

North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department

NEWS RELEASE

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North Dakota state parks see record numbers

Annual vehicle pass goes on sale Nov. 1

It's been a camping season unlike any other in North Dakota as campers flocked to the 13 state parks in record numbers. Interestingly enough, this comes in the same year the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department is celebrating its 50th Anniversary.

In 2014 the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department saw a record number of camping nights with 68,480. That number was surpassed by mid-October of this year and by Oct. 25 there were a total of 70,875 nights, an increase of 2,395 nights. There are still two months remaining in which state parks may see more campers, albeit a limited number with winter weather approaching. In 2014, over a 1,000 camping nights took place in November and December.

“Camping remains a very popular family activity for North Dakotans as well as visitors to our state,” NDPRD Director Mark Zimmerman says. “This camping season we were fortunate to have favorable weather conditions almost every weekend and people took advantage of that and enjoyed the North Dakota outdoors.”

The department also sold 16,672 annual vehicle passes. The \$25 pass, which provides entrance into any state park, has seen a remarkable increase of sales over the past five years. In 2011 the NDPRD sold 11,629 and last year the number had risen to 15,319, so it appears state parks are popular. The 2016 annual vehicle pass goes on sale Nov. 1 and is good until April 30 of 2017. There are discounts for senior citizens age 65 and older and for veterans with disabilities. Annual passes can be purchased from any state park, NDPRD headquarters in Bismarck, or on the department's website at www.parkrec.nd.gov.

“It is evident that people are coming to state parks for more than just camping,” Zimmerman says. “People are visiting parks for fishing, horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, interpretive programs, special events and many other activities. Parks are just a great family get away for a weekend or more!”