



Baxter State Park
2026 Fee Adjustment Proposal
Review Date: October 3, 2026
BSPA Approved:

This proposal and attached Worksheet A were prepared by the staff of Baxter State Park (BSP). During the BSP Authority (BSPA) meeting on October 3, 2026, the staff will seek the BSPA's review and approval of this proposal.

General Discussion and Rationale:

The number of visitors to the Park remained fairly stable from 2016 to 2025, averaging about 60,000 per year. As of December 31, 2025, the latest figures indicate that visitation dropped to 58,963, down from 60,061 the previous year. Notably, 54% of these visitors were residents of Maine.

Maine's per capita income increased by about 11.4% between 2023 and 2025, outpacing the 5.6% inflation rate over the same period. See *Worksheet A, Section 2, Table 2, Table 3*. In FY26, the most recent fiscal year, generated user fees (including canoe rental and firewood sales) covered 26.7% of Park expenses. The 10-year average of user fees collected to total expense suggests a *minimum* percentage of 30%. The biennial budget for FY28/29 projects 23.7% and 23.5%, respectively. See *Worksheet A, Section 1, Table 1*

Based on the general discussion and rationale, the Staff proposes the following:

Entrance and Camping Fees: From 2024 to 2026, camping site fees in the local area or region have remained largely stable, with only slight differences. Entrance fees for State and Federal Parks tend to be higher in other locations. State Parks offer a 7-day vehicle pass at various rates: a single-user pass is \$55.00, and a multi-user vehicle pass is \$107.00. Additionally, senior visitors can obtain a pass for \$45.00. At Acadia National Park, the cost of a 7-day resident vehicle pass is \$35.00, while a 7-day non-resident vehicle pass is \$100.00. At BSP, the entrance fee and season pass are much lower and charged per vehicle. See *Worksheet A, Section 2, Table 4*

Recommendation: *Increase camping fees (excluding backcountry and winter) by 5%, rounded, and park entrance fees for non-residents by \$5.00, as outlined in Table A below. Backcountry and winter were determined to be appropriately priced.*

Katahdin Trailhead Pass: In 2024, the Park raised the fee from \$5.00 to \$10.00; no changes are recommended at this time.

Recommendation: *No fee change is recommended for KTP.*

Canoes: The Park charges \$1 per hour or \$8 per day for canoe rentals. The park offers a program where canoes are available at various locations for visitors and campers. The fees are typically collected on an honor system. These revenues are ample to supply the Park with canoes and resources to administer the program.

- Revenue collected in recent fiscal years (July – June):
 - 2026 - \$18,595
 - 2025 - \$18,541
 - 2024 - \$14,150
 - 2023 - \$17,971

Recommendation: *No fee change is recommended for canoe rentals.*

Bundled firewood: The price of bundled firewood has been set at \$5 per bundle since at least 2021. The Park provides bundled firewood as an affordable purchase option for campers while also supporting the objective of protecting natural resources by preventing the spread of insects and diseases on firewood imported into the Park.

- Over the past decade, the prices of bundled firewood in areas around the Park have risen to an average of \$6 to \$8 per bundle.
- The costs associated with the program (harvest, transport, processing, and staff time to administer) have increased significantly with inflation. The Park can no longer break even with the current price of \$5.00 per bundle.

Recommendation: *Increase the price per bundle to \$6.00 to cover firewood processing costs.*

Table A:

Camping Fees (per unit, per night)				
Summer Rates	Current	5%	Recommended	Change Description
Campground Lean-to or Tentsite	\$38	\$39.90	\$40.00	5% Rounded
Backcountry Lean-to or Tentsite	\$25	No Change	\$25.00	No change
Bunkhouse- fee per bunk	\$15	\$15.75	\$16.00	5% Rounded
Cabin-2 person	\$65	\$68.25	\$68.00	5% Rounded
Cabin-3 person	\$95	\$99.75	\$100.00	5% Rounded
Cabin-4 person	\$125	\$131.25	\$131.00	5% Rounded
Cabin-6 person	\$185	\$194.25	\$194.00	5% Rounded
Group Site (per person per night)	\$10	\$10.50	\$11.00	5% Rounded
Group site minimum	\$60	\$63.00	\$63.00	5% Rounded
Winter Rates				
Lean-to or Tentsite	\$22	No Change	\$22.00	No change
Chimney Pond Lean-to	\$51	No Change	\$51.00	No change
Cabin-2 person	\$72	No Change	\$72.00	No change
Cabin-3 person	\$105	No Change	\$105.00	No change
Cabin-4 person	\$138	No Change	\$138.00	No change
Cabin-6 person	\$195	No Change	\$195.00	No change
Bunkhouse- fee per bunk	\$23	No Change	\$23.00	No change
Chimney Pond Bunkhouse	\$46	No Change	\$46.00	No change
Entrance Fees (non-Maine residents only)				
Entrance Fee	\$20	\$1.00	\$25.00	Higher % - Market Adjustment
Season Pass (for entrance only)	\$50	\$2.50	\$55.00	Higher % - Market Adjustment
Trailhead Pass				
Katahdin Trailhead Pass	\$10	\$0.00	\$10.00	No change
Refunds/Transfers				
Site Transfer	\$17	\$17.85	\$20.00	Higher %, Cost of Service
Refund Fee	\$17	\$17.85	\$20.00	Higher %, Cost of Service
Other Sales				
Canoe Rental	\$1/hr, \$8/day	\$0.00	\$1/hr, \$8/day	No change
Bundled firewood	\$5	\$0.25	\$6.00	Higher %, Cost of Service, Market Adjustment

Fee Structure Notes:

1. The goal is to increase Park-generated revenue by 5%. This can be achieved by increasing entrance fees to align more closely with other similar locations, without increasing winter and Backcountry fees.
2. The recommended increase in refund and transfer fees reflects the labor and processing costs the Park incurs for each modified transaction.
3. The proposed entrance fee and seasonal pass are per vehicle, not per person.