

**VETERAN ACCESS TO STATE PARKS**

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Karen Kwan**

House Sponsor: Matthew H. Gwynn

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill expands veteran access to state parks.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ creates a one-year pilot program that expands access to state parks to certain veterans who have a Military-Lifetime pass for national parks; and
- ▶ makes technical changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

This bill appropriates in fiscal year 2025:

- ▶ to Department of Veterans and Military Affairs - DVMA Pass Through - DVMA Pass Through as a one-time appropriation:
  - from the General Fund, One-time, \$200,000

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**63I-2-279**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapters 33, 139 and 221

**79-4-304**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 140

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*



28 Section 1. Section **63I-2-279** is amended to read:

29 **63I-2-279. Repeal dates: Title 79.**

30 (1) Section **79-2-206**, Transition, is repealed July 1, 2024.

31 (2) Section **79-2-407**, which directs the Department of Natural Resources to study  
32 funding for water infrastructure costs, is repealed July 1, 2025.

33 (3) Subsection **79-4-304**(4), which creates a pilot program for veteran free admission to  
34 state parks, is repealed July 1, 2025.

35 [~~3~~] (4) Section **79-7-303** is repealed on July 1, 2024.

36 Section 2. Section **79-4-304** is amended to read:

37 **79-4-304. Board rulemaking authority.**

38 (1) [~~Rules made by the board shall be made~~] The board shall make rules in accordance  
39 with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act.

40 (2) (a) The board may make rules:

41 (i) governing the use of the state park system;

42 (ii) to protect state parks and their natural and cultural resources from misuse or  
43 damage, including watersheds, plants, wildlife, and park amenities; and

44 (iii) to provide for public safety and preserve the peace within state parks.

45 (b) To accomplish the purposes stated in Subsection (2)(a), the board may [~~enact~~] make  
46 rules that:

47 (i) close or partially close state parks; or

48 (ii) establish use or access restrictions within state parks.

49 (c) Rules made under Subsection (2) may not have the effect of preventing the transfer  
50 of livestock along a livestock highway established in accordance with Section **72-3-112**.

51 (3) The board shall [~~adopt~~] make rules:

52 (a) governing the collection of charges under Subsection **79-4-203**(8); and

53 (b) granting free admission to state parks to an honorably discharged veteran who:

54 (i) is a resident of the state; and

55 (ii) has a current service-connected disability rating issued by the United States  
56 Veterans Benefits Administration.

57 (4) (a) Beginning on July 1, 2024, and ending on June 30, 2025, the board shall offer a  
58 pilot program that grants free admission to state parks to a veteran who:

59 (i) is a resident of the state; and

60 (ii) has an Interagency Military-Lifetime Pass for national parks and federal  
61 recreational lands.

62 (b) The board may make rules to establish the pilot program described in Subsection  
63 (a).

64 Section 3. **FY 2025 Appropriation.**

65 The following sums of money are appropriated for the fiscal year beginning July 1,  
66 2024, and ending June 30, 2025. These are additions to amounts previously appropriated for  
67 fiscal year 2025.

68 Subsection 3(a). **Operating and Capital Budgets.**

69 Under the terms and conditions of Title 63J, Chapter 1, Budgetary Procedures Act, the  
70 Legislature appropriates the following sums of money from the funds or accounts indicated for  
71 the use and support of the government of the state of Utah.

72 ITEM 1 To Department of Veterans and Military Affairs - DVMA Pass Through

73 From General Fund, One-time \$200,000

74 Schedule of Programs:

75 DVMA Pass Through \$200,000

76 The Legislature intends that the Department of Veterans and Military Affairs pass  
77 through the appropriation under this section to the Division of State Parks to pay for free  
78 veteran admission to state parks in accordance with Subsection 79-4-304(4).

79 Section 4. **Effective date.**

80 This bill takes effect on May 1, 2024.