

<http://fox13now.com/2016/05/24/forest-service-proposes-fees-to-maintain-popular-trails-in-little-big-cottonwood-canyons/>

## Fox 13 Salt Lake City

# Forest service proposes fees to maintain popular trails in Little, Big Cottonwood Canyons

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SALT LAKE CITY, Utah – Hiking in Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons could get more expensive. The U.S. Forest Service wants to start charging for the use of improved trailheads up the canyons.

The Forest Service estimates between five and six million visitors use the paved trails every year, more than some of Utah's national parks. Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest trails manager Matt Lane said the number of visitors has made it difficult to keep up with maintenance.

“Our prime objective here is to give that good recreation experience to the public,” Lane said. “I mean, this is in our capital city, these are our flagship canyons, and we want it to be the best it can be.”

Under the proposed fee structure, vehicles would be charged \$6 if their intent were to use the improved trailheads. The fee would be good for three days and only apply to sites with facilities.

Trails affected in Big Cottonwood Canyon are Mill D and Mill B trails, Silver Lake, Spruces, Guardsman Pass and Donut Falls.

Trails impacted by the proposed fee in Little Cottonwood Canyon are White Pine and Temple Quarry, Catherine's Pass and Secret Lake trailheads.

“We want to be able to maintain the facilities better,” Lane said. “We want to get better security up the canyons, we want better information to be given out to our visitors.”

Hiker Kevin Godinet said he understands the reasoning behind the fee and would be willing to pay for nicer trailhead facilities.

“If money is what they need to upkeep them, then I think that's a smart idea,” Godinet said.

But others, like frequent trail user Sandra Hickey said the trails are fine the way they are, and thinks the trails should remain free and open to everyone.

“There's enough volunteers that take care of it,” Hickey said. “The trails look great. I just think it will keep people off.”

The forest service is currently taking public comment on the proposal, which can be submitted by emailing [malane@fs.fed.us](mailto:malane@fs.fed.us). A decision won't be made on the implementation of fees until next spring.