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BOSTON — Visitors will pay \$2 more to get into Salisbury Beach State Reservation under a plan approved by the state Senate this week.

The \$2 surcharge will go into the newly created Salisbury Beach Preservation Trust Fund. It's expected to raise \$250,000 of dedicated revenue annually to fight erosion and preserve Salisbury Beach.

It still needs approval from Gov. Deval Patrick and the House, but Sen. Steven Baddour, the fund's creator, expects that will happen. If it passes, the fee would take effect July 1.

"I'm very excited about this," Baddour said. "There is no loss of revenue to the commonwealth or to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (which owns the beach). The money comes from a modest surcharge on the parking and camping fees at Salisbury Beach State Reservation, and it will go to preserving an asset in dire need of help."

Currently, the parking charge at the reservation is \$7, and with the \$2 preservation fund surcharge, the cost to park for a day will rise to \$9.

Renting a campsite at the reservation is currently \$20 per night, with a \$9.25 one-time reservation fee. The preservation fund surcharge will bring campsite reservations to \$22 per night, the one-time reservation fee remains the same.

Baddour, D-Methuen, tried last year to insert a similar proposal in the budget, but it was struck down because the language wasn't quite right. This year, Baddour started early, working with the Senate Ways and Means Committee to ensure the language was perfect, he said.

Baddour said state Rep. Michael Costello, D-Newburyport, plans to shepherd it through the House. Baddour is hopeful this year the preservation fund will be in the final budget when it comes out of the conference committee and goes to Patrick for signing.

Salisbury Town Manager Neil Harrington said the idea has real merit and is similar to the preservation fees charged on tickets purchased for events at some of Boston's oldest theaters, like the Opera House.

"I think this is a creative way to look at how to fund the long-term stabilization of the beach," Harrington said. "I don't think the additional \$2 charge will affect demand (attendance) at the reservation at all."

Baddour said about 75,000 cars park at the reservation during a typical summer, generating about \$525,000 for state coffers annually. Revenue from the reservation's 500 campsites is about \$1 million annually.

Using past years' figures, Baddour estimates the \$2 surcharge on both parking and campsite rentals will produce about \$250,000 each year.

Baddour conceptualized a trust fund for Salisbury Beach after devastating storms savaged the beach and abutting homes and businesses for three years running. It took a long struggle with the Department of Conservation and Recreation after last year's Patriots Day storm, but the state agency finally agreed to spend \$1 million to truck in 20,000 cubic yards of sand to shore up

teetering homes, restore ravaged dunes and prevent further erosion. But this was a one-time beach repair.

Baddour sees this trust fund as a way to make such struggles a thing of the past.

"The creation of the Salisbury Beach Preservation Trust Fund will help ensure that residents and business owners will not have to rely on one-time or special state funding year to year to repair any damage, or to preserve and maintain the beach on a regular basis," Baddour said.

"The new fund, combined with regular maintenance funds from the Department of Conservation and Recreation, will allow us to begin the long-overdue process of protecting this natural treasure," he said