

Mammoth Cave National Park

Proposed Recreational Fee Changes for 2024

General Information

The authority to charge recreational fees at national parks stems from the 2004 Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act.

Expanded amenity fee (campground, tours, day use, etc.) increases require annual comparability studies and are determined by comparing the cost of Mammoth Cave tours, campsites, and other amenities with the cost of privately operated businesses of similar duration and visitor experience. The park keeps fees in line with private operators and must not over or under charge for tours and visitor amenities.

Current rates have been in effect since 2021. The proposed fees would remain in place through at least 2026.

Proposed Rates 2024

Cave Tour	Current Rate Adult	Proposed Rate Adult	Current Rate Youth (6-12)	Proposed Rate Youth (6-12)
Accessible Tour	\$22.00	\$27.00	\$16.00	\$21.00
Broadway	\$18.00	\$22.00	\$13.00	\$17.00
Cleaveland Tour	\$22.00	\$30.00	\$16.00	\$24.00
Discovery Tour	\$8.00	\$12.00	\$6.00	\$9.00
Domes & Dripstone Tour	\$21.00	\$30.00	\$16.00	\$25.00
Extended Historic Tour	\$23.00	\$27.00	\$17.00	\$21.00
Focus Tour	\$16.00	\$25.00	\$12.00	\$21.00
Frozen Niagara Tour	\$18.00	\$26.00	\$14.00	\$22.00
Gothic Tour	\$19.00	\$23.00	\$15.00	\$19.00
Grand Ave Tour	\$35.00	\$42.00	\$27.00	\$34.00
Grand Historic	\$35.00	\$39.00	\$27.00	\$31.00
Great Onyx	\$23.00	\$31.00	\$18.00	\$26.00
Historic Tour	\$20.00	\$24.00	\$15.00	\$18.00
Introduction to Caving	\$35.00	\$49.00	\$28.00	\$42.00
Mammoth Passage	\$11.00	\$15.00	\$9.00	\$13.00
River Styx	\$22.00	\$26.00	\$16.00	\$20.00
Star Chamber	\$25.00	\$30.00	\$20.00	\$25.00
Trog (ages 8 - 12)	-	-	\$25.00	\$25.00
Violet City	\$25.00	\$32.00	\$20.00	\$27.00
Wild Cave (age 16+)	\$66.00	\$79.00	-	-
Wondering Woods	\$18.00	\$26.00	\$14.00	\$22.00

Educational Tours	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
Historic Tour School Groups (K-12th)	\$14.00	\$12.00
Environmental Education Groups	\$6.00	\$10.00

Camping Types	Mammoth Cave Campground	Maple Springs Campground	Houchin Ferry Campground	Backcountry & Riverside Camping
Current Rate Electric	\$50.00	\$50.00	-	-
Current Rate Non-Electric	\$25.00	\$30.00	\$20.00	\$10.00
Current Rate Group Sites	\$40.00	-	-	-
Proposed Rate Electric	\$50.00	\$50.00	-	-
Proposed Rate Non-Electric	\$25.00	\$30.00	\$20.00	\$10.00
Proposed Rate Group Sites	\$40.00	-	-	-

Day Use Fee	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
Picnic Shelters (Enclosed)	\$80.00	\$85.00
Picnic Shelters (Open Air)	\$55.00	\$55.00

New Proposed Fee	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
EV Charging Stations (Level III)	-	\$0.40 per kilowatt hour Idle Fee: After charging is complete, a 10-min grace period will be applied. If the vehicle remains connected to the charger after the grace period is over, a \$0.40 per minute fee will be charged until it is disconnected.

America the Beautiful Interagency Senior/Access pass holders will continue to receive a 50% discount the regular ticket price for the pass-holder only, as well as 50% off campground fees. Reservations for group campsites, picnic shelters, backcountry camping, or electric vehicle charging do not receive a 50% discount.

Proposed Changes to Fees

In addition to fees charged for existing cave tours, campsites, and day use picnic shelters, new fees are being proposed for the use of electric vehicle charging stations. The new stations should be installed in the visitor center parking lot within the next year.

Use of Fees

At Mammoth Cave, 80% of the fees collected are used within the park to fund projects that address deferred maintenance needs, enhance visitor programs and services, protect resources, and improve and rehabilitate facilities for visitors. The remaining 20% helps support projects in the 270+ National Park Service (NPS) units that do not charge entrance fees, like nearby Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park in Hodgenville, KY.

Some examples of past projects and programs funded from recreation fees at Mammoth Cave National Park:

- Replacement of failing emergency backup generator and primary electric equipment at the Mammoth Cave Hotel.
- Rehabilitation of deteriorating hotel parking lot to address safety, deferred maintenance, and visitor needs.
- Reconstruction and replacement of deteriorated and unsafe benches and program equipment at the outdoor amphitheater.
- Replacement of security bollards and repair of a concrete walkway at the Mammoth Cave Visitor Center.
- Repair of damaged handrails at the Historic Entrance to Mammoth Cave.

Public Comments

The park is accepting written comments on the proposed rate increase during an open public comment period from Monday, June 26, 2023 to Friday, July 28, 2023. Comments are preferred to be submitted through the NPS planning website at https://parkplanning.nps.gov/maca_fees_2023.

Comments may also be mailed to:

Mammoth Cave National Park
Attn: Proposed Fee Increase
P.O. Box 7
Mammoth Cave, KY 42259.

All mail-in comments must be postmarked by July 28, 2023.

Anonymous comments and comments submitted by e-mail will not be accepted. Bulk comments in any format submitted on behalf of others will not be accepted.