

# Park fees continue to climb

By Tim Richard  
staff writer

State park fees will go up by half next year and keep going up through 1993 under a bill on its way to Gov. James Blanchard's desk.

The Michigan Senate last week had to vote twice on the controversial bill before giving it 24-8 approval.

"It's amazing the increase we've had in the state budget in the '80s," said Sen. Doug Cruce, R-Troy, one of the no votes.

"For us to increase fees while the tax base is expanding so rapidly is unthinkable. There should be enough tax revenue to operate the parks," Cruce said in an interview.

THE VEHICLE admissions provide \$2.9 million a year for park op-

erations and maintenance, about 20 percent of the operating budget.

Here's how fees would rise under House Bill 4681:

- The annual vehicle permit, which has been at \$10 since 1980, would go to \$15 next year, \$18 in 1992 and \$20 in 1993.

- Daily permits would go from the current \$2 to \$4 for Michigan residents.

- Senior citizen fees would go from \$1 a year to half the general admission price.

- Non-resident fee would go from \$3 to \$6.

- Commercial buses and vans holding more than 12 passengers no longer would be able to buy annual stickers. They would be charged daily fees of up to \$15 to be set by the Natural Resources Commission.

- A bigger chunk of the annual

permit money would go for park operation and maintenance, a smaller proportion into capital outlay and special maintenance. This is due to voter passage of a \$140 million recreational bond issue last year that is to be used solely for capital outlay.

- The Department of Natural Resources could raise fees for camping reservations and camping fees, which are paid on a daily basis over and above vehicle entry fees.

SUPPORTING the bill were Sens. William Faust, D-Westland, Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, and Robert Geake, R-Northville.

Opposed were Cruce, George Hart, D-Deerborn, and Rudy Nichols, R-Waterford.

Richard Fessler, R-Commerce, had an excused absence.

Current fees are "ridiculously low" according to a staff analysis. Meanwhile, staffing is down, toilet facilities are sometimes in disrepair, and stairways are deteriorating.

"The money goes into a special, restricted fund," said Sen. Phil Arthurhult, R-Whitehall. "It is used for day-to-day operations — rangers, trucks. Fees have not been increased in a number of years. This does not meet inflation."

"The DNR budget is based on this fee increase," said Arthurhult.

Debate was brief as senators waded through a stack of budget conference reports in the cramped quarters of a committee room. The Senate chamber has been torn apart during extensive renovations of the State Capitol Building.

# Bill would attach fee to conviction

By Tim Richard  
staff writer

Every convicted felon and drunk driver would pay a \$30 fee to compensate crime victims under a bill passed by the state Senate.

The bill goes back to the House of Representatives to see if they will agree to Sen. Doug Cruce's amendment to bring drunk drivers into the program.

"This will provide funding for the crime victims rights program," said Cruce, R-Troy, referring to the constitutional amendment approved by voters last year.

No area senators opposed House Bill 4869 as it passed 31-0. Sen. Richard Fessler, R-Commerce, had an excused absence. Sen. George Z. Hart, D-Deerborn, missed the roll call.

THERE WAS NO immediate estimate of how much would be raised for the program because the bill was amended extensively in a Senate committee.

As written by Rep. William Van Regenmortel, R-Ann Arbor, sponsor of the constitutional amendment, the plan was to charge \$15 for 24,600 felony convictions and 600,000 misdemeanor convictions.

Based on an estimated 30 percent collection rate, it would have raised \$1.5 million in revenue.

Senate amendments raised the fee to \$30, added drunk driving, set a fee of \$20 for lesser offenses than drunk driving and eliminated "victimless" misdemeanors.

THE BILL establishes a six-member Criminal Assessments Commission under the Department of Management and Budget.

The panel would investigate and determine what is needed to pay for crime victims' services, estimated currently at \$5.5 million annually by the Senate Fiscal Agency.

Whatever costs weren't covered by the fees would have to be made up by the general fund budget. But sponsors hope the fees will cover the costs.

It's one thing for the state Legislature to pass a law and another to collect the money. According to the staff analysis, several things could happen:

- Some courts may not order the assessment.

- Other courts may waive or reduce them, if the convicted person is unable to pay.

- Some defendants may never pay.

# OCC faculty members are lauded

Five members of the Oakland Community College faculty were honored at recent graduation ceremonies as Outstanding for 1989.

Honored were Christine Noorshoorn, communications and humanities; Highland Lakes Campus; Marvin Parent, science and health; Auburn Hills Campus; Frances Smith, mathematics, Orchard Ridge Campus; Sandra Sutherland, creative writing and literature, Orchard Ridge Campus; and Steve Zussman, American literature, humanities, world religions and English, Royal Oak/Southfield Campus.

Noorshoorn, a Highland resident, is originally from the Dutch East Indies, and attended high school in The Netherlands. He earned a bachelor's degree in French and a master's in comparative literature at the Uni-

versity of Michigan. He has been with OCC since 1965.

Parent, of Troy, has been a part of the OCC faculty since January 1970. He received his bachelor's degree from Cleveland State University and master's degrees from the University of Michigan and Clarkson University. He is currently writing the dissertation for his Ph.D. from Wayne State University.

Smith, Farmington Hills, is co-reipient of the Outstanding Faculty award for her campus. She has been a full-time member of the OCC faculty since August 1983 and taught part-time for eight years prior to that.

Smith is a graduate of the University of Michigan and earned her master's degree from Wayne State.

Sutherland, Union Lake, the other co-reipient of the award for her

**Parent of Troy has been a part of the OCC faculty since January 1970. He received his bachelor's degree from Cleveland State University and master's degrees from the University of Michigan and Clarkson University.**

campus, earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Wayne State University. She has been with the college for 21 years.

Zussman, Royal Oak, received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Michigan and

earned his Ph.D. at Wayne State University. He has been with the college since September 1968.

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