

Stehekin Solid Waste Management Reduced Waiver Rate Proposal

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

North Cascades National Park
Lake Chelan National Recreation Area
Ross Lake National Recreation Area



Since the 1970s, the National Park Service (NPS) has provided free solid waste management service to all non-NPS users within Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. While this service has benefited both the community of Stehekin and park resources over the past 40 years by providing safe and appropriate means for the disposal of solid waste, North Cascades National Park Service Complex has been out of compliance with federal regulations (36 CFR Part 6) that prohibit the NPS from accepting waste from non-NPS users. NPS policy also requires that parks charge fees to recover the full cost of providing utility services (including solid waste management) to non-NPS users.

NPS Request for Special Regulation and Waiver for Reduced Rates

To address non-compliance with 36 CFR Part 6, North Cascades National Park Service Complex is pursuing implementation of a special regulation that would allow the NPS to accept waste from non-NPS users within Stehekin¹. Additionally, in response to public comments on the solid waste fee structure proposed in the *Replacement of Administrative Facilities at Stehekin Environmental Assessment*, the park is seeking a waiver to NPS policy requirements in order to reduce the rates charged for solid waste disposal services in Stehekin. Specifically, the park is requesting to:

- Waive cost recovery for the recycling program, allowing customers to dispose of approved recyclable materials for free;
- Waive cost recovery for capital improvements, including current trash compaction equipment upgrades and the planned relocation and construction of a new transfer station;
- Reduce initial 2016 rates to less than half of the full cost recovery rate with phased rate increases over six years to achieve cost recovery at the reduced waiver rate in 2022 (annual rate increases capped at 10% per year).

The park is requesting this waiver on behalf of all non-NPS users who generate solid waste within the boundary of Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. This includes private residents and businesses in the community of Stehekin, as well as NPS concession operations. The purposes of this request are to:

- Find a balance between achieving the intent of cost recovery while encouraging participation in the program at a fair and reasonable rate; and
- Reduce potential resource damage and enforcement challenges associated with implementing a solid waste program that is prohibitively expensive for local residents and businesses.

Future of Solid Waste in Stehekin

Once the park has authority to accept non-NPS waste, NPS policy guidelines will be used to set fees and recover costs for solid waste management. Approval of the waiver request would result in an initial 2016 rate of \$0.17 per pound, with an escalation to approximately \$0.30 per pound by 2022. Full cost recovery without the waiver reduction would be \$0.35 per pound in 2016. Table 1 on the back of this handout provides estimates of annual solid waste costs based on quantities of trash generated by various user groups in 2010. **Actual costs will be calculated by multiplying the actual quantity of solid waste disposed at the transfer station (weighed by scale) by the fixed unit rate (\$/lb), which will be adjusted annually based on the previous year's actual operating costs (e.g. 25 lbs trash x \$0.17/lb = \$4.25).**

¹ The proposed rule was published in the Federal Register on July 13, 2015 and can be viewed online by searching for RIN: 1024-AE09 at www.regulations.gov. Comments specific to the proposed rule will be accepted via this website through October 13, 2015.

Table 1. Comparison of unit rates and estimated annual solid waste costs by generator across various rate scenarios.

		Estimated City of Chelan Rate 2016 ²	Estimated Orcas & San Juan Island Rate 2016 ³	Stehekin Full Cost Recovery Rate 2016 ⁴	Stehekin Reduced Waiver Rate 2016	Stehekin Reduced Waiver Rate 2022
Fixed	Unit Rate (\$/lb)		\$0.15	\$0.35	\$0.17	\$0.30
	Household (\$/yr)	\$209	\$400	\$933	\$390	\$692
Estimated	Large Business (\$/yr)	\$1,685	\$4,944	\$11,535	\$4,825	\$8,548
	NPS (\$/yr)	\$3,370	\$5,713	\$13,330	\$5,575	\$9,877
	NPS Concession (\$/yr)	\$3,370	\$8,185	\$19,098	\$7,887	\$14,151

Phased increase, 10% per year over six years

² Based on current residential and commercial rates for a comparable volume and frequency of service.

³ Averaged and based on a per-ton unit rate for mixed solid waste measured via scale.

⁴ Full cost recovery rate was calculated from average 2013 & 2014 actual costs, adjusted for inflation to 2016, and reduced to account for anticipated efficiency improvements in trash compaction operations resulting from new equipment upgrades.