

# News Release

## *Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex*

Block Island NWR □ John H. Chafee NWR at Pettaquamscutt Cove □ Ninigret NWR □ Sachuest Point NWR □ Trustom Pond NWR  
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**For Immediate Release**

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### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Provides Updates on Proposed Beach Pass Fees for Sandy Point Island**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is providing updated information on the proposed beach pass fees for those wishing to visit Sandy Point Island (Island) in Little Narragansett Bay.

In February 2015, the Service sought comments on a proposed beach pass fee schedule as shown below. The Service did not receive any negative comments, and had one on-line positive comment during the thirty-day period. While the Service did not manage the beach passes during summer 2015, refuge staff did provide outreach on the proposed beach pass program, as well as monitored visitation numbers and compliance on the Island. Based on this outreach and monitoring, the Service is proposing to revise the fee schedule beginning 2016 to simplify purchasing and compliance requirements as follows:

Type	Proposed 2016 Fee	Proposed 2015 Fee	Summer, 2014 Fee (Avalonia)
Season Pass, Individual	\$25.00	\$55.00	\$70.00
Season Pass, Family	-----	\$75.00	\$90.00
Season Pass, Senior Citizen	\$15.00	\$25.00	n/a
Federal Duck Stamp holder	n/a	Free	n/a
Daily Pass	\$10.00	\$5.00	\$5.00

Compared to previous years, the proposed fees for an individual season pass will be substantially less than what has been charged in the past to visit the Island. Additionally, the Service proposes to eliminate the need of a family season pass since children under the age of 18 are free. Under the new proposal, a family visiting the Island for the season will generally be \$50.00 for the two adults, as long as the children are under 18.

There will be a senior discount at age 62, at \$15.00 for the season; however, the Federal Duck Stamp cannot be accepted as a beach pass. The fee for the daily pass at \$10.00 is proposed to cover processing fees.

Beach passes will be required from Memorial Day through Labor Day, outside these dates the Island may be visited free of charge.

Beach access passes will be made available on-line and also by mail or phone. We are still exploring options on providing the opportunity to purchase beach passes locally. Updates will be posted to the refuge website ([www.fws.gov/refuge/ninigret/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/ninigret/)). **UPDATE: Beach passes may be purchased at [www.thecommo.org/about-us/beach-passes/](http://www.thecommo.org/about-us/beach-passes/)**

The Service has finalized a lease for the Island and is working in collaboration with the landowners, Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. The fees collected will go back into management of the Island, in addition to paying for administration of the fee program. Management includes law enforcement and visitor services programs. The goal is to manage the Island for migrating shorebirds, and at the same time maintaining its availability to the public for passive recreation and observation of the wildlife we aim to protect.

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