

# VETERANS and GOLD STAR FAMILIES GET FREE ADMISSION TO NATIONAL PARKS, REFUGES AND OTHER DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR SITES

Veterans and Gold Star Families will be granted free access to national parks, wildlife refuges and other Federal lands managed by the Department of the Interior starting on Veterans Day this year and every day onward.

"With the utmost respect and gratitude, we are granting Veterans and Gold Star Families free access to the iconic and treasured lands they fought to protect starting this Veterans Day and every single day thereafter," said Secretary of the Interior David L. Bernhardt.

Entrance fees for the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and standard amenity recreation fees for the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Reclamation sites will be waived for

Veterans and Gold Star Families. They will have free access to approximately 2,000 public locations spread out across more than 400 million acres of public lands, which host activities to fit any lifestyle, from serene to high octane, including hiking, fishing, paddling, biking, hunting, stargazing and climbing.

Many Department managed lands have direct connections to the American military, such as frontier forts, Cold War sites, battlefields, national cemeteries, and memorials. These special places pay tribute to our veterans and serve as reminders of their courage and sacrifice throughout the history of our nation, from Minuteman National Historic Park where colonists stood in defense of their rights, to Yellowstone National Park, which was protected from vandalism and poaching

by the 1st U.S. Cavalry before the National Park Service was established, to Mount Rushmore where modern warriors attend reenlistment ceremonies. Details on program

For purposes of this program, a Veteran is identified as an individual who has served in the United States Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserves, and is able to present one of the following forms of identification:

- Department of Defense ID Card
- Veteran Health ID Card (VHIC)
- Veteran ID Card
- Veterans designation on a state-issued U.S. driver's license or ID card

Gold Star Families are next of kin of a member of the United States Armed Forces who lost his or her life in a "qualifying situation," such as a war, an international terrorist attack, or a military operation outside of the United States while serving with the United States Armed Forces.

The Interagency America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass Program already includes a free annual pass for active duty members of the U.S. Military and their dependents. Other free or discounted passes are available for persons with permanent disabilities, fourth grade students, volunteers, and senior citizens age 62 years or older.

The Department also offers free entrance days for everyone throughout the year to mark days of celebration and commemoration including the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., National Public Lands Day, Veterans Day, and the signing of the Great American Outdoors Act.

## 'SHE-OAK' NET

A slang-term for "Down Under", for the safety-net slung under gang-planks. The name is derived from a brand of potent Australian beer, which carried a picture of a she-oak tree on the bottle label. As the beer had an alcoholic content of some 15 or 20 percent, one can easily understand why the safety net was so nicknamed by "Aussie" sailors returning from a particularly hilarious shore leave.

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