

Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

235 Promenade Street | Providence, RI 02908 | 401.222.4700 | www.dem.ri.gov | @RhodelslandDEM

Interoffice Memo

To: Janet Coit, Director, DEM

From: Terri Bisson, Chief Program Development, Bureau of Natural Resources

Date: May 20, 2019

Re: Responses to oral and written public comments to proposed amendments to

the Rules and

Regulations for User Fees at State Beaches, Parks and Recreation Areas

Notice for amendment to **the Rules and Regulations for User Fees at State Beaches, Parks and Recreational Areas** was posted on the Rhode Island Secretary of State's website on March 18, 2019. A public hearing was held on April 2, 2019 and the comment period whereby DEM would receive written comments pertaining to the proposed regulations ended on April 17, 2019.

The individual comments that DEM received at the public hearing and in writing, along with the Division's responses, are attached.

The Department received comments from 33 individuals. One individual also presented a petition with 667 signatures, 32% of which were from Rhode Island. Most comments were in opposition to the camping fee increases. Many who were opposed to the fee increases specifically mentioned the steep amount of the proposed increase and many expressed concern that the Charlestown Breachway, which has no amenities or services, would be considered Tier 1. There was only one comment opposing golf fee increases.

At the close of the public comment period, DEM staff evaluated the comments and reviewed camping rates in southern New England. The review revealed that the proposed rates for Tier 1 and Tier 2 sites for non-residents were slightly higher than MA, CT and NH state campgrounds and some private campgrounds. Based on the results of this review and the public comments received, the Department feels it is appropriate to adjust the proposed camping rates for Tiers 1 and 2 down as shown below.

	No Hookup/ Primitive (Tier 3)		Electric & Water (Tier 2)		Electric, Water, Sewer (Tier 1)		Rustic Cabin			
	R	NR	R	NR	R	NR	R	NR		
State Campgrounds										



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Proposed	\$18	\$36	\$2 5	\$50	\$30	\$60	\$5 0	\$75
Amended			\$2				\$5	
Proposal	\$18	\$36	4	\$45	\$28	\$55	0	\$75

The Department has also amended the Tier definitions to include the Charlestown Breachway in Tier 3 based on the high number of comments directly received for this campground. Although located directly on a beach, the Charlestown Breachway has no electric and water services or shower facilities.

Please let me know if you require additional information.

Cc: Dean Hoxsie, Deputy Administrator, Bureau of Natural Resources Frank Floor, Administrator, Division of Parks & Recreation Joseph LoBianco, Senior Legal Counsel