



Reference Guide: Commercial Use Permit for Service Provider

This reference guide provides information on the permit required for service providers to conduct commercial use on Montana State Parks land, including outfitter, water-based service provider, and guided tour or trip. Please note that commercial use on all Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks land is a privilege, not a right. Authorization may be denied, amended, or revoked at any time for cause.

Note: A separate commercial use permit is needed for outfitters, guides, and water-based service providers on Fishing Access Sites (FAS) and Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). Contact FWP Regional Offices for more information.

Permit Requirements

A Commercial Use Permit is required for a service provider to conduct commercial purposes at state parks.

- Outfitters include but are not limited to whitewater rafting, canoe tours, etc.
- Water-based service providers means any person that provides any facilities, equipment, vehicle, watercraft or personal service for any person to float or recreate on water in the absence of hunting or angling. This includes but is not limited to boat rentals or demos, fishing charters, dive lessons, kayak lessons, etc.
- Guided tours include but are not limited to wildlife watching, horseback riding, bicycling, and historical or cultural tours.

Smith River is a restricted river, and opportunity to conduct commercial use on this river is limited. Please contact the Smith River Park Manager (406- 454-5840) for information on conducting water-based outfitting on the Smith River.

Permit Application Process and Fee

You must submit a completed Commercial Use Permit Application to the state park or regional office that oversees the site where you wish to operate. Applications are available on the Montana State Parks website at <http://stateparks.mt.gov/protect-and-respect/usePermits.html>. Applications are due at least 45 days before the use is intended to begin. Applications received under 5 days to intended use are subject to a rush permit fee of \$25 in addition to applicable use fees.

The permit fee for service providers is **\$5 per client day**. The permit administrator will determine the total fee based on the information provided in your permit application. Montana State Parks may adjust the fee on a case by case basis when the commercial use permit holder:

- Donates all proceeds, minus expenses, from the use or event to the management or improvement of fish, wildlife, or parks, including the maintenance, management, or the improvement or development of facilities; or
- Donates all proceeds, minus expenses, from the event or activity to a nonprofit organization or charitable cause and is not compensated for the service.
- The department may adjust commercial use fees on a case-by-case basis for special events involving children under the age of thirteen.
- The department may adjust commercial use fees on a case-by-case basis for commercial use when the sole purpose of the use is to promote department land and resources.

Terms and Conditions

The Commercial Use Permit is valid at the location(s) and time period specified on the permit. The terms and conditions are printed on your permit. Your compliance is important to ensure future opportunities to obtain a permit. FWP may require proof of liability insurance that names the State of Montana – FWP as additionally insured. The amount of coverage will vary depending on the type of use you wish to conduct.

For questions, please contact Maren Murphy, Senior Planner, at 406-444-3364 or marenmurphy@mt.gov.