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Title: RESOLUTION - Of the Council of the City of Fresno, California, opposing the proposed National Park Entrance Fee increases

Sponsors: Steve Brandau

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Attachments: 1. RESOLUTION - Opposing NPS Entrance Fee Increases.pdf, 2. Attachment A - NPS Fact Sheet and Current and Proposed Fee Rates Spreadsheet.pdf

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
11/9/2017	1	City Council	approved	Pass

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

November 9, 2017

FROM: STEVE BRANDAU, Councilmember for District 2
City Council Offices

SUBJECT

RESOLUTION - Of the Council of the City of Fresno, California, opposing the proposed National Park Entrance Fee increases

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Council adopt the position resolution opposing the proposed National Park entrance fee increases.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On October 24, 2017 the National Park Service announced its proposed intent to raise entrance fees at 17 national parks across the United States. Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are included as part of that proposal. The fees for these three parks would be increased dramatically for "Peak Season" (May 1 through Sept 30) visitors.

The proposed fee increases are:

	Park-Specific Annual Pass Fee	Peak Season Per Vehicle Fee	Peak Season Per Person Fee	Peak Season Per Motorcycle Fee
Yosemite NP	\$60 → \$75	\$30 → \$70	\$15 → \$30	\$25 → \$50
Sequoia NP	\$50 → \$75	\$30 → \$70	\$15 → \$30	\$25 → \$50
Kings Canyon NP	\$50 → \$75	\$30 → \$70	\$15 → \$30	\$25 → \$50

The purpose of the fee increases, according to the NPS “would generate badly needed revenue for improvements to the aging infrastructure of national parks. This includes roads, bridges, campgrounds, waterlines, bathrooms, and other visitor services.” The NPS estimates there is a \$12 billion infrastructure maintenance downfall nationwide.

The proposed fees are expected to bring in approximately \$70 million annually, and, if implemented, would begin May 1, 2018.

More information on the proposed fee schedule can be found in Attachment A, or at <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1207/10-24-2017-fee-changes-proposal.htm>.

The City and County of Fresno are important hubs to these three parks, with more than 2.5 million visitors passing through our region, and visiting our restaurants hotels. The hospitality industry in Fresno County generates more than a \$1 billion dollars annually, generating TOT, sales, and fuel tax revenues for local governments.

The implementation of these increased entrance fees could negatively impact tourism in our region. In addition, the severity of the increase could affect the ability of low-income families to visit and enjoy public lands. While it is acknowledged that there is a severe funding shortfall facing the National Park system, the proposed entrance fee increases would both restrict public access to the park and at the same time be an inadequate solution to the funding shortfall. With other Congressional initiatives already underway, it is recommended the City Council oppose this specific fee proposal.

It is recommended the Council approve the attached resolution opposing the proposed National Park entrance fee increases, stating the possible impacts to the City of Fresno and its residents, and to submit the resolution to the NPS during their public comment period which ends November 23, 2017.

BACKGROUND

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

This is not a project for CEQA purposes.

LOCAL PREFERENCE

Local preference is not applicable because this item does not involve an award of a contract.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact from passing this resolution.

RJ103017