

Introduction

As Ohio has several routes both in existence and being planned, such as the United States Bicycle Route 25, a portion of the ACA's Underground Railroad Route, and the Ohio to Erie Trail, there needs to be places for the users of these trails to stop and rest. For the self-propelled visitor (SPV) who can only make rough estimated arrival and departure times, reserving a campsite or a place to stay is not always an option due to the nature of long distance touring.

The changes of the current policy will help the state of Ohio and the Department of National Resources with an increased potential for revenue, as well as being known as a "Hiker / Biker friendly state".

The reason for this draft proposal is that it is not always safe to camp on the side of the trails, since many of the trails run alongside of roadways, which has the potential to become very hazardous to both the camper as well as the motorist.

The benefits of this proposal include:

- A financial benefit for the Department of National Resources; it will provide additional income above and beyond what can be established currently.
- Ohio will become one of the few states with an official policy, providing an incentive for more tourism throughout the state.
- A safe place for self-propelled visitors to stop and rest for the day / night.

The downsides, or side-effects, of this policy proposal include:

- A very small minority of self-propelled visitors may not abide by the rules of "Leave No Trace" or LNT.
- The potential for a slight increase in risks for disaster management in the event of a natural or human-caused disaster (such as a forest fire, tornado, or flood).

Proposed Changes

- All park managers are to designate an area in which ride-in bicyclists can camp. Unlike other campers using RV and tents arriving with vehicles, self-propelled visitor(s) travel long distances, carrying their gear with no vehicular support. Under normal circumstances, the camping adventurer will either possess advance reservations made through Ohio State Parks Reservation Center or utilize the honor camp system in place at each of the parks.
- In the event that the self-propelled visitor(s) arrive without a reservation and all designated developed campsites in the park campgrounds are full, the manager should designate a non-intrusive area for the self-propelled visitor(s) who require camping for the night. This special accommodation shall only apply under the following conditions:
 1. There are no reasonable alternative camping accommodations available, such as a nearby private or public campground that can be reached within the time allowed before darkness.
 2. The self-propelled visitor(s) is not accompanied by or joined by a motor vehicle that could transport the visitor to other accommodations.
 3. The camping party is not larger than four individuals.
- If the camping stay of the self-propelled visitor(s) extends beyond the period of full capacity, the individual(s) must then relocate to a standard campsite.
- This special camping area may not be able to provide standard campsite amenities such as a fire ring, lantern post, and picnic table, but must be located within the legally required distance from bath houses and drinking water sources
- This policy does not supersede the use of special use permits being issued for organized events or situations where large groups of individuals stage an event adjacent to a state park site and plan to camp overnight within the state park.
- All applicable fees and regulations shall apply for this special use camping area, including full pricing for a primitive camping area, even though full campground amenities may not be available.