Senior Pass, Access Pass, Military Pass, and Volunteer Pass cover park entrance fees. The Interagency Annual Pass is available to anyone for \$80. Current US military members and dependents can get a free annual Military Pass. US citizens or permanent residents with a permanent disability are eligible for a free lifetime Access Pass. US citizens and permanent residents aged 62 or older can obtain a lifetime Senior Pass for \$10.

### Where Does Revenue Go?

Park fee revenue has funded recent projects such as improvements to campgrounds, special events such as BioBlitz in March and Celestial Centennial in April, ranger-led educational programs, printing park brochures, and upgrades to visitor use areas at Badwater, Stovepipe Wells, and Father Crowley Point.

In the next few years, park fees will help fund emergency medical services, campground custodial work, and educational programs. However, the main focus of Death Valley National Park's fee expenditure in the next few years will be restoring Scotty's Castle from damaged caused by a massive flash flood.

Scotty's Castle and the surrounding Grapevine Canyon have been closed to all public access since a 3,200 cubic foot per second flash flood on October 18, 2015. That flood destroyed sections of the road, washed away the water system, destroyed the sewer

system, damaged pedestrian walkways, and damaged several historic buildings. The park plans to use park entrance fees to fund about one-third of the total \$26 million cost of repairing damage at Scotty's Castle in order to be able to reopen the historic district to the public. From 2016 to 2019, about \$8.7 million in fee revenue would be spent on Scotty's Castle flood projects including preservation of the museum collection; repairing the water system; repairing the historic gate and bridge; restoring the historic fence line; restoring the picnic area and historic landscape; and repairing water damage to Scotty's Castle, Chimes Tower, and Fire Cache.

Park fees are not the only source of funds being used to restore Scotty's Castle. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will fund an estimated \$7 million in repairs to Scotty's Castle Road. Regional and national offices of the National Park Service will fund about \$10.5 million in

	Current Fee	Proposed Fee
Entrance fee (per vehicle)	\$20	\$25
Entrance fee (per person)	\$10	\$12
Entrance fee (per motorcycle)	\$10/ one person \$20/ two people	\$20
Death Valley annual pass	\$40	\$50
Furnace Creek Campground (sites without electricity)	\$12 (summer) \$18 (winter)	\$16 (summer) \$22 (winter)
Furnace Creek Campground (sites with electric hookups)	\$30	\$36
Texas Spring Campground	\$14	\$16
Sunset Campground Mesquite Spring Stovepipe Wells	\$12	\$14
Emigrant Campground Wildrose Campground Thorndike Campground Mahogany Flat	Free	Free
Scotty's Castle House Tour	\$15	Not available until 2019
Scotty's Castle Flood Tour	N/A	\$32



projects, such as restoration of the Scotty's Castle Visitor Center (in the extensively damaged historic Garage/Longshed building), electrical repairs, Hacienda building repairs, parking lot repairs, walkway repairs, replacing HVAC systems, and constructing a flood control diversion dike.

### **Temporary Scotty's Castle Flood Tour**

If all funding, design, and construction happen as planned, Scotty's Castle will be fully open to the public again in 2019. All of Grapevine Canyon and Scotty's Castle district are closed to the public until repairs are done.

Death Valley National Park is considering offering a Scotty's Castle Flood Tour to provide ranger-guided access to Scotty's Castle in a safe manner before the construction projects are completed. The tour would be two hours long, be limited to groups of 15 or less, and would begin and end at Grapevine Ranger Station. Tours would not be offered every day, but would instead be offered only when conditions are safe enough and sufficient staffing is available. It is not decided yet whether the tours would include entering any of the historic buildings, or would remain outside on the grounds of the historic district. The park proposes to charge \$32 for the tour, which would defray the costs of providing the tour. Children, Senior Passholders, and Access Passholders would be charged \$16.

"With Scotty's Castle closed and many facilities impacted, this is a one-of-a-kind and spectacular opportunity to see Scotty's Castle in a different way," said Superintendent Mike Reynolds. "Through these tours, we plan to provide a safe way for visitors to learn about the history of Scotty's Castle and to see the power of the flash flood. The flood pushed a wall off its foundation. It lifted up the road and laid it back down on top of rocks. People don't often get to see such impressive reminders of the power of nature. It's a good way to appreciate the geologic forces that are still creating and shaping the landscape of Death Valley."

Once repairs are done in 2019, the National Park Service plans to reopen Scotty's Castle fully. At that point, visitors would again be able to walk around the grounds on their own or take the Scotty's Castle House Tour or Underground Tour.

### **How To Comment:**

Public comments are due by June 29, 2016 and can be recorded at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/DEVAfee>. Written comments can also be mailed to:

Death Valley National Park  
ATTN: Fee Proposal  
P.O. Box 579  
Death Valley, CA 92328

Public feedback is one factor that will be used to make a final decision on raising park fees. If implemented, new fees would be effective October 1, 2016.