



Press Release

다시, 대한민국!
새로운 국민의 나라

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
06/24/22

Contact: Hwang Eui-jeong, Deputy Director
Nature Park Division / +82-(0)44-201-7326
Media Contact: Rachel(Minjo) Chun
+82-(0)44-201-6055 / rachelmchun@korea.kr

The Ministry of Environment to revise the Natural Parks Act to ease residents' inconvenience

- The Ministry of Environment made a pre-announcement of legislation to revise the Enforcement Decree and Enforcement Rules of the Natural Parks Act -

Sejong, June 24 - The Ministry of Environment (ME, Minister Han Wha-jin) made a pre-announcement of legislation to revise the Enforcement Decree and Enforcement Rules of the Natural Parks Act from June 21 to July 31 to ease the residents' inconvenience from complicated administrative procedures, etc. Until now, the Ministry of Environment has received several complaints concerning the infringement of private property rights in the natural parks and difficulties in making their living. The Ministry will revise the acts to ease the relevant regulations.

The substance of the revision is as follows.

Campsites on the islands and beaches will be temporarily available.

Additional campsites will be available inside the temporary areas inside the national park beaches and islands. Normally, the national park beaches and islands could temporarily have amenities like restaurants and bathhouses and safety facilities in the national park beaches and islands from July to April. However, campsites were excluded from the temporary exception. Therefore, campsites cannot be registered according to the Tourism Promotion Acts. Once opened, the campsites were considered to violate the Natural Parks and were subject to penalty. These problems stirred up new tensions in the community and caused accidents. The Ministry of Environment expects to resolve conflicts in the community and bolster hygiene and safety standards, thus promoting people's safety and boosting the local economy. Since it takes some time for the revision to be proclaimed, the Ministry of Environment will apply the revision during the summer holiday season through proactive public administration.

The procedure for designating recreational fishing ponds will be simplified.

Recreational fishing ponds had been categorized as park facilities. Under the revision, the Ministry of Environment simplified the procedure for recreational fishing ponds by removing the fishing ponds from the category of park facilities and mandating acquiring permission. Until recently, complicated processes had been required to change plans for park facilities, such as the fishing village association should submit the application for park change. The fishing village community requested to exclude the recreational fishing ponds from the category of park facilities, and it even intrigued community conflict. The revision of the act will expedite the handling of civil complaints. Thus, it is expected to reduce residents' inconvenience and help generate revenue.

Deregulation of a fishing village and fishery harbor

When facilities in a fishing village or fishery harbors inside the national parks, such as banks and breakwaters, need to be fixed without expanding areas, they will no longer be subject to require permission for repair activities. Instead, they will only require to report to concerned authorities, resulting in simpler procedures. Under the current 'Fishing Village And Fishery Harbors Act,' minor repair and improvement projects that do not involve compensation for land or fishing rights were handled by reporting to the concerned authorities, which goes against fairness.

Infrastructure expansion

The revision will expand the range of infrastructures required for the public interest inside natural environment districts, such as water supply, sewerage, drainage, and village access roads, to benefit residents of park zones and neighboring regions. Under the current act, infrastructure built in the national park is limited for the residents around the parks. It is inevitable to install infrastructures in the park areas. However, residents of nearby villages were not actually benefitted from the infrastructures. Due to the problems, the residents even requested to cancel the designation of park areas.

Minimization of infringement of private information

Affairs that can be processed with the date of birth shall be excluded from matters subject to Unique Identifying Information to protect private information. The activities that do not require Unique Identifying Information include the following: execution of park protection agreements, permission for collecting park admission fees, affairs relating to the subleasing of national property, affairs relating to resident assistance projects, and matters concerning field natural park programs.

Adjustments on fines

The amount of fines imposed by violation history has been updated considering the upper limit prescribed by law. Fines stipulated in the Natural Parks Act have been imposed depending on the gravity of the violation (KRW 100,000; KRW 200,000; KRW 500,000; KRW 2 million). However, there has been a case when the fine imposed by the enforcement decree was more than the legal maximum. The revised version intends to correspond to the original objective of the statute. For instance, administrative fines for camping outside permitted areas and smoking will be increased from the original amount, as they are closely related to safety issues such as fire. Fines for denial of entry and failure to pay admission fees will be lowered from their original levels.

Other updates

Other updates include more precise definitions of "coastal" and "island," as well as different terminologies, in accordance with law revision standards to make it easier for the public to grasp. More information on the revision is available at opinion.lawmaking.go.kr.

"This revision is expected to improve unfair regulations that have dissatisfied communities for a long time, relieving inconvenience of residents and revitalizing local economies simultaneously," said Kim Jong-ryul, Director-General of Nature Conservation Bureau. "We will actively consolidate people's different opinions to make thorough preparations and ensure proper execution of institutions, and we will hear about residents' difficulties and inconveniences to enable further regulatory improvements."