

# OUR NATIONAL PARKS

## Paying For Parks To Benefit Generations

(NAPSA)—When it comes to helping maintain and preserve one of the nation's most valuable treasures—its expansive and informative national park system—America's vacationers are doing a great job.

The small fee paid to visit some of the nation's parks is helping to maintain and preserve this national heritage for future generations. These parks honor the nation's history, and that history is part of who Americans were, who they are and who they will be.

The nearly 400 national parks cover everything from remnants of ancient civilizations to the boyhood homes of U.S. presidents to the stirring sagas of hard-fought wars to the reverberations of one woman refusing to give up her seat on the bus.

Fees, which are adjusted periodically, ensure that these parks will be available to future generations. Only 40 percent of the parks have entrance fees; 60 percent have free entry. Many entrance fees have not increased since 1997, so the National Park Service is implementing a simplified, standardized entrance fee structure where fees will range from \$5 to \$12 a person and \$10 to \$25 per car.

Or you can get an annual pass for \$80; seniors can get a lifetime pass for \$10.

One hundred percent of the fees paid stay in the park system.

Since 1998, about \$1.2 billion has been retained by the National Park Service to enhance visitor



**America will stay beautiful, thanks to vacationers who choose to visit and contribute to the nation's parks.**

facilities and services, such as improving trails and campgrounds, replacing aging water and sewer systems, providing new exhibits and interpretive signs and providing accessibility to visitors with disabilities.

Specifics include the \$9 million spent on the Canyon Visitor Center in Yellowstone, \$452,000 to improve trails in Bryce Canyon and \$2 million spent to stabilize the historic Alcatraz cellhouse at Golden Gate NRA.

The millions of dollars allocated by Congress to the parks only covers part of the work that needs to be done to preserve the nation's inheritance.

Entrance fees are a great investment if you consider how much of a bargain vacationing in the parks can be. For more information, visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).