



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 3/23/2021

To: The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Regional Parks
Staff Name and Phone Number: Jim Piercy 565-3955
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): All

Title:

Consolidated Fee Hearing: Regional Park Fee Package FY21-22

Recommended Action:

Approval of Resolution of the Board of Supervisors authorizing fee adjustments for peak season and non-peak season camping, new fees for document copies, and a County Resident Discount for Community Engagement Programs effective on July 1, 2021.

Executive Summary:

Sonoma County manages 56 parks, trails, beaches and other facilities covering more than 12,600 acres and hosts more than 5.2 million visitors annually. In FY19-20 fees paid by park visitors provided 25% of the Regional Parks operating budget. Fee revenue is critical in operating and maintaining 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, for providing park services, and for consistency with prior fee adjustments. Details are included in the Fee Package Cover Sheet attached to the Resolutions accompanying this Agenda Report and summarized here.

Discussion:

Changes to Current Fees and Rates

Regional Parks proposes changes to individual camping fees in FY21-22. Peak season Individual Campsite Fees will increase by \$2 per night for Regular (\$37), Resident (\$35) and Access (\$33) camping. Non-peak season fees will increase by \$3 per night for Regular (\$35), Resident (\$33), and Access (\$31). Camping fees were last increased on July 1, 2015, and utilization is high and campground maintenance and operation costs have increased.

New Fees

Regional Parks proposes two new fees for FY21-22: a document copy fee and a County Resident Discount for Community Engagement Programs.

Regional Parks has been receiving a significant increase in public records acts requests for documents. To offset the cost of providing these documents, Regional Parks proposes a \$.10 per page copy fee starting on

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July 1, 2021 to recover the direct cost of duplicating public records. This would offset part of the materials cost of providing this service.

Regional Parks would like to offer a \$2 discount to County Residents for Community Engagement Programs. This discount would reduce the fee for School Field Trips, Outreach Programs, Educational Programs, Park Program Fees, Tier 1 Programs for General Registrants and Member Registrants, Tier 2 Programs for General Registrants and Member Registrants, Tier 3 Programs for General Registrants and Member Registrants, Tier 4 Programs for General Registrants and Member Registrants, Summer Camp Fees including Basic Jr. Lifeguard, Environmental Jr. Lifeguard, Surf Camp, River Camp, Open Water Lifeguard Training, Drop-in Lifeguard Training, Enhanced Recreational Programs, Multi-day Excursions, and Trainings for Partner Agencies.

A discount for residents has been implemented in other Park and Recreation Districts, including East Bay Regional Parks, Huron Metro Parks (MI), Nova Parks (VA), and Cleveland Metro Parks (OH). The proposed County Resident Discount is consistent with these other Park and Recreation Districts.

Justification to Changes to Current Fees:

The primary purpose of the proposed increases to Regional Park Fees is to maintain core services that provide park users with a safe experience in our parks. The proposed fees also comply with Proposition 26 criteria because the fees reflect the reasonable cost of maintaining the parks for public use and recovering the reasonable costs of the services provided. Fee amounts cover only a portion of the Department's overall costs as the park system receives over \$12.5M per year in support from the General Fund, sales taxes, and Transit and Occupancy Taxes. Therefore, the proposed increases do not exceed the reasonable cost of maintaining the parks for public use and for providing for these public services.

The proposed increase elevates camping fees to match state-operated Sonoma and Mendocino County campgrounds, which are currently priced at \$35 per night, which locally include Bodega Dunes and Wrights Beach. Most nearby operators charge at least 20 percent more and in some cases double for tent or RV camping (Riverbend Campground and Porto Bodega or Casini Ranch).

While not keeping pace with labor and utility expense increases since the last fee adjustment in 2015, the proposed increases are commensurate with Consumer Price index (CPI) inflation rates. From 2016-2020, total CPI growth totaled 9.74 percent. Applying that rate to the existing \$32 per night fee, we arrive at \$35 per night.

The proposed fees are reasonably allocated since they are applied equally based on use or service provided either to the public at large. While partial cost recovery is the key driver necessitating parks fees, Regional Parks seeks to ensure that its fees are not prohibitive to users even at the expense of cost recovery.

Summary of Expected Results:

With revenue from user fees the Department expects to keep all Regional Parks open with a satisfactory level of maintenance and enhanced visitor services and experiences.

Prior Board Actions:

May 9, 2017 BOS adopted Regional Parks Fee Adjustments

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 20-21 Adopted	FY21-22 Projected	FY 22-23 Projected
Budgeted Expenses		\$82,100	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures		\$82,100	
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other		\$82,100	
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources		\$82,100	

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Fees collected for Peak Season Camping, Non-Peak Season Camping, Document Copy, and County Resident Discount for Community Engagement Programs.

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 existing staffing levels.

Attachments:

- Fees Cover Sheet
- Concurrent Resolution 1

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

Department	Division/unit	Type of change (Increase, decrease, new fee, replacement of fee, deletion of fee, other change)	Fee Description (short)	Fee Subcategory	Legal basis for fee	Requirement to adjust fee (resolution or ordinance)	FY 2019-20 Units	Anticipated units, FY 2021-20	Current fee amount	Proposed fee amount	Change in fee (%)	Proposed effective date	Additional revenue expected*	Last date fee changed	Amount prior to last change	Amount fee is subsidized by other funding (per unit), if any
Regional Parks	Administration	New fee	Document copy fee		Government Code Section 6253 (b), California Constitution, Article XI, section 7, California Constitution, Art. XIII C, Section 1(e)	Resolution	unknown	1,000	n/a	\$ 0.10	n/a	7/1/2021	\$ 100.00	n/a	n/a	0
Regional Parks	Community Engagement	New fee	County Resident Discount for Community Engagement Programs		Government Code Section 6253 (b), California Constitution, Article XI, section 7, California Constitution, Art. XIII C, Section 1(e)	Resolution	unknown	500		\$ (2.00)	n/a	7/1/2021	\$ (1,000.00)	n/a	n/a	0
Regional Parks	Administration	Increase	Individual camping - peak season - regular		Government Code Section 6253 (b), California Constitution, Article XI, section 7, California Constitution, Art. XIII C, Section 1(e)	Resolution		23,000	\$ 35.00	\$ 37.00	6%	7/1/2021	\$ 46,000.00	7/1/2015	\$ 32.00	0
Regional Parks	Administration	Increase	Individual camping - peak season - resident		Government Code Section 6253 (b), California Constitution, Article XI, section 7, California Constitution, Art. XIII C, Section 1(e)	Resolution			\$ 33.00	\$ 35.00	6%	7/1/2021		7/1/2015	\$ 30.00	0
Regional Parks	Administration	Increase	Individual camping - peak season - access		Government Code Section 6253 (b), California Constitution, Article XI, section 7, California Constitution, Art. XIII C, Section 1(e)	Resolution			\$ 31.00	\$ 33.00	6%	7/1/2021		7/1/2015	\$ 28.00	0
Regional Parks	Administration	Increase	Individual camping - non-peak season - regular		Government Code Section 6253 (b), California Constitution, Article XI, section 7, California Constitution, Art. XIII C, Section 1(e)	Resolution		12,000	\$ 32.00	\$ 35.00	9%	7/1/2021	\$ 36,000.00	7/1/2015	\$ 30.00	0
Regional Parks	Administration	Increase	Individual camping - non-peak season - resident		Government Code Section 6253 (b), California Constitution, Article XI, section 7, California Constitution, Art. XIII C, Section 1(e)	Resolution			\$ 30.00	\$ 33.00	10%	7/1/2021		7/1/2015	\$ 28.00	0
Regional Parks	Administration	Increase	Individual camping - non-peak season - access		Government Code Section 6253 (b), California Constitution, Article XI, section 7, California Constitution, Art. XIII C, Section 1(e)	Resolution			\$ 28.00	\$ 31.00	11%	7/1/2021		7/1/2015	\$ 26.00	0

*Should be calculated to indicate the additional revenue expected if this fee goes into affect vs. status quo with no fee impact, not the difference between the prior year's revenue and the future year revenue.



County of Sonoma

State of California

Date: March 23, 2021

Item Number: _____

Resolution Number: 1

4/5 Vote Required

**Resolution Of The Board Of Supervisors Of The County Of Sonoma, State Of California,
Authorizing A New Fee For Document Copying, A County Resident Discount For Community
Engagement Programs, And Increased Fees For Peak Season Camping And Non-Peak Season
Camping.**

Whereas, the County of Sonoma owns and operates fifty six Regional Parks, trails and other facilities; and

Whereas, pursuant to California Constitution, Article XI, section 7, California Constitution, Art. XIII C, Section 1(e)(4), Government Code section 6253(b) and Sonoma County Code section 20-24, the County of Sonoma may charge fees to for the entrance and use of County parks, and to recover the reasonable cost of service provided to the fee payor for maintaining the parks and providing government services;

Whereas, in fiscal year 2019-20 the Regional Parks Department generated \$6.9M in revenues and \$21M in expenditures with a General Fund subsidy of \$4.7M and Transit and Occupancy Tax of \$2.7M to operate and maintain the County's park system, excluding the Marinas and Spring Lake Park; and

Whereas, the fee revenue generated for the provision of these services does not fully recover the cost to provide those services to the fee payors, however, the fee revenue offsets expenses incurred in the operation and maintenance of the County's park system; and

Whereas, a comparison of Regional Parks revenue, expenditures, and the General Fund subsidy in the last fiscal year indicates that the additional revenues to be collected from the adjusted fees will be less than the cost to the County of funding the Regional Parks programs;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that to recover the reasonable cost of providing certain parks services, it is necessary to increase certain fees and establish certain new fees as

set forth below:

Type	Fee Description	Current	New
New	Document Copy Fee	N/A	\$0.10
New	Resident Discount for Community Programming	N/A	-\$2.00
Increase	Camping – Peak Season – Regular	\$35.00	\$37.00
Increase	Camping – Peak Season – Resident	\$33.00	\$35.00
Increase	Camping – Peak Season – Access	\$31.00	\$33.00
Increase	Camping – Non-Peak Season-Regular	\$32.00	\$35.00
Increase	Camping – Non-Peak Season-Resident	\$30.00	\$33.00
Increase	Camping – Non-Peak Season - Regular	\$28.00	\$31.00

Be It Further Resolved based on information presented to this Board, this Board finds that the proposed fees comply with all legal requirements, including Art. XIII C of the California Constitution.

Be It Further Resolved that in all other respects, previously established fees for the Regional Parks Department not modified by this resolution shall remain in full force and effect.

Be It Further Resolved that if any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this resolution

Be It Further Resolved that pursuant to state law and Section 20-24 of the Code of the County of Sonoma, the Director of Regional Parks shall be authorized to increase fees for Peak Season Camping and Non-Peak Season Camping, offer a County Resident Discount for Community Engagement Programs and in response to California Public Records Act requests, charge 10 cents per page to recover the direct costs to duplicate copies of public records. . The proposed fee adjustments are hereby authorized to become effective on July 1, 2021, and shall supersede rates and policies presently in effect, and shall be incorporated into the schedule of all rates and fees charged for the use of Sonoma County’s park facilities.

Be It Further Resolved that the Director of Regional Parks is hereby authorized and directed to take such steps as necessary to implement and charge the adjusted fees adopted herein.

Resolution #21-

Date:

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Supervisors:

Gorin:

Rabbitt:

Coursey:

Gore:

Hopkins:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

So Ordered.