



Legislation Text

File #: 2023-0148, **Version:** 1

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Regional Parks
Staff Name and Phone Number: Robert Gonzalez, 707-565-6032
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Consolidated Fee Hearing - Regional Parks Fee Package FY 23-24

Recommended Action:

Approval of Resolution of the Board of Supervisors authorizing fee adjustments for residence maintenance fees, firewood purchases, fees for hiker/bicycle campsites, and new tiers to the volume rates for annual parks memberships. Fee changes will become effective July 1, 2023.

Executive Summary:

Sonoma County Regional Parks manages 58 parks, trails, beaches, and other facilities covering more than 15,506 acres. In FY 22-23, fees paid by park visitors provide an anticipated 29% of the Regional Parks operating budget. Fee revenue is critical in operating and maintain the growing system of parks for residents and visitors. Regional Parks proposes changes to its fees to recover the reasonable costs of maintaining parks for public use, providing park services, and for consistency with prior fee adjustments.

Discussion:

Changes to Current Fees and Rates

Regional Parks propose changes to the following fees for FY 23/24. The proposed fee increases reflect the reasonable costs of maintaining the parks for public use and recovering the reasonable costs of the services provided. Resident maintenance fees increase will be used to help mitigate some of the costs of repairs and deferred maintenance to these facilities

- Park residences allow for added security and timely response from staff to address site issues. Residence maintenance fees are charged to Regional Parks employees inhabiting the facilities and will go up 2.74% in accordance with bargaining unit contract language, from \$199.17 to \$204.63 the first and second paydays of each month and will be used to offset the costs of maintenance of the facilities.
- Firewood purchases will increase from \$10 a bundle to \$12 a bundle, to offset rising costs. Firewood fees have not been increased since 2015, and the fee proposed for firewood is based on vendor increases and current market rates.

Hiker/bicycle campsites fees will increase from \$5 to \$7, to remain consistent with current fees charged to visitors for day use. The hiker/bicycle campsite fees have not been increased since 2010, and the proposed

increase will make the fee consistent with current day use charges, currently at \$7 daily. Hiking or bicycling visitors can enter park facilities at no cost but would only be charged when camping overnight. The cost of the amenities associated with camping are proposed for increase to be consistent with the same rate charged to day use members who utilize park amenities with their fee.

New Proposed Fees

To promote community health and wellness, Regional Parks encourages local businesses and community groups to purchase annual park memberships for their employees or members. Regional Parks currently offers tiered rates for volume purchases. Customers purchasing memberships in bulk receive the following discounts: 10 to 24 memberships = 5% discount; 25 to 49 memberships = 10% discount; and 50 or more memberships = 20% discount. Regional Parks proposes two additional tiers for volume purchases to attract larger organizations who would like to offer a healthy gift of appreciation or wellness incentive to their employees. Regional Parks recommends a 30% discount for orders of 200 to 299 memberships and a 35% discount for orders of 300 or more memberships.

Justification for New Fees:

Regional Parks' membership sales are a key source of funding for park programs, and memberships sales have grown to more than \$2 million annually through the department's ability to competitively market parks memberships. The proposed fee changes will allow Regional Parks to expand its customer base by further incentivizing purchases for the area's larger employers and organizations. Regional Parks regularly sells memberships to small and medium-size employers and community groups, and larger organizations have asked about the potential for expanded discounting that would make it more likely for them to buy memberships in bulk for employee recognition or wellness programs. Increasing membership sales also supports the county's strategic priority to promote community health.

Summary of Expected Results:

Proposed fee increases are to help cover increases to facility maintenance costs. While partial cost recovery is the key driver necessitating increases to park fees, Regional Parks seeks to ensure that its fees are not prohibitive to users.

The request to add new tiers for volume purchases will enhance opportunities for Regional Parks to expand its customer base, generate additional revenue and promote community health.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Prior Board Actions:

April 3, 2021 - Board of Supervisors adopted Regional Parks Fee Adjustments

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 22-23 Adopted	FY23-24 Projected	FY 24-25 Projected
Budgeted Expenses		\$36,362	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures		\$36,362	

Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other		\$36,362	
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources		\$36,362	

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Fees reflect the reasonable cost of maintaining park residences and firewood provided to customers. The Hiker/Bicycle campsite fee maintains consistency with other fees charged. New fees for volume purchases will generate additional revenue and promote community health.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

The proposed new fees will not impact current staffing levels.

Attachments:

- Fee Resolution
- Regional Parks Fee Package Adjustment

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None