

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hopewell Culture National Historical Park Ends Entrance Fee on October 1

Hopewell Culture National Historical Park (NHP) will cease collecting entrance fees on October 1, the beginning of the new Federal Fiscal Year. Since 1988, the park has been collecting an entrance fee to the 2000-year-old archeological site. The fees are currently \$3.00 per individual, or \$5.00 for a single vehicle and all of its occupants. Fees were scheduled to rise on October 1 to \$5.00 per individual, or \$10.00 per vehicle.

Since fees were implemented in 1988 visitation and donations have declined. Concerns about further impacts to visitation, and analysis of the costs of administering the program caused the National Park Service to reconsider fee collection at Hopewell Culture NHP. "The Park currently spends almost as much to administer the fee collection program as we get back from the cash register," says Superintendent Dean Alexander. In addition, there are more limitations on how the money collected as fees can be used. "In the current system we are spending money that we can use for salaries and the utility bills to administer a program where the receipts are mostly to be used for facility projects. We have several sources of funds for construction projects, but only the one account for keeping the lights on and staffing the visitor center. The fee program was not working well for us. We were losing flexibility in our budgeting process," comments Alexander.

The costs of administering fees would also have risen as the park brings facilities on-line at two other units of the Park, Hopewell Mound Group Unit at the intersection of Sulphur Lick Road and Anderson Station Road, and at the Seip Earthworks Unit adjacent to the Seip Mound State Memorial on U.S. Highway 50. Collecting fees at these sites and checking to see if visitors have paid would end up costing even more money. Given these limitations, the National Park Service has dropped entrance fees at Hopewell Culture NHP. The public will still be able to purchase National Park Passes, Golden Age Passports, and obtain Golden Access Passports at the park's visitor center. (More information on these passes, good all units of the National Park System, visit www.nps.gov/fees_passes.htm.)

The end of fees will get a head start on Saturday, September 30, which is National Public Lands Day. Entrance fees at all Federal recreation areas are waived for the day.

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End of Fee Collection

The visitor center at the Mound City Group unit of Hopewell Culture NHP is located north of Chillicothe on State Route 104 and is open seven days a week from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm with longer hours in the summer. The visitor center is closed for Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Years Day. The grounds at Mound City, Seip Earthworks, and Hopewell Mound Group units are open from sunrise to sunset.

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. Experience your America!

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