

Discover Pass Information for Schools and Groups

Dear Teachers and Group Leaders,

Thank you for your interest in scheduling a group visit to Deception Pass State Park. Recently, we have been fielding a lot of queries about the Discover Pass, a vehicle-access pass that is now required at all Washington State Parks. We hope this document will help answer some of your questions.

The Discover Pass has been required at State Parks since July 1st, 2011. The annual Discover Pass—good for two vehicles for one year from date-of-purchase—costs \$30, a single day pass costs \$10.

There are some exemptions that pertain to school groups:

- School buses and vans and state vehicles with exempt plates do not need a Discover Pass. Exempt plates are indicated by the letters “XMT” on the left side of the plate.
- Groups participating in **park approved** volunteer or environmental monitoring projects are issued free volunteer passes for the duration of their stay.

FAQs

Q: *Parks used to be free. Why is the Discover Pass required now?*

A: In 2011 the Washington State Legislature cut 90% of tax support from State Parks. The Discover Pass was enacted in order to keep parks open and staffed. So far, sales have been less than anticipated. At Deception Pass, nearly half of our fulltime staff has been cut. If sales do not improve, we will likely be forced to make further cuts and some State Parks may be closed. While we certainly do not enjoy having to charge for what used to be free, the Discover Pass is the only thing keeping parks open and staffed.

Q: *What if our group is camping?*

A: Vehicles that are registered at a campsite do not need a Discover Pass for the duration of their stay at the park.

Q: *Is a Discover Pass required if we are carpooling in non-school vehicles?*

A: Yes. All private vehicles with non-exempt plates need a Discover Pass.

Q: *Is a Discover Pass required for parents/chaperones that are only dropping off/picking up students and not actually parking?*

A: Technically speaking, yes—the Discover Pass is required for *access*, not just parking.

For more information about the Discover Pass including purchasing options and other exemptions, please visit <http://discoverpass.wa.gov/>

If you have specific questions about how the Discover Pass requirement will apply to your visit to Deception Pass, please contact Deception Pass Interpretive Services at (360) 675-3767 ext. 31.

